

MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE INDICATIVE COOPERATION PROGRAMME BETWEEN NIGER AND LUXEMBOURG

Final report - Synthesis

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(original version in French)

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FACT SHEET

	PIC II	PIC I
Period	2008-2012	2003-2007
Budget	60 millions €	20 millions €
Objective	To contribute to capacity strengthening for a sustainable development and the reduction of poverty	Fight against poverty
Priority sectors	Professional training and Insertion (national programme) Implementation of the Rural Development Strategy (Dosso)	Handicraft (national level), Integrated rural development, education and health (Dosso)
Hors concentration	Basic education (Dosso)	
Engagement politique		Défis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity strengthening through the implementation of sector approaches - Implementation of the Aid efficiency principles (Paris Declaration) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tripling of the budget compared to previous PIC - Important delays in implementing the activities of the bilateral cooperation linked to local context and the formulation of sector approaches
Key Implementation figure		
Execution rate on October 15, 2102 = 23%		

	Pojects and Programmes	Implementation periods – Financial execution October, 15 2012							
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Bilateral Cooperation	Reg SDR					100,0%			
	NIG 017					9,9%			
	NIG 018					11,1%			
	NIG 019					13,5%			
	CCA					40,0%			
	CARE					83,7%			
Multilateral cooperation	FAO/NER					100,0%			
	UNDP/PAPEN					100,0%			
	UNDP/PTFM					100,0%			
	UNDP/PCM					59,0%			

Situation	Main weaknesses	Opportunities - Perspectives
Synergies	Considered on a case by case basis and not as an integrating aspect of the PIC implementation	« Natural » bridges between the sectors of interventions
Transversal themes	Considered at the level of the symptoms and not at the level of the founding causes	Thematic Experts embedded in the projects/programs

Principales conclusions et recommandations de la RàMP	
Sector approach	Strong foundations exist in Dosso. Should pursue efforts. Partnerships still to be activated for vocational and professional training
Sector Programmes	Crucial need for local capacity strengthening to guarantee a quick pace in the consumption of available credits until 2015
Aid efficiency	Alignment with sector strategies is satisfactory. Donors harmonisation on the move again. To pursue efforts for increasing the use of national systems and improve results based management. Permanent political presence of Luxembourg in Niger is desirable
After 2012	Prolongation of the PIC II until 2015. Draw first lessons from sector programmes in 2013 and agree at that time on the opportunity or not to increase the financial envelop of the PIC.

Executive Summary

Objectives of the report

The objective of the report is to present the main conclusions and the recommendations reached by the members of the experts' team which led the mid-term review of the Indicative Program of Cooperation 2008-2012. The work aimed more specifically at feeding the political and strategic dialogue between Niger and Luxembourg in preparation of the discussions to come for the meeting of the Partnership Commission that will be held on November, 2012. This session of the Partnership Commission is particularly important because it is held at the end of the period covered by the PIC II.

Methodology

This report is the result of the work of the experts' team mobilized for realizing the mid-term review. The work of the experts' team developed on the basis i) of a documentary review, which concerned the general and the sector frameworks of the development policy of Niger as well as the PIC and its implementation (end of August to mid September), ii) of the contacts and the discussions in group or with individual with the actors involved in the PIC both at the level of its formulation, of its execution and of its follow-up / evaluation, in Luxembourg and in Niger (end of September), iii) of the sessions of synthesis between the members of the experts' team to confront opinions and perceptions gathered during the contacts and the meetings and to prepare the conclusions and the recommendations and, (iv) of technical sessions held with sector and regional partners on initial conclusions (follow-up meetings in Niamey and Dosso between October 12 and 16) and meetings with MAE and LuxDevelopment in Luxembourg (Steering Committee on October 19).

The calendar of the work of mid-term review was accelerated compared with what it is in standard conditions. The work spread out over only 2 and half months (between the end of August and the beginning of November) so that a report can be presented to both governments before the holding of the Partnership Commission. Therefore, the content of the report is concise and targeted at certain aspects which appeared to the experts as being the most important to deal within the framework of the review.

Content of the report

The body of the report of the mid-term review is built on 4 main elements:

- A reminder of the local context and the history of the cooperation between both countries (Part III),
- An assessment of the cooperation between the two countries through an analysis of the PIC as a programming tool (Part IV) and of its implementation (Part V),
- The main conclusions reached by the experts' team of the mid-term review (Part VI) and,
- The recommendations, their translation in actions to be implemented and the involved actors (Part VII).

