

1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 10/06/2014	
Country:	Iraq		
Project ID:	P098979	Appraisal	Actual
Project Name :	Iraq: Household Survey And Policies For Poverty Reduction	Project Costs (US\$M):	6.6 11.98
L/C Number:		Loan/Credit (US\$M):	6.6 11.98
Sector Board :	Poverty Reduction	Cofinancing (US\$M):	
Cofinanciers :		Board Approval Date :	07/24/2006
		Closing Date :	06/30/2008 06/30/2013
Sector(s):	General public administration sector (100%)		
Theme(s):	Other economic management (29% - P); Economic statistics; modeling and forecasting (29% - P); Social safety nets (14% - S); Poverty strategy; analysis and monitoring (14% - S); Improving labor markets (14% - S)		
Prepared by :	Reviewed by :	ICR Review Coordinator :	Group :
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2. Project Objectives and Components:

a. Objectives:

The objective of the project was "to strengthen the ability of the Government of Iraq (GOI) to make informed decisions towards reducing poverty, creating jobs and protecting the vulnerable ". (Project Grant Agreement, p. 7). The Restructuring Paper dated September 27, 2012 stated slightly differently the project objective, which aimed " to strengthen the ability of the GOI to make and implement informed policies regarding poverty reduction, job creation and improvement of safety nets in Iraq". While the change in the statement of objective was minor, the substantive revision of PDO indicators at the restructuring phase justified a split review of this operation that will account for the project efficacy before and after restructuring .

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

Yes

If yes, did the Board approve the revised objectives /key associated outcome targets?

No

c. Components:

The project entailed four components as detailed below :

(i) Iraq Household Socio -Economic Survey (IHSES) and Poverty Assessment (Costs at appraisal of US\$ 4.9 million against US\$ 7.3 million after restructuring): Key activities were to: (i) collect high quality data on household income, expenditure and living standards for all governorates, (ii) strengthen capacity of Iraqi statistical bodies to conduct quality household surveys, (iii) increase knowledge of living standards and income and expenditure patterns of Iraqi households, and (iv) strengthen capacity of ministries and other government entities to analyze household survey data.

(ii) Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (Costs at appraisal of US\$ 0.7 million against US\$ 1.0 million after restructuring): Activities that were to be executed were to (i) increase knowledge of the poverty and social impact of existing and proposed economic policies b) strengthen capacity of ministries and other government entities to analyze the impact of economic policies on poverty and social welfare .

(iii) Strategy for Poverty Reduction, Employment Generation and Safety Net Development : (costs at appraisal of US\$0.7 million against US\$ 3.6 million after restructuring)

Activities that were to be implemented were: (i) development of a poverty reduction, employment generation and safety net strategy and b) strengthen the capacity of policy makers to develop a comprehensive, information -based strategy

(iv) Project management and contingency : (Costs at appraisal of US\$ 0.3 million against US\$ 1.2 million after restructuring): Activities intended to carry out the project management, coordinate and support activities necessary for effective implementation of the project.

d. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates:

Cost: Disbursed amount on both trust funds at the project closure was \$ 11.98 million, or 91.5 percent of committed amount, and a balance of US\$563,341.64 on the borrower-managed grant was cancelled on October 31, 2013.

Financing: This was a grant-funded project supported by: (i) a borrower-managed trust fund (TF056441), and (ii) a Bank-managed trust fund (TF056442) for initial endowment of US\$5.1 million and US\$1.5 million respectively. The Government-managed TF was amended twice in order to receive additional funding in April 2008 for US\$0.4 million, and in June 2010 for US\$1.5 million, for a total grant of US\$7.0 million. The Bank-managed TF was amended three times to receive additional funding in April 2008 for US\$2.5 million, in June 2010 for US\$1.5 million, and in September 2012 for US\$1.0 million, for an overall grant amounting to US\$6.1 million. In all, committed amount for this project was \$13.1 million.

Borrower Contribution : The Borrower contribution was estimated at US\$0.7 million, but disbursement is unknown, and there was no co-financing for this project.

Dates: The two separate trust funds were approved in 2006. The closing date of the project was extended four times, from an initial date of September 2007, to September 2009, and then to June 2010, September 2012, and finally to June 30, 2013. The project was closed on revised schedule on June 30, 2013.

