

PD-ABC-732
71417

P R O J E C T C O M P L E T I O N R E P O R T

C E N T R A L T U N I S I A

R U R A L D E V E L O P M E N T P R O J E C T

(664-0312)

February 1991

February 12, 1991

CENTRAL TUNISIA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT 664-0312

PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

SUMMARY

The Central Tunisia Rural Development Project incorporated a range of sub-projects over its 10 year (1979-1989) life. The subprojects had three objectives: to strengthen a multi-sectoral management oriented area development agency the Central Tunisia Development Authority (CTDA), to increase agricultural production and to meet basic human needs. It had its largest impact in the 12 districts of Kasserine governorate, although the CTDA area of intervention included 2 districts of Gafsa governorate and 3 districts of Siliana. USAID end of project figures indicate a total USG expenditure of \$22,320,938.65 divided between loans and grants (\$12,101,409.69 Loan - \$10,219,528.96 Grant). In Kasserine governorate beneficiaries with access to potable water increase by 111.9% 1985 and hectares served by surface wells increased by 330.4% 1985. The Dryland Farming Systems and the Rangeland Management subprojects were less successful. The Central Tunisia Rural Development Project generated an independent Tunisian community development PVO as well as an on-going rural potable water institutions project which has led to the adoption of a national strategy to promote beneficiary participation in water system management. A mid-term evaluation of the current project concluded that

"USAID/Tunisia's historical strategy of concentrating a good portion of its development assistance on the GOT agency responsible for rural development in one of the least developed areas of the country has strengthen the capacity of that agency (CTDA) to ensure adequate financial management, computerized information systems, and sound project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation." (1)

USAID/Tunis has shifted its focus from hands-on participation in development in the field to support for the GOT's structural adjustment program. Our creditable record in the Central Tunisia Rural Development Project will sustain our ongoing activities in Central Tunisia.

(1) Water and Sanitation for Health Project, WASH Field Report no. 256, April 1989, "Midterm Evaluation of the USAID/Tunisia Rural Potable Water Institutions Project", p. xx.

BACKGROUND

A late 1970s study revealed that inhabitants of Central Tunisia were among the country's poorest citizens with less than U.S. \$100 per capita annual income. Most were engaged in dryland farming; only 1.5% had access to irrigation water. Further, rural extension activities in the region were thwarted by communication deficiencies between researchers, extension agents and farmers. Extension agents lacked access to knowledge of improved cropping practices and techniques and communication between households and change agents was poor in related fields of rural development such as health, nutrition, and family planning.

The Central Tunisia Development Authority was created by the GOT in 1978 as an autonomous agency under the Ministry of Agriculture and charged with carrying out regional planning and project implementation for Central Tunisia. It was the first regional organization in Tunisia to combine both planning and project implementation and was also unique in serving more than a single governorate. Its zone of intervention included all districts in the governorate of Kasserine, plus two districts in the governorate of Gafsa and three in the south of Siliana.

THE PROJECT

USAID/Tunisia began to provide support to and through the CTDA in FY 1979 under the Central Tunisia Rural Development (CTRD) Project (USAID/GOT No. 664-0312). The CTRD was a multisectoral rural development project with the goal of improving the quality of life of approximately 200,000 people in Central Tunisia. The project was designed as an umbrella project with a number of subprojects which, combined, were to yield more effective area development in Central Tunisia. By July 1985 the USAID-funded action zone and the area over which CTDA had titular authority were coterminous and included 17 delegations in three governorates, Kasserine, Siliana and Gafsa. The purposes of the Central Tunisia Rural Development Project were to:

1. develop cost-effective, managerially efficient and resource-mobilizing project interventions for a portion of Central Tunisia so that, ultimately those that were proven to be the best could be replicated in other geographic areas of Tunisia where conditions of similar marginality obtained in:

Agriculture
Natural Resource Endowments
Transport and Communication
Preventive and Curative Health Services
Industrial and Marketing Development
Housing
Credit and Banking, and
Local Participation.

2. To increase income, labor productivity and improve the quality of life for 200,000 rural Tunisians residing in the CTRD zone.

3. To reduce regional disparities in income levels, quality of life, and access to basic services in Tunisia.

4. To reduce intra-regional disparities in income, quality of life, and access to basic services.

The CTRD project encompassed subprojects in dryland and irrigated agriculture, health, range and pasture improvement, and potable water supply. The subprojects had three objectives: to strengthen a multi-sectoral management oriented area development agency (CTDA), to increase agricultural production and to meet basic human needs. Funding had both grant and loan components.

