



1. Project Data

Project ID P123447	Project Name NI Rural Roads Infrastructure Imp.	
Country Nicaragua	Practice Area(Lead) Transport & Digital Development	Additional Financing P146845,P146845,P146845

L/C/TF Number(s) IDA-50280,IDA-55330,IDA-H7440,IDA-H9830	Closing Date (Original) 30-Nov-2016	Total Project Cost (USD) 40,000,000.00
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Bank Approval Date 13-Dec-2011	Closing Date (Actual) 30-Nov-2017
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	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	35,000,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	91,888,048.21	0.00
Actual	84,805,492.77	0.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The Project Development Objectives (PDOs) as stated in the Financing Agreement (Schedule 1, page 5) and in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, page 5) were:

(a) To improve the access of the rural population living in the Project areas to markets and social and administrative services, through: (i) the carrying out of improvements in the Recipient's road infrastructure: and (ii) the strengthening of Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure's (MTI)



institutional capacity for asset and disaster risk management: and (b) support the generation of short-term employment opportunities for the rural population living in the Project areas."

One more objective was added following the Additional Financing (AF) for the project on July 11, 2014. The PDOs as stated in the AF Agreement (Schedule 1, page 5) were:

(a) improve the access of the rural population living in the Project areas to markets and social administrative services through: (i) the carrying out of improvements in the Recipient's market infrastructure: and (ii) strengthening of the MTIs and Road Maintenance Fund (FOMAV's) institutional capacity for road asset and disaster risk management: (b) support the generation of short-term opportunities for the rural population living in the Project areas: and (c) improve the recipient's capacity to respond promptly and effectively to an Eligible Emergency.

Note: Eligible emergency was defined as a situation when the President of Nicaragua declares the country as in "disaster status" through an Executive Order (ICR, page 13).

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

Yes

Date of Board Approval

14-Jul-2014

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

There were three components (PAD, pages 6-7).

1. Rural Road Improvements and Maintenance. Appraisal estimate US\$30.00 million. AF estimate US\$63.14 million. Total estimate US\$93.14 million. Actual cost US\$88.47 million. There were three sub-components.

(1) Road improvement in about 88 Kilometers (Km) of priority roads in selected rural regions with cobblestone surfacing. and, (2) periodic road maintenance (through asphalt resurfacing) in about 60 km of the core road network under the Road Maintenance Fund (FOMAV) within the National Trunk Road Network.

The scope of this component was expanded with AF as follows. (i) The Bluefields-San Francisco road section (26.5 Km) - part of the only corridor in the South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS) that



connected the South Atlantic to the Pacific - was added; and (ii) 75 km of roads were to be provided results-based routine road maintenance under a new pilot of microenterprises.

2. Institutional Development. Appraisal estimate US\$3.40 million. AF estimate US\$2.00. Total estimate US\$5.40 million. Actual cost US\$4.68 million. There were three sub-components. (1) Strengthening the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure's (MTI) institutional capacity (including in the areas of road asset and disaster risk management). (2) strengthening FOMAV's institutional capacity. and, (3) financing specific studies and designs.

3. Project Management. Appraisal estimate US\$0.95 million. AF estimate US\$1.33 million. Total estimate US\$2.28 million. Actual cost US\$2.59. million. Activities included project implementation support and strengthening MTI's capacity to monitor project performance. A new component was added with AF.

4. Immediate Response Mechanism. There was no initial allocation of funds for this component. In case this component had been activated, it would have been financed with IDA funds. Since Nicaragua is vulnerable to natural disasters such as climate-related phenomena (droughts, hurricanes, flooding and landslides) and geological events (earthquakes and volcanic eruptions), this component allowed the possibility of using IDA resources for eligible expenses in case of natural disasters.

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

Project cost. At appraisal, the project cost was estimated to be US\$39.50 million (including baseline cost and contingencies.) Together with AF of US\$66.47 million, the total estimated cost US\$105.97 million. Actual cost was marginally lower at US\$100.24 million.

