



1. Project Data

Project ID P145634	Project Name Central Asia Road Links - Phase 2	
Country Central Asia	Practice Area(Lead) Transport	
L/C/TF Number(s) IDA-55930,IDA-D0300	Closing Date (Original) 31-Aug-2020	Total Project Cost (USD) 42,116,727.35
Bank Approval Date 25-Feb-2015	Closing Date (Actual) 31-Dec-2020	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	45,000,000.00	0.00
Revised Commitment	45,000,000.00	0.00
Actual	42,116,727.35	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 the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, page 6), were:

"To increase transport connectivity between the Republic of Tajikistan and neighboring countries along priority cross-border road links in Sugd Oblast, and to support improvements in road operations and asset management practices".



This review is based on the two objectives:

1. To increase transport connectivity between the Republic of Tajikistan (hereafter Tajikistan) and neighboring countries along priority cross-border road links in Sugd Oblast.
2. To support improvements in road operations and asset management practices.

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

No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

This project with interventions in Sugd Oblast in Tajikistan was the second phase of the Central Asia Road Links (CARs) program, aimed at increasing transport connectivity between neighboring countries in Central Asia along priority cross-border road links, and supporting improvements in road operations and asset management practices. The first phase rehabilitated cross-border road links between the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. The second phase of the program, aimed to improve Tajikistan's connectivity with the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan, along priority cross-border road links and to support improvements in road operations and asset management practices.

There were three components (PAD, pages 7 - 8).

1. Rehabilitation of priority road sections in the Sugd Oblast. The estimated cost at appraisal was US\$51.0 million. The actual cost was US\$43.6 million. This component aimed at rehabilitating about 70 kilometers (km) of roads in Sugd Oblast, including and within close proximity of the road linking Kuckkak - Kim-Isfara-Gulistan Dehmoi- Proletarsk Madaniyat, and Kanibadam -Patar.

2. Improvement of Road Operations and Asset Management Practices. The estimated cost at appraisal was US\$2.0 million. The actual cost was US\$5.0 million. This component aimed at improving road operations and road asset management practices. Activities in this component: (i) a review of technical standards, norms and parameters on vehicle (truck) weight and axle load limits, developing an axle loading control plan, and the equipment required for implementing the plan: (ii) procurement of a roughness profiler: (iii) installing about 40 permanent traffic count stations: (iv) support for adapting the road data base to be used by 62 maintenance units: and (v) support for deploying a road asset management system in the Ministry of Transport (MOT).

3. Project Management and Implementation. The estimated cost at appraisal was US\$1.0 million. The actual cost was US\$0.8 million. This component aimed at supporting project implementation, through providing goods, consultants' services, training, incremental operating costs, and support for the project's external audits.

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



Project cost. The estimated cost at appraisal was US\$54.0 million. The actual cost was US\$49.5 million.

Project financing. The project was financed by an IDA credit and grants of US\$45.00 million (IDA credit of US\$38.25 million, and IDA grant of US\$6.75 million). Funding for this project came from both national IDA allocation (approximately US\$14.5 million) and regional IDA financing (approximately US\$30.5 million). The amount disbursed was US\$49.5 million. There was parallel financing for complementary activities for cross-border activities from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Union (EU).

Borrower contribution. The borrower contribution was estimated at US\$9.0 million at appraisal. The actual contribution was US\$7.4 million.

Dates. The project became effective on October 12, 2015, and was to close on August 31, 2020. The project closed four months behind schedule on December 31, 2020.

Other changes. There were three Level 2 restructurings.

The following changes were made through the first restructuring on October 12, 2018.

- Savings of US\$10.5 million were realized due to lower price bids for component one activities. These savings were used to: (i) prepare detailed work under the Transport Sector Development Strategy (component two), and (ii) financing additional activities such as, installing additional traffic counters and solar panels, a server for Weigh-In Motion System (WIMS), a Road Asset Management System (RAMS), and rehabilitation of 6.7 km of the road link from Kanibadam to Patar border crossing point.

Funds were reallocated between disbursement categories through the second restructuring on July 11, 2019.

