

Mobile Metropolises: Urban Transport Matters
An IEG Evaluation of the World Bank Group's Support for Urban Transport

Report to the Board from the Committee on Development Effectiveness
Sub-Committee Report*

Meeting of August 30, 2017

The Sub-Committee of the Committee on Development Effectiveness met to consider the IEG report *Mobile Metropolises: Urban Transport Matters – An IEG Evaluation of the World Bank Group's Support for Urban* (CODE2017-0033) together with World Bank Group Draft Management Response (CODE2017-0034) and IEG Comment on Management Response (CODE2017-0035).

The Sub-Committee welcomed the discussion of the first report carried out under the pilot of six new ways of improving the process for IEG's evaluations. Members broadly agreed with IEG findings and Management Response. They found the evaluation timely given the relevance of urbanization including urban transport in the context of pursuing the twin goals and IDA18 implementation.

Members found that the WBG has been effective in supporting improved service quality and increasing access in urban areas. However, they expressed concerns regarding the portfolio composition, particularly in relation to the low representation of interventions in Africa where the urban transport portfolio is declining. The Sub-Committee urged Management to take specific measures to address this finding. Members noted that LICs face challenges of low institutional capacity in technical urban poverty management, urban design, and comprehensive city and land use planning.

Members underscored that due to the Bank's country-based model of engagement and competing demands on its limited resources, many governments may not see urbanization and urban transport as a priority. They also acknowledged the complexity of designing urban transport systems which involve multiple agencies and levels of administration. Therefore, they agreed with the recommendation to increase analytical work and client awareness on the relevance of urban transport to the twin goals. One member asked for more analytical work in IDA countries while another welcomed the launch of the Mobility and Logistics Multi-Donor Trust Fund which includes an Urban Transport Window and will provide advisory and technical support to operations. There were also comments on the need to support a comprehensive approach to urban planning at the national level, to encourage engagement at all levels including medium-size cities, as well as to support capacity building in some client countries on public-private partnerships (PPP), particularly in appraising proposals and negotiating agreements.

Members stressed the importance of considering gender-specific issues in the transport sector, as well as issues related to other socially vulnerable groups to ensure that projects are equitable and inclusive. They stressed the need to give special attention to gender issues in Africa projects. They also underlined the significance of safe transit and security for women, as well as monitoring and evaluation of these projects. They raised questions about concrete steps for mainstreaming attention to gender and vulnerable groups in urban, peri-urban and rural transport projects, and increasing the attention on disabled persons. Members agreed that Environmental Sustainability in transport projects needed a more comprehensive approach.

* This report is not an approved record.