



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/B.30-31/4
4 January 2018

Adaptation Fund Board

**REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF PROJECT
COMPLETION DATE: WFP (MAURITANIA)**

Background

1. The Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) at its eighteenth meeting, approved a four-year project titled “*Enhancing Resilience of Communities to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change on Food Security in Mauritania*” submitted by the World Food Programme (WFP) for a request amount of US\$ 7,803,605 (decision B.18/20). The overall objective of the project is to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities to the effects of climate change on food security by (a) strengthening government services to support communities in their participative development and implementation of local adaptation and natural resource management plans; and (b) mobilize communities to invest in resilience and climate change adaptation. As mandated by the decision, an agreement was prepared and signed between the Board and WFP.

2. The first tranche of disbursement for the implementation of the project was released following signature of the agreement in November 2012, with the total amount of US\$ 2,015,156. The original date for the inception workshop was scheduled for January 2013. However, the project was delayed for a number of reasons including a management review of WFP operations in Mauritania and several key personnel changes in the WFP office, notably a change in Management, and the focal point for the project, the Rural Development Programme Officer. In June 2013, WFP established a project trust fund to enable the project to start. The project finally held its inception workshop on 14 August 2014, following several kick-off meetings held at regional level throughout 2014. The inception was delayed because of the need for the project to implement a robust consultation process and establish effective administrative and financial arrangements.

3. The first project performance report (PPR) for the project was submitted in 2015. The second PPR was cleared by the Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat (the Secretariat) in April 2016, and the third PPR was cleared by the Secretariat in June 2017. As of December 2017, a total amount of US\$ 5,845,468 was disbursed to the project by the Board’s Trustee. The project went through a mid-term evaluation (MTE) process, with an MTE report finalized in March 2017.

4. The official expected completion date of the project was August 2018. As outlined in the Adaptation Fund project delay policy, a request for an extension of project completion date should be submitted by the implementing entity at least six months prior to the official completion date. WFP had submitted on 21 December 2017 such request for an extension of the completion date until July 2019 through the Secretariat, hence in accordance with the project delay policy.

5. The request, for an extension of 11 month of the completion date, is annexed to the present document.

6. The reasons for that request include the fact that the project has experienced to the above-mentioned delays in project start. In addition, many other challenges were faced during implementation, delaying or postponing some key activities. More details are provided in the annex, with the main key points including:

- Delays in procurement;
- Delays in the establishment of the project team and hiring NGO partners;
- Delays due to changes in Regional Delegations of Environment and Sustainable Development (DREDD) assignment;
- Weak DREDD's capacity;

- Non-availability of DREDD during the bushfire campaigns;
 - Inaccessibility of some sites in the rainy season; and
 - Recommendation of the mid-term evaluation.
7. The requested extension of the completion date would allow to:
- Compensate for accumulated delays encountered due to different challenges and constraints faced in the project implementation, and
 - Ensure fulfillment of the project outputs and outcomes for enhanced sustainability.

Secretariat's review of the request

8. Following a review of the request, the Secretariat finds that given the delays incurred due to the afore mentioned issues during the early years of project implementation, which will make difficult achieving completion of the project activities by the official completion date of August 2018, the request of a 11-month extension is justified.

Recommendation

9. Therefore, the Board may consider and decide to approve the request for a 11-month extension of the project completion date for the project "*Enhancing Resilience of Communities to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change on Food Security in Mauritania*" as requested by the World Food Programme (WFP), from March 2018 to June 2019.

