



W+ Verification Report

**Measuring the increase in Women's Income and Assets and Education and
Knowledge generated through the CSR Noor Programme**

VERIFICATION REPORT

Measuring the increase in Women's Income and Assets and Education and Knowledge generated through the CSR Noor Programme

Document Prepared by Liz Allen and Lisa McMullan – Social Audit Network

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Prepared By	Liz Allen and Lisa McMullan – Social Audit Network
Contact	Social Audit Network 54 St James Street, Liverpool, UK. L1 0AB
Approved By	Liz Allen
Work Carried Out By	Liz Allen and Lisa McMullan – Social Audit Network

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Summary:

The intention of the audit process was to verify the outcomes derived from the implementation of the W+ Income and Assets method and the Education and Knowledge method through the Co-operatives development programme led by ACWA Power in the Ouarzazate region. The verification activity included in this report took place over two days, the 12th and 13th September 2018. It was undertaken by two SAN verifiers, Liz Allen and Lisa McMullan during visits to the Ouarzazate region of Morocco. The verifiers met with the project team (David Ungar, Abdelmajid Benjelloun and Mustapha Mechmoum) as well as three groups of beneficiaries, all of whom had become members of co-operatives established in the region. The co-operatives have been established with the support of ACWA Power, the company that has developed four solar power stations in the region Noor 1, 2, 3 and 4. The co-operatives cover 18 villages and in total 6 co-operatives have been set-up (5 co-operatives are focused on livestock management and 1 is focused on handicraft production).

The purpose of the verification activity was to establish if the presence of these co-operatives has led to an increase in Income and Assets, and an increase in Education and Knowledge for the women participating in the co-operative activity. The verification also sought to validate the W+ units created by this activity.

The monitoring period considered in the verification was March 2016 – March 2018. A combination of methods was adopted in undertaking the verification including:

- Site visits to:
 - Verify the presence of the co-operatives by visiting co-operative members in three locations
 - Conduct focus groups with members of the co-operatives to explore their experiences and identify the change created by their participation in the co-operatives
 - Interview ACWA Power team members in Morocco supporting the implementation of the programme

In addition, the verification team reviewed the following supporting documents:

- W+ Project design document

- Monitoring Report compiled by Maria Lee on the 18th September 2018

A total of 415 women had benefitted from the activity and during the verification the team met with a sample of 40 women. During these meetings the verification team were able to question the groups about the changes that had occurred. The first meeting was intended to be for women only and they were the main respondents although some men from the village were in the room throughout and made some contributions. The second group was a mixed group but with women's voices dominating the feedback session and the final meeting was made up of women only, all from the handicraft co-operative.

The verification team felt that improvements had been made in the lives of the women participants both in terms of Income and Assets and Education and Knowledge, however continuation of the co-operative activity is likely to lead to increased control over income and assets. The verification team identified that in the second and third meetings the women were identified as the decision makers around how additional income was used in the home. This was clearly a change from the way decisions had been made previously and the men acknowledged this in the second group, using humour to say that the women's decision around spend would be final regardless of how the decision was made. It was clear from the humorous recognition by the women that this is now the case. As such the verification team feel comfortable to certify this programme and recommend its continuation.



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Objective

The intention of the audit process was to verify the outcomes derived from the implementation of the W+ Income and Assets method and the W+ Education and Knowledge method through the Co-operatives Development Programme led by ACWA Power in the Ouarzazate region. The verification activity included in this report took place over two days, the 12th and 13th September 2018.

1.2. Scope and Criteria

The scope of the audit was limited to the W+ Income and Assets and the Education and Knowledge domains and considered the following indicators as evidence of successful implementation:

- Women report and increase in income and/or assets generated by the introduction of a new breed of sheep, the sale of sheep or handicraft activities
- Women report increased control on use of this additional income and/or increased participation in decisions about household finances
- Women report increased confidence to participate in group discussions and ability to make allies in their favour e.g. access external resources and services to the benefit of the group/co-operative/community
- Women retained, and applied knowledge and skills acquired during trainings (e.g. feeding sheep, separating breeds, learning new sewing/embroidery techniques)
- Women report benefits from the knowledge applied in terms of production increase and/or income

Additionally, a Do No Harm indicator was sought to evidence that “no less than 97% of both men and women report that the project has not caused a loss of self-confidence, use of knowledge for untoward gains by the project developer, or any other unwelcome effects.

The W+ methods applied were Education and Knowledge version 001 07/02/2018 and Income and Assets version 001 26/05/2016.

