

Impacts of Microfinance Institutions on Guinea Agricultural Production: Case of the Urban Commune of Faranah, Guinea

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Abstract—This work aims to assess the socio-economic impacts on agricultural production. It was carried out in the urban commune of Faranah from June 24 to September 30, 2013. The methodology used consisted of bibliographic consultations, technical and socio-economic surveys in the three (3) Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) of the Joint with 5 authorities, 15 MFI agents and 102 peasant people (Physical and Moral), then to analyze and interpret the data collected. The results of our surveys reveal that the population of the urban commune of Faranah, particularly farmers, are interested in MFIs (despite their small number), because they allow them to improve living conditions through increasing the yields of their cultures are the following variations: 46.27% ; 47.37% ; 32.14% and 42.50% respectively for rice, cassava, peanuts and fonio. And the monetary values of production also experienced variations: 181.43% for rice, 184.91% for cassava; 108.86% for peanuts and 90% for fonio. This is due to the fact that its farmers have taken out credits: 162275000 GNF in 2010 for 499 credits; 405550000 GNF for 797 credits in 2011 and 154425000 GNF for 447 credits.

Keywords— Impact, Institution, Microfinance, Agricultural Production, Faranah.

I. INTRODUCTION

In sub-Saharan Africa in general and in WAEMU countries in particular, agriculture is essentially rainfed [1,2]. This dependence on rain exposes agricultural production to the effects of climate change, the consequences of which are drought, floods, degradation of natural resources and soil fertility, etc. [3]. Indeed, the development issue which underpins the Strategic Development Directions (OSD) emphasizes the acceleration of Guinea's economic growth, which is based primarily on the promotion of the agricultural sector. Thus, small farms need to intensify, modernize and adopt technical, organizational and technological innovations to improve their income [4].

Over the past twenty years, MFIs have experienced significant development, in institutional forms in most southern countries, particularly in Guinea.

This development was undertaken with a dual objective : Fight against poverty by providing populations who do not have access to traditional banks with sustainable financial services, capable of supporting economic activities and the accumulation process.

The application of these innovations and new technologies requires appropriate financing. However, the self-financing

capacity of small farms alone is not enough to finance this modernization because the income obtained is substantial (intended for family survival). In addition, the large mass of the agricultural and rural population of Africa in general and of Guinea in particular is made up of small, so-called family farms.

They occupy a decisive place in supplying domestic and foreign markets and provide the majority of agricultural production [5]. External financing then becomes an alternative to which these farms must resort to to modernize their production systems.

Furthermore, the agricultural sector does not benefit from significant financial support from African states because the share of public spending devoted to this sector in these countries still remains very low [6]. As for financial institutions (Bank, MFI, ASF, etc.), their contribution represents less than 20% of total bank credits [7]. Financing aspects play a very important role in the agricultural development of countries [8]. Consequently, the State and the banking system are invited to increase their financial resources intended for the agricultural sector [9]. This sector contributes 32.7% on average to gross domestic product (GDP), 75% to export revenue, 15% to state revenue and provides around 70% of jobs [10]. An increase in agricultural GDP contributes to reducing poverty four times more in developing countries [11]. Indeed, in Benin, agricultural production is dominated by food crops and particularly cereals.

Financing of the agricultural sector until the beginning of the 1980s was marked by strong state intervention. The strategies used during these periods to finance agriculture are diverse and multiple. Five-year plans have been drawn up for the implementation of major development projects.

For several years, the agricultural sector has benefited from funds through major development projects. These funds distributed by public institutions in the form of short-term credits to cooperatives serve to clean up the agricultural sector so that it can satisfy the main concern of the day which is to achieve food self-sufficiency [12].

Access to and acquisition of financial services by rural smallholders is one way to improve productivity in the agricultural sector [13, 14]. Credit is increasingly accepted as a powerful instrument for lifting the rural poor out of abject

poverty. It plays a crucial role in increasing agricultural productivity through the creation of production assets [15]. It also allows smallholders to invest in land improvement and thus adopt new agricultural technologies such as high-yielding seeds and fertilizers that increase their efficiency and income [16]. Additionally, microcredit should benefit poor individuals who lack collateral, stable employment, verifiable credit history, or other conditions necessary to access formal credit [17].

In developing countries, however, lack of credit constitutes a major constraint to the adoption and use of improved inputs and modern agricultural technologies [17]. The poorest families in developing countries have limited access to formal financial services, including credit, savings and insurance [18]. They therefore rely on a variety of informal credits such as local lenders, relatives, friends or traders.