Project financing. At appraisal, IDA financing was estimated at US\$35.00 (including US\$6.00 million with IDA Credit and US\$29.00 with IDA Grant). With AF of US\$57.00 million (including US\$2.90 million with IDA Credit and US\$54.10 million with IDA Grant) the total estimated amount increased to US\$92.00 million. Actual amount disbursed at completion was about 8% lower at US\$84.84 million, with the difference being attributed mainly to the depreciation of the SDR *vis-à-vis* the US\$ during implementation. There was parallel financing for complementary sector activities at appraisal from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (BCIE), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the European Union (EU) (PAD, page 10).

Borrower contribution. Appraisal estimate US\$5.00 million. Revised estimate US\$14.08 million. The borrower contribution at closure was 10% more than planned at US\$15.43 million.



Dates. The project was approved on December 13, 2011, became effective on March 12, 2012 and was scheduled for completion on November 30, 2016. The AF was approved on July 14, 2014 to: (1) scale up road improvement and routine maintenance activities, as described in Section 2d-Components, (2) finance cost overruns under the rural road improvements and maintenance component associated with change in surfacing from adolquine to concrete surfacing in one road section (this change was necessitated by the more than anticipated traffic flows as well as climate resilience considerations in this road section); and (3) the project closing date for the original credit and grant was extended by a year for completing the ongoing road works financed through AF. During preparation of the AF, the Government of Nicaragua (GoN) and the World Bank agreed to include an Immediate Response Mechanism PDO to all the infrastructure projects to allow the country to have access to a contingent financing for rapid and effective response capacity of the country in case an emergency occurs.

There were two Level 2 restructurings. The first on April 14, 2015 reallocated funding between disbursement categories. The following changes were made through the second restructuring on May 30, 2017: (1) The results framework was revised to reduce the targets for road construction from 185 km to 167.95 km to correct the calculation error made during preparation of AF and to account for the removal of Las -Carpas – Waslala road section improvement from the project due to insufficient funds available under the IDA credit amount resulting from the depreciation of SDR exchange rate relative to the US\$ (Restructuring Paper, page 6). The additional number employed in the Community Modules of Adoquines (MCAs) was accordingly revised from 2840 to 2470, and (2) There was reallocation between disbursement categories. The project closed on November 30, 2017, an year after the planned closing date of November 30, 2016.

Split rating. A split rating was not conducted given that the original objectives were not changed and a component was added with a new objective at AF.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

The PDOs were relevant to the government strategy. At appraisal, about 42.5% of the population in Nicaragua was classified as poor and the incidence of poverty was disproportionately high in rural areas (with 63% of the rural population classified as poor, as compared to 27% of the urban population). Regarding the road sector - the dominant transport mode - only 13% (2,814 km out of 22,111 km) of the road network was paved. Less than a third of the population had access to a paved road and less than half (42%) of the road network was reported to be in either good or fair condition. The sector deficiencies restricted mobility and posed adverse risks for the economy in terms of high transport costs, productivity losses and precluded economic opportunities for the poor. The PDOs were consistent with the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure's (MTI), priority rural road program, embedded in the Sector Wide Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (PAD, page 37.)



The PDOs were aligned with all the four pillars of the Bank's Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for the 2007-2012 period at appraisal. These pillars were: (1) reactivating the economy and stimulating productivity. (2) human capital development by improving social equity and opportunity. (3) infrastructure and sustainable development, and (4) governance and accountability by modernizing the state institutions and promoting citizen participation. The PDOs were also aligned with the two strategic objectives of the CPS for 2013-2017 period of "raising welfare by improving access to quality basic services, in particular for the rural poor households" and "raising incomes by improving productivity, competitiveness and diversification."

Rating

High

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

Objective 1 Objective

To improve the access of the rural population to markets and social administrative services.

Rationale

Outputs (ICR pages 38-41 and 43-44).

Improving market infrastructure.