1.3. Level of Assurance



The following table summarises the findings of this verification report

W+ Domain	Desired Outcome	Very Much Worse (-3)	Much Worse (-2)	Somewhat Worse (-1)	No Change (0)	Somewhat Better (+1)	Much Better (+2)	Very Much Better (+3)
Income & Assets	<i>Increased income and assets for women generated by the introduction of a new breed of sheep or handicraft activities</i>						<i>All women report increased income generated by the introduction of a new breed of sheep, increased productivity from the sheep and increased income from the sale of handicraft items. All women also report sharing this learning with family and friends indicating increased confidence.</i>	
	<i>Increased control over the use of finances</i>					<i>The majority of women report increased control over finances but this is clearly a significant change that needs to be sustained over time</i>		
	<i>Perception of well-being by women and/or increased status of women in the household and</i>						<i>All women report an increase sense of well-being. The women in the handicraft co-operative</i>	



	community						especially report new friendships between tribes and opportunity to purchase items for themselves and their families	
Education & Knowledge	Knowledge and skills (livestock management, handicrafts etc.) being applied in both intended and unintended ways Use of knowledge leads to increased productivity and income						All women report and recall specific learning around livestock feeding, breeding, breed separation and good husbandry. Similarly, all handicraft co-op participants report learning and application of skills in knitting, sewing, embroidery and in the sale and marketing of items at local craft fairs. All women report increased productivity from their livestock and consequently increased income. All handicraft women report increased income and express appetite to learn more about marketing and to take their items to more local and international	

	<i>Increased perception of well-being by women and/or increased status of women in the household and community.</i>						<i>fairs.</i>	
							<i>All women report an increase sense of well-being. The women in the handicraft co-operative especially report new friendships between tribes and opportunity to purchase items for themselves and their families</i>	

The stakeholder engagement process evidences the descriptors outlined above. This is coupled with statistical analysis of numeric data gathered from stakeholder questionnaires undertaken by the project monitoring team that also evidence effective education and increased income.

The sample size for the survey was determined using stratified random sampling. The sampling was performed within the level of precision at 10% and a confidence level of 90% with assumed proposition at 20% to give a sample size of 40. The final sample size was adjusted to reflect the small size of the handicraft activity to date with final samples of 37 from agricultures/livestock co-operative beneficiaries and 7 from handicraft cooperative beneficiaries.

The level of assurance gained is in light of the project duration to date and the opportunity to secure further control over decision making through the continuation and development of the women's roles in the co-operatives. However, there is a clear improvement from the baseline of limited income/assets and no control over these, and limited education/knowledge to operate and manage the co-operative and its activities; to clear increase in income and assets, influence around decisions making regarding household income and applied knowledge and skills in the management of the livestock and the cooperative. This justifies the assurance level of 2.

1.4. Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report Summary

ACWA Power commissioned the WOCAN W+ team to apply the W+ standard over two domains (Education and Knowledge; Income and Assets) to the CSR Noor Programme, covering 6 co-operatives established across 18 villages between March 2016 and March 2018.

The Education and Knowledge method was applied based on the following anticipated results:

- Women report and increase in income and/or assets generated by the introduction of a new breed of sheep, the sale of sheep or handicraft activities
- Women report increased control on use of this additional income and/or increased participation in decisions about household finances
- Women report increased confidence to participate in group discussions and ability to make allies in their favour e.g. access external resources and services to the benefit of the group/co-operative/community
- Women retained, and applied knowledge and skills acquired during trainings (e.g. feeding sheep, separating breeds, learning new sewing/embroidery techniques)
- Women report benefits from the knowledge applied in terms of production increase and/or income

These outcomes were to be achieved through

- the delivery of training in livestock management and the introduction of a new and more productive breed of sheep to the co-operative members
- the provision of training in handicrafts (sewing, embroidery etc.) and provision of linkages to markets
- the provision of training in co-operative management

The application of the two domain areas show that there is a positive achievement for 415 women learners. When applied to the total number of project beneficiaries that have undertaken learning the total Education and Knowledge units generated over the monitoring period is 76,620. The total number of units generated under the Income and Assets domain is 26,800 giving a total of 103,420 W+ units generated by the programme of activity.

W+ Units Generated:

1 W+ unit = 1% change in one woman's life in one domain over the monitoring period

INCOME & ASSETS: 26,800 units

The results between the control group and the beneficiaries show an increase of 67% per women over the period of 24 months (livestock component).

67% = 67 units per woman. Number of women x 67 = 400 x 67 = 26,800 W+ Income and Assets units for 400 women. (See the details of calculation on page 21)

While members of the handicraft cooperative have increased their income, the increase is still minimal compared to the value of labor invested, and not sufficient to generate units; hence it is not included in this calculation.

EDUCATION & KNOWLEDGE: 76,620 units

The results between before and after the trainings show an increase of 183 % per woman for the livestock component and 228% per woman for the handicraft component over the 24 months.

183%=183 units per woman (livestock component) **Number of women x 183 = 400 x 183= 73,200 W+ Education & Knowledge units** generated for 400 women. *(See the details of calculation on page 30)*

228% =228 units per woman (handicraft component) **Number of women x 228 = 15 x 228= 3,420 W+ Education & Knowledge units** generated for 15 women. *(See the details of calculation on page 31)*

The total amount of combined W+ units generated by the project is 26,800+ 76,620=103,420.

