



UNDP-UNEP POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE
PNUD-PNUE Initiative Pauvreté-Environnement
PNUD-PNUMA Iniciativa Pobreza-Medio Ambiente



Mauritania

Basic facts of the PEI in Mauritania

- PEI is a joint programme between the Government of Mauritania, PEI, UNEP, and UNDP Mauritania.
- It focuses on capacity building for better inclusion of environment policy in the national development planning processes.
- Started in October 2005, PEI Mauritania was scaled up for 2009–2011, as additional funding was mobilized for the mainstreaming programme by UNEP and UNDP through the Spanish MDG-Fund Environment and Climate Change Thematic window.
- PEI is executed by the Government of Mauritania (NEX) through national partner institutions, led by the Ministry of Environment (*Ministère Déléguéauprès du Premier Ministre pour l'Environnement et le Développement Durable* - MDEDD) and the Ministry of Economics and Finance (*Ministère des Affaires Economiques et du Développement* - MAED).
- The project is implemented through a National Project Management Unit – under the supervision of the MDEDD –which leads the process and liaises closely with the other national partners.
- Donors include Norway, PEI, UNDP Mauritania (TRAC) and Spain (MDG-F). Funds are distributed through UNDP Mauritania.
- Total budget:
 - 2005-2006: USD 240,000 (UNEP Norway: USD 200,000, UNDP Mauritania: USD 40,000)
 - 2007-2008: USD 827,460 (UNEP Norway: USD 577,460, UNDP Mauritania: USD 200,000 and GoM: USD 50,000)
 - 2009-2011: PEI Mauritania scale-up USD 1,660,200 (MDG-F USD 599,000 - UNEP-MDG-F: USD 333,500 and UNDP-MDG-F: USD 265,500, UNEP Norway remainder 2008: USD 375,000, UNDP Mauritania: USD 130,000, PEI Global Award: 256,200, GoM: USD 300,000)

The context of poverty-environment mainstreaming in Mauritania

- The 1st Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP in English, or CSLP in French) was developed in 2002. It provided the basis for the development of the regional Plans for Poverty Reduction implemented at the district level.
- In 2004–2005, a National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) was developed. It was approved and adopted in 2006.
- In 2006, the second generation of PRSP was developed. The PEI country project team was involved in the development of PRSP 2 and made contributions towards mainstreaming environment in it.

- PRSP 2 recognizes environment and sustainable management of natural resources as one of the two priority cross cutting-issues through the implementation of the NEAP as an important step in to fully take into account the cross-cutting aspect of the environment.
- Due to the on-going political instability the national PRSP unit has not been operational since the formulation of the second PRSP in 2006.
- After the election of 2009, the country is now on the right path of development and democracy.
- A third generation of PRS has been operational since February 2010 and was adopted by the ministries council in early 2011.
- PEI has significantly contributed to the adoption of outputs to mainstream poverty-environment linkages into the 2nd pillar of the new PRSP (growth and poverty reduction) and the 4th pillar (Capacity development and good governance). The implementation of this new PRSP remains the challenge for coming years.

Main activities

- Engagement in the CSLP process by participation in various workshops and consultations, supporting the Environment Thematic Group and other thematic groups for the integration of poverty-environment issues. In 2009, PEI supported MAED and MDEDD in the review and monitoring of the implementation of the PRSP 2. Within this exercise, PEI provided specific support to the sectors of Water, Energy and Fisheries for the production of environmental and sustainable development indicators related to their activities.
- This work led in 2010 to the preparation of the third generation of the PRSP, where environment and poverty linkages are mainstreamed into the second and fourth pillar of the PRSP respectively (growth and poverty reduction plus capacity development and good governance).
- The third Generation of the PRSP was adopted by the Ministers council in 2011 and is going to be implemented between 2011 and 2015.
- In 2010 significant progress were made in the area of legal instruments, with the revision of the Mauritania environmental framework law, dating from 2000.
- PEI has published 12 strategic studies on Economic studies, strategic assessment, ecosystems assessment, the state of the environment in Mauritania, and environmental indicators.
- The environment data base was developed in 2010 through PEI and is available to the Ministry.
- PEI contributed to the UNDAF 2012–2016 and Environment mainstreaming was one outcome of the UNDAF/ Section environment.
- Training of academics, policy makers, economists and CSOs in techniques of integrated ecosystem assessment (IEA), which lead to a better understanding of poverty-environment links in Mauritania. In 2009, regional francophone training on the Millennium Assessment methods manual was organized in Mauritania by PEI and UNEP-WCMC. In addition, a pilot IEA focusing on wetlands [Diawling National Parc, Maâl lake and Kankossa pond] was launched.
- Identification of the national geographical areas where poverty-environment linkages are the most critical. In 2008, as a follow-up to this study, poverty-environment profiles have been developed for four districts situated in the most vulnerable regions. In 2009, two poverty-environment micro-projects were launched (in Assaba and Brakna districts).
- In-depth analysis of to what extent environment is integrated into the main national development strategies, the sectoral strategies, the decentralized development strategies/plans and national projects/programmes. This work was complemented in 2009 by Strategic