- 169.52 km of rural roads (including 138.52 km with asphalt surfacing) were constructed at closure. This was marginally higher than the revised target of 167.95 km. The roads constructed included 26.5 km of the Bluefields-San Francisco road in the South Caribbean Coast Autonomous region. This region before road construction could be reached only by air during most of the year due to heavy rains and non-passable infrastructure (ICR, page 19).
- Periodic road maintenance with asphalt surfacing was provided for 63 km of rural roads as per the revised target. This significantly exceeded the original target of 40 km.
- Results-based minor maintenance was provided on 67.98 km of roads at closure, somewhat lower than the target of 75 km. The ICR (page 21) notes that this pilot of results-based routine maintenance contracts was launched in August 2016. The duration of the contracts was two years, eight months beyond the closing date. Given this, these contracts were to be financed with local funds. The ICR reports that as of May 14, 2018, a total of 79.5 km of roads were maintained under results-based contracts.

Strengthening institutional capacity.

- Road inventory and condition survey of the core road network (3,345 km of roads) was completed and uploaded into the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure's (MTI) database.
- A road safety capacity review was completed road safety features were incorporated in the design of project roads. This contributed to the initiative of establishing the National Road Safety Agency.



- The following studies were completed: (1) The Road Maintenance Fund reform study for financial sustainability, (2) A reform of the axle load system: (3) A study of the baseline rural accessibility index indicator of selected rural roads; and (4) studies to improve the MTI's social and environmental management capacity. The adoquines roads program in the productive regions of the country was finalized.
- A total of 43 staff from the MTI and the Road Maintenance Fund were trained under the capacity building initiatives at closure. This exceeded the original and revised targets of 30 and 40 respectively.

Outcomes.

- 40.62% of the rural population had access to an all-season road at closure as compared to 36.68% at the baseline and marginally lower as compared to the revised target of 41%. A total of 1,077,108 people in rural areas had access to an all-season road at closure as compared to 945,831 at the baseline and as compared to the target of 1,019,135.
- Travel times on improved rural roads under free flow conditions reduced from 2.90 hours at the baseline to 1.50 hours at closure as targeted.
- Roads reported to be in good or fair condition as a share of the total classified road network increased from 29% (236,647 km) at the baseline to 32.42% (245,533) at closure. This exceeded the target of 32% (23,800 km).
- A user survey was conducted at the end of 2017 (with 425 drivers and pedestrians surveyed) in the project area. The conclusions of the survey were: (1) 84.40% of the rural population indicated satisfaction with the quality of the road network after the project, as compared to 13.50% at the baseline and as compared to the target of 70%. (2) The average travel time from home to frequent destinations (such as schools, hospitals, banks and family visits) before the project was 3.14 hours during the dry season and 4.33 hours in the rainy season for drivers and 2.07 hours and 2.69 hours for pedestrians. After the project, the travel time reduced by 57% during the dry season and 69% during the rainy season for drivers and by 78% and 83% for pedestrians. (3) The results of the survey showed that the absolute travel time after the project did not differ significantly in terms of seasons. (4) The travel time to markets was reduced by 42 minutes and 54 minutes for the dry and rainy season with the project. and, (5) The survey indicated that 99% of the households surveyed reported improved access to health centers and schools with the project roads.

Rating
Substantial

Objective 2
Objective



To support the generation of short-term opportunities for the rural population living in the Project areas.

Rationale

Outputs.

- The outputs described above were also relevant to this objective.
- 138.54 km of the targeted roads of 169.52 km of roads were adoquines roads, built under the Community Modules of Adoquines (MCA) modality. The MCA modality represented a community development approach for constructing adoquines roads under a collaborative arrangement between the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, local mayors and selected local participants living in the vicinity of those roads. This method was labor intensive as compared to constructing roads through either contracting private companies or force account modality used by COERC (Corporation of Regional Highway Construction Agencies), a semiautonomous state corporation of regional construction firms.

Outcomes.

- A total of 2,470 short term employment opportunities (average duration of six months) was created by the MCAs as per the revised target and as compared to the original target of 2840 km.
- The percentage of women in MCAs increased from 19% at the baseline to 46% at project closure. This exceeded the target of 26%. The women were hired as presidents of MCAs, accountants, treasurers, administrators, traffic controllers, pavement fillers and for installing the adoquines (The ICR (page 23) notes that this was a significant achievement as compared to the 15% increase in women's participation at the end of the Fourth road project in Nicaragua).
- A survey focused on gender completed at project closure noted that income for these women as a MCA worker was three to four times higher than if they did household-related work and that the skill they obtained during the work also opened the opportunity to search for other jobs.

