

REDSO/WCA
PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT
FOR
SPECIAL SELF-HELP PROJECT
(698-9901)

Date of Report: September 1993 PACD: September 30, 1993

I. INTRODUCTION

The regionally-funded Special Self-Help Project (SSH) financed small-scale projects in less-developed countries which promoted community development and rewarded local involvement. A continuation of the project was signed in Mauritania on March 29, 1988, and was funded annually.

The program was based on the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and a general agreement between the U.S. and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania (GIRM), which was signed in 1971. The overall purposes of the program were to demonstrate an interest in the welfare of the communities, generate public good will, and bolster indigenous development activities that reposed responsibility on Mauritians.

The project offered an expeditious response to a community's request for funds. A one-time U.S. contribution was to catalyze communities to initiate high-impact projects which would improve their basic economic or social conditions.

Project funds were allotted to undertakings that lended themselves to prompt implementation with rapid results. Each community provided in-kind or financial contributions to the project, and the project had to be initiated, planned and executed by Mauritians. Some development activities were conducted in coordination with the local Peace Corps Volunteer.

During the six-year life of the project, 138 activities were funded. Funded activities included: construction of health clinics, women's centers, wells, dams, mills, irrigation systems, pumps, protective fencing, schools, dormitories, storage facilities, and buildings for cooperatives. The project also financed the procurement of gardening tools and supplies, school equipment, motor pumps, mill machinery, construction materials, and sewing machines. Funding for these individual projects ranged from \$1,000 to \$12,000.

Following the June 1993 close-out of operations in Mauritania, project files were delivered to the REDSO/Abidjan office. This project assistance completion report was compiled from these documents, which consisted of individual activity agreements (IAAs) and correspondence. No other project documents were available for this review.

II. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PARTIES

GIRM

The GIRM provided support through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but it did not financially contribute to the project.

USAID

USAID provided \$706,424 to finance project activities.

Other Donors

Local communities contributed in-kind or financial resources to their respective projects.

III. IMPLEMENTATION

The U.S. Embassy in Nouakchott designated a Self-Help Coordinator to implement the project on behalf of the U.S. Ambassador to Mauritania. The Office of the AID Representative in Nouakchott's (OAR/Nouakchott) Program Officer and Controller worked closely with the Self-Help Coordinator to provide assistance.

Applications for funding were submitted by community officials to the Self-Help Coordinator. A committee, comprised of representatives from the U.S. Embassy, the GIRM Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and OAR/Nouakchott, reviewed the requests and assessed the merit and validity of each entreaty. Final funding approval was made by the U.S. Ambassador.

Funding was issued through IAAs, and the Self-Help Coordinator and OAR/Nouakchott Controller handled fund disbursement.

USAID Financial Inputs

A summary of project financial reports as of June 30, 1993 indicated that \$706,424 was obligated over the six-year life of project. Unused project funds will be deobligated at the end of FY 93.

IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Special Self-Help Project was instituted to reach local populations to provide immediate results. It was hoped that these self-initiated projects would inspire on-going activities in the affected communities using local funding sources.

Project funding was provided to villages and communities in the following regions: Adrar, Assaba, Brakna, Gorgol, Guidimakha, Hodh El Chargui, Hodh El Gharbi, Inchiri, Nouadhibou, Nouakchott, Ouadane, Tagant, and Trarza. Project funds were used only in cases where a large percentage of the community would benefit from an activity. The construction of health clinics, wells, dams, mills, irrigation systems, schools and storage facilities was considered crucial to the livelihood and development of the community. Following is a summary of the project's accomplishments:

1988: The SSH project earmarked \$94,966 to fund 15 projects.

1989: The SSH project earmarked \$83,528 to fund 14 projects.

1990: The SSH project earmarked \$104,934 to fund 24 projects.

1991: The SSH project earmarked \$138,514 to fund 25 projects.

1992: The SSH project earmarked \$134,482 to fund 29 projects.

1993: The SSH project earmarked \$150,000 to fund 31 projects.

V. LESSONS LEARNED

Due to the nature of these small-scale projects, no evaluation reports were conducted on the Special Self-Help Project.

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