3. Relevance of Objectives & Design:

a. Relevance of Objectives:

Original project : May 2006--September 2012 : Substantial

Addressing poverty was a high priority issue for the Government of Iraq . The country's National Development Strategy was organized around four pillars as follows : (i) strengthening the foundations of economic growth (including reform of the subsidy system, which is the only currently functioning safety net and diversifying the economy beyond its current dependence on oil); (ii) revitalizing the private sector as the engine of growth and job creation; (iii) improving the quality of life (improving access to clean water and sanitation, high -quality medical care, affordable housing; investing in education; providing a targeted safety net for the needy); and (iv) strengthening good governance and security . All of the above pillars had a linkage with the components of this project . The work to be accomplished by this project aimed to lay the groundwork for a revised poverty assessment and updated poverty strategy. It was also to help focus on the reform of the Public Distribution System (PDS), which has the potential of leading to a major shift of government services toward the poor .

The Bank's work program for Iraq was organized into four pillars, supporting government efforts to : (i) restore basic service delivery; (ii) enable private sector development; (iii) strengthen social safety nets; and (iv) improve public sector governance. The proposed Iraq Household Socio-Economic Survey was intended to contribute to the existing surveys by collecting data on expenditures as well as non -monetary aspects of poverty . The data would permit the establishment of a poverty line, to examine the relationships between monetary and non -monetary aspects of poverty and to develop a targeting mechanism for an efficient safety net program . Moreover, in the fast changing circumstances of Iraq, the proposed survey was to provide needed updates of previous surveys . The Bank's

overarching objective (as articulated in the Second Interim Strategy Note for Iraq) was to help Iraq build efficient, inclusive, transparent, and accountable institutions .

However, the program of project activities was unrealistic and diverged from the actual country context . While the Bank was operating in a fragile context of a post-conflict country, the list of deliverables was comprised of the most recent products in the areas of poverty assessments and strategy policies . Due to this mismatch, some key deliverables were missed. In conclusion, while the project objective was in synchrony with the priorities of the country and at the center of the Bank's business agenda, there was a mismatch between the post -conflict environment of the country, and the identified products .

Restructured project : October 2012- June 2013: Substantial

In essence, the project objective didn't change substantially during restructuring, because "informed decisions to protect the vulnerable" is very close to "informed decisions to improve the safety nets". However, the split evaluation was triggered by the substantive change in the PDO indicators as shown in the table under Section 3.b. The relevance of objective remained substantial, but the project outcomes were ambitious and difficult to be achieved in one year in a post-conflict environment.

b. Relevance of Design:

Original project : May 2006-September 2012: Modest

The project objective was clearly stated both in the Proposed Trust Fund Grant document presented to the Board and in the letter agreements signed in 2006 for the two TFs. The results chain in the Proposed Trust Fund Grant document was rudimentary. The objectives and the performance indicators and outputs (Annex 1, p. 21) were not sufficient to inform on the achievement of the outcome . Also, there was a disconnect between the objectives in the results matrix and those in the legal documents, and there were no adequate M&E arrangements .

The project design seemed not to have integrated enough the post -conflict status of the country . Instead of identifying simple products, in line with weak local capacity, the project identified the most complex products (PSIA, Social Safety Nets and Employment creation) that the Bank had on its agenda, and envisioned them for Iraq .

Restructured project : October 2012- June 2013: Modest

The project level two restructuring was triggered by the need to chart out a new action plan to use the remaining resources to respond to a Government's request to upgrade the skills of the technical teams so that they become self-sufficient after project closure. There was no change in the project objective or in the other institutional or implementation arrangements. There was however a substantive shift in setting new PDO indicators as indicated in the table below.

PDO indicators (May 2006- September 2012)	PDO indicators (October 2012-June 2013)
· Data sets and tabulation reports	· Governates with high quality data on household income, expenditure and living standards
· Statistical staff trained, including on-the-job training)	· IHSES Data used for Poverty Assessments and Social Impact Assessments
· Poverty assessment report and dissemination of report (to policy makers and researchers)	· Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) developed based on analysis of IHSES-1
· Technical staff of various entities trained (including on-the-job training)	· PRS priorities are integrated into the budget and PRS activities are implemented
· Series of analytical studies (specific topics to be determined by the Project Committee) and dissemination of analytical studies (to policy makers and researchers)	· National Household Surveys completed
· Technical and policy staff of various government entities to trained (including on-the-job training)	
· Strategy document, written by the Project Committee and dissemination of strategy (including to the general public)	
· Workshops and/or study tours on	

international experience

Source: Trust Fund Grant Document/Restructuring Paper

The PDO indicators adopted when the project was approved were inadequate . They were for the most part output indicators. The new PDO indicators were excessive in numbers and were unachievable, especially given that the project duration was short.