Rating

Substantial

Objective 3

Objective

To improve the recipient's capacity to respond promptly and effectively to an Eligible Emergency.

Rationale



This component allowed for the possibility to access IDA resources for eligible expenditures in case of a natural disaster. The indicator was defined as time taken to disburse funds requested by the Government for an eligible emergency. As reported by the ICR, the activity associated with this objective was not activated, as no eligible emergency was triggered during the project implementation. However, the project funds were available should the Government require such support, and served the purpose of supporting the response capacity to the natural disasters if occurred.

Rating

Not Rated/Not Applicable

Rationale

Based on the substantial ratings for the first two objectives, and a not rated/not applicable for the third objective, the overall rating is substantial.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

Economic analysis. A cost-benefit analysis was conducted for rural roads improvements and maintenance at appraisal and at closure using the Roads Economic Decision (RED) Model for low traffic volume rural roads. This component accounted for 76% the cost at appraisal and 88% of the actual cost. The project benefits were assumed to come from savings in Vehicle Operating Costs (VOCs) from having an improved road surface and travel time savings for road users due to improved driving conditions. The costs included the initial investment costs of road construction and subsequent road maintenance costs. The Net Present Value (NPV) at 12% discount rate at closure was US\$80.86 million as compared to the NPV of US\$79.77 million at appraisal. The ex post Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) was 27% as compared to the ex-ante EIRR of 28% (ICR, page 52).

Administrative and Operational Issues. There was a cost overrun of 30% which was covered through the AF. The cost overruns were due to a combination of factors such as: change in surfacing from adoquines to concrete on one project road (due to higher than anticipated traffic flows and climate considerations), which resulted in higher costs; as well as similar increases in costs on the periodic maintenance section. At project



closure, all activities with the exception of pilot of results- based minor routine maintenance contracts had been completed at closure and this pilot activity was eventually completed by May 14, 2018 with local funds.

Efficiency Rating

Substantial

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	28.00	76.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	27.00	88.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

Relevance of the PDO for the government and Bank strategies is rated High. Efficacy is rated Substantial as most of the outcomes were either realized or exceeded. Efficiency, based on the results of the economic analysis is rated Substantial. Taking these factors into account, the outcome is rated Satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating

Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

Financial Risk. Although the Road Maintenance Law was approved by the Government and the Road Maintenance Fund (FOMAV) set up for promoting the long-term sustainability and providing for financing of the periodic and routine road maintenance needs of the core road network, there is a resource gap for financing road maintenance needs. According to the estimates of the Road Maintenance Fund Reform Study for the Financial Sustainability, funding would still be about 28% short of the required financing (Nicaraguan Cordobas Oro (NIO) gap of 267 million, as compared to the required NIO of 1,223 million) from 2017 to 2019.



8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

This was the fifth road sector project in Nicaragua and the preparation of this project was based on lessons from the prior Bank-financed projects. Lessons incorporated included using locally-made adoquines as the surfacing option for the relatively low-traffic volume rural roads which was cost-effective as compared to other options (such as concrete surfacing); and using Community Modules of adoquines (MCAs) which entailed labor-based methods and hence could generate short term employment. Several risks were identified at design, including the risk associated with natural disasters, which had proven in the past to be extremely destructive to roads and bridges, and possibility of cost-overruns. Several mitigation measures were incorporated including activities aimed at developing disaster risk management activities and providing a reasonable margin for contingencies. Overall project risk was rated as Moderate at appraisal (PAD, page 46). The implementation arrangements entailed retaining the same unit within MTI, which had managed previous IDA projects. The arrangements that were made for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) (discussed in section 9) and for environmental and social safeguards were appropriate (discussed in section 10).

There were cost overruns associated with one road section where adoquine surfacing had to be changed to concrete surfacing due to factors such as higher than anticipated traffic flows and climate resilience considerations (discussed in section 8b).