In addition, there has been a significant challenge to the social asymmetries associated with gender division of roles and decision making as a consequence of the training and participation in the co-operative activity, as reported by both men and women during the focus group meetings held. This needs to be evidenced as sustainable change but as one of several women from the handicraft co-operative reported – “we want this to continue and for our daughters to have this opportunity too”. It was clear in all groups that the balance of power is gradually shifting, and this was recognised as being something happening across Moroccan society, but is seen in reality in these co-operatives

2. VERIFICATION PROCESS

2.1. Method and Criteria

This verification report is limited to consideration of two W+ domains, Education and Knowledge, and Income and Assets. Monitoring data has been gathered from field research and this data has been verified through the use of two approaches

- Examination of the data gathered and consideration of its accuracy and consideration of the two domain methods
- Site visits to:
 - Verify the presence of the co-operatives in the communities
 - Conduct focus groups with co-operative members
 - Interview the ACWA Power team members supporting the implementation of the programme

2.2. Document Review

The following documents were reviewed in order to complete the verification of the Education and Knowledge; and Income and Assets domain results for the CSR Noor Programme

- Method documents for the two domains
- W+ Project Design Document
- Monitoring report – 18/09/18
- Formula calculation for the statistical analysis of surveys undertaken

Each document was crosschecked against the others and with the findings from the site visits and interviews to ensure consistency and accuracy. This was done following the site visits and interviews and these adequately reinforced the findings presented.

The findings from the site visits and interviews informed the score applied to the programme and its assurance level of 2 (much improvement).

2.3. Interviews

An initial interview took place with the ACWA Power team on the morning of the 12th September 2018, followed by three site visits that took place on the 12th and 13th September 2018.

During the site visits focus groups took place with co-operative members. The discussions were intended to verify the findings presented in the Monitoring Report 18/09/2018.

The discussions were facilitated by Liz Allen, Lisa McMullan, Abdelmajid Benjelloun and Mustapha Mechmoum. All are experienced community facilitators, with Majid and Mustapha acting also as translators. The focus group discussions were structured around a series of questions devised by the verification team in order to elicit responses that could prove/disprove the findings of the Monitoring Report. The questions listed below were arranged as higher level and supplementary questions and acted as a guide rather than being prescriptive, to ensure flexibility and for facilitators to gain insights into the reported experiences of the co-operative members.

Higher Level Questions

- Do you feel you have learned new skills and knowledge as a result of the trainings provided?
- What did you learn from the training provided?
- How have you applied this learning in your livestock management or handicraft activities?
- How have you applied this learning in your co-operative?
- Have you seen an increase in your household income as a result of this applied learning?
- Do you believe that your family health and wellbeing is improved as a result of your participation in the co-operative?

Supplementary Questions

- Who makes the decisions around how you spend money in your household?
- What are you using the additional income for?
- Do you have more connectedness and friendship to others outside of your community as a result of your participation in the training?
- Is there anything else we need to hear?

Focus Group One – 12/09/18

- Location: Agoudim Izerki
- Representatives from: Agoudim, Iznaguen, Essour and Oum Roummane
- Women only group - Agri/livestock co-operative members – 13 women (7 local men in the room)

How many of the women are actively involved in the cooperative?

- All of the women are involved as individual members

Tell us about the training that you did?

- Learnt to build stables; we do think differently now about sheep distribution, we understand how to separate different breeds; tend the livestock and ensure they're healthy
- We have seen effects as soon as we separated the breeds; e.g. Better milk
- Better quality milk and meat for self / family; faster reproduction and more sheep; able to use one of their sheep for their feasts / celebration

Have you seen an improvement in life of sheep /stock?

- Yes, less diseases

Help us understand the work that you now do with the sheep?

- The men control the money we get from the sheep but we are able to buy more food and clothes etc. and of a better quality
- We would like more assistance for training; we are better off today but we would like more, particularly re access to health services.

Within the community – has involvement in the cooperative provided an opportunity for women to be more involved in community life?

- There has been a positive impact on the family level; (what about how they feel about themselves?)
- The women reported a change from before – we feel that our participation is valued, we are more important in our families
- Ever since the workshop happened we have lost the burden of worry about their livestock because we know how to look after them

Anything else?

- The women report being able to educate others, in villages and families
- The women recognise that they have become teachers to others and value that about themselves

What learning can we take from training?

- The women requested a workshop in handicraft
- In addition – insisting on training for handicrafts workshop; and transport for our children to get to school – we want children to be at school. (Mustapha received a call today to confirm new buses will be available to respond to the demand –confirmed from the local authority). This led one woman to ask directly for his phone number to ensure that this goes ahead – she had no problem with asking and others supported her to do so.

Have you done training or worked together in a group before?

- Women say no; men intervene and say yes; but women tell us that it wasn't useful.