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy):

This Review will assess the project performance on the basis of the initial and revised outcome indicators organized around two sub-objectives:

Original project : May 2006--September 2012:

- **Strengthening the ability of the Government of Iraq to make informed decisions towards reducing poverty and protecting the vulnerable : Substantial**

Performance targets achieved were the following: (i) a data tabulation report from IHSES-1 was made available in January 2009, and was available on the internet in Arabic and English, (ii) three other targets related capacity building (statistics and data treatment) were also met as a substantial core team of staff proficient in poverty analysis now exists in the Central Statistical Organization, and the Kurdistan Regional Statistics Office since 2006, (iii) a Poverty Assessment was published based on 2007 data, and official poverty line adopted by Council of Ministers in 2010 and the poverty headcount from the 2012 survey was officially released thereafter, and finally (iv) the sixth target related to PRS preparation was also achieved as a Poverty Reduction Strategy was drafted based in part on the 2007 household survey data, and was formally adopted by the Government in 2009. The ICR did not provide evidence on the completion of studies supporting the PSIA, or the holding of workshops and study tours on international experience.

In summary, progress toward project outcome included (i) the production of data in connection with the completion of the IHSES-1, (ii) increased technical capacity in the data and statistical treatment, and (iii) the completion of a poverty assessment and a Poverty Reduction Strategy . Studies to support a PSIA and international experience were not documented.

- **Strengthening the ability of the Government of Iraq to make informed decisions towards creating jobs : Negligible**

The ICR had limited evidence on what was achieved toward helping the Government in crafting policies supporting the creation of jobs. It only mentions that the poverty reduction strategy focused on raising employment incomes, without much specificity.

Restructured project : October 2012- June 2013:

- **Strengthening the ability of the Government of Iraq to make informed decisions towards reducing poverty and improving safety nets in Iraq : Modest**

As indicated in the ICR (p. 26), the first PDO indicator was met as all Governorates had high quality data on household income, expenditure and living standards when the project closed . Two surveys were completed in 2007 and 2012, and the quality of the data was considered above average .

The second PDO indicator was partially achieved as IHSES data were used for published Poverty Assessments based on 2007 survey data. On the contrary, the work on the Poverty and Social impact Assessments (PSIA) and analysis of the PDS reform, or other policy reforms, was not completed . Performance towards intermediate outcomes was as follows: (i) the process for updating the poverty line and analyzing poverty was established and a report on trends in poverty between 2007 and 2012 was issued, (ii) the poverty analysis from the first national household survey was widely disseminated in Iraq and externally, as was the second survey poverty headcount estimate, and (iii) technical staffs of various government entities were trained on poverty assessment and Poverty and Social Impact Analysis, as the target of 30 was reached. A substantial core team of staff proficient in poverty analysis now exists in the Central Statistical organization and associated government services .

Towards the third PDO indicator, (i) a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) was developed based on an analysis of the 2007 national household survey and was adopted by the parliament in 2010, (ii) the PRS implementation was

delayed and currently consists of \$ 500 million allocated to projects which are designated as “poverty projects”. The three following intermediate outcomes were partially achieved : (i) the first annual PRS monitoring report was to be completed by the end of 2012, but has been delayed because of the lag in the availability of the results from second national household survey . It was expected to be done by early 2014 in the form of a World Bank poverty assessment, (ii) A Poverty assessment was completed and published in book form entitled “Confronting Poverty in Iraq” (2010), but no analytical studies were completed, and (iii) finally a gender-poverty assessment was planned for 2013, but was also delayed by the late finalization of the 2012 national survey.

The fourth PDO indicator was missed as the PRS integration in the budget did not occur .

In line with the fifth PDO, two National Household Surveys (NHS) were completed in 2007 and in 2013. Three intermediate indicators were also achieved as follows : (i) data tabulation report from the first NHS are available on the internet in Arabic and English since January 2009, (ii) computer-based quality control, field-based data entry and the use of small field work teams pioneered under the first NHS were being routinely used by the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) in follow-up surveys, including the second NHS. The CSO’s Data Analysis Unit, created and trained under the project, was using the software and analytical methods learned in the first NHS on other surveys, and finally (iii) Statistical staff trained (person days) reached 2464 against a target of 1000.

