### Empowering Women:

### PAHABO PROJECT – HYDRO-AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN WEST BRAKNA – MAURITANIA

(PROJET D'AMÉNAGEMENT HYDRO-AGRICOLE DU BRAKNA OUEST – MAURITANIE)

Finance in Common Summit, 12 November 2020 PDBs in Action Showcase Platform



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP GROUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT





Hydro-agricultural development project in West Brakna – Mauritania (Projet d'aménagement hydro-agricole du Brakna Ouest – Mauritanie) https://bit.ly/PAHABO-mauritanie

Photos: https://bit.ly/Smugmug-PAHABO

African Development Fund Nigeria Trust Fund Islamic Development Bank www.afdb.org Region/country where the PDB organization is registered: Côte d'Ivoire, Africa

Main region/country in which the project is implemented: Mauritania, West Brakna

Main sector or theme of the project: Agriculture and project also addressed the following areas: gender, extreme poverty, rural migration rural development. The, fragility, climate change

Contact of the project manager(s) Rafaâ Marouki, r.marouki@afdb.org, +216 71 10 14 54



# **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project exemplifies gender mainstreaming in the African Development Bank's operations. Fully executed in June 2014, it positively impacts the West Brakna area on the right bank of River Senegal, downstream of Boghé.

The West Brakna area is impoverished with erratic and inadequate agricultural yield due to unfavorable climatic conditions, including drought.

The project aimed to secure the incomes of more than 4,500 farmers by reactivating flood recession cropping on some 3,400 ha and supporting irrigated farming, while strengthening the management capacities of the farmers and local cooperatives.



#### Pocket of extreme poverty

Geographically, West Brakna spans a total area of 430 km2 on the right bank of River Senegal. It is impoverished despite its high agricultural potential.

Women, who constitute 57% of the population, are the most affected by this rural poverty given the dearth of incomegenerating activities. In the project area, as in the river valley, women play a key role in both rain-fed and flood recession rice cultivation. They also participate in all the various stages of rice cultivation on the blocks, namely planting, harvesting and winnowing. Women provide over 50% of the labor needed for irrigated rice cultivation.



They also undertake group vegetable growing that constitutes a significant income-generating activity. Some groupings have in the past received donor support (UNICEF and WB) or from NGOs, but most of them had to grapple with poor irrigation network and inadequate organization of female producers.

Women undertake produce processing and preservation activities (onions, tomatoes), and other farming-related tasks, notably marketing of milk, petty trading in foodstuffs, breeding of livestock, fattening of small ruminants, dyeing and sewing, babyweaning food production, making and selling of incense, pottery, basket weaving, spinning of local wool, etc.



#### Easy-to-use techniques

The techniques initiated for flood recession farming were deliberately simplified and tailored towards tapping highly valued potentials in the communities.

The project package was designed to lead to a substantial increase in agricultural production. It aimed to contribute to poverty alleviation and improve food security through the rehabilitation of 3,400 ha stretch of ravines suitable for flood recession crop cultivation including the desilting of the water supply channels and the construction of a dyke to protect the blocks from floods.

LET FILLE

PROJECT PROFILE (GENDER) 8

#### Job creation

The project implementation was expected to create permanent and temporary jobs, which would curb the rural-urban migration of young people and men to the urban centres.

The project was designed to deeply involve women in the operational phase, mainly by providing support to 40 market gardening groups. The works included the rehabilitation of vegetable growing blocks totalling 110 ha cultivated by the 40 women market gardening groups (5,000 women).

The project was also designed to serve as a framework for the self-promotion of rural actors, land security for the farmers and the conservation of natural resources.



Through the construction of the dyke-road and its connection to the Rosso-Boghé road, the project was expected to open up the area and its economic and social development, impacting the entire population estimated at over 30,000 persons.

#### Key project components and expected outputs

- resizing of the N'Diorol marsh over 18 km for the development of 3,400 ha of flood recession land,
- resizing of the Diou over 2.6 km,
- construction of a 68-km dyke road and two access roads totalling 19.3 km,
- stabilization of 50 ha of dune ridges and providing plantation of 30 km of windbreak,

- construction of 15 village wells and rehabilitation of the existing 5 boreholes,
- rehabilitation of 110 ha of vegetable irrigation blocks managed by women,
- drawing up a structural plan and conducting a land survey on West Brakna,

- extension and training activities for 10,000 producers,
- managerial and organizational capacity building for beneficiaries, professional associations and agricultural counselling, and
- promotion of specific actions for women.

# IMPACTS ON GENDER: Empowering women

- 9,600 women trained as against 5,000 initially planned (+192%)
- Women = 62 % of the total number of beneficiaries;
- Rehabilitation of 48 vegetable growing blocks cultivated by women totalling 110 ha;
- Creation of 95 feminine vegetable cooperatives;

# IMPACTS ON GENDER (continued)

- Women participation in decisionmaking: two women have been appointed in the Local Consultation Committee, the representative body of the project's beneficiaries. Their voices are therefore heard.
- At the national level, one of these two women is appointed to the National Steering Committee and actively participates in various meetings.



### **RESULTS / IMPACTS SO FAR: Improved food security**



# Impacts beyond agricultural production and productivity

- Downstream value chain impacts: the increase in agricultural production and supply in the region has led to the creation of three new weekly markets, promoting local commercial activities;
- Upstream value chain impacts: Another significant impact is the development of livestock farming, a symbol of wealth (richer farmers and women have become able to re-invest their additional income in livestock) and the introduction of fish farming in this arid region, enabled by the resizing of marshes and the availability of water;

**PROJECT PROFILE (GENDER** 

- Reduction of water-borne diseases such as bilharzia;
- Improvement of the nutritional status resulting from the consumption of livestock products and fish;
- New significant income-generating activities for youth, through the development of fish farming and the development of eco-tourism;





Designed by the Communication and External Relations Department © 2020