FIRST STEPS TOWARDS AN EFFICIENT SAFETY NET SYSTEM

Two RSR grants provided Togo with essential building blocks of the country’s budding safety net systems and catalyzed resources from IDA. Based on the results of the analytical work and the capacity building activities financed by the RSR grants, the Government of Togo elaborated its first national social protection policy and developed public works and cash-transfer programs.

CHALLENGE

Togo has made considerable progress in the past years following successful legislative elections in 2007 and recent economic growth resulting from better rainfall and increased cereal production. Yet significant challenges remain: Togo’s is one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita GDP of 570 in 2011 (according to the World Bank’s Atlas methodology), and a ranking of 139 out of 169 countries in the 2010 UNDP Human Development Index.¹

APPROACH

In response to a number of crises that affected the country in recent years, the government decided to build fiscally sustainable and targeted safety nets system to reduce the most severe poverty and halt its adverse impact on the country’s growth.

RSR contributed to the development of the safety net system by supporting the development of the national Social Protection Strategy, and helping in the design and implementation of new targeted programs on cash transfers and public works. The activities financed by RSR were part of a broader program, supported by all major development partners in Togo, and under the leadership of Ministry of Employment.

Specifically, RSR provided a technical assistance grant to develop a public works program and a cash transfer pilot under the IDA Community Development and Safety Nets Project. The cash transfer pilot is being implemented in close collaboration with UNICEF, which is co-financing an impact evaluation of the cash transfer component. The grant also financed activities to increase the capacity of the government, in particular the Ministry of Social Action, to better implement and monitor the social safety net system.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS

- Designed a public works program, including beneficiary eligibility criteria, institutional and administrative arrangements, etc.

- Designed a cash transfer program, including computer-assisted monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, payment systems and geographical targeting schemes.

- Developed a comprehensive national social protection strategy (NSPS), addressing efficiency, and financial sustainability concerns
  - Government of Togo elaborated and validated its first national social protection policy


- Associated IDA Projects: Community Development Project Additional Financing (US$ 9 million) and Community Development and Safety Nets Project (US$ 14 million) Complimentary Financing: Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) grant of US$ 2.55 million
  - Creates 1,400,000 work days for 35,000 workers (40 days per worker), of which 40 percent are women
  - Protects about 62,000 poor children in 180 schools from hunger
  - Provides cash-transfers to over 11,000 poor households with young children who are malnourished or vulnerable to malnutrition