



1. Project Data :
OEDID: C2207
Project ID: P000593
Project Name: Highway Maintenance
Country: Comoros
Sector: Highways
L/C Number: Credit 2207-COM
Partners involved : UNDP, French Government (FAC)
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Date Posted: 07/20/1998

2. Project Objectives, Financing, Costs and Components :

The project, supported by a credit for SDR 4.6 million (US\$6.6 million equivalent), was approved in FY92. The credit closed in FY97, two years behind schedule. A balance of SDR 0.1 million was canceled.

Objectives : i) stemming road deterioration; ii) improving road safety; iii) ensuring access to markets; iv) strengthening road planning, budgeting and maintenance operations; v) promoting private sector participation in road maintenance.

Components : a) three-year road maintenance program (including 169 km periodic maintenance of paved roads and 478 km routine maintenance of paved and unpaved roads) ; b) a program of road marking; c) technical assistance for project implementation and to support institutional objectives; d) road-related studies. The objectives were relevant for the country as the vast majority of the population is rural, and therefore the roads are essential for agriculture activity and for poverty alleviation .

Cost: US\$12.1 million, or about 10 percent higher than the appraisal estimate .

Cofinancing : FAC (\$2.2 million) and the UNDP (\$0.2 million).

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives :

The **physical** targets were substantially achieved : periodic maintenance works were underachieved, while routine maintenance works slightly exceeded the appraisal targets . Similarly, the majority of **institutional** objectives were achieved: a small Planning and Studies unit was established, responsible for preparing the road investment and maintenance programs, organizing and monitoring feasibility studies, monitoring procurement and establishing and maintaining a road data base; a staff rationalization program was carried out, contributing to improve efficiency and discipline; an extensive training program was carried out; the project contributed to the creation of Comorian Small and Medium enterprises (SME) in the area of road maintenance. New regulations, followed by a change in funding mechanisms (direct transfer of funds from the national petroleum company instead of the government budget) improved the operations of the Road Maintenance Fund

4. Significant Achievements :

The 15 SMEs working on road maintenance whose creation was supported by the project were the first SMEs in this field in the country. By project closing, some 40 percent of the routine maintenance works were done through contracting out. The staff rationalization program resulted in a 45 percent reduction in staffing between 1990 and 1994 in the two key directorates responsible for public roads .

5. Significant Shortcomings :

The highway marking and safety program was still underway at the time of project completion . Therefore its expected benefits had not been realized . Due to inadequate cost estimates, the program of periodic road maintenance had to be reduced 25 percent.

6. Ratings :	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Institutional Dev .:	Substantial	Substantial	
Sustainability :	Likely	Likely	
Bank Performance :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Borrower Perf .:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of ICR :		Satisfactory	

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability :

Under conditions of sustained political instability, the continuity of the national team of the project is essential for successful project implementation . This continuity, and integration of the technical assistants into this stable national team, also proved to be an essential factor in the success of the technical assistance activities, starting by building ownership of the recommendations on institutional development . Another lesson is that if government provides a strong signal supporting privatization of routine maintenance, local, small enterprises can develop fast and carry out these activities; a question is whether a stable amount of work can be offered to these enterprises to ensure their survival.

8. Audit Recommended? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9. Comments on Quality of ICR :

The ICR is of satisfactory quality . It covers all topics well, except the economic evaluation which was limited to the periodic maintenance, whereas the appraisal also had evaluated the routine maintenance works .