Focus Group Two – 12/09/18

- Location: Ighrem Amellal
- Representatives from: Ighrem Amellal, Z. Tidgheste, Tiflite
- Mixed group – Agri/livestock co-operative members - 15 women 5 men

This group demonstrated much stronger women's voices with many of the women talking over the men and ensuring that we heard their requests for support.

Tell us about the impact of training and work in your co-operative

- Workshop was very good, but we want a lot more than this
- We need to address our water needs and a lack of feed for livestock
- We need more help now to ensure the future for the animals and our families as water supplies are so low

What worked well or was enjoyable about participation in the programme?

- The degree of improvement /appreciation differs because of the way people dealt with livestock – some report a lack of feed for example because they spent more on the stock and used it too quickly, overfeeding the sheep in the early days. The group are critical of one another's approaches and believe that the workshop told them all they needed to know but not everyone implemented the instructions
- One woman reported that 3 years ago we had no sheep breeding, now we have 7 that we use for food, to sell and to buy feed for the rest, the guidance from the workshop does work
- We learned to better manage their feedstocks, we are now rationing food appropriately. The programme has had a positive impact but people have to be willing to go the extra mile to make it work too – you have to believe in the project.
- Women reported that they had learned about management and separation of the breeds, attending to new mums and lambs, we learned a great deal but the drought conditions and climate make it hard to find feed.
- Everyone believed the workshops were interesting but some co-operative members feel that not everyone respects the learning they had. We were taught to clean the stables for sheep etc. but some people are going back to old systems, not taking the learning and applying it well and so not having the same breeding success.
- The President of the women's co-operative reported that her family had built stables as they were taught and they worked. They shared this with neighbours who didn't attend the workshop and it worked for them too. Their livestock is now sufficient for them for food, milk and produce so saving money for the family.

Can you tell us about your level of engagement in other community activity?

- Women reported having been part of other associations previously in handicrafts, honey and hives, and pottery. Those people have come back together to professionalise into cooperatives.

- They also report that they believe their involvement in the co-ops is more important than the associations; in one village there are now only 2 people that don't participate in the co-op, however, this has been slow to develop. They report that the key to success are the trainings provided because people gain understanding and that leads to membership.
- The women also report that it would have been great to have had the training a lot longer before the co-ops formed in order to build traction in the community.

Are you involved in decision making in the co-op?

- The Co-op management team usually make all the decisions, but they are always guided by advice of the members. Offices are taken up by men and women and they have a sense of equal membership.
- The President of the women's co-operative explained that 'We all cry because it's a drought, but we can't just complain, we need to find solutions whether that's through drilling wells, shared growing space for feed etc. We need to work together to explore ideas that can be shared/developed/improved'.

Are you, as women, playing a role in decision making in the home?

- Women are ultimately making the decisions at home one way or another. Everyone reports that the culture is changing across Morocco and the way women are perceived and their impact in the home is becoming more and more important.

Overall are your household income and assets levels improved?

- All participants reported a positive change in income levels but the women report needing more feed and more opportunities to learn.
- One woman identifies that she feels a burden as she has more responsibility for spending well at the market as she is the sole person responsible for the home.
- Another man reports that it's better to talk to the men about this as they are the ones who go to market – they know that the per sheep price has doubled and that this benefits the household income.

Can you tell us about any negative impacts/challenges as a result of the programme?

- Poverty of the population is the biggest problem, people with low incomes are expected to invest in the co-op but they don't have enough for themselves. It's a long-term commitment and hard to justify the investment and motivate others.
- All co-operatives expressed frustration at fellow villagers who are not part of the co-operative who decide to buy feed from other providers. Although the co-operative is mandated by villagers to provide feed and to bring it close to the villages, the villagers don't always follow through and buy from the co-op. The external perception is that the money made will only be distributed to co-op members not the wider village.

- Additionally, the Co-operative concept is not necessarily understood. Good prices come with buying power and members can use any surplus to buy other things for the co-op. People may think profits are being made on their backs without seeing that it will come back to them.
- There was a strong concern from several women that this misunderstanding is exacerbated by the fact that people need this money today not tomorrow, they need to see it in a reduction of costs of feed etc.
- The President of another co-op defended the prices charged, explaining that they are sometimes higher sometimes lower than the rest of the market – the price fluctuates. Historically some co-ops were formed by other people to raise monies but then ripped off their colleagues leading to a mistrust in the co-operative system.
- The third co-op is also suffering from a lack of education and trust in the system. They report finding it hard to get people to understand the long-term nature of a project. People feel they have to win and gain money today; they live in a very poor region, living costs are very high, and people can't expect a village to survive on the same prices as a city would charge. The long-term investment made by joining a co-op will come back to them one day but it feels too far away for many. Cheaper suppliers aren't investing into the future of the village like the co-op and people need to understand this message.

Can you tell us about your perception of your wellbeing before and after the training and project?