Further changes were made through the third restructuring on July 21, 2020.

- The closing date was extended by four months, in the face of disruptions to cross-border movement of goods, due to the COVID - 19 pandemic.
- Savings of US\$2.17 million realized during implementation were used for distributing personal protective equipment, disinfectants for frontline workers, and COVID - 19 test kits for the transport operators.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

Country and sector context. Tajikistan is a remote and poor country in Central Asia, with an economy dependent on the agricultural sector. Diversification of the economy was hence important in the country context. Being landlocked and having a largely mountainous terrain, the road transport mode was important for both passenger and freight traffic, particularly for interregional movements of time-sensitive goods (such as, fruits and vegetables). Given this dependence on this mode, improving road links in the Sugd Oblast, which accounted for about a quarter of Tajikistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and



40% of the country's overall freight movement and improving asset management practices in the sector was important to the Government Strategy.

Country and regional strategy. At appraisal, the PDOs were aligned with the Government's *Living Standards Improvement Strategy (LSIS)* for 2013 - 2015. This strategy recognized the importance of transport connectivity for private sector-led growth, developing human potential, energy dependence and food security. The socio-economic development program of the Sugd region for up to 2015, highlighted the need for improving transport connectivity. The World Bank's doing business trading across border indicator, ranked Tajikistan as 188 out of 189 countries. The PDOs were relevant to the development priorities articulated in Tajikistan's *National Development Strategy (NDS)* until 2030. The PDOs were relevant to two of the four development goals of the NDS namely: (i) exiting from the communication deadlock and turning the country into a transit path: and (ii) expanding productive employment. At the regional level, *the Transport and Trade Facilitation Strategy and the Action Plan of the Central Asia region* for 2008 - 2017, endorsed by the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), identified the rehabilitation of six strategic transport corridors, based on their potential impact on regional economic growth and poverty reduction.

Bank strategy. The PDOs were well-aligned with the Bank strategy. At appraisal, the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for 2015 - 2018 highlighted the need for improving connectivity for facilitating regional and international trade. The Bank's Systematic Country Diagnostic issued in 2018, articulated the need for strategic infrastructure investments. The PDOs were consistent with the three development priorities of the current CPS for 2019 - 2023: (i) building human capital and strengthening social resilience: (ii) improving public institutions: and (iii) fostering private-sector growth.

Bank experience. This project was the first Bank-financed transport sector project in Tajikistan. The design included rehabilitating key road links, and institutional strengthening activities for improving asset management practices. With the savings realized due to the competitive procurement process, the project activities were scaled up appropriately for driving the sector reforms. That said, though the PDOs to improve connectivity were important in the country and regional corridor context, the PDOs as formulated were unambitious, as compared with the Bank's usual criteria for a regional project (that is, having activities in two or more regional countries). The PDOs were focused on rehabilitating priority road links in Sugd Oblast (a specific location in Tajikistan). In this case, the Asian Development Bank and the European Union have taken responsibility for the cross border facilities. The project timing was less than ideal, given the instability in the region, manifested in Tajikistan's border disputes with Kyrgyz Republic. The relevance of the PDO, nevertheless, rated substantial.

Rating

Substantial

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1



Objective

To increase transport connectivity between the Republic of Tajikistan and neighboring countries along priority cross-border road links in Sugd Oblast.

Rationale

Theory of change. The causal links between project activities, outputs and outcomes were logical. Rehabilitation of priority road sections in Sugd Oblast - Tajikistan's entry and exit points for trade and travel to the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan - were likely to increase the volume of freight through the border crossing points, thereby increasing transport connectivity between Tajikistan and neighboring countries.

Outputs (ICR, pages 30 -31).

- 74.40 km of priority roads in Sugd Oblast were rehabilitated. This exceeded the target of 70 km. The ICR (paragraph 35) notes that different construction techniques, including resilient infrastructure solutions and night reflectors were implemented along the 13 km road section. With this rehabilitation, 41.33% of roads in Sugd Oblast were reported to be in good and fair condition. This exceeded that target of 40%.
- 2,658,400 road users benefitted from project activities, exceeding the target of 2,650,400. Of this, 1,329,400 beneficiaries were females, exceeding the target of 1,320,400.