- **Strengthening the ability of the Government of Iraq to make informed decisions towards creating jobs** : Negligible

As indicated in the design section, there were no specific PDO indicators or intermediate indicators to track performance under this sub-objective. While performance achieved under the first sub-objective could have an indirect impact on the Government’s ability to chart out policies and instruments to address unemployment issues, the ICR did not provide substantive material to support this assumption . This review rates performance under this sub-objective as negligible.

5. Efficiency:

Modest

There was no ex-ante or ex-post economic analysis for this project . The major source of inefficiency seems to have come from the long delays in implementing the project from the initial 2-3 years to the more than 7 years of actual implementation. Despite the doubling of the project life, an amount of about 10 percent of the committed resources was not disbursed and used to fund activities that could have contributed to achieving the outcome . Moreover, as the project drags on, the costs of procured goods and services tend to increase, with a negative effect on the resources efficiency.

The ICR reported, by way of comparison, that a Bank project supporting a household budget survey in Yemen, which faced similar capacity and security challenges, envisaged a total cost of around US\$ 4.0 million with US\$2.6 million coming from trust funds . Allowing that the Iraq project had financed two surveys, one would not expect the cost of two surveys to be double the cost of one survey, as some capacity built during the first survey could be leveraged for the second. The ICR concluded that, in any event, the project cost does appear high compared to the Yemen case .

Long delays in the project implementation have led to increased costs in the project . The project context as well as implementation arrangements didn't allow the disbursement of all project proceeds, and project costs seem to have been higher in comparison to other Bank projects executed in similar contexts (ICR, p.23).

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

	Rate Available?	Point Value	Coverage/Scope*
Appraisal	No		
ICR estimate		%	%

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

6. Outcome:

Moderately Unsatisfactory :

Original project : 49.7 percent of disbursed amount : Moderately Unsatisfactory

Relevance of objective was substantial, while relevance of design was modest as detailed under Section 3. Efficacy was Substantial for sub-objective 1 and was Negligible for sub-objective 2.

Restructured project : 50.3 percent of disbursed amount : Moderately Unsatisfactory

Relevance of objective was substantial, while relevance of design was modest . Efficacy was Modest for sub-objective 1 and efficacy was Negligible for sub-objective 2.

Efficiency was **modest**, due to long delays in the project implementation that led to increased costs . The project context as well as implementation arrangements didn't allow the disbursement of all project proceeds, and project costs seem to have been higher in comparison to other Bank projects executed in similar contexts .

Applying the harmonized IEG/OPCS formula $[(3*0.5)+(3*0.5)= 3.0]$ for assessing restructured projects, overall outcome is rated as **moderately unsatisfactory** .

a. Outcome Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

7. Rationale for Risk to Development Outcome Rating:

The ICR noted two categories of risks to the achieved development outcome : (i) as regards to capacity building risks, the Central Statistical Organization has the capacity to continue to undertake household surveys, and while this capacity might deteriorate over time, it is likely to remain strong, unless the Government makes a decision to cut financial resources in the budget for further work on data collection and poverty strategy formulation, (ii) regarding the pro-poor policies risks, some reluctance to fully incorporate the findings of the poverty reduction strategy into the budget was observed, and the Public Distribution System reform could not be completed .

The major source of risks threatening sustainability of the project results lies in the perspective for adequate country stability and capacity for socio-economic reform in the near future . Recent security developments in Iraq are dangerously threatening the progress achieved on the security and the socio -economic fronts as well. Currently and in the immediate future, the focus of the Government will be on security and political issues, and the pursuit of socio-economic reforms supported by this project will likely be slowed down . Despite these risks, the country team believes that the Government has shown signs of willingness to build on achieved outcome and move forward with the reform agenda.

a. Risk to Development Outcome Rating : Significant

8. Assessment of Bank Performance:

a. Quality at entry:

The project was strategically relevant as it aimed to help the country enhance its database and information needed for improved socio-economic management. The Bank has experience with household surveys and poverty strategies, and the project design was supposed to draw on this expertise . The combination of the two trust funds aimed to ensure that there will be enough resources to support capacity building and organization to carry out the survey and the analysis work . However, it turned out that the project budgeting was tentative, as the cost of the committed resources were doubled in the course of project implementation (from \$6.6 million at approval to \$13.1 million after the last letter agreement amendment in 2012).