Annex

1. Request for an extension of the project completion date from WFP.

Annex: Request for an extension of the project completion date from WFP**Request for extension of concrete adaptation project/programme**

Request for extension of project/programme completion date

Implementing Entity Name: United Nations World Food Programme			
AF Project/programme ID: MTN/MIE/Food/2011/1/PD			
Project/programme Title: Enhancing Resilience of Communities to the Adverse effects of Climate Change on Food Security in Mauritania			
Country: Mauritania			
Project/Programme Approval (date)	July 23, 2012 (inception August 14, 2014)		
Expected Project/programme Completion (date)	August 2018	Proposed Revised Completion (date):	July 2019

The 'Enhancing Resilience of Communities to the Adverse effects of Climate Change on Food Security in Mauritania' project is now considered as the leading Climate Change project within the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) of Mauritania, at central and regional levels. Many other environmental projects are now seeking synergies to benefit from its experience. The project is closely in line with the strategic orientations of the MEDD that have just been updated with the development of the new National Strategy for Sustainable Development covering the period 2017-2030 and its action plan on the horizon 2021.

Through its concrete achievements and realizations, the project is recognized by the MEDD as a main contributor to the implementation of the aforementioned strategy.

The project contributed to a capacity building programme for different sectoral government representatives at the central and regional levels, as well as for civil society to better understand the challenges of climate change and mainstream adaptation into development planning. This allowed to develop community adaptation plans in a participative and integrated approach, covering all the project intervention areas.

The effectiveness of the project in the field is confirmed by the positive results recorded so far and the feedback from local communities about the positive impacts of the implemented activities on their lives.

The project's innovative income-generating activities such as market gardening, poultry farming, beekeeping and fruit trees farming, are among the effective climate adaptation activities in vulnerable rural communities improving household income and food security.

Resolving problems related to access to water in about 30 sites was considered by beneficiaries as the most important adaptation measure implemented by the project; water being the major element for the development of a disadvantaged area. All the IGA implemented in the different project sites depend on the water supply.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, located at the bottom right of the page.



Reasons/justifications for the extension of project/programme completion:

The Inception workshop was held on August 14, 2014 with delays due to presidential elections and changes in the government. As a result, the project schedule outlined in the project document was affected and thus a new timeline for the activities' implementation was developed.

In addition to the above-mentioned delays in project start, many other challenges were faced during implementation, delaying or postponing some key activities. The main key points are highlighted below:

Delays in procurement

Some key procurements took longer than expected:

- The procurement of project vehicles took more than 6 months due to administrative procedures. The vehicles were officially assigned to the different DREDDs in March 2015.
- The tendering process for purchasing food took a long time to be finalized. It was the first tender which WFP CO procurement service prepared in Mauritania. This has implied delays on food distribution and frustration among communities involved in the Food for Assets activities.

Delays in the establishment of the project team and hiring NGO partners

One of the key project staff (M&E officer) was hired only in October 2015. The hiring process managed by an independent MEDD committee took more time than expected.

The NGO partners were supposed to be hired at the beginning of the project, but MEDD wanted to be cautious in hiring due to previous bad experiences with NGOs. The recruitment of the NGO took place only in March 2017, so implementation of some activities was further delayed.

Delays due to changes in DREDD assignment

Since inception, three changes have occurred in the DREDD assignment as project regional focal points. The first change occurred at the beginning of the project and didn't really impact the progress of the project, as only one region / Wilaya has been affected. The second change occurred in August 2015 with the reassignment of 6 out of 8 DREDDs. The last one took place in August 2017 where 4 DREDD were reassigned, 3 of which are new and have never worked with the project before. These changes have disrupted the normal progression of project implementation, as new focal points (DREDDs) need to become familiar with the project approach and reach out to the affected communities.

Weak DREDD's capacity

In 04 DREDDs out of 08, we noted a lack of capacity in terms of technical and management skills (poor quality of supervision, reporting and management) and also in terms of staffing. This affected the quality of work and the deadlines for implementing activities in the concerned regions.

Non-availability of DREDD during the bushfire campaigns

DREDD, as regional responsible for the environmental sector, are fully busy with the bushfire campaign that runs from September to December each year. In this period, there is a lack in supervising project activity execution causing further delay.

Inaccessibility of some sites in the rainy season

During the rainy season (June-August), many project sites become inaccessible due to the impracticability of the terrain. This situation is very cumbersome and causes a slowdown in activities' implementation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, located at the bottom right of the page.