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

Supervision missions were held twice a year during implementation, and eleven Implementation Status Results (ISR) reports were filed. The supervision team was proactive in evaluating the need for AF. The early identification of AF aided in maintaining project continuity and in meeting the targets envisaged at appraisal. Given Nicaragua's vulnerability to natural disasters, the AF revised the PDO to include an emergency response mechanism and also introduced a pilot of results-based routine maintenance using the MCA modality and which eventually was to be transferred to microenterprises to ensure sustainability. The supervision team incorporated lessons from other road sections that suffered from climate events and appropriately revised the design. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) had financed the construction of an adjacent road section to the Bluefields-San Francisco section, using adoquine surfacing. During the climatic events in 2016 which took place shortly after the construction of this road section, the severe damage caused to this section financed by the IDB made it intransitable. The road section that was to be financed by the Bank was originally designed with the same standards as the road section financed by IDB. Taking heed of the lessons from the IDB financed project, the supervision team along with the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure reevaluated the original design



and decided to have hydraulic concrete surface standards, although the revised design cost 30% more than the original design. During the climate event of the tropical storm in November 2016, the road section financed by the Bank was able to withstand the climate event, although other roads along the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua were severely damaged from floods (mainly because the embankment was not able to resist the damage from the climate disaster). The assistance provided by the team aided in monitoring project performance (discussed in section 9) and ensuring safeguards and fiduciary compliance (discussed in section 10).

Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The key PDO indicators at design -increase in the share of rural population with access to an all-weather road (within 2km), the percentage of roads that were in good and fair condition, and the share of the rural population indicating satisfaction with the quality of the road network - were generally appropriate for monitoring project performance against the first objective that focused on access. The intermediate indicator on reduction in travel time on improved roads was moved to the outcome level during implementation. The indicator related to the second objective, i.e., "increase in opportunities for short term employment and empowerment" as measured through additional number of employed in MCAs and percentage of women, was moved to the outcome level and revised to "additional number of short-term jobs generated in MCAs" and percentage of women in MCAs. Other intermediate indicators at design were intended to measure the progress of the road infrastructure in total length and to monitor the achievement of capacity building activities.

At AF, a new objective was added for the emergency response component and an indicator to capture the response time taken to disburse funds for an eligible emergency.

b. M&E Implementation

The data for monitoring project performance was collected by the Project Coordination Unit.



As reported by the ICR (p.30), the data for M&E were collected by the PCU and reported to the World Bank every six months in the semiannual progress report. The only delay was for the baseline data collection for the three indicators at the national level ('share of rural population with access to an all-season road', 'roads in good and fair condition as a share of total classified roads', and 'increase in the share of the rural population indicating satisfaction with the quality of the road network') through the road network inventory survey financed by the project before the road construction started. The road network inventory survey financed by the project was completed before road construction began and this enabled monitoring performance. During implementation, MTI created an Impact Evaluation Committee (IEC) to supervise data collection and serve as a long-term unit within the MTI.

As indicated in section 2e, there was an error in the calculation of total length of roads made at the time of AF preparation.

c. M&E Utilization

The M&E indicators were utilized for monitoring project performance. The database that was set up to evaluate the nationwide access to all-season roads later aided in planning and prioritizing road investments by the MTC and the Road Development Fund (FOMAV).

M&E Quality Rating

Substantial

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project was classified as a Category B project at appraisal. Other than Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01), two safeguard policies were triggered: Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04) and Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP 4.11). Environmental and Social Assessments (ESA) were conducted within the areas of influence of the project roads at appraisal. The ESAs included Environmental Management Plans (EMP) with details on the mitigation measures, monitoring, responsibilities and specific procedures (such as waste management plans, encampment plans, banks of material management plans where applicable). The safeguard policies associated with natural habitats and physical cultural resources were triggered on a precautionary basis as the project activities were not expected to cause any significant loss to natural habitats and road improvements were taking within the right of way of existing roads and hence no impact to any physical or cultural resource was anticipated (PAD, pages 14-16).