Outcomes (ICR, page 29 -30).

The outputs described above were expected to increase the volume of freight through Gulistan/Kyzyl-Bel and Madaniyat/Kairagach, Patar border-crossing points, and increase the market accessibility index of Sugd Oblast (this index, developed by the Development Research Group (DEC) of the World Bank, is a measure of potential connectivity between villages/towns and big cities).

- The volume of freight through Gulistan/Kyzyl-Bel and Madaniyat/Kairagach, Patar border-crossing points, increased from 359,838 tons/year at the baseline in 2015, to 620,961 tons in 2019, exceeding the target of 550,000 tons in 2019. However, due to the travel restrictions due to COVID-19, the volume dropped dramatically from 620,961 in 2019 to 113,724 tons in December 2020. The ICR (paragraph 31) notes that this significant reduction in traffic volume is expected to be temporary, and traffic is expected to rebound once the pandemic is under control. The IEG concurs with this view based on evidence from the countries that are recovering from the pandemic.
- The market accessibility for Sugd Oblast improved by 11%, from 4.5% at the baseline in 2015 to 5.5% in 2019. This exceeded the target of 5%.
- 94% of road users were satisfied with the rehabilitated roads, exceeding the target of 90% (this result was based on a survey of 1,150 households who lived within 150- 200 meters from the rehabilitated road sections).

Given that the targets were realized, efficacy of this objective is rated substantial.

Rating

Substantial



OBJECTIVE 2

Objective

To support improvements in road operations and asset management practices.

Rationale

Theory of change. The causal links between project activities, outputs and outcomes were logical. Developing and implementing a long term transport sector development strategy, operationalization of the Road Asset Management Database System (RAMS), reviewing the technical standards, norms and parameters on vehicle weight, developing an axle load control plan, buying the equipment necessary to implement the plan, and installation of addition traffic counters and solar panels, were likely to improve road operations and road asset management practices.

Outputs (ICR, pages 15 -16).

- A transport sector development strategy for up to 2030 was developed. This strategy was approved by the Ministry Of Transport (MOT). This document was published and is being used to develop the Government's mid-term development programs, covering two planning cycles 2021 - 2025 and 2026 - 2030.
- The equipment for the Road Asset Management Database System (RAMS) such as the hardware, machinery and equipment (servers, roughness profiler, forty traffic counts along with solar panels on the main roads in different parts of the country), were procured. The relevant staff of the MOT were trained in using the system.
- The Dynamic Weigh-in-Motion (WIM) was installed as targeted.
- The activity associated with completing a feasibility study and design of investments for the fourth phase of the Central Asia Road Links (CAR) program was only partially completed, with an expected completion date of April 2021.
- The MOT with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and customs officers prepared a list of the personal protective equipment for COVID -19, to be used by transport operators at border points. This equipment is now being distributed at the border crossing points.

Outcomes

The outputs described above were expected to contribute to two outcomes. One, operationalization of the RAMS, and two, that the MOT approves a strategic plan on weight and axle load control.

- The Road Asset Management Database System was operational when the project closed. The RAMS hardware, however, was too near to the closing date due to various delays (including procurement delays initially and later due to COVID - 19).
- The MOT approved the strategic plan on weight and axle load control. This plan was presented at the regional level (Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation Program (CAREC)).

Given that the intended outcomes were realized and that the RAMS system and a strategic plan on weight and axle load control is necessary for improvements in road operations and asset management practices, efficacy of this objective is rated as substantial.



Rating
Substantial

OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

Given that the outcomes were realized, and the activities completed with minor shortcomings, overall efficacy is rated substantial.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

Economic analysis. A cost-benefit analysis was conducted using the Highway Development and Management Model (HDM -4), both at appraisal and at closure for component one activities. These activities accounted for 94% of the appraisal estimate and 88% of the actual cost. The project benefits were assumed to come from travel time savings and savings in vehicle operating costs. The Net Present Value (NPV) at 12% discount rate was US\$27.4 million at closure, as compared to the NPV of US\$25.3 million at appraisal using the same discount rate. The ex post Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) was 26.7%, as compared to the ex ante EIRR of 16.7%. The ex post EIRR was higher, due to the higher-than-expected traffic flows on the rehabilitated road links.