The design of implementation and M&E arrangements was mixed . The combination of a borrower-executed grant and a Bank-executed grant was a sound approach, as Bank performance could compensate the limited implementation capacity of the Government services . However, M&E arrangements should have been tightened up more to take into account the post-conflict environment and capacity weaknesses of the country .

As mentioned in Section 3.b, the project design overlooked that Iraq was a post-conflict country, and that simplicity should have been the guiding principle in designing activities and operations to be implemented on the ground. Instead, the Bank put forward the Bank's latest products in the areas of poverty assessment and strategy preparation, which proved to be capacity intensive and not appropriate for a country with security and technical capacity challenges.

The Bank's team identified general project risks, and the measures to be taken to mitigate those risks. The risks assessment turned out to be very optimistic, and in hindsight the appraisal team might have been more candid about those risks (mostly political risks) and taken better mitigation measures. The other shortcoming of the appraisal was to underestimate the time needed to carry out the project, as well as the ability of the government to handle its fiduciary responsibilities, and to ensure financial oversight and auditing.

Quality-at-Entry Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

b. Quality of supervision:

Grant disbursement arrangements were not in place on time, and Bank supervision was unable to facilitate progress. It is only when the project was under threat of a halt that the Bank waived the prohibition of designated accounts. This weakness slowed down initiation of project activities.

Moreover, throughout the project life, project supervision was hampered by the country's security situation, high rotation of TTLs who could not reside in the country, and weak M&E arrangements set up when the project was designed. Most technical capacity activities were held outside the country and supervision meetings took place at that time, in a context detached from the country's realities.

Quality of Supervision Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating : Moderately Unsatisfactory

9. Assessment of Borrower Performance:

a. Government Performance:

The project coordination was entrusted to the Ministry of Planning, but as noted in the ICR, extended isolation of the country from the external world created a situation whereby Iraq officials were unfamiliar with Bank requirements in the areas of financial management, procurement and disbursement. When the project was approved, the government was not ready for implementation. It took a while for the government officials to get used to the Bank's systems, and to perceive how to accommodate the interests of both parties.

During project implementation, the Government remained committed to the project objectives, despite the urgent security issues that clouded the entire period of project implementation. However, it lagged behind in incorporating the results of the PRS into the budget or national planning process, and in spearheading the studies and the training needed to complete a PSIA operation. In all, while the Government showed increased support to the project, it suffered from long isolation from the donor community, prevalence of insecurity and limited capacity to undertake some of the project activities (PRS and PSIA).

Government Performance Rating Moderately Unsatisfactory

b. Implementing Agency Performance:

The project was coordinated by a Project Management Team (PMT), with all necessary supporting staff and logistics provided by the Government. Coordination by the PMT was effective and appreciated by the Bank staff. Besides the Project Management Team, the project was implemented by various agencies, including the Central Statistical Office (CSO), which did most of the survey work. The ICR reported that the CSO's performance on the implementation of the household surveys was outstanding, particularly considering the security situation, poor internet connections, and delays in wage payments. Overall, despite the limited interaction between the Bank staff and the local teams, the PMT and the CSO performed well in pursuing the project objectives.

Implementing Agency Performance Rating :	Moderately Satisfactory
Overall Borrower Performance Rating :	Moderately Unsatisfactory

10. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization:

a. M&E Design:

The 2006 project paper did not discuss monitoring and evaluation issues . The grant agreement of July 2006 stipulated that the Government had to report on progress toward the development objectives . Most of the indicators for project results were output oriented, such as the completion of the household survey, analytical studies and the formulation of a Poverty Strategy . It is only in 2009 that a final results matrix was finalized and implemented .

b. M&E Implementation:

Field monitoring of project progress was hampered by security concerns, as staff had few missions to Baghdad to interact with key government officials . While quarterly reports on financial management were prepared on a regular basis by the Fiduciary Management Agent, this was not enough for stakeholders to identify obstacles, and agree on corrective measures that plagued the project . Starting 2007, supervision reports on performance indicators were available, but the restructurings in 2008 and 2010 did not report on the results framework, and its implementation .

c. M&E Utilization:

Given the difficulties in launching the project, the high rotation of TTLs and the weaknesses of the PMT, the use of M&E was delayed. Had the M&E system been working smoothly, implementation shortcomings would have been identified earlier and corrective measures initiated .