In addition to the safeguard policies mentioned above, two new safeguard policies were triggered with AF for the project: Indigenous Peoples (OP 4.10) and Involuntary Resettlement (OP 4.12). The ICR (pages 31-32)



notes that there were no environmental or social safeguard issues during implementation and there was compliance with safeguard policies during implementation. The ICR (p.32) mentions that there were minor issues regarding environment and social safeguards, and there were slight delays in the preparation and updating process of the Resettlement Action Plan for the road section of Bluefield-San Francisco, due to the MTI’s lack of experience with specific World Bank’s social safeguards policies related to this road section. Overall, the ICR does not discuss why these new safeguard policies were triggered at AF, and whether there was actual resettlement.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial Management. The Financial and Administrative General Directorate (DGAF) in MTI was responsible for financial management (PAD, page 13). DGAF had implemented Bank-financed projects and was familiar with Bank procedures. An assessment was conducted at appraisal to assess DGAF's capacity to address financial management issues. The assessment concluded that the financial management risk was Substantial in view of the number of contracts. Mitigation measures incorporated at design including, training the relevant staff and having an external audit. The ICR (page 32) reports that there were no financial management issues during implementation and there was financial management compliance during implementation. The team clarified that the financial audits were unqualified.

Procurement. The procurement responsibilities for the project were with the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure (MTI), the Road Maintenance Fund (FOMAV) and the community organizations (MVAs). A procurement assessment conducted at appraisal concluded that both MTI and FOMAV had the required capacity for addressing procurement issues and procurement procedures for MCAs were specified at design (PAD, page 13). The ICR (page 32) notes that there were no procurement issues during implementation.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

d. Other

11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	---



Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	---
Quality of M&E	High	Substantial	There were minor shortcomings in M&E design and implementation.
Quality of ICR		Substantial	---

12. Lessons

The ICR (pages 34-35) draws the following three lessons from the experience of implementing this project, with some modification of language.

(1) Structured prioritization for road investment with government support can promote community involvement, and improve the impact of a road project. The rural roads prioritized by the Ministry of Transport and Commerce (MTI) were those having the highest impact in improving access to markets in the productivity zones. Further, MTI promoted the labor-intensive rural road construction modality through community level involvement.

(2) Rural roads projects can help in integrating gender considerations. This project promoted employment to women through the Community Modules of Adoquines (MCAs), which reached 46% of women participation during the project. Women were trained to work as the president, accountants and in administration. This enabled them to participate in the decision making. The gender-based survey conducted at closure indicated that this participation increased their income by three or four times compared to levels before the project. With government support, the project protected women in the worksite by taking measures against sexual harassment.

(3) Conducting pilot project and capacity building activities can encourage sector wide road improvement efforts. This project conducted various pilot activities such as establishing a road network database for investment planning and microenterprise for improving the sustainability of the Community Modules of Adoquines. These were combined with capacity building activities aimed at improving the financial sustainability of the Road Maintenance Fund and supporting the implementing agency’s capacity to monitor performance. The combination of these activities besides aiding project implementation, encouraged the Government to take a comprehensive approach to road improvement.

13. Assessment Recommended?

Yes

Please explain



Given that the project entailed community-level initiatives such as through the MCAs for providing short-term employment opportunities and then transferring the MCAs into micro enterprises to ensure sustainability, it would be instructive to see to the extent to which these initiatives have had sustainable outcomes. Further, given that activities have integrated gender considerations with successful results, it would be instructive to see the lessons that can be drawn from this project for other projects elsewhere in the Bank.

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR is well-written and outcome-oriented. It provides good evidence, drawing from a variety of data sources. There is an adequate level of detail covering the issues that affected project implementation (such as changing from adoquine to concrete surfacing in one road section given that traffic flows were higher than anticipated and there were climate resilience considerations) and how they were resolved. The ICR provides a solid analysis on gender considerations, which were integrated in the project. The lessons are based on project experience. The information provided in the ICR on safeguards compliance is sparse. It is not clear why the additional safeguards were triggered during AF and it is not clear if there was actual resettlement during implementation.

a. Quality of ICR Rating Substantial