Administrative and operational issues. Savings were realized on component one activities due to the competitive bidding process. These were utilized for scaling up project activities during the first restructuring, and for distributing personal protective equipment, disinfectants, and COVID - 19 test kits for the transport operators in 2020. However, there were delays in the initial years due to a combination of factors, including the low quality of initial outputs prepared by international consultants for the National Transport Strategy, delays in supply of RAMS-related equipment and operationalization of the Weigh-in-Motion (WIM) system and issues associated with occupational health and safety issues (discussed in section 10). The delays were exacerbated by factors beyond the control of the project, major weather events (above average rainfall, glacial melting and subsequent flooding), which caused major damage to the Kim-Kuchkak Road section, and the impact of COVID-19 on the timely delivery of imported equipment. However, these factors were rectified, and all project activities were completed, with just a four months extension of the closing date.

Overall, efficiency is rated substantial.

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	✓	16.70	94.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	26.70	88.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

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

6. Outcome

The relevance of the PDO to the Government and Bank strategies is rated substantial. The overall efficacy is rated substantial, given the minor shortcomings. Efficiency is rated substantial, given the economic justification for the project. Taking these ratings into effect, the project outcome is satisfactory, reflecting minor shortcomings in the achievement of its objectives, in its efficiency and relevance.

a. Outcome Rating
Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome

Government commitment. The long term sustainability of the Road Asset Management System (RAMS) established under the auspices of this project could be undermined by the lack of sufficient budget support. This risk is considered substantial.

Exposure to natural disasters. Climate change induced glacial melting and associated flooding could pose a risk to the sustainability of this project's investments. This underscores the need for the Government to monitor these impacts and ensure that the necessary infrastructure investments are made. This risk is considered moderate.

Political risk. There is a risk to the activities financed under the project, given the political instability in the region and disputes over borders (over issues such as water for irrigation purposes and pasture grounds). This risk is considered moderate.

Road safety risk. According to a beneficiary survey conducted during implementation indicated that over a third (37%) of the respondents (557) cited road safety concerns due to drivers significantly exceeding the speed limits, as serious concerns. Other issues raised were, pedestrians walking along the road in



dangerous areas, children crossing the roads not in the pedestrian crossings, and drivers overtaking areas in areas forbidden for overtaking.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

This was the first transport sector financed by the World Bank in Tajikistan. The project was prepared in close coordination with other donors financing complementary activities at the regional level (PAD, paragraph 35). The civil works to be implemented under the project were "climate proof" and took into account climate adaptation measures (PAD, paragraph 11). The implementation arrangements were appropriate, with the regional coordination mechanism of the Central Asia Regional Cooperation (CAREC) responsible for coordination and policy-related issues (such as, harmonization of standards, norms and parameters on vehicle weight and axle load limits), and the Project Implementation Group (PIG) in the Ministry of Transport (MOT) responsible for project execution (PAD, paragraphs 32 and 33). Several risks were identified at appraisal, including high stakeholder and governance risks, weak implementation capacity, procurement risks, and risks associated recent social tensions along the border between Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. Several mitigation measures were incorporated at design, including recruitment of a reputable construction supervision consultant, hiring individual consultants with prior experience in donor-supported projects, and developing citizen engagement and communication activities. Even with mitigation measures, overall project risk was rated high, given that this was the first transport sector project in Tajikistan (PAD, paragraph 40). Appropriate arrangements were made for safeguards and fiduciary compliance (discussed in section 10).

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

There were thirteen supervision missions during the project, with missions twice a year as per the norm. The supervision missions included on-site visits. The supervision team made the appropriate decision to restructure the project and ensure utilization of savings to strengthen the institutional strengthening dimension of the project. According to the information provided subsequently by the team, the continuity of leadership was maintained with two Task-Team Leaders (TTLs) during the project lifetime.