Data supplied by CTDA as reported in the project's mid term evaluation indicated that the GOT resources made available for the Central Tunisia Rural Development (CTRD) Project from 1979 to the end of December 1985 were the equivalent of U.S. \$50.5 million. (1) USAID end of project figures indicate a total USG expenditure of \$22,320,938.65. (See Annex 1).

(1) Ronco Consulting Corp., Central Tunisia Rural Development Evaluation Report, May 1986, Annex B, p.1.

IMPACT

Tables I and II give an indication of the impact of the project in Kasserine governorate, the governorate in which the larger part of project activities took place, and an estimate of the costs per beneficiary for the 1980-1985 period.

Table I shows the principle areas of progress under the project in its first five years in Kasserine Governorate.

TABLE I
PROGRESS 1980-1985 (1)

	Pre 1980 Situation		Additions in 1980-1985			
	No. of Beneficiaries	Area (Ha.)	No.	(%) Increase	Ha	(%) Increase
Potable Water	58,070	-	65,000	111.9	-	-
Basic Health	236,014	-	45,057	19.1	-	-
Electricity	10,320	-	2,382	23.1	-	-
Surface Wells	4,830	805	7,986	165.3	2660	330.4
PPIs (Irrigated Public Perimeters)	6,813	4,665	3,036	44.6	820	17.6

(1) Ronco p.59

Table II shows the estimated costs per beneficiary for the principal interventions in Kasserine governorate for the 1980-1985 period.

TABLE II
PROJECT COSTS PER BENEFICIARY (1)

Intervention	No.	Estimate Costs (TD)	Estimated Number of Beneficiaries	Cost per Beneficiary	
				Direct (TD)	With Over Head (TD)
Potable Water	35	1,790,000	65,600	27.54	32.5
Basic Health	28	1,515,009	45,057	33.62	39.7
Electrification	12	397,000	2,382*	166.67	196.7
PPI		3,364,000	3,036*	1108.04	1307.0
Surface Wells		3,539,600	7,986*	443.23	527.0

Source: CTDA Records on Kasserine Governorate

*/ These numbers of beneficiaries are based on an estimate of 6 people per family with 397 families benefiting from electricity, 600 from PPIs, and 1331 from surface wells. In the case of surface wells and PPIs there should be substantial numbers of indirect beneficiaries from increase in farm employment and from increased marketing of produce and supply of production inputs. Electricity also may result in some productive and secondary economic impacts.

(1) Ronco. p.58

THE SUBPROJECTS

Subprojects addressed various dimensions of the project purposes.

1. The Area Development subproject (664-0312.1) (\$2,748,877 - Grant) was designed to establish a CTDA planning and evaluation capacity for management of the natural and other resources of the region. The objective was to increase income, employment, efficiency, and access to rural infrastructure and services. The subproject originally incorporated some centrally-funded technical assistance from the University of Wisconsin and Cornell which was discontinued in 1981. It attempted to accomplish many related objectives simultaneously. It proved impossible to develop regional planning, design, monitoring and evaluation skills in the absence of implementation activities. However, the implementation activities were designed by USAID, without CTDA, and there was, therefore, a fundamental contradiction between the objectives of the Area Development activity and the implementation imperatives. Poor synchronization slowed achievement of the subproject's objectives.

2. The Dryland Farming Systems Research subproject (664-0312.2) (\$1,848,000 - Grant) was to develop and adapt tested systems of dryland farming practices and inputs for use by and extension to the small farmers of the Central Tunisia Rural Development zone. Insufficient attention was given to the critical importance of a soils testing laboratory to the other subproject activities. Together with internal problems of coordination, the lack of the soil testing facility caused the results of this subproject to be very limited.

3. The Small Holder Irrigation Development Support subproject (664-0312.3) (Total - \$4,014,958: \$3,698,593 - Loan; \$316,365 - Grant) was to optimize small farmer access to and income derived from agricultural groundwater, primarily through on farm irrigation infrastructure expansion and, secondarily, through diffusion and institutionalization of appropriate on farm water management practices. By the close of the project in 1986, 1331 wells had been improved or installed. Efforts were underway to create associations for self-management of the irrigated perimeters and to increase the price paid by farmers for water to cover a larger share of its costs.