- One woman doesn't feel she has benefitted at all.
- Others say they have the knowledge but not the resources to build the stable, feed the livestock and take activity to the next level. Some report some improvement in their sense of wellbeing, but not enough, they need more, a stronger presence to get up to speed. Need to support to get to the next level – 'ACWA have ignited our appetite and we want to learn more'.
- The women reported that they want help to find solutions for secure water resources–community water sharing programmes etc. ACWA is doing this and trying to find ways to solve this. The area has experienced drought conditions for 8 years and the resources are at rock bottom and having an obvious effect on their sense of wellbeing.
- The women also requested help to make the existing wells more effective using solar power and thereby reducing electricity bills at home; and support on how to develop projects – wells, etc. to produce feed for the sheep and reduce expenditure on feed.

Focus Group Three – 13/09/18

- Location: Ghassate
- Representatives from: Nour Echems
- Women only group – Handicraft co-operative - 12 women

Can you tell us about your activity and engagement in the co-operative?

- The women reported that they undertake knitting and sewing activity, making clothes, bags, hats etc.
- They explained that they had 6 months of training before the co-operative was formed, around the use of knitting and sewing machines, embroidery techniques etc.
- The vice president of the co-operative went on to explain that ACWA Power then helped to create the co-op, one year ago. ACWA supplied the machines and provide transport from home to the workshop which is housed in old local authority buildings.

What impact did the training have for you?

- The women explained that they split into two groups, one had training in sewing and one had training in knitting – after 4 months, both groups came together and taught the other group the skills they had each learned. The women became teachers of one another.
- The women went on to explain that their plan is to teach other women from the villages and encourage them join the co-operative.
- The women reported that they also had training in co-operative development and leadership, they had a workshop from ACWA Power around management and financial management of the co-op which they found helpful.
- The women report that now they want more help with marketing their products and accessing markets. They report that ACWA Power have commissioned them to produce work wear items and school wear items, but they want to widen their market.
- One woman was not a member of the co-operative but a customer, she expressed her pride at being able to buy from the women and to promote their activity to other people in her village. She explained that she is an entrepreneur with a small baking/catering business and they have formed a reciprocal relationship promoting one another's activities, this is a mutually beneficial relationship with Women supporting Women.

Can you tell us about your decision-making processes?

- The women report that management decisions are made together, they come together every day except weekends and as a result they deal with issues as they arise.

What happens to all the products you create?

- The range of products on display during the focus group was a very real demonstration of the learning. The women report that they attend fairs to sell products and go to villages to show their products as a group and individually. The women receive orders from people in the villages as well as ACWA power.

Have you seen an increase in income and assets?

- The women report that none of them were working before the training and that the workshop has helped them to generate income.
- They explain that the co-op keeps a share of the sales and then distributes the remainder to the members based on the time that they have worked – all now have an income that they didn't before.

How do use the extra income and can you influence how its spent?

- None of the women in this co-operative are married but all report that they can provide income for their family homes.
- Some money is used for themselves and some for the family, they explain that this gives them increased importance but also gives them a sense of pride and motivates them to work even harder to earn more.
- The women are using the income to buy more clothes, and feel they have independence from their parents. This group demonstrated real ambition to grow the co-operative, they are becoming strong, independent women.
- The women also reported that they now know one another very well as a consequence of the co-operative. They didn't know one another before the workshops as they come from several different villages, they explain that they have built friendship and connectedness between villages and tribes that they wouldn't have had the chance to develop without the co-op activity.

Have there been any down sides/problems since you have joined the co-operative?

- The women reported that initial group dynamics, getting to know one another and getting along with one another wasn't easy because they didn't know one another.
- They also explained that management and negotiations in prices are a challenge as well as marketing their products.

Do you feel that your personal confidence levels have risen as a result of the training and co-operative activity?

- The women explained that before they didn't know how to share views, now they feel able to, now they can go to authorities and talk about rights and expectations – they all agree about this change.
- The visiting customer also voiced her pride in the women and how they have confidence to speak out and to promote their business activity – she believes that this improves their overall quality of life.

Can you tell us about any changes in your self-perception and wellbeing?

- The women told us that before all they did was sit at home and hope to find a husband, now they have this, finding a husband is still a hope.

- One woman explained that if she found a husband who is understanding she would choose to stay at the co-operative, however, if he was not supportive then she feels she may have to choose between the co-operative and a husband and that having a husband is very important to her.

Are you having more fun?

- The women were overwhelmingly clear that yes, life is happier. The fact they come from different villages with different cultures means that getting along with one another is not a given, but here they all agree on a common goal and are getting along well together.

How important is it that the group is all women?

- The women reported that because it's all women they feel more at ease and free to make decisions. They believed men would have taken over leadership and they would have been left behind.

What do you see as the next steps for the co-operative?

- In the short to medium term the women would like more training on management and commercialisation.
- In the long term they want to maintain the co-operative and pass this on to their children to ensure sustainability.
- The women would also like to attend national and international fairs too.