These options are not ideal, however, as they tend to be expensive and unreliable. This is largely because banks and other formal financial service providers, such as insurance companies, generally do not view the poor as a viable market and the penetration rates of formal financial services in developing countries are extremely weak.

Aside from the rural poor (smallholders weigh more heavily), women constitute the most neglected group in the services of financial institutions. The inability to obtain formal credit support has limited the ability of poor farmers and women to increase their production and improve their living conditions, technology adoption, nutrition, and health [18] since the reach of MFIs among the rural poor and very poor women is limited [19] and thus, women tend to rely more on informal sources of credit than their male counterparts [20].

The question of the contribution of microfinance to Guinean agricultural production in general and in particular in the urban commune of Faranah therefore takes on greater urgency in this context.

By addressing this theme, our wish is to highlight not only the advantages that can be derived from MFIs and the importance of agriculture in the development of an entity. And the choice of the urban commune of Faranah as a field of application is explained by the fact that it is a production zone par excellence, but financing for agriculture is lacking.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

A. Material

1) Geographic location and limits:

Faranah prefecture is located between 10°02' and 10°10' north latitude and between 10°42' and 11°50' west longitude with an average altitude of 340m.

It covers an area of 13,000 km² for a population of 232,926 inhabitants, i.e. an average density of 18 inhabitants per km² (DPS/F April 2011) and is limited:

- To the North by the prefecture of Dabola;
- To the South by the prefecture of Kissidougou and Guéckedou;
- To the East by the prefecture of Kouroussa;
- To the West by the prefecture of Mamou and the Republic of Sierra Leone.

It has eleven (11) rural communes, namely: Banian, Beindou, Hèrèmakono, Niala, Songoyah, Tiro, Tindo, Marella, Passayah, Sandénia, Kobikoro and the Urban Commune.

2) Presentation of the study area

The Urban Commune of Faranah was established in June 1991 thanks to the decentralization policy in force in the Republic of Guinea. It is located 455 km from the capital Conakry and located in the south center of the country. It is both the capital of the prefecture and the capital of the administrative region of the same name. It has a population of 57,863 inhabitants including 29,633 women, representing a taxable population of 11,243 inhabitants and an average density of 1,237 inhabitants per km².

Physically the urban municipality extends over an area of approximately 47km² and is classified in the category of type B municipalities.

It is limited:

- To the north by the Rural Commune of Passayah
- To the south by the Rural Communes of Tindo and Songoyah
- To the east by the Rural Communes of Beindou and Nialia
- To the west by the Rural Communes of hèrèmakono and sandénia.

The urban commune of Faranah is made up of 12 neighborhoods and 13 districts with 75 sectors, more than 83% of the population practices agriculture, livestock and fishing which are very profitable. It is home to all ethnic groups (malinkés, soussou, kissis, diallonkés, peulhs, tomas, guerzés, etc.) who came for commercial, administrative and livestock reasons, they ended up settling as their activities developed. flourished. The most spoken dialect is Sanrakan.

TABLE 1: Distribution of the population of the urban commune of Faranah/neighborhood, Districts and CRD (municipal archives 2010)

N°	Neighborhoods/Districts/CRD	Population			
		Male	Feminine	Total	taxable
1	Abattoir I	3.335	3.155	6.490	555
2	Abattoir II	2.022	1.869	3.891	404
3	Aviation	1.938	2.079	4.017	664
4	Birissa	433	529	962	246
5	Dandaya	1.290	1.393	2.683	413
6	Faranah koura	1.404	1.516	2.920	330
7	Laminiya kondéboun	821	571	944	335
8	Koria koura	263	249	512	228
9	Magna	316	351	667	490
10	Marché I	1.530	2.055	3.585	675
11	Marché II	1.010	1.215	2.225	671
12	Milidala	551	526	977	490
13	Modia	53	221	274	345
14	Mosquée	2.000	2.083	4.083	784
15	Sambouya	348	389	737	281
16	Samsambou	451	504	955	111
17	Sansanko	569	584	1.153	374
18	Sirikoulény I	1.916	2.036	3.952	493
19	Sirikoulény II	815	825	1.640	353
20	Sokourala	614	708	1.322	284
21	Souleymany	1.135	1.293	2.428	1.034
22	Tindo CRD	473	471	944	335
24	Tonkolonko I	1.976	1.999	3.975	443
24	Tonkolonko II	2.360	2.406	4.766	604
25	Yèrèwalia	600	663	1.263	393
	Totals	28.123	29.633	57.756	11.243

A municipal council of 17 members directs the development activities of all communities in accordance with the decentralization policy.

