



– International Fund for Agricultural Development –
– Identifying and sharing innovation in Western and Central Africa –

– Land tenure agreement –

I. Context

1. Name of the innovation

Land tenure agreement

2. Country – Region

Mauritania

3. Organization

Maghama Improved Flood Recession Farming Project, Phase II (PACDM II)

4. Who is the innovator?

PACDM

5. Actors involved

Landowners, Government, IFAD and PACDM II

6. Starting date

July 1995

7. Type of innovation

Institutional and policy-related

II. Key concepts

8. Summary

Using local social dynamics as a starting point and adopting a participatory approach, the project succeeded in having a land tenure agreement approved by the various actors. The agreement is between the Government and landowners, allowing sustainable integration of landless small farmers into areas developed by the project.

9. What problems does this innovation seek to solve?

Using consensual and participatory processes, this innovation seeks to provide a lasting solution to inequalities over small farmers' sustainable access to the flood recession land developed by the project.

10. Factors for successful replication

- The active involvement of the actors who are the key to land redistribution (traditional landowners, local officials) at every stage in the process
- The use of local social dynamics to solve the very complex problem of land tenure
- The supply of the local population with broad, sufficient information on the draft agreement
- The use of written documents to act as proof and sources for decisions, and their translation into local languages
- The fact that enough time was left for the process to mature (two years), so that the project would have the full adherence of local people

11. Target group(s) (the poor, women, young people, nomads etc.)

Vulnerable landless small farmers settled permanently in the area

12. Difficulties encountered

- The complexity of implementing participatory processes in a politically fragmented context
- Policy-makers' and donor's lack of a clear picture of traditional mechanisms for the allocation and use of flood recession land at the start of the agreement signature process
- The piloting of the process among the various actors (State, IFAD and landowners) with a view to obtaining consensual approval of the documents (integration attestation certificates) for the operationalization and application of the land tenure agreement

13. Costs and benefits of the innovation (financial, social, political etc.)

Cost. Measured against the results obtained and the issues at stake, the financial cost of the process is minimal. Nevertheless, we estimate that it was no more than UM 20,000,000, or US\$76,335 (cost of meetings, land surveys, seminars and travel).

Benefits. According to the socio-tenure survey, 1,356 heads of extended families are considered landless. The benefits are more social, political and cultural than monetary: sustainable possibility to produce, strengthened social cohesion, improved political environment and a favourable climate for the positive development of traditions.

III. Technical aspects

14.

The main technical aspects of landless people's integration are:

- A participatory socio-tenure survey carried out by the beneficiaries with the support of the project, following previously defined guidelines
- Formulation of the integration attestation certificates and their validation at various levels as instruments for application of the land tenure agreement
- Processing and efficient conservation of data from the socio-tenure survey by actors: sustainability principle, and trust and transparency factors

IV. Further information

15. Key contacts

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16. Internet link

FIDAFRIQUE

17. Key documents

With the PACDM II:

- Land tenure agreement
- Socio-tenure survey
- PACDM reports
- Data sheet and capitalization note
- FAO and SONADER survey report