General comments

- We want to maintain the sustainability of the co-op and get other help to market the products. We want to expand the numbers of co-op members, touch all 18 villages in the commune in order to help other women and get the area known for the co-op activities.
- We want to progress, we know that if we don't put in the effort it won't happen.
- The women confirmed they have developed new skills; they are applying these and teaching others; they have made new friends and have aspirations to achieve more. They demonstrate a collective and individual commitment to increase achievement and longevity. They recognise what they have achieved and what they can achieve, they have independence and confidence.

2.4. Site Inspections

Three site visits took place, the details are shown below. All visits enabled the verification team to see community locations and visit the co-operatives. The objective was to ensure that activity was taking place and that the team could meet and speak to co-operative members in their own locations.

Focus Group One – 12/09/18

- Location: Agoudim Izerki
- Representatives from: Agoudim, Iznaguen, Essour and Oum Roummene
- Women only group - Agri/livestock co-operative members – 13 women (5 local men in the room)

Focus Group Two – 12/09/18

- Location: Ighrem Amellal
- Representatives from: Ighrem Amellal, Z. Tidgheste, Tiflite
- Mixed group – Agri/livestock co-operative members - 15 women 5 men

Focus Group Three – 13/09/18

- Location: Ghassate
- Representatives from: Nour Echems
- Women only group – Handicraft co-operative - 12 women

2.5. Resolution of Findings

There were no corrective actions or clarifications required during the verification process

2.6. Forward Action Requests

The co-operatives all requested further ongoing support from the ACWA team including:

- Further training in marketing and access to markets
- Support to explore solutions to ensure secure water supplies for livestock and families
- Ongoing support around effective recruitment of other villagers to the co-operatives
- Opportunities to explore further health services –

(although the health domain has not been included in this verification ACWA Power has provided considerable support in this area including:

- Sonographic equipment
- Blood testing equipment
- Dental services to 1100 children
- Remedial services for 175 children born with cleft palate)

3. VALIDATION FINDINGS

3.1. Project Description Deviations

There are no deviations from the project description.

3.2. Project Eligibility of any new activities initiated during monitoring period

The project meets the eligibility criteria for consideration under the W+ standard. The verification team has explored the methods (Education and Knowledge; Income and Assets) and after checking the method document to this data and interviews it can confidently state that the method has been effectively validated and applied.

3.3. Method Deviations

There are no method deviations identified or applied to this programme.

4. VERIFICATION FINDINGS

4.1. Project Implementation Status

The project has been implemented in line with the project description. The project has been monitored effectively using appropriate sampling techniques, individual surveys and site visits. There are no material discrepancies between the actual monitoring system and the monitoring plan set out in the project description and the applied W+ methods. The verification team can confidently confirm that the project has been implemented as described in the project description.

4.2. Accuracy of Calculations of Women's Empowerment Benefits

Process for calculating the number of W+ units

1) **Measurement of results:** The formula of each domain is applied two times: at the time of the baseline survey, and again at the time of the monitoring survey (determined by the schedule established in the Project Design Document (PDD)). **The difference between the two numbers is the quantified result that is used to determine the number of W+ units generated.**

2) **Calculation of the percentage of change**=
$$\frac{\text{Result} - \text{Baseline}}{\text{Baseline}} \times 100$$

3) Calculation of the number of W+ units

1 unit = 1 % improvement in one woman's life, in relation to one domain over the monitoring period.

Total number of units= percentage of change x number of woman beneficiaries

As described in the Monitoring Report 18/08/18, data has been checked, no manual transposition errors have been identified and all calculations are good.

The calculation of the units has been completed using the original arithmetic methods identifying change from the baseline and the percentage change of the participant group against a control group.

The values applied are real values taken from the survey data and from market values and the verification team is confident that the women's empowerment benefits have been quantified correctly in accordance with the project description and applied W+ method(s).

4.3. Quality of Evidence to Determine Women's Empowerment Benefits

The evidence used to determine the women's empowerment benefits are:

- The Monitoring Report 18/09/18 including the explanation of data flows from data generation to data aggregation and unit calculation.
- Statistical analysis of survey data
- Site visits and interviews with co-operative members
- Interviews with ACWA Power team members
- The quality of the information gathered in the Monitoring Report is excellent and was obtained using a professional researcher/enumerator. As such the information is comprehensive and reliable.
- The process of converting data from written to electronic formats is considered to be accurate and the information deduced from the data set is considered to be comprehensive and reliable.
- The information gathered from the focus group discussions and stakeholder interviews is considered to be excellent in its reliability and rigour as it is source data from the women co-operative members. Experts facilitated the session, each of who had considerable experience in ethnographic research techniques.
- Overall the quality and quantity of evidence is considered to be appropriate and comprehensive, ensuring the voice of the person served is heard and that the data set gained during monitoring activity reflects the findings from stakeholders.