4. The Rural Extension and Outreach subproject (664.0312.9) (Total \$3,677,930: Loan - \$2,805,000; Grant - \$872,930) was to establish a better communication system between the rural population and public sector service and information organizations in such fields as agriculture, health, and family planning. An extension unit was established, resident advisors put in place, and five Tunisians sent for long term training in the U.S. in vegetable production, irrigation, sheep production, apple production and soil and water conservation. Several others were sent for short term training both in Tunisia and in third countries in appropriate technical agricultural production techniques and extension methodology. Demonstration plots both for fruit trees and vegetables were established. New varieties of fruit trees were planted and production extended of traditional fruits and vegetables. The 1986 evaluation team concluded that the Rural Extension and Outreach subproject had achieved a considerable part of its purpose. The subproject had also persuaded many farmers to move into high risk activities and the evaluation recommended their continued support over a longer period. The subproject was, indeed, extended until 1988, allowing the Tunisians abroad on long term training to complete their studies and return home and increasing the spread of fruit, nut and olive trees throughout the region.

5. The Range Management Phases I and II subproject (664-0312.8) (Total \$5,330,869: Loan \$3,420,000; Grant \$1,910,869) was to introduce improved rangeland management and stock raising practices among the farmers of central Tunisia, to improve the quality of the sheep flocks, increase market price and contribute to higher productivity. The range management and development subproject trained Tunisian staff and introduced improved range and herd management systems which were accepted by stock raisers on 25 perimeters. On at least three of the perimeters there was sufficient measurable progress, improved range conditions and increased flock productivity, for stock raisers to continue the recommended practices and encourage non-participating farmers to adopt them.

Weaknesses of the project were implicit in the original design which did not include an assessment of the rangeland conditions. Fragmentation of land and relatively small size farms constrained the development of improved systems of rangeland rotation. Competition from cereal and other income crops hampered increased forage production. The original project did not provide for seed production. When, after two years and a change in the implementation strategy from resting rangelands to reseeding them, a seed production component was added to the project, Office d'Elevage et Paturage (OEP) had difficulties in accepting it. Droughts, changes of sites and insufficient support from research and extension prevented the seed production component from operating efficiently.

Economic analysis played a strong role in the first three years of the project. - Oregon State University (OSU) computed internal rates of return (IRRs) and undertook cost return analysis of animal feed. In addition OSU completed a farm model to assist the Office d'Elevage et Paturage (OEP) in evaluating the economic potential of various forage production technologies that were available to the farmers. Over 20 Tunisian participants undertook long term training in range management, sheep production, seed production, extension, crop science and agricultural economics. 57 participants were trained in range management extension and ten participants undertook short term training in new technologies overseas. Considerable research was done on optimum varieties of grains for land of various characteristics. Emphasis shifted to increased production from dryland farming when limitations in water resources were recognized. Technical assistance to CTDA developed the institution's monitoring capacity.

6. The Rural Potable Water interventions (664-0312.4 and 664-0312.7) (Total - \$2,865,903: \$2,177,815 - Loan ; \$688,088 - Grant) in the CTRD area included spring and well development and related activities including procurement of drilling equipment and provision of technical services to improve access to potable water for the semi urban and rural dispersed population. The initial target was the development of 16

springs, lining and motorizing of 10 surface wells and drilling and developing of 90 tube wells. A serious underestimation of the cost for the development of the drilled wells resulted in a total of 14 being completed. The other targets were met. USAID's assistance in potable water began in 1980. Approximately \$2.19 million of AID funds and \$888,000 equivalent in GOT contributions supported provision of safe, reliable, potable water to rural inhabitants of Central Tunisia. Based on the lessons learned during these initial potable water projects, and the desire to resolve problems of site maintenance and maximize opportunities for local participation, a Project Paper was approved in March 1986, which led to an on-going Rural Potable Water Institutions Project (664-0337) scheduled for completion in September 1991.

7. The Community Development/CDF sub-project (664-0312.10) (\$430,705 - Grant) helped establish an operational, effective and autonomous Tunisian private voluntary organisation affiliated with Save the Children Federation (SCF) in Westport Connecticut to implement community based integrated rural development activities in central Tunisia.

The support given the Community Development Foundation (CDF), the name given to the affiliate of SCF in Tunisia, built on a community-based integrated rural development project which USAID/Tunisia, in conjunction with the SCF in Westport Connecticut, had been supporting since 1977. The approach to development emphasized:

- 1) Community members' substantive participation in their own projects from choice and inception to completion;
- 2)- A multisectoral focus in all projects;
- 3) Effective linkage with and use of community resources by project participants;
- 4) Active follow-up of projects in the field.

