

October 13, 2011

Comments from Germany on Approval by mail: Niger: Community Action Project for Climate Resilience (CAPCR)

Dear PPCR-Team, dear Andrea,

thank you very much for the extension granted. We were able to finalise our comments tonight. Please find details on our position attached.

As already expressed in earlier interventions we are very much in support of the pilot project in Niger and in general the approach that has been taken, in particular the attention being paid to harmonisation issues.

We do, however, have serious concerns on a number of issues and would therefore welcome your response to these before we feel in a position to approve the proposal.

Thank you very much,
kind regards
Annette Windmeisser
Federal Ministry for Economic and Development

Comments on proposed project:

**Niger:
Community Action Project for Climate Resilience (CAPCR)**

Summary

We welcome the proposed project, and would like to commend all involved parties for submitting the proposal. There are, however, some issues that, from our point of view, would require the proposal to be revisited and amended before we can approve it, as outlined in our recommendations below (see **bold** highlights below).

Individual Comments

The project proposal lays out at length and in great detail how the CAPCR will integrate into and build upon existing initiatives, strategies and projects, among them the *Rural Development Strategy* (SDR), the *Development Strategy for Poverty Reduction* (SDRP), the *National Adaptation Programme of Action on Climate Change* (NAPA), and various projects already supported by the MDBs. We very much welcome that so much attention is being given to harmonisation. It is nevertheless important to note that the new Nigerian government is within a drafting process of its new development agenda and sectoral policy strategies; measures taken under the project should therefore take the outcome of these processes into consideration.

The core rationale of the project appears to be that *Sustainable Land and Water Management* (SLWM) is the key approach to increase climate resilience in Niger. Other approaches are

being mentioned, summarised as “*resilience measures other than agriculture*”. Considering the number of beneficiaries, these other approaches however appear to having been given rather little weight¹. In summary, the project design leaves the impression of being a conventional rural development project, with a very strong focus in SLWM, which makes some linkages to climate change adaptation². While SLWM undoubtedly contributes a great deal towards increasing climate resilience, it may not be the only important approach to climate resilience. And while the CIFs are designed to deliver strong *development* outcomes, they are also expected to deliver strong *climate* outcomes. **We therefore recommend more distinctly addressing climate change aspects in the proposal. This should involve strengthening the analytical part of the project, to identify measures other than SLWM that have the potential to increase communal climate resilience. We would further like to see at least one indicator that tracks such measures. This could possibly be one of the “additional indicators to reflect a minimum quality threshold” discussed below.**

Component 1 will focus on three key sectoral policies: health, water, and road infrastructure. This choice has been made, as other institutions, namely the NAPA and the *African Adaptation Programme* (AAP), are already working on mainstreaming climate issues into the *Rural Development Strategy* (SDR) and *Development Strategy for Poverty Reduction* (SDRP) respectively, and therefore represents a contribution to better harmonisation between actors and approaches. However, it remains unclear how improvements to the health and road infrastructure policies in particular are linked to activities in the other projects of the SPCR or in the other parts of the CAPCR project itself, in particular those in component 2, which focuses on agro-sylvo-pastoral systems and adaptive social protection, and contains few – if any – measures related to health and road infrastructure. **We recommend that the proposal be more explicit in justifying the choice of sectoral policies and in clarifying how their improvement will benefit other parts of the proposal or the broader SPCR implementation.**

A key element of the proposal is “incorporating climate change” into *Local Development Plans* (LDPs) and *Annual Investment Plans* (AIPs). This is fully in line with the overall objectives of the PPCR. The proposal remains somewhat vague however in explaining *how* this will be done. The proposal does mention that “the proposed project will support the validation of newly revised guidelines for local development planning and the incorporation of climate-sensitive issues into these guidelines”, and that “the project will closely assist participating local governments ... in the preparation or revision of their local development plans (LDPs) and their

¹ There is only one indicator in the results framework that makes an attempt at measuring the success of other approaches (“number of workers who ... have participated in wage works”), the accumulated target of which is 20000. Expressed as a percentage of the total number of beneficiaries (slightly over 2 million) there would be just 1% of beneficiaries benefiting from “resilience measures other than agriculture” that are not just cash transfers.

