



PROJET D'APPUI À LA RÉDUCTION DE L'ÉMIGRATION RURALE DANS LE BASSIN ARACHIDIER DU SÉNÉGAL (PARERBA) COUNTERFACTUAL IMPACT EVALUATION



Funded by
the European Union

EVALUATION CONTEXT

PARERBA's objective is to develop stable and remunerative employment opportunities in the Bassin Arachidier, the largest agricultural region of Senegal. Facing limited and precarious job prospects, many rural youths prefer to migrate to cities or other countries.

Enabel aims to strengthen local economic opportunities in the agricultural and agro-food sectors, with three interventions targeting in particular young people aged 15 to 34 old:

Opportunity 1: Development of irrigated perimeters and support of producers in order to promote crop intensification and profitable sale of products by improving the production, productivity and competitiveness of family farms in the rice and market gardening sectors. It targets farmers with limited access to irrigated land – including family farms and young people – with the key objective that beneficiaries achieve three seasons per year, i.e. three full crop cycles;

Opportunity 2: Support to 1) young project holders in the creation of income-generating activities, and 2) promoters of micro and small enterprises, aiming to develop rural micro-entrepreneurship along the agri-food value chain for young people aged 15 to 34 old;

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

The Counterfactual Impact Evaluation (CIE) of PARERBA will focus on Opportunity 1. Beneficiaries will be compared to similar individuals who did not participate in the program. As the choice of program

QUICK FACTS

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

Enabel – Agence Belge de Développement

LOCATION

Bassin Arachidier, Sénégal

METHODS

Mixed methods: Matching and Qualitative study

TARGET GROUPS

Youth aged 15 to 34 (incentive process only, not exclusive)

FINANCING AMOUNT

18 000 000 EUR

Opportunity 3: collaboration with small and medium enterprises in the agri-food sector offering job placement services, targeting young producers, skilled and unskilled workers.

areas and program participation are not random, C4ED will rely on matching, a statistical process aiming to make beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries comparable. Data were collected in quarter 4 of 2022,

covering about 1,200 beneficiaries and 1,400 non-beneficiaries. The survey included a “recall” module where respondents (from both groups) were asked about their socio-economic situation before PARERBA started. This information is used for the matching. Furthermore, the survey aimed to measure outcome variables. Endline data will be collected in quarter 4 of 2023 to measure whether program impacts last over time. The evaluation of Opportunities 2 and 3 will be done via a quantitative study based on Monitoring & Evaluation data. Moreover, a qualitative

study will shed light on the key mechanisms of the success of the three interventions, and provide insights on quantitative results. The qualitative data was collected in quarter 3 of 2022, before the project ended. The collected data are currently being analysed. Note the initial design proposed to use reverse difference-in-differences for Opportunities 1 and 2. The design and scope of the CIE was modified because PARERBA stopped its expansion, and because Opportunity 2 counts too few beneficiaries to allow a CIE.

BUILDING ON SOLID FOUNDATIONS

Counterfactual impact evaluations (CIEs) are used to identify the attributable effect of a project on beneficiaries. The “counterfactual” is what life would have looked like in the absence of the intervention. Unlike in simple before-and-after comparisons, CIEs provide a way to separate program impacts from other effects. Since we cannot directly observe a counterfactual, we construct a control group using experimental and quasi-experimental econometric methods to estimate program impacts.

Propensity score matching (PSM) is a statistical process that consists of making a group of project participants and a group of non-participants as comparable as possible based on observed characteristics. This quasi-experimental approach then allows to compare outcomes between the two (matched) groups to estimate the causal impact of the project.

HOW WILL A CIE INFORM POLICY?

In support of evidence-based policymaking, the outcomes of the CIE will provide context and insight into the how and why of the program impacts. The evaluation will inform the effectiveness of the PARERBA’s interventions in contributing to the achievement of the European Union

Emergency Trust Fund Strategic Objective 1. Findings regarding effects by key subgroups, in particular young people aged 15-34 and women, will also inform targeting approaches for future policies and programs.

TIPS FOR FUTURE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

- Highlight the importance of planning the evaluation at the design/inception stage of the project, allowing for better control over the evaluation timeline and design, allowing for more robust CIE options (e.g., Randomized Control Trial), and more timely results throughout the life of the project (iterative/adaptive designs).
- Project implementers to adopt a digitalised user-friendly monitoring system to

better follow the project activities and the evolution of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For this purpose, the use of a digitalised questionnaire via tools such as Kobocollect, Survey Solutions, Survey CTO or CommCare is highly recommended. This allows to keep an up-to-date database on the status and progress of project activities, that can be easily mobilized for reporting and evaluation purposes, but also to potentially adapt project activities.