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Managing for Development Results — A Baseline for Impact Monitoring on Poverty. Case Study in Sub-saharan Africa, Niger

SILVIA MARTIN HAN¹, MELANIE DJÉDJÉ², JESSICA FRÜHWALD¹

¹*Humboldt University Berlin, Advanced Training in Rural Development, Germany*

²*Consultancy for International Cooperation, Western and Eastern Africa, Germany*

Abstract

The German cooperation in Niger has committed itself to contribute to the fight against poverty (Programme de Lutte contre la Pauvreté, LUCOP) as outlined in the national PRSP. Thus, a regular follow up of the results due to the programme's interventions became a necessity. A results based monitoring system was initiated according to the new orientation on impacts of the international development policy.

The present study delivered the baseline for the results based monitoring. Main challenges met were the identification of linkages between the national poverty strategy and the programmes intervention as well as the national and international definitions of poverty and those of the local people. For what results the programme can be made responsible and how do interventions of other projects and organisations influence locally the programme's impact?

The OECD-DAC Model of results chains (slightly adapted by GTZ) and the DFID Model of the four dimensions of poverty helped to tackle the task. In identifying the underlying hypotheses of the programme's strategy through the results chains, differences between programme's outputs, outcomes and impacts became evident and measurable through indicators. Then linkages could be drawn to indicators of the national strategy.

The programme's key indicators formed the reference for the field study, which was carried out in the two regions of the intervention zone. The methodology applied comprised semi-structured interviews, adapted PRA tools and observation. Villagers were invited to define themselves categories of poverty and means to measure well being.

Main findings were: Dependency on agriculture is considered the principal cause of poverty (income, access to production factors and services). Poverty is always influenced by a combination of factors belonging to the four dimensions of poverty. Thus to fight against poverty it is necessary to be aware that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. Furthermore, consequences of extreme poverty do not restrict to man but impact directly the natural surroundings by destroying the environment (excessive tree cut, selling wood), basis for future subsistence.

In summary, the intention of the study is to make a practical contribution to reinforce the impact monitoring system of development programmes for poverty alleviation in rural areas. Thus effective use of current resources should lead to more visible and successful achievement of the MDG.

Keywords: Food security, monitoring, evaluation, poverty assessment, rural areas