Main conclusions and recommendations

After a few years of political upheavals, Niger found back a stable democratic life and the government has attempted since to formulate and/or to update its development strategies. The country is still one of the poorest of the world but there are very good economic perspectives for years to come, in particular thanks to the mining and oil sector. Nevertheless, the new balance remains precarious of the fact, in particular, of strong pressures generated by the conflict in nearby Mali but also because of very hard weather conditions and of very fragile geophysics and environmental conditions.

The cooperation between Luxembourg and Niger is rooted well, in particular in the region of Dosso, the first PIC 2003-2007 having been preceded by numerous interventions introduced from 1989. Both partners are satisfied by the orientation and by the quality of the interventions but also by

their implementation modalities. The meeting to come during the next session of the Partnership Commission is very much expected.

Key issues for the political dialogue

The PIC II was signed between both governments only in October, 2008. It is thus 10 months that were lost from the starting up on the programmatic logic at the heart of the approach PIC. The implementation of the interventions was then delayed for numerous reasons, certain totally independent from the PIC and others than it will be necessary to think more in detail. A few months away from its term, the PIC II 2008-2012 is executed only at approximately 22 % (near to 14 % for the bilateral cooperation).

Both governments have thus to quickly agree on what it is advisable to make to give to the ongoing interventions a new legal framework. At the local level, there is a consensus on the fact that the orientations, the principles and the implementation modalities of the PIC II are still relevant and that it would be more suited to extend the current framework rather than to draw a new one, an option which could take more time. Clearly, the various partners agree on the fact that it is now necessary for the planned activities development to proceed as fast as possible.

Taking into account the national programming calendar (Economic and social Development plan, Initiative 3N in particular), those of many European donors, as well as action plans for 3 projects / programs of the bilateral cooperation, it would seem that an extension of 3 years of the PIC II is an optimal solution. The end of the period of execution of the PIC II would thus be situated in 2015.

If this extension of 3 years is approved by both governments, it will be necessary to pay out every year approximately 15 Mo euros from the bilateral cooperation to exhaust the credits still available on the PIC II. This is more double of what the Luxembourg cooperation paid out on average in the previous years (with the exception of 2010s and 2011). There is thus an important effort to make to strengthen capacities at the local level, both as regards the piloting of the cooperation, the technical implementation of the interventions and the consumption of the available credits. At all these levels it will be necessary to reach and to maintain high rhythms.

Still from the point of view of the financing planned on the PIC II, there are funds which have not found affectation yet and for which it will be necessary to take a decision. It would be necessary to use these remaining funds to develop alternative types of interventions which help diversify partnerships, in particular between sectors of the civil society or between research laboratories in the Luxembourg and in Niger.

The geographical extensions for the current interventions, the principle of which was already approved between both countries for certain existing projects of the bilateral cooperation (coverage of all the departments of the region of Dosso the NIG 019 project), will have financial consequences which were not taken into account yet. It is advisable to determine exactly the scale of the needs and then to discuss the way of financing them.

The mid-term review recommends that the executing agency LuxDevelopment makes as quickly as possible, together with the local counterparts, the assessment of the requirements so that both governments can discuss on a common basis. The review also recommends waiting at least for one year before increasing potentially the envelope of the PIC to appreciate better the absorption capacities.

In any case, the mid-term review team thinks that it would be necessary to give priority to the consolidation of the current interventions rather than to open new areas if both governments intended to increase the envelope of the PIC. It would also be necessary to start as soon as possible the preparation work for the next PIC to avoid that there is a new gap in its implemented. Both governments should so work in setting up tools for the joint steering of their cooperation through relevant instruments (system of performance and results indicators) and means (in particular for the MAE NIGER as the coordinator of the PIC at the national level).

The dialogue between the two countries asks for more rigor and continuity. All the annual meetings were not held during the PIC II and the political dialogue suffered from it. On this point, a permanent political presence from the Luxembourg in Niger could help. Numerous arguments, political but also technical, militate moreover for this presence, arguments which are detailed in the

report. The mid-term review team is convinced that it will not be possible to improve the impact and the durability of the results of the PIC without this permanent presence.