The support provided by the supervision team aided in safeguards and fiduciary compliance (discussed in section 10). A minor aspect to note on M&E: the team could have provided more support through training the implementing agency in monitoring the key PDO indicator associated with the market accessibility index for Tajikistan (discussed in section 9b).



Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The theory of change adequately represented the logical framework, and how the project and outputs were to aid in realizing the PDO. The key outcome indicators were appropriate for monitoring project performance. The two outcome indicators relating to the connectivity component of the project were: (i) the volume of freight through Gulistan/ Kyzyl-Bel Madaniyat/ Kairagach border crossing points, and (ii) the market accessibility index of Sugd Oblast. These indicators were attributable to project activities. The indicators relating to asset management practices were: (i) satisfaction of users with the improvements along the completed road users, (ii) the Ministry of Transport (MOT) approves and presents a strategic plan on weight and axle load control at the regional level, and (iii) a road asset management system is operational for analysis and planning of road works (PAD, paragraph 20). The key indicators although adequate, were not ambitious, for a regional project (this pragmatic approach, however, has been due to the historical silo mentality between the states concerned). The Ministry of Transport was responsible for M&E. There were however no indicators aimed at monitoring road safety features.

b. M&E Implementation

The ICR (paragraph 72) notes that overall, M&E data were collected and analyzed in a methodological manner by the Project Implementation Group (PIG). As further noted, although the methodology to calculate market accessibility index was detailed in the PAD, the PIG had difficulties in measuring this indicator. The ICR notes that while the Bank team supported the PIG group in providing calculations for this specific indicator, training the M&E staff would have helped in measuring this indicator. Excepting for this, all other indicators were regularly updated during the project lifetime.

c. M&E Utilization

The M&E indicators were used by both the PIG and the Bank teams during supervision activities to assess performance and ensure that the project was on track towards achieving the development objectives.

Although there were minor shortcomings, including the challenges associated with regular monitoring of the market accessibility index, given that the indicators were adequate to track achievement of the PDO, the overall M&E is rated as substantial.



M&E Quality Rating

Substantial

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project was a Category B (Partial Assessment) project under the World Bank safeguard policies. Two safeguard policies were triggered at appraisal: Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01), and Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12) at appraisal (PAD, page 17).

Environmental Assessment. The PAD (paragraph 58) noted that the adverse environmental project impacts were expected to be site-specific and transient (such as, air pollution from trucks, soil disturbance during earthmoving and material extraction, loss of vegetation, and disposal of construction and household solid waste). The draft of the site-specific Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was prepared and publicly-disclosed at appraisal (PAD, paragraph 59).

The ICR (paragraph 75) notes that there was compliance with environmental safeguards during implementation. On the positive side, the project provided innovative solutions to environmental issues, such as installing oil collection systems and tanks along the road where oil was leaking from the ground at the sites of old wells and drip irrigation system for along one section of the road. The ICR (paragraph 76) notes that there were periods when environmental safeguard compliance was rated as moderately satisfactory, due to an incident in 2018, where a member of the contractor's office was killed by paving equipment. This accident reflected a lack of full compliance with occupational health and safety measures. The ICR notes that the MOT, the PIG and contractors responded promptly and quickly, including through additional safety training.

Involuntary Resettlement. The PAD noted that there could be land acquisition and compensation for assets (such as fences, trees and crops), as well as the demolition and compensation for a small number of structures along the section between Kuckkak - Gulistan and Dehmoi - Madaniyat. A site-specific Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) for the road segments financed by the Bank was prepared and publicly disclosed at appraisal (PAD, paragraph 57). The RAP described the land acquisition and compensation entitlements for the users of the project affected land parcels, as well as specific terms and conditions for temporary impacts occurred during construction.