3) *Knowledge of existing MFIs in the urban commune of Faranah*

Nowadays, there are three (3) MFIs in the urban commune of Faranah, two (2) of which are interested in the agricultural sector, among which, one operates according to the rules of the art taking into account several factors: financing and customer base.

Alongside its MFIs, there are five brokerage agencies (local transfer agencies).

The existing MFIs are therefore among others:

a) *CAFODEC through the ASF of the CU of Faranah*

CAFODEC is an institution which is mainly involved in the establishment of ASFs, village banks with two windows (I and II), it has 227 funds distributed between 27 prefectures out of the 33 prefectures in the country.

Are affected by its areas of intervention, rural or urban populations, grouped or individual, categorized as follows: farmers, breeders, artisans, especially women and young people. To better appreciate this institution in the Urban Commune of Faranah we must take an interest in the ASF of the Urban Commune of Faranah.

b) *COOPEC-NAFA (NAFA Savings and Credit Cooperative)*

It is located in the Sirkoleny I district in the Faranah prefecture, it is limited to:

- To the north by Dabola bus station;
- To the east by the Abattoir district;
- To the west by RPG section II headquarters;
- To the south by the manga friguia mosque.

COOPEC-NAFA in Faranah currently offers three ranges of financial products: savings, credit and money transfer nationally.

c) *CRG-SA "Dji" of Faranah*

The Faranah local fund began its activities on February 5, 1995 with the regional delegate Mrs. LORD and with a staff of 15 members. On February 16, 1995 the first credits were granted.

B. *Methods*

1) *Bibliographic consultation*

The university library of the Higher Agronomic and Veterinary Institute of (ISAV-VG) of Faranah, resource people, websites and various documents relating to MFIs and agricultural production, allowed us to immediately have relative information to the theme.

2) *Technical and socio-economic survey*

In the field, we surveyed 5 authorities, 15 MFI agents and 102 farmers where we asked open questions, using survey sheets and the answers to the questions allowed us to construct our results.

The questionnaires are recorded in the survey sheets that we have developed for this purpose.

3) *Data analysis and processing*

This part allowed us to analyze the data from our research, analyzes and interpretations.

III. RESULTS

Studying the impact of microfinance institutions on the agricultural production of beneficiary farmers consists of presenting the situation resulting from all the effects of the different operations, referring where possible to the previous situation and deepening the analysis of the links between financial and dynamic innovation, evaluating the impact consists of putting it into consideration with the objectives of the institutions. Following our field research work, the results we reached are as follows:

A. *Situation evolution of MFIs from 2010 – 2012*

In Table 2, the figures are recorded to indicate the evolution of MFIs from 2010 – 2012.

TABLE 2: Situation of the membership of MFIs in the CU of Faranah from 2010 – 2012

Year IMF	2010				2011				2012			
	H	F	PM	T	H	F	PM	T	H	F	PM	T
CAFODEC	170	455	90	715	187	483	106	776	203	542	116	861
COOPEC-NAFA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	20
CRG-SA	1999	2299	2597	6895	4369	1170	1872	7411	4644	2403	860	7907
TOTAL	2169	2754	2687	7610	4556	1653	1978	8187	4867	2945	976	8788

Legend: F= Female; H= Man; PM = Legal Person; T=Total

TABLE 3: Situation of MFI savers in Faranah CU 2010 – 2012

Year IMF	2010		2011		2012	
	Number	Amount (GNF)	Number	Amount (GNF)	Number	Amount (GNF)
CAFODEC/ASF	420	141 800000	315	253850000	380	281550000
COOPEC - NAFA	-	-	-	-	20	118800000
CRG-SA	2027	835958000	2449	1496830000	2728	1476675000
TOTAL	2447	977758000	2764	1750680000	3128	1877025000

From this table, it appears that the membership of MFIs in the urban commune of Faranah experienced a gradual increase from 2010 to 2012, except COOPEC – NAFA which is on the fringes of this reality and it was only in 2012 that it recorded a staff of twenty (20) clients. This is explained by the fact that this institution was established in the locality in January 2012.

And the gradual increase in the two (2) other institutions, notably CAFODEC – ASF and CRG – SA, is explained not only by their duration of existence but also and above all the awareness-raising carried out by agents and elected officials on the one hand and on the other hand, their credibility in the eyes of the beneficiary populations.

In this table 3, we note that from 2010 to 2012, MFIs injected large sums into the locality, i.e. 977758000 GNF for 2447 credits in 2010; 1750680000 GNF for 2764 credits in 2011 and in 2012, 3128 credits granted for an amount of 1877025000 GNF and among these MFIs, the CRG – SA injected more amounts than the other MFIs. This is due to the fact that it is allowed to finance all IGAs and also grant a very large number through the credit lines that the partners grant,

for example: the IDB, the IOM, the ANAMIF . As for the ASF, it receives average funds through CAFODEC in its role of financial intermediation and the funds mobilized by the associates of the ASF; COOPEC-NAFA for its part in its first experience did not given that twenty (20) motorcycles, (20 credits) for a value of 118,800,000 GNF just to help young people in the locality.