The multilateral cooperation was a tool by which the Luxembourg was able to maintain a presence in spite of the interruption of the cooperation. Nevertheless, this specific cooperation is little coordinated with the other interventions and little suited by the partners of Niger. The mid-term review team recommends working on more synergy between the bilateral cooperation and the multilateral cooperation which develop according to two logics and too much separated sequences today.

Finally, it is important that the transversal themes of the cooperation (gender, environment and governance) are better taken into account in the PIC II than it was the case in the previous PIC. As regards the bilateral cooperation, there are today tools which were developed (guide by LuxDevelopment) and mechanisms of assistance which were deployed (mutualized technical support) that it is now necessary to use to implement interventions where the transversal themes are fully integrated and guarantors of success. It is besides necessary to identify and to disseminate widely best practices on the subject.

As regards the multilateral cooperation, it is necessary to discuss with the executing agencies the expectations of the cooperation of the Luxembourg on these issues and make sure that the expected impacts are effective.

Content of the PIC

The review was the opportunity to confirm the choices which were made in the PIC II as regards the priority areas of activity. The PIC initially planned two sectors of concentration: agriculture and vocational training. At the request of the Government of Niger, activities were also pursued in the field of basic education in the region of Dosso. These three sectors are very relevant both with regard to the development priorities of the country and with regard to the history of the cooperation between Luxembourg and Niger.

The NIG 017 program supporting the sector of the vocational training covers the whole territory. Partnerships necessary for the program are not all still established and it is difficult to believe that they will be set up like that is planned in the coming 3 years without a proactive approach at this level. In front of this situation, the fund planned for the execution of the program could be a unifier to activate the necessary partnerships, in particular with the other national structures intervening in the domain for their own needs, and create synergies both between the national structures and with the BAD.

An emphasis is put on the works and the equipments (about 50 % of the budget) and very few resources are mobilized for supports and accompaniment for the target groups (young people out of the official educational system and women involved in grouping). Nevertheless these target groups are important levers of the policy of the government,

It is not necessarily the vocation of the project NIG017 to deal with the question of the employment (MFPE - problems of division of responsibilities with the other structures -) but follow-up data on specific of markets could be useful to direct the efforts. On this point, the project of a monitoring center (observatory) for employment is essential.

Based on the long cooperation in the sector of Agriculture and Rural Development in the region of Dosso, there is some experience and know-how (in the administrative structures and at the level of the program NIG018) and even certain working habits on which to base a deployment of the interventions. But it would be an error to think that it is enough today for moving forward, in particular as regards certain specific aspects such as: i) the question of the hydraulics and in particular the irrigation. There are at this level various actors requiring various types of support, since the support for the individual initiatives until the big works of irrigation, ii) The institutional development of the sector and the strengthening of capacities in particular for the new institutions which were reorganized through the SDR and the I3N and iii) the consideration to the transversal themes (gender) and environment but also governance and its resonance on the decentralization) as elements allowing the effective implementation of the program and the realization of long-lasting results.

The support given by the project NIG 019 in the sector of Education to the strategic approach (PDDE) and to its regionalization (PDER) is important for the overall coherence of the system. The strategic anchoring is strong and agents were already sent to training in the field of results-based management. The accent which was put on the quality and on the anchoring with the hygiene and the sanitation issues is essential and it is necessary on this point to maintain absolutely the course. There are domains which ask for a quite particular attention as the coherence of the whole approach of the sector, in particular footbridges with the pre-school and the secondary sector, and the relations with the private sector and the associative sector which are the other important actors in this domain and which also contribute to the efforts of the country in the sector.

The nature of the regional concentration of the cooperation of Luxembourg to Dosso evolved with the PIC II: the projects/programs in Dosso are grounds of experiment for the rest of the country today. This new nature gives its sense to actions targeted at regions and this character should be systematically put forward with the local partners during the implementation of the program NIG018 and the project NIG019

Other questions from the situation analysis

Beyond what precedes, the review team recommends first of all putting more coherence in the global nature of the interventions of the cooperation of Luxembourg. First, it is necessary to assure that the synergies between the various projects / programs of the bilateral cooperation are driving forces in the implementation of the interventions. There are "natural" synergies among them that are simple to develop but they should be completed and strengthened. Synergies must also be more systematically developed between the bilateral cooperation and the multilateral cooperation. Finally, it is necessary to establish footbridges between the activities of the PIC and the other activities financed or co-financed by the Luxembourg in Niger and in particular with the humanitarian aid (to connect to interventions aiming at strengthening capacities in the domains of aid planning and management) and with the assistance to NGOs (mutual information and joint actions)

All the Donors active in Niger were confronted with the same difficulties as the Luxembourg. Except for some international agencies, all the donors also interrupted their cooperation between 2009 and 2011. Today, they are all back and are also engaged in processes of programming / reprogramming of their aid with the government of Niger. They collide all with the weakness of capacities in the ministries which slows down enormously the strategic dialogue, at first, and then the execution of the interventions.