M&E Quality Rating : Modest

11. Other Issues

a. Safeguards:

This was a Category C project, and did not entail any physical works or environmental impacts .

b. Fiduciary Compliance:

The ICR reported that there were problems with financial management and procurement as detailed below . The financial management of the project was difficult because of the security situation, weaknesses in the banking system and in public sector financial management, and a project that required a large number of small payments to survey workers throughout the 18 governorates of the country . Over the course of project execution, steps were undertaken to improve project management, install accountants in each governorate, and have a designated internal auditor in the PMT.

The scope for the fiduciary monitoring agent (FMA) was expanded to advance project implementation, to include pre-screening of withdrawal applications and monitoring payments made through the Designated Account . The Bank and the FMA assisted the PMT to improve financial management performance, particularly with tracing payments and providing monitoring sheets and other kinds of support . According to the ICR (p.19), the Interim Unaudited Financial Reports (IFRs) and accounting records have been generally satisfactory . Recent audits have been up to date and unqualified.

The project document rated procurement risk as high at the start of the project . Procurement was initially affected by the lack of good internet facilities and IT capacity in the Governorates and proved to be a difficult issue in the early days of the project. There was improvement over time as procurement was rated satisfactory by July of 2007.

c. Unintended Impacts (positive or negative):

d. Other:

12. Ratings:	ICR	IEG Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome:	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	A split assessment found that outcome was MU before and after restructuring, resulting in a MU rating for the overall project outcome .
Risk to Development Outcome:	Significant	Significant	
Bank Performance :	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The Bank overlooked the need for simplicity, given the post-conflict nature of the country and capacity challenges . Risk assessment was very optimistic .
Borrower Performance :	Satisfactory	Moderately Unsatisfactory	The government was not ready for implementation, and lagged behind in incorporating the results of the PRS into the budget or national planning process, and in launching the studies and the training needed to complete a PSIA operation
Quality of ICR :		Unsatisfactory	

NOTES:

- When insufficient information is provided by the Bank for IEG to arrive at a clear rating, IEG will downgrade the relevant ratings as warranted beginning July 1, 2006.
- The "Reason for Disagreement/Comments" column could cross-reference other sections of the ICR Review, as appropriate.

13. Lessons:

IEG adapts the following two lessons cited in the ICR :

(i) In a fragile environment, one cannot be expected to produce results quickly, particularly when public institutions are weak (page 26). This provides more evidence to a common lesson observed in post -conflict environment that building technical capacity is the most urgent and sensible activity to engage in during the first years of social-economic recovery.

(ii) The combination of a Bank-executed trust fund with a recipient executed trust fund proved to be an effective approach in building capacity in a post-conflict environment (page 26). This operational mode proved effective because it allowed the Bank to provide its technical assistance, and to give the opportunity to the Iraq administration to be exposed to Bank practices, and to deliver key products in the area of poverty assessments, and strategy preparation.

In addition, IEG identified the following three lessons :

(i) Risks identification and mitigation are of paramount importance when operating in post -conflict countries. In this situation, there is need for simplicity and flexibility to accommodate the changing priorities of the borrower, and of other stakeholders in the donor community .

(ii) The Bank needs to pay closer attention to projects that are experiencing significant implementation delays .

Delays in project implementation affect negatively the efficiency of resources, and the change in TTLs affects continuity in the dialogue and the speed of project implementation .

(iii) Finally, given the difficulties associated with the design and implementation of small projects supported by Trust Funds, streamlining and integrating TFs into larger Bank operations can have efficiency gains . Such a move would be cost-effective and might create stronger synergy between the normal Bank operations, and those areas supported by specific donors through TFs .

14. Assessment Recommended? Yes No

15. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The ICR was candid and detailed, but it had substantive weaknesses as summarized below :

- (i) The analytics on efficacy was weak . While progress on target indicators was reported, there was limited verification and assessment as regard to the extent to which the expected specific outcomes and objectives were achieved or missed .
- (ii) The graph on p.9 about the disbursement profile was incomplete, as it omitted disbursements of Bank-managed TF, and did not give a thorough picture of disbursement operations of the entire project .
- (iii) The ICR didn't distinguish between the Government and the implementing agency when reporting the performance of the borrower .
- (iv) Attention to detail would have improved the ICR quality . As an illustration, the original closing date on page 5 was wrongly reported as being set on 07/24/2026.
- (v) ICR length- main text exceeded the norm of 15 pages, consistent with OPCS ICR Guidelines .

a.Quality of ICR Rating : Unsatisfactory