TABLE 4 : Situation of repayments of loans taken out by MFI borrowers in the Urban Commune of Faranah from 2010-2012

N°	IMF	2010			2011			2012		
		Amounts granted	Amounts reimbursed	TR (%)	Amounts granted	Amounts reimbursed	TR (%)	Amounts granted	Amounts reimbursed	TR (%)
1	CAFODEC/ASF	141800000	99260000	70	253850000	228465000	90	281550000	261841500	93
2	COOPEC-NAFA	-	-	-	-	-	-	118800000	105464000	88,77
3	CRG-SA	835958000	793433337	94,91	1496830000	1451925100	97	1476675000	1456001550	98,60
	Total	977758000			1750680000	1680390100		1877025000	1823307050	

TABLE 5 : Situation of farmers and credits granted by MFIs in the CU of Faranah from 2010-2012

N°	IMF	2010		2011		2012	
		Number	Amounts (GNF)	Number	Amounts (GNF)	Number	Amounts (GNF)
1	CAFODE/ASF	74	32 120 000	94	47 800 000	69	33 975 000
2	COOPEC-NAFA	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	CRG-SA	420	130 630 000	703	357 750 000	378	120 450 000
	TOTAL	499	162 275 000	797	405 550 000	447	154 425 000

The analysis of this table allows us to understand that during these last three (3) years of exercise, only the CRG-SA experienced an appreciable rate in 2012 (98.60%), with an amount of 1476675000GNF granted, customers reimbursed 1456001550GNF, i.e. an outstanding amount of 20673450GNF. This is due to the strategy adopted by the new team of its staff. The ASF for its part must make enough effort for this purpose, because during its three (3) years, the highest reimbursement rate was recorded in 2012, i.e. 93%. This is due to the dynamism of his departing supervisor and the negligence in terms of reimbursement is explained by the discouragement of agents who are not paid by CAFODEC and the socio-political situation that the country through the CU of Faranah is not in margin of this reality. And the rate recorded by COOPEC-NAFA in 2012 (88.77%) is due to the fact that the deadline has not yet arrived.

It appears from this table that the MFIs of the locality finance farmers on an average basis, among the three (3) years

of exercise, only the year 2011 saw the greatest granting of credit with an amount of 405,550,000GNF for 797 credits. This is explained by the agricultural policy encouraged by the government in place, which pushed many towards agriculture. From the same table, we see a decrease the following year (2012), because we went from 405550000GNF for 797 credits to 154425000GNF. This results in misunderstanding of the agricultural policy adopted by the government. And exceptionally COOPEC-NAFA did not grant credit to finance this activity because it had not planned for its departure.

B. Impacts of MFIs in Faranah CU on Agricultural Production

Our investigations reveal that access to credit allowed an increase in the living conditions of the peasant population by allowing them to increase the cultivated areas, which allowed them to maximize their production through the use of agricultural inputs.

TABLE 6 : Average area of main crops before and with MFIs in Faranah CU

N°	Main crops	Number of respondents	Total area per crop in ha		Average area per crop in ha		Variation in %
			Before	With	Before	With	
1	Rice	52	79	152	1,52	2,92	92,10
2	Cassava	30	45	87	1,50	1,93	28,67
3	Peanut	16	31	49	1,93	3,06	58,54
4	Fonio	6	6	8	1,00	1,33	33,00
	Total	102	161	296			

We note from this table, an increase in the average cultivated areas of all crops in the situation with MFIs for variations of 92.10%; 28.67%; 58.54% and 33.00% respectively for rice, cassava, peanuts and fonio. This increase is explained by the loans taken out by the beneficiaries, which favored the employment of paid labor and easy access to sufficient quantities of agricultural inputs (seeds, phytosanitary products, modern equipment, etc.).

Rice, cassava, peanuts and fonio remain the dominant crops in the commune given their importance in food and the place they occupy on the market.

The analysis of this table reveals that all crops experienced an increase in yields in the situation with MFIs, with variations of: 46.27%; 47.37%; 32.14% and 42.50% respectively for rice, cassava, peanuts and fonio. This is

explained by the increase in cultivated areas, the use of labor and agricultural inputs.