There is today a favorable frame so that the dialogue between the donors develops in a more effective way than in the past, in particular at the level of the member countries of the EU and the EU Delegation. The results of the dialogue at the regional level in Dosso, who was organized through thematic working groups, are good and lessons can be drawn which will be useful for the national level.

The experiences of "delegated cooperation" with Switzerland and the EU are good and there could be other openings in the future (Unicef). The Danish cooperation is ready to execute actions financed by Luxemburg funds in the regions of Diffa and Zinder. Regarding co-financing, the NIG116 project implemented by LuxDevelopment with a big contribution from the EU worked well. There also, there is a base to go farer. The NIG017 program opens opportunities also at the national level, opportunities which could be discussed and promoted in a more effective way if the Luxembourg was a leader in the sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	Suggestions of actions to be undertaken	Concerned actors
To quickly agree on the form the future cooperation should take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the occasion of the next session of the Partnership Commission, to sign an agreement to extend the implementation period of the PIC II until 2015 	Niger and Luxembourg Governments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To commit discussing the content and modalities of the PIC III and launching identification work for some of the interventions as soon as end of 2013 or beginning of 2014 at the latest. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To precisely estimate the financial impact of the extension of the geographical coverage of NIG019 in the Dosso region. 	LuxDevelopment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of 2013, to adjust the financial envelop of the PIC II according to the requirements of the extension after having assessed the rhythm of credit consumption on 2012 and 2013. 	Niger and Luxembourg Governments
To improve and boost the political dialogue between the two countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To commit for systematic annual meetings all along the duration of the PIC and for and end-of-program review (2015) 	Niger and Luxembourg Governments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To feed the sessions of the Partnership Commission with a synthesis report prepared and written by Niger for the bilateral part and completed by Luxembourg for what concerns multilateral cooperation and humanitarian and NGO support. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish a permanent political presence of Luxembourg in Niger. 	Government of Luxembourg

Recommendations	Suggestions of actions to be undertaken	Actors concerned
To improve and boost the political dialogue between the two countries (continue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To set up an articulated monitoring system for the PUC based on results and performance indicators at different levels : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The strategic level to follow-up on the global evolution in the sectors supported by Luxembourg, ○ The operational level (bilateral, multi-bi, ONG, humanitarian aid) ○ The level of aid efficiency, based on a sub-set of indicators from the Paris Declaration 	Government of Luxembourg
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To earmark specific resources for the local follow-up by the MAE Niger of the interventions financed by Luxembourg 	Niger and Luxembourg Governments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To strengthen the local teams in charge of the follow-up of the interventions financed by Luxembourg and make reporting systematic at this level. 	Government of Niger
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To effectively steer the coordination among the actors involved in the PIC, in particular for what concerns monitoring and evaluation and accountability. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change the mode of recording of the financial commitments of the PIC on a programmatic basis (1 PIC, 1 envelop). 	Government of Luxembourg
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give more flexibility to the share of responsibilities for identification and formulation (between the MAE and LD in particular) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the Government of Niger for the mobilization of resources from other donors to match the magnitude of the problems the country faces in the sectors supported by the PIC. 	