² This impression manifests itself in various sections throughout the proposal. See for instance the heading „After the close of the project, a number of problems has been solved for each target group“ in the results framework: none of the problems listed here makes direct reference to climate change.

annual investment plans (AIPs), in order to better integrate climate-sensitive initiatives”. However, the proposal does not detail any further how the existing planning process will systematically incorporate climate resilience, how the “adequate planning tools” that the local governments (*Collectivités*) “are already endowed with” will be modified or supplemented to address climate change issues, and how the project will make use of the range of climate mainstreaming and climate proofing tools already being developed and tested in numerous other countries and initiatives. **We therefore recommend that a section be added to the proposal that provides more detail about the intended modifications of the local development planning process and the mainstreaming and climate proofing tools used in the process.**

In a similar vein, the proposal remains somewhat vague on how climate information will be incorporated into the planning process. The proposal does mention “knowledge products” as a key output of the “communication strategy” under component 1. However, two issues that warrant further attention are not being sufficiently addressed: (1) how and by whom will local governments, in their role as development planners, “be provided with basic information concerning historic climate patterns and key meteorological parameters”, and (2) how will this information provision be coordinated with and make use of the outputs generated under one of the other PPCR investment projects, the *Climate Information Development and Forecasting Project*. It would seem to us that in a climate resilience project these are central questions, and **we therefore recommend that the proposal discusses at greater depth the issues of climate information provision and making use of the outputs of the *Climate Information Development and Forecasting Project*.**

There are two result indicators for measuring the success of “mainstreaming climate resilience into sectoral policies” (component 1) at the local level: (1) the number of local development plans (LDPs) and (2) the number of annual investment plans (AIPs) incorporating climate resilience. These indicators certainly are a sensible choice for tracking the mainstreaming of climate change issues within local development planning in a broad *quantitative* sense. However, they lack a *qualitative* component: what set of criteria will be used to judge whether a local development plan or an annual investment plan incorporates climate resilience *beyond* merely mentioning climate resilience as an issue, and whether it contains actions that, once implemented, will make a plausible and measurable contribution to increasing resilience? Against this background, **we recommend that the respective results indicators be modified or supplemented with additional indicators to reflect a minimum *quality* threshold that a plan needs to fulfil in order to be judged as “incorporating climate resilience”.**

The implementation arrangements for component 2 do not portray a sufficiently tangible image of how component 2, being the largest component, will be implemented. **We therefore**

recommend that the proposal be extended by a more in-depth section on implementation arrangements for component 2.

In addition we have the following comments and questions:

1. An innovative pillar of the project is the provision of safety nets for poor household via cash transfer and vouchers. **How is sustainability to be assured on the long run?**
2. From our experience, ANFICT is not yet operational. Without substantial support for institution building we would not expect ANFICT to fulfill its expected role within a medium perspective. We request information what kind of measures are planned to support the correct functioning of ANFICT. German development programs in Niger support fiscal reforms as well as decentralization processes (e.g. institution building for ANFICT). We would therefore recommend to enter into an exchange of experience with GIZ and KFW.
3. **The project is complementary to the BMZ financed programme on poverty reduction LUCOP and the future programmes on irrigation and decentralization.** Given the fact that the CNEDD is a partner to all these programmes, we recommend
 - to coordinate intervention sites at community level
 - to coordinate measures for capacity development of partners
 - to exchange with BMZ and GIZ on options for enhancing synergies between adaptation-relevant measures.

Gender

The *2010 gender inequality index* ranks Niger at 167 out of 169 (with no improvement compared to 2008, where Niger ranked at 136 out of 138). Clearly, special efforts are warranted in programs like the PPCR to reduce gender inequality. The proposal repeatedly discusses the “*specific vulnerabilities of women and children*”, and states that “*attention will be given to women as priority beneficiaries of activities*”, which we very much appreciate. However, not a single indicator in the entire results framework reflects gender issues. **We therefore urgently recommend revisiting the results framework and including appropriate indicators that explicitly reflect efforts to reduce gender inequality.**

Learning

Best practices play a pivotal role in the design of the CAPCR, with “*a set of best practices and techniques to improve the productivity of agricultural, forestry and pastoral activities*” being an intermediate outcome. It remains unclear, however, how and by whom best practices will be identified. The proposal states that “*there are already numerous good practices and techniques that the CAPCR will contribute to scale up and disseminate*”, presumably those listed in “*TABLE 2: Examples of SWLM measures*”, which would indicate that best practices are already readily available. While this may be the case, **we would appreciate the proposal being more explicit about the identification and selection of best practices, considering that adaptation to climate change is a relatively new field of activity, with few if any proven best practices readily available.**

The proposal makes only very brief mention of “*research centers and university structures*”, and appears to consider them as recipients of communication products and training rather than actors to be involved in implementing the CAPCR. Also, when looking at the overall architecture of the proposal, the issue of learning seems insufficiently addressed in our view. The proposal does state that “*systematic M&E will be carried out to monitor the performance of the project interventions and to ensure that lessons learned are used throughout project implementation*”. It remains very vague, however, in outlining how and by whom this will be achieved, apart from listing (in the results framework) “*CNEDD (with service providers)*” as being responsible. The issue of how lessons learned in the CAPCR will feed back into the *overall* knowledge management of the SPCR for the benefit of other countries and actors is apparently not being discussed altogether. **We therefore recommend that the proposal provide more detail on how learning will be supported, both within Niger’s SPCR and as input of Niger’s SPCR to the PPCR (and new strategies) as a whole, and how and in which roles university and research institutions will be engaged.**