TABLE 7: Average yield per crop in Kg/ha before and with the MFIs of the CU of Faranah

N°	Main crops	Number of respondents	Area total (ha)		Production per crop (Kg)		Average yield (Kg/ha)		Variation (%)
			Avant	Avec	Avant	Avec	Avant	Avec	
1	Rice	52	79	152	52930	148960	670	980	46,27
2	Cassava	30	45	87	8550	24360	190	280	47,37
3	Peanut	16	31	49	43090	90000	1390	1836,73	32,14
4	Fonio	6	6	8	2000	3800	3800	333,33	42,50
Total		102	161	296	-	-	-	-	-

TABLE 8: Gross values of total production of different crops before and with MFIs in the urban commune of Faranah

N°	Main crops	Total production in Kg		Unit price (GNF)	Total production values (GNF)		Variation in %
		Before	With		Before	With	
1	Rice	52930	148960	5500	291115000	819280000	181,43
2	Cassava	8550	24360	2000	17100000	48720000	184,91
3	Peanut	43090	9000	5000	215450000	450000000	108,86
4	Fonio	2000	3800	5000	10000000	19000000	90

This table allows us to understand that there is an increase in the gross values of production of all crops in the situation with MFIs for variations of: 181.43% for rice, 184.91% for cassava, 108.86% for peanuts and 90% for fonio. This sufficiently proves that MFIs have, through the loans granted to farmers, a positive impact on their activities in the CU of Faranah.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The intervention of MFIs in the urban commune of Faranah has caused a positive change both on a social and economic level in the standard of living of the beneficiary populations, especially the farmers. This is explained by their impacts on certain socio-economic indices.

a) Impact on local development:

The impact of credit on the local economy brings us to a very important notion, that of “Local development”.

Local development is defined as “a process of diversification and enrichment of economic and social activities in the territory based on the mobilization and coordination of its resources and energies”.

At the level of the local economy, our surveys show that local economic agents take MFIs as “instruments of development”. Their credit granting services allow the population (farmers, traders, breeders, craftsmen, etc.) to obtain capital for the diversification and intensification of their AGR.

It should also be emphasized that thanks to the role of monetary circulation that credit promotes, even the poorest benefit from the fruits of the amount injected.

b) Impact on living conditions:

The effects of credit on the standard of living of the population cannot be summed up only by the changes induced on the economic level but also on the social level.

The improvement in the population's standard of living is sometimes difficult to demonstrate, because borrowers are not completely protected from natural disasters (flooding, drought, etc.) and risks specific to the socio-economic environment. To understand this reality, we propose to summarize the impacts on the economic and social levels.

❖ On the economic level:

MFIs, through the loans granted and the savings mobilized, have promoted the production of wealth by increasing the yields of the peasant layer and improving the working conditions of other economic actors. This wealth makes it possible to invest either for the diversification of IGAs or for social recognition.

The peasant population finds itself in the case of continuous accumulation, which allows them to satisfy their needs.

❖ On a social level:

We cannot dissociate the phenomenon of economic accumulation from that of social rank in the sense that the population finding itself in favorable economic situations occupy a fairly important place at the level of the family and village unit as an emerging economic and social actor (prestige, respect for speech, distribution of tasks, etc.). They participate (actors) in the process of social recomposition.

c) Impact on gender relations (emancipation of rural women):

Given the role that women play in our societies, MFIs cannot achieve their goals without their massive intervention.

Despite the motivation of certain men to believe this is true, women are considered at the peasant level as the most vulnerable, yet in terms of credit and savings, they surpass men. This is why these days they are the target of MFIs, just to help them:

- Strengthen and diversify IGAs;
- Take advantage of family expenses;
- Remove them from dependence on the people who supported them or financed their activities (husband, suppliers, etc.) and to provide for their needs;
- Promote their social integration, consult them in decision-making.

d) Impact on rural exodus:

Given the importance of the objectives that the MFIs of the urban commune of Faranah have set for themselves, the AGR of the populations have improved. This improvement allowed the beneficiary population, particularly the peasant population,

to consolidate their economies, satisfy their daily needs and keep young people in the locality.

V. CONCLUSION

At the end of our surveys carried out on the impact of Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) on agricultural production, the results obtained showed that the intervention of MFIs in this sector at the level of the urban commune of Faranah in the Republic of Guinea contributed to the increase in production of all crops from 52,930 kg of rice before the MFIs to 148,960 kg with the MFIs; For cassava from 8,550 kg before to 24,360 kg with MFIs; For peanuts from 43,090 kg before to 90,000 kg with IMF and from 2,000 kg before to 3,800 kg with IMF for fonio. This is due to access to credit by farmers. In addition, several positive socio-economic impacts were noted among farmers in the areas surveyed as part of our research.

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