Recommendations	Suggestions of actions to be undertaken	Concerned actors
<p>To accelerate and secure the global implementation of the PIC II</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To quickly set-up the structures for the consumption of credits (in particular for the bilateral cooperation) as well as the modalities for the use of the available resources in order to effectively implement the planned interventions. 	<p>Sector Ministries and LuxDevelopment</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring a specific technical support to the Ministries involved in the PIC for what concerns procurement and the chain of expenses. 	<p>LuxDevelopment with the agreement of the two governments</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make synergies among interventions a central engine for the implementation of the bilateral cooperation. 	<p>Sector Ministries and LuxDevelopment</p>
<p>Agriculture sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support activities linked to the preparation of land development plans at the level of the communes and in the Dosso region, guarantying that the approach is largely a participative one. 	<p>Agriculture Ministry and LuxDevelopment</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote a global approach for irrigation that integrates different levels of interventions (individual projects, collective and community works, large irrigation projects). 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To guarantee an integrated vision regarding the management of natural resources by associating systematically the department of hydraulics to all the work and developing an holistic approach for the integrated management of water resources. 	
<p>Vocational and professional training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To set-up and/or consolidate partnerships that are essential for the implementation of the Government strategy in the sector and for its financing. 	<p>MFPE with the support of LuxDevelopment</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To rapidly establish the mechanisms allowing the disbursement of the available funds for both infrastructure and support programmes. 	

Recommendations	Suggestions of actions to be undertaken	Concerned actors
Vocational and professional training (continue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To re-consolidate the funds allocated to « hard » and « soft » with in mind the magnitude of the needs for accompanying and following-up the insertion of target groups in the country (youth and women in particular). 	MFPE with the support of LuxDevelopment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To give to the Employment Observatory the means (human and financial) it needs to function. In particular, ensure dialogue and coordination with the Statistical Office for what concerns the production and the dissemination of data and with the University (in Niger and in Luxembourg) for what concerns analyses and studies. 	Government of Niger and MFPE with the support of NIG 017
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that the good practices developed in Dosso as the laboratory for the whole country are well identified and documented and are largely disseminated by the national structures of the Education Ministry. 	MEN and LuxDevelopment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To secure a strong rooting of the project with the questions of health, hygiene and sanitation, as a key element for improved social cohesion at the level of the villages and for better girl school enrolment rates. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the recruitment rules and incitation measures to make more attractive teaching posting in rural zones. 	MEN
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work at establishing bridges with pre-school education and the first years of the secondary level of education in order to give the entire primary education system a better coherence. 	MEN and LuxDevelopment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To associate the private and the associative sectors to the initiatives aiming at improving the quality of education (training of the teachers in particular) and to the formulation of a reference frame. 	

Recommendations	Suggestions of actions to be undertaken	Concerned actors
<p>To consider the transversal themes more systematically and proactively in the interventions of the bilateral cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement mechanisms that are systematic and reciprocal for exchanging and valorising experiences between the headquarters, the “mutualised” services in Niamey and the projects/programs 	<p>LuxDevelopment</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To realize more systematically impact studies on the three transversal themes for all the interventions and to organize the identification and the dissemination of good practices 	<p>Sector Ministries and LuxDevelopment</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to assess, document and largely disseminate experiences and good practices 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to create cooperation mechanisms between research in Luxembourg and Niger and the projects/programs in order to de-multiply capacities and experiences 	
<p>To put more global coherence around the interventions of Luxembourg</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give the full responsibility in the field office (MAE office) for the selection and the monitoring of the projects under the multilateral cooperation in order to get a real multi-bi cooperation 	<p>Government of Luxembourg</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To link disbursements of the multilateral cooperation to the delivery of technical and financial execution reports along an established calendar with the executing agencies involved. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To look for more synergies between bilateral and multilateral interventions and co-financed interventions through the NGO sector on the model of what is already done through the “accords-cadres” (areas of concentration). 	

Recommendations	Suggestions of actions to be undertaken	Concerned actors
To put more global coherence around the interventions of Luxembourg (continue)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support exchange of information and, when possible the cooperation, between interventions of the bilateral cooperation and the ones of the NGOs. 	Government of Luxembourg
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the deployment of targeted cooperation actions between Niger and Luxembourg in order to strengthen the links between the two civil societies. 	
Delegated cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To evaluate the results of the actions executed by LD for other donors and set-up clear procedures allowing the accounting traceability of these funds. 	Government of Luxembourg and LuxDevelopment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get more involved in discussions with other EU donors in order to agree on a common approach and to identify opportunities for giving the execution of Luxembourg funds to other donors. 	
Complementarities and coordination among the donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To more actively participate to the donors coordination mechanisms and to initiatives for joint programming, in particular at the national level and with EU donors 	Government of Luxembourg
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take the position of « chef de file » for the vocational and professional training sector and support the government of Niger for the mobilisation of other partners in supporting the sector 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss with the other donors the setting-up of a pool of resources to support the strengthening of implementation capacities in the ministries of Niger 	