The ICR (paragraph 78) notes that 48 people were affected by the project activities and that all project affected people were compensated by project closure. The ICR (paragraph 79) notes that during implementation, public and proactive consultations were held with the Project Affected Persons (PAPs) and households living adjacent to the road sections. The project conducted baseline, intermediate and end line beneficiary surveys aimed at: (i) identifying general public awareness and beneficiary perception of the project activities; (ii) assessing the impact of civil works on the environment; and (iii) assessing beneficiaries' satisfaction with civil works. The end-line survey findings showed that the general public awareness of the project activities had increased from 65% at the beginning of the project to 87% at the end. 83% of the respondents were very satisfied with the civil works and quality of roads.

The ICR (paragraph 80) notes that the project used the Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRMs) used by the Ministry of Transport (MOT) and the local communities. A GRM was established to register complaints



and provide feedback to beneficiaries. The complaints were filed and addressed at the local level (jamoat), regional level (Regional Coordinator of the Project Implementation Group (PIG) and national level (MOT/PIG) through existing communication and information channels. The GRM was accessible to beneficiaries in the target sites. The ICR (paragraph 80) notes that the GRM of the project was assessed as "satisfactory".

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial Management. The Ministry of Transport (MOT) was responsible for fiduciary management. A financial management assessment conducted at appraisal, concluded that the financial management arrangements did not meet the Bank's requirements at appraisal, but that the arrangements would meet the requirements upon meeting two conditions, i.e., installation of software and finalizing the financial management chapter of the Project Operational Manual. The overall financial risk was assessed as substantial after mitigation measures (PAD, page 33). The ICR (paragraph 81) notes that some shortcomings relating to processing payments during implementation were addressed. The quarterly interim financial reports under the project were issued in a timely fashion. Annual audits of financial statements were submitted in a timely fashion and the audits were unqualified.

Procurement. An assessment of the MOT's capacity to manage was conducted at appraisal. Although the MOT had executed several donor-funded projects in the sector, it did not have prior experience with Bank-financed projects. The overall procurement risk was rated substantial at appraisal (PAD, page 37). The mitigation measures, included creating additional procurement capacity during implementation, and continuous training of MOT staff involved in procurement activities. With mitigation measures, procurement risk was rated substantial (PAD, page 37). The ICR (paragraph 82) notes that procurement was deemed to be satisfactory. There were no procurement issues and the ICR does not report any cases of mis procurement.

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	Substantial	Substantial	



Quality of ICR

Substantial

12. Lessons

The ICR (pages 26 -27) draws the following main lessons from the experience of implementing this project, presented with some adaptation of language.

- 1. When implementing projects with a new client and in the context of the weak implementation capacity, the project design needs to be simple.** The design of this project was simple and straightforward to be implemented by the Ministry of Transport and the Project Implementation Group.
- 2. In the face of more frequent and intense climatic events occurring in the region, the design should include climate resilient infrastructure to minimize vulnerability of the physical assets.** While this project was being implemented, glacial melting along with prolonged and heavy rains caused mudslides and flooding throughout Tajikistan. The cross-coordinated work on the climate resilient infrastructure by the Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Emergency and other bodies was key in responding to these climatic events.
- 3. A road investment's impact on economic growth often depends on a variety of factors external to the road investment, making the theory of change complex and challenging to validate through an evaluation.** The lesson from this project is that in addition to the improvement of physical connectivity, important institutional reforms on trade and transport facilitations through cross-border measures are required to complement the physical connectivity issues.
- 4. The long term impact of road safety measures could be undermined due to lack of enforcement of road safety regulations.** Although road safety measures were incorporated into the design of the roads under this project, the results of the beneficiary survey identified road safety as a major concern. This highlights the need for enforcing road safety strategy and mechanisms for enforcing road safety regulations in road sector projects.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No

14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR is well-written and provides a detailed overview of the project. The theory of change is logical and clearly discusses the links between project activities, their outputs and intended outcomes. It candidly discusses the issues associated with the indicator on the market accessibility index. The quality of evidence and analysis is aligned to the messages outlined in the ICR, and the ICR adheres to the guidelines. The ICR draws solid lessons from the experience of implementing this project. The ICR appropriately includes the Borrower's ICR in Annex 5 (ICR, page 45).



a. Quality of ICR Rating
Substantial