5. W+ RESULTS

5.1. W+ Domains

Method (W+ Domain)	<i>Income and Assets</i>
Indicator	<i>Women report and increase in income and/or assets generated by the introduction of a new breed of sheep, the sale of sheep or handicraft activities – Immediate</i>
Situation	<i>The project activities generated additional income and assets for a large number of women.</i>
Justification	<i>Three focus groups were conducted over two days 12th and 13th September 2018. The questions sought to elicit evidence to justify the claims made in the monitoring report. All of the women engaged in the focus groups confirmed directly an increase in their household income as a result of the increased productivity of their sheep, the sale of sheep and/or the sale of handicraft items. The women also explained that the training they had undertaken allowed them to generate income where in most cases they had no opportunity to generate income before the training or formation of the co-operatives. As a result, it is considered that this outcome has been evidenced and the circumstances of the women has become much better and is scored as 2.</i>
Evidence	<i>Monitoring report Statistical analysis of survey data Focus group feedback</i>

Method (W+ Domain)	<i>Income and Assets</i>
Indicator	<i>Women report increased control on use of this additional income and/or increased participation in decisions about household income - Intermediate</i>
Situation	<i>Some women are able to save money but amounts saved or invested in informal savings groups are still low</i>
Justification	<i>Three focus groups were conducted over two days 12th and 13th September 2018. The questions sought to elicit evidence to justify the</i>

	<i>claims made in the monitoring report. All of the women engaged in the focus groups confirmed an increase in their control over use of increased household income, however there was a much stronger sense of this control in the focus groups held in Ighrem Amellal and Ghassate. As a result it is considered that this outcome has been evidenced and the circumstances of the women has become somewhat better and is scored as 1.</i>
Evidence	<i>Monitoring report</i> <i>Statistical analysis of survey data</i> <i>Focus group feedback</i>

Method (W+ Domain)	<i>Income and Assets</i>
Indicator	<i>Women report increased confidence to participate in group discussions, and ability to make allies in their favour.</i>
Situation	<i>Some women reported engaging more in conversation with their husband about livestock management and use of income</i>
Justification	<i>Three focus groups were conducted over two days 12th and 13th September 2018. The questions sought to elicit evidence to justify the claims made in the monitoring report. All of the women engaged in the focus groups confirmed increased self-confidence to participate in group discussions. Several women had strong voices that dominated conversation even in mixed groups. The presence of a female president in both the handicraft co-operative and one of the livestock co-operatives evidences the changing role of women in the community. Additionally, several women demonstrated that they are comfortable to build allies in other entrepreneurs and in ACWA Power support workers who can facilitate access to local authorities and additional community services. However, again there was a much stronger sense of this confidence in the focus groups held in Ighrem Amellal and Ghassate. As a result it is considered that this outcome has been evidenced and the circumstances of the women has become much better and is scored as 2.</i>
Evidence	<i>Monitoring report</i>

	<i>Statistical analysis of survey data</i> <i>Focus group feedback</i>
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Method (W+ Domain)	<i>Education and Knowledge</i>
Indicator	<i>Women retained and applied knowledge and skills acquired during trainings (e.g. feeding sheep, separating breeds, learning new sewing/embroidery techniques) - Immediate</i>
Situation	<i>High to relatively high levels of confidence in remembering and explaining the knowledge acquired</i>
Justification	<i>Three focus groups were conducted over two days 12th and 13th September 2018. The questions sought to elicit evidence to justify the claims made in the monitoring report. All of the women engaged in the focus groups confirmed that they had retained and applied their new knowledge and skills and that these had led to improved productivity in their livestock. They recounted learning around separation of breeds, feeding, healthcare, knitting, sewing and embroidery techniques. They also confirmed that they have shared learning with others in the families and villages. As a result, it is considered that this outcome has been evidenced and the circumstances of the women has become much better and is scored as 2.</i>
Evidence	<i>Monitoring report</i> <i>Statistical analysis of survey data</i> <i>Focus group feedback</i>

Method (W+ Domain)	<i>Education and Knowledge</i>
Indicator	<i>Women report benefits from the knowledge applied in terms of production increase and/or income - Intermediate</i>
Situation	<i>The new knowledge easily applied and led to positive outcomes e.g. no. of new sheep, increase in income, increase in confidence, and new ideas</i>
Justification	<i>Three focus groups were conducted over two days 12th and 13th September 2018. The questions sought to elicit evidence to justify the</i>

	<i>claims made in the monitoring report. All of the women engaged in the focus groups confirmed that they had retained and applied their new knowledge and skills and that these had led to improved productivity in their livestock. They all confirmed increased income in their households, however, they also recognise that as the co-operative activities develop this should lead to further increases and that these are still early days. The women also expressed a desire to explore other opportunities for sales of sheep and handicraft items, as well as solutions to community problems such as water security. As a result it is considered that this outcome has been evidenced and the circumstances of the women has become much better and is scored as 2.</i>
Evidence	<i>Monitoring report</i> <i>Statistical analysis of survey data</i> <i>Focus group feedback</i>

