

PIP - ANALYSIS

April 2014



PIP 2 mid-term evaluation



Created in 1973, the COLEACP is an inter-professional association that represents and defends the interests of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) producers/exporters and European importers of fruit, vegetables, flowers and plants.

Through the PIP Programme, funded by the European Union and implemented since 2001 at the request of the ACP Group of States, the association encourages and helps its members and other private sector stakeholders (e.g. retailers) ensure that the horticultural trade contributes towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Horticultural exports help to reduce poverty, especially among disadvantaged groups such as smallholders or rural women whose opportunities for income generation are limited. Furthermore, developments in the horticultural export sector in ACP countries have a knock-on effect, also benefiting production for local and regional markets.

Summary

A mid-term evaluation of PIP 2 was conducted in 2013 to provide an independent analysis of the project's performance levels and to propose appropriate practical recommendations for the remaining implementation period.

The findings of the evaluation team indicate that the programme has so far achieved the majority of its objectives, contributing to maintaining the level of horticultural exports from ACP countries to the EU and helping to professionalise agro-industry in the countries concerned. The satisfaction rate among beneficiaries was 96%.

According to the evaluation team, the methodological approach of PIP 2 offers a model of best practice in technical cooperation, particularly regarding how beneficiaries' needs are taken into account and the quality of capacity building.

The report states that COLEACP is implementing the project effectively, for example in its development of local human resources (almost 90% local experts) and its consideration of the cultural, linguistic and gender aspects of the beneficiary countries.

The evaluation report encourages the project to continue along the same track, while suggesting a number of adjustments to improve its impact and the lasting effect of its initiatives.

PIP 2 mid-term evaluation

In accordance with EDF procedures, PIP 2 underwent an external mid-term evaluation in 2013 to provide an independent assessment of the project's performance levels and to propose appropriate practical recommendations for the remaining implementation period.

The independent experts tasked with the evaluation visited six countries in May and June 2013 for their field visit and also met the project team in Brussels. The evaluation process concluded with a workshop presenting the findings in October 2013.

PIP 2's response to the needs of the ACP horticultural industry was regarded as very satisfactory. The findings of the evaluation team indicate that the programme has so far achieved the majority of its objectives, contributing to maintaining the level of horticultural exports from ACP countries to the EU in a difficult and changing environment.

Mid-term indicators of the project's results:

Based on 42 objectively verifiable indicators (OVI), the mid-term implementation rate is as follows:

Objectives met:	29
In progress:	8
Unmet objectives:	5

The report highlights that the project's positive impact has earned high regard among beneficiaries, as reflected in the 96% satisfaction rate.

Beneficiaries' overall assessment of the project's impact:

(based on interviews conducted by the evaluation team during their field visits to six countries – Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal, Uganda)

Regarding more than 800 initiatives:

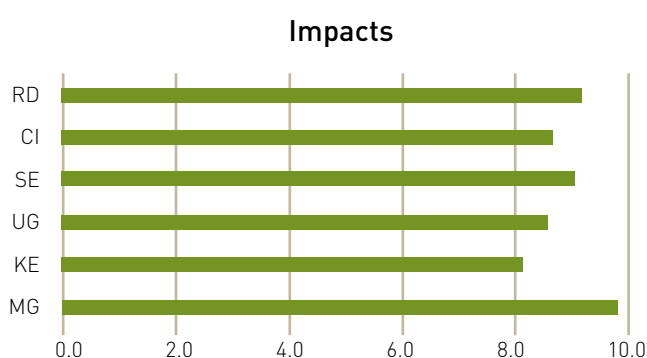
33% of beneficiaries indicated that the benefit from PIP 2 support initiatives is high, while 63% indicated that it is very high.

Satisfaction level: 96%

36% of beneficiaries indicated that support from PIP service providers is beneficial, while 61% indicated that it is very beneficial.

Satisfaction level: 97%

When beneficiaries were asked about PIP 2's impact rate, the average response was 8.9 out of 10, as shown in the table below:



The beneficiaries perceive COLEACP as an effective manager, with an organised and versatile team, demonstrating flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances in the field and an ability to capitalise on experience gained from previous initiatives. At mid-term, all components of the project have been implemented according to the original work plan.