Environmental Assessments on the health sector, the rural development sector and water sector.

- Development of environmental indicators for Mauritania. In 2009, this work was complemented by an additional study on poverty-environment indicators.
- In 2008, an economic analysis of the cost of environmental degradation and unsustainable management of natural resources in Mauritania was conducted. This study was complemented in 2009 with additional environmental economic assessments focusing on water, fish resources and rural development [livestock and agriculture].
- In 2008, PEI supported the development of Mauritania's first State of the Environment Report.
- Exchange visit to Cotonou to learn from Benin's experience with greening its PRSP.

What has been achieved to date?

- The development of the national environmental action plan (PANE) has been strongly supported by PEI.
- Recognition by the Government of the importance of environmental issues and their link to poverty.
- Increased awareness and improved knowledge base on the links between environment and human well-being through the training on integrated ecosystem assessment and country-specific evidence on poverty-environment linkages.
- PEI has played a key role in mobilizing MDG-F funding related to the "environment and climate change" thematic window in Mauritania (MDGF -1724: Mainstreaming Local Environmental Management in the Planning Process). In this process, PEI developed a template concept note for environmental mainstreaming activities to be used by the MDG-F Secretariat for other MDG-F countries.
- Mauritania's First State of the Environment Report was produced in 2008.
- PEI's engagements with MAED/PRSP led to the development of a matrix for monitoring environmental activities planned in the PRSP 2 (2006-2010) and more recently during the review process of PRSP 2 indicators, 20 new indicators specific to environmental governance and the links between poverty and environment have been integrated.
- Technical validation of the 15 studies produced through the project.
- Revision of the Mauritanian Environmental Framework Law.
- Development of an environmental data base.
- Environment fully mainstreamed into the second pillar and fourth pillar of the new PRSP 2011–2015.
- UNDAF 2012–2016 has taken into account environment mainstreaming as one of the main outcomes.

Lessons learned

- Political and related instability makes it very difficult to achieve environmental mainstreaming. There was not adequate national ownership of the programme for quite some time, largely because of the political instability, including frequent changes in government structures and personnel.
- Importance of having a strong communication strategy to disseminate the results of PEI activities and strengthen national ownership of the programme.

- Strong involvement and ownership of the programme by the UNDP Country Office (management, Environment and Poverty Units) strengthens synergies with on-going projects and increases impacts and chances of success.
- Good understanding of the programme by in-country donors strengthens poverty-environment mainstreaming advocacy and increases impact and chance of success.

Way forward

- Organization of a national high-level poverty-environment mainstreaming workshop [*Etats generaux de l'environnement*] to mobilize key decision makers from the new government and disseminate PEI results to date.
- Strategies for a proper dissemination of all publications
- Support the implementation of the new PRSP 2011–2015
- Public expenditures report
- Develop proposal for environmental fiscal reform
- Integrated ecosystem assessment in Brakna, AlegLake
- Technical meeting to update the environmental data base
- Directive on environment
- Environmental guidelines
- Development of a training module on environment for the University of Nouakchott
- Implementation of the Agendas 21 in partnership with Art Gold program (local governance)
- Organization of high levels decision meetings
- Information and sensitization campaign under the MDG Fund