



1. Project Data :
OEDID: C1917
Project ID: P003524
Project Name: Sichuan Provincial Highway Project
Country: China
Sector: Highways
L/C Number: C1917/L2951
Partners involved : None
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2. Project Objectives, Financing, Costs and Components :

Objectives: Expand road capacity between Chengdu, the provincial capital, and Chongqing, the largest commercial center in Sichuan; improve road access in less wealthy areas of the province; improve road planning and management; train highway personnel; modernize technical and contract specifications; and improve road safety .
Components: (Physical) Construction of 340 km Chengdu-Chongqing highway and upgrading of rural roads in two relatively poor prefectures; and (institutional) the preparation of road management systems (including road data bank (RDB) and a pavement management system (PMS), and improved technical specifications); staff training program; a pilot program for road safety; and equipment to support road maintenance and electrical&mechanical (E&M) systems in tunnels. **Costs and financing :** The total project costs were US\$ 728.9 million (US\$399.8 at appraisal) of which the bank financed US\$ 125.0. The project was approved in FY88 and closed fully disbursed in FY97 two years later than scheduled .

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives :

The projects physical objectives were exceeded . During implementation the Borrower, without consulting the Bank, but consistent with the National Trunk Highway System (NTHS) plan, modified the design of the Chengdu-Chongqing highway from a largely two-lane highway to a four-lane expressway . Two rural roads (Ya'an-Hongya and Fenggu-Santai) were selected during implementation to improve access in relatively isolated areas of the province; they involved no Bank financing or supervision . The ERR for the Chengdu-Chongqing expressway was estimated to be 15 percent (vs. 27 at appraisal for the mostly 2-lane highway) and the ERR for the rural roads was estimated to be 16 percent (vs 17 at appraisal). The institutional objectives were partially achieved . The RDB and PMS systems cover 60 percent of the network of the Sichuan and 18 percent of the Chongqing networks. The time and effort to implement the road management systems were significantly underestimated and, as currently constituted, the systems are not broadly integrated to planning, programming and budgeting systems of the respective road administrations . The staff training component exceeded both the content and the costs originally identified. However, given the expanded scope of the project and the improvements in skills needed, the money was well spent. The pilot program for traffic safety was prepared but not implemented due to institutional difficulties and complexities. Equipment acquisition to support road management and E&M works also exceeded the amounts and scope estimated at appraisal; this was necessary for a variety of reasons, including increased project scope and a better understanding of needs .

4. Significant Achievements :

The most significant achievement of the project is the construction of the Chengdu -Chongqing expressway . It is the longest single expressway in mountainous terrain and includes some of the longest road tunnels constructed in China. In association with this accomplishment staff skills and capacities were substantially improved . The project also helped modernize technical specifications, and contracting methods and documents in Sichuan province .

5. Significant Shortcomings :

For the borrower the most significant shortcoming was the lack of implementation of the traffic safety project . For the Bank, the most significant shortcoming was its unwillingness to restructure the project in the context of the expansion of its scope to provide needed advice and help arrange additional institutional and organizational

development.

6. Ratings :	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Institutional Dev .:	Partial	Substantial	There clearly are many aspects of ID that deserve rating as 'modest' (partial). However, staff training and the complex project itself resulted in substantial increase in institutional capacity and technical knowhow and merit a higher overall rating.
Sustainability :	Likely	Likely	
Bank Performance :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Borrower Perf .:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of ICR :		Exemplary	

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability :

Project content should be consistent with the project on the ground, otherwise the project's supervision cannot be tailored to its needs (in the present project the Bank continued its supervision as if the project scope remained unchanged). In large scale efforts, such as the construction of China's NTHS, institutional and organizational development, including planning and financing mechanisms, project preparation and programming and the (road) management systems, must be given a high priority in order for them to be assimilated . Large projects, such as this one, need a specific component for Evaluation&Monitoring; preferably it should cover the entire provincial (road) program.

8. Audit Recommended? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9. Comments on Quality of ICR :

The ICR addresses all the project issues clearly and candidly . Especially relevant is the discussion of how the Bank might have responded to changes in project scope . The ICR is also comprehensive on how the project impacted institutional development and on its discussion of environment and resettlement issues . Finally, the aide-memoire of the ICR mission is a good well-written document that addressed all aspects of the project .