The interviews highlighted beneficiaries' perception that "what sets PIP apart from other projects is its practical knowledge of the issues". The project is seen as closely associated with the private sector and, since its actions are demand-driven, as being close to beneficiaries' needs. This proximity has also helped assimilate the needs of the private sector into the project's development.

The evaluation team noted the high proportion of local experts (almost 90%) used to strengthen beneficiaries' capacities, and highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation in training. Optimising local resources in this way has, according to the report, led to substantial savings in operating costs, particularly for travel.

Importance of local human resources:

The use of local human resources is 90%. The graph below shows a clear upward trend in the proportion of local experts in recent years.

Proportion of local and international experts since 2002



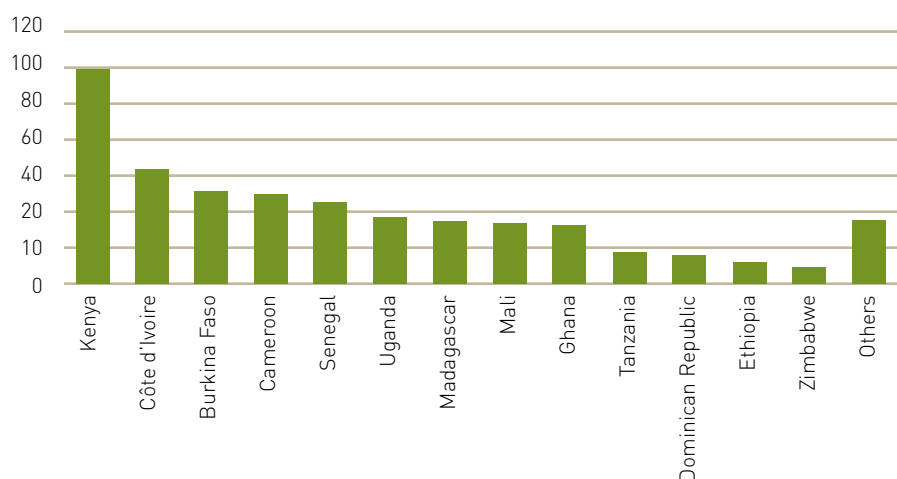
The evaluation describes PIP 2's combination of vertical (following the value chain) and horizontal (holistic) approaches as being in line with best practice in technical cooperation. The approach to capacity building is seen as a paradigm for initiatives in other sectors and geographical regions.

The evaluation report adds that the project has had a positive impact on all beneficiary businesses, large and small, and that the inclusion of large businesses among the beneficiaries has had a ripple effect on the rest of the economy. Overall, the report says, PIP 2 has helped professionalise the ACP agro-industrial sector.

Evolution of the number and type of support agreements:

464 agreements were signed between 2010 and 2012. The implementation rate of these agreements is above 50%.

Number of agreements signed in ACP countries



Since 2010, there has been an upward trend in agreements signed with producers in the area of ethical and environmental initiatives.

There has been a rise in agreements signed with consultants (from 38% in 2009 to 47% in 2012) and other types of organisation (from 15% in 2009 to 20% in 2012), in contrast to agreements signed with producers (from 46% in 2009 to 33% in 2012)

Finally, the evaluation indicates that women are proportionally well represented in the project team (37%), in the supported organisations and among the beneficiaries. The project adequately takes into account cultural and linguistic aspects in preparing the material. The systematic involvement of local consultants has also played a positive role in this regard.

Recommendations

Regardless of these positive findings, the evaluation team made a number of recommendations for improving the quality and impact of the project during the second half of the implementation period.

These recommendations include the suggestion to integrate a number of stakeholders (credit organisations, pesticide and fertiliser sellers, intermediaries, etc.); to extend support to new areas (agronomic aspects of production, access to funding, etc.); to strengthen collaboration with a number of institutional partners (DG TRADE, etc.); to develop national contact points (on a case-by-case basis); and to systematise the use of new information and communication technologies (SMS) as a vehicle for the project's activities. Most importantly, the report recommended that PIP 2 prepare a strategic vision and an action plan, creating the conditions to ensure the initiatives in progress have lasting impact by including reflection on the needs of non-ACP countries and of new sectors (such as coffee, cocoa, tea and flowers).



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