By 1984, SCF/CDF had initiated more than 40 community development projects of which slightly less than half were on-going. Working relationships with the Ministry of Social Affairs were close. The projects were in the sectors of agriculture/nutrition, including bee-keeping, income generation, including women's weaving, community buildings, and health and sanitation. Geographically, the focus was on the central Tunisia areas of Kasserine and Makthar.

In May 1984, SCF/CDF requested support over a five year period to aid in the transition to a Tunisian community development foundation. It was envisaged that the support would have two major objectives: continuing implementation of community development projects in Central Tunisia and establishment of a Tunisian PVO. The latter objective required resolution of legal issues, formation of an Advisory Committee and Board of Directors, development of an institutional charter, by-laws and operating procedures for the new organization, establishment of a publicity campaign and an ongoing fundraising system, and transfer of staff, resources and responsibility from CDF/Tunisia, to be known as the Fondation Tunisienne du Developpement Communautaire (FTDC).

The total project budget was over \$2.5 million. USAID support of \$430,705 was to finance 15 percent of the costs over three years of the five year transitional period with the balance to be financed by SCF/USA and Tunisian and international donors. USAID's contribution under the CTRD project ended in 1987. At that time FTDC was administratively in place, recognized by the -GOT, and continuing to implement its community development activities. Internal fund-raising efforts, however, fell short of expectations and an additional \$372,000 was granted over two years to facilitate both project activity and the Tunisification process. The last American advisor left in June 1990, and a final \$100,000 grant was made to the Tunisian private voluntary organization, FTDC, in the same year.

8. In the first three years of the CTRD project, Caremedico received support for its activities in Siliana and Kasserine. (664-0312.5 and 664-0312.14) Activities under this subproject included the lining of wells and the cleaning and maintenance of water points. The CTRD project provided a useful framework for these complementary activities of a U.S. PVO.

CONCLUSION

The Central Tunisian Rural Development Project ended on September 30, 1989, ten years after its inception. After the May 1986 evaluation, the active subprojects were limited to a revised and extended Rangeland Development subproject for which the CTDA was one member of an inter-agency coordinating committee and which concluded on 5/18/89, the Area Development subproject (9/30/87), the Rural Extension and Outreach subproject (12/31/87) and support for the community development PVO (9/30/87).

The long-range benefits of the subprojects in the agricultural area are evidenced by increased productivity and a wider range of crops grown on irrigated lands, better range management practices and greatly enhanced planning, extension and monitoring capacities throughout the Central Tunisia area.

Although formally the project has been concluded, two of its elements have been included in on-going mission activities. Support for the Save the Children Foundation has led to the establishment of The Fondation Tunisienne du Developpement Communautaire (FTDC) an independent Tunisian community development PVO. FTDC has now taken initiative in organizing a federation of Tunisian community development NGOs to ensure cooperation in their endeavors and coordination in their relations with the government.

The Rural Potable Water Institutions project, drawing on lessons learned under the earlier potable water subprojects, established and refined a coordinated, decentralized institutional approach to rural potable water operations and maintenance with user participation and user fees. Initially, the project was limited to the CTDA zone but has led to the adoption of a national strategy to promote beneficiary participation in water system management. This on-going project focuses on providing the analyses and procedures for the establishment of Water Users' Associations (WUAs) throughout the nation and encourages the local financing of potable water points' Operation and Maintenance costs. The WUAs serve as a model for participation in community development activities.

At the end of the 1980s, USAID/Tunis shifted its focus from hands-on participation in development in the field to support for the GOT's structural adjustment program and the ENE's bureau emphasis on "Open Markets, Open Societies". An Assistance Management Plan for the 1990s (AMP), developed in 1990, focuses on growth in Enterprise, Exports and Employment. A major agribusiness promotion grant, a private enterprise promotion project, a training project and a technology applications project form the core of our hard currency commitment while, as we work cooperatively with the GOT, local currency programming contributes to support for NGOs and in-country employment related training programs. Our creditable record in the Central Tunisia Rural Development Project will sustain our ongoing activities in Central Tunisia in support of active community participation in the development effort as well as the expansion of agricultural production, processing and exports.

0076P/February 12, 1991/PDP

CLEARANCES: G. CARNER GC
D. PUTMAN (DRAFT)
L. LUCHE (DRAFT)
P. PELLETREAU PDP