Method (W+ Domain)	<i>Education and Knowledge</i>
Indicator	<i>Women report increased confidence to participate in mixed group discussions, and ability to make allies in their favour e.g. access external resources and services to the benefit of their group/co-operative/community</i>
Situation	<i>Some women reported engaging more in conversation with their husband about livestock management and use of income</i>
Justification	<i>Three focus groups were conducted over two days 12th and 13th September 2018. The questions sought to elicit evidence to justify the claims made in the monitoring report. All of the women engaged in the focus groups confirmed increased self confidence to participate in group discussions. Several women had strong voices that dominated conversation even in mixed groups. The presence of a female president in both the handicraft co-operative and one of the livestock co-operatives evidences the changing role of women in the community. Additionally, several women demonstrated that they are comfortable to build allies in other entrepreneurs and in ACWA Power support workers who can facilitate access to local authorities and additional</i>

	<i>community services. However, again there was a much stronger sense of this confidence in the focus groups held in Ighrem Amellal and Ghassate. As a result it is considered that this outcome has been evidenced and the circumstances of the women has become much better and is scored as 2.</i>
Evidence	<i>Monitoring report</i> <i>Statistical analysis of survey data</i> <i>Focus group feedback</i>

5.2. Direct Payment Mechanism

As yet there have been no sale of units and so no direct payments to the communities. However, the Project Developer confirmed that a payment mechanism will be created and women will receive payments in a timely manner.

6. ANALYSIS OF W+ RESULTS

6.1. Current Performance

This verification focused upon two domains, Income and Assets; Education and Knowledge and so a score of zero has been applied to all other domains. That is not to say that the project has not had positive effects upon other domains but merely that these have not been subject to verification.

Income and Assets – average score 2

Education and Knowledge – average score 2

Overall project score - 2

The scores reflect consideration of all of the evidence provided to the verification team coupled with findings from the site visits and focus group feedback. The project is performing well, but all participants, as well as the Project Developer recognise that there is scope to do more. ACWA Power are committed to these developments over the medium and long term and are keen to explore activity under other domain areas. ACWA Power is committed to this region for at least 25 years and over that time want to ensure that they contribute to an improved quality of life for local people.

The strengths of the project lie in the willingness of women in the communities to become involved in co-operative activities and in the ACWA Power staff on the ground in the Ouarzazate region; they have built strong social capital with the co-operative members and are trusted by the co-operatives to understand and represent their needs and aspirations for future developments. It is the belief of the verification team that over time this will only deepen and will lead to even more positive outcomes for the women of the region.

The weakness of the project lies only in the time it can take to influence other villagers to join the co-operatives. It may be that additional services funded by ACWA Power including health services and transport services will act as influencers to other local people who will see the co-operatives develop and hopefully flourish and connect the role of ACWA Power in supporting the communities.

W+ Domain	Very Much Worse (-3)	Much Worse (-2)	Somewhat Worse (-1)	No Change (0)	Somewhat Better (+1)	Much Better (+2)	Very Much Better
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							(+3)
Income & Assets	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Time	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education & Knowledge	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Leadership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Food Security	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

6.2. Non-Permanence Risk Analysis

The verification team do not see any non-continuity risks at this time. The Project Developer is committed to the projects and region for at least 25 years and is actively engaging the communities of the area to identify additional support that can be provided by ACWA Power. Additionally, all of the focus group participants expressed a strong desire to grow their co-operatives, to secure additional support services and to ensure a sustainable model that can be passed to their children.

It is the view of the verification team that this 'partnership' between ACWA Power and the communities of the region is strong and has scope to effect positive change for the women of the area.

7. VERIFICATION (AUDIT) CONCLUSION

The project complies with the verification criteria for projects and their women's empowerment benefits as set out in W+ Standard and Program Guide. The verification team can confirm that the project has been implemented in accordance with the project description.

The total number of W+ units achieved by the project during the verification period is 103,420. The project complies with the verification criteria for projects set out in the W+ Standard. W+ verification period: From 15/03/2016 to 15/03/2018

Net women's empowerment benefits	Year/Month	Baseline	Project benefits
Increased knowledge and understanding that is retained and applied	Verification Period 1	76,620 W+ units generated	Increased ability to manage healthy productive livestock Increased ability to produce saleable handicraft items
Increased income to the household	Verification Period 1	26,800 W+ units generated	Increased ability to provide higher quality food, clothing etc. for the families engaged in the co-operative
Increased confidence to influence the use of additional income and to influence the activities of the co-operatives	Verification Period 1		Increased confidence to share learning with others – women as teachers in their communities Increased confidence to challenge a male dominated culture as all co-operative members have equal status Increased willingness to challenge a male dominated society as self-esteem and self-confidence is rising
	Total	103,420 W+ units generated	

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOS FROM VERIFICATION VISITS

Focus Group One



Focus Group 2



Focus Group 3



Handicraft products – Focus Group 3





Signed, October 2, 2018

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Liz Allen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Liz Allen

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Lisa McMullan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa McMullan