



# Evaluation Summary



International  
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## Roads for Development (R4D) - Final Independent Evaluation

### Quick Facts

**Countries:** *Timor-Leste*

**Final Evaluation of Phase 1:** *5-10 March 2017*

**Mode of Evaluation:** *Independent*

**Administrative Office:** *CO-Jakarta*

**Technical Office:** *ROAP*

**Evaluation Manager:** *Pamornrat Pringsulaka*

**Evaluation Consultant:** *Ty Morrissey*

**Project End:** *31 March 2017*

**Project Code:** *TIM/12/01/AUS*

**Donor & Project Budget:** *DFAT (US\$ 32,000,000)*

**Keywords:** *Capacity building, Rural roads, Local contractors, Rehabilitation, Timor Leste*

### Background & Context

The Roads for Development (R4D) program is a Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL) program which the Government of Australia (GoA) supports with technical assistance. R4D seeks to support the development and management of the rural roads network in Timor-Leste. The International Labour Organization (ILO), as the delivery organisation, provides technical and managerial expertise to implement the program in partnership with GoTL. The program combines physical works, including the rehabilitation and maintenance of rural roads, institutional support and development and associated capacity building initiatives both within GoTL and at local contractor level.

The goal of the R4D is: *Women and men in rural Timor-Leste are deriving social and economic benefits from improved road access.* The goal statement is supported by three outcome statements:

- Outcome 1: The GoTL is effectively planning, budgeting and managing rural road works using labour-based methods, as appropriate
- Outcome 2: Local civil works contractors effectively implement investments in rural road works, using labour-based methods where appropriate
- Outcome 3: Rural road development adequately resourced and planning and implementation of investments effectively coordinated between Government agencies and (donor)projects

### Program Strategy

The programme strategy of R4D phase 1 was to develop and institutionalize adequate capacities in the public sector – in particular within the Directorate of Roads, Bridges and Flood Control (DRBFC) of the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communications (MPWTC) – and in the private sector, that will enable GoTL to effectively and equitably plan, budget and implement investments in rural road construction, rehabilitation and maintenance using local contractors.

### Evaluation Scope

The primary purpose of the final evaluation was to *evaluate the achievement and progress of R4D against its objectives and targets. Furthermore, it provides the opportunity to identify the lessons learned and make recommendations that will guide the implementation of second phase of R4D (i.e. in R4D-SP), also building on the design of R4D-SP as reflected in the R4D Design Update Document.*

## *Evaluation Methodology*

In addressing the ILO evaluation criteria, the final evaluation focused on the following five key evaluation questions:

- To what extent has the program made appropriate choices about the use of labour-based approaches and technologies?
- To what extent has the program contributed to the development of a viable contracting industry?
- How appropriate were R4D's capacity building approaches with the MPWTC?
- How adequate was GoTL ownership? What constraints was GoTL facing in terms of budget and human resource allocations? What alternative strategies are recommended to improve progress for phase 2?
- What are the implications of GoTL's emerging decentralization agenda for the rural roads sector? How can R4D respond to these? Are there any other major changes in the context that require adjustments from the program for phase 2?
- Based on the lessons learned from phase 1 of R4D, what are the recommendations for R4D-SP (i.e. phase 2)?

The evaluation maintained a participatory approach. Data and information collection processes included: (i) an initial desk review of all documents related to R4D and key stakeholders; (ii) an in-country mission from 5-10 February 2017; (iii) interviews and group discussions with key informants and stakeholders from R4D, MPWTC, DFAT and other relevant GoTL agencies; (iv) synthesis and analysis of other secondary data sources available through R4D.

## **Main Findings & Conclusions**

**Relevance and Strategic Fit:** The overall strategic direction of the program outlined in key planning, implantation and management documents is consistent with the strategies and priorities affirmed by the Government of Timor-Leste (GoTL), DFAT and the ILO. The program continues to reinforce the GoTL's efforts to maintain its road network and reaffirms the importance of rural road investments as part of the overall strategy.

**Validity of Project Design:** The R4D project design is a comprehensive and detailed document that retains a high level of relevance and validity.

Development objectives and outcomes remain relevant and implementation and management arrangements are aligned to GoTL approaches, policies and priorities. An important recognition has been provided in the acknowledgement of the design's validity as part of R4D Phase 2 Design Update Annex (DUA). It is important for R4D to continue reviewing progress and engagement to ensure its implementation and management arrangements remain relevant and appropriate, particularly in light of the transition to technical advisory support in a decentralised operating context.

**Project Progress and Effectiveness:** The R4D program is effective in that planned activities were implemented and results (in some cases were exceeded). However, achievement was not equally distributed across the results framework with some under achievement in key areas, often due to external and extenuating circumstances outside the control of the program.

**Efficiency of Resource Use:** R4D's resources were allocated strategically and for the most part effectively to achieve defined outcomes. The decision to implement more expensive pavement treatments needs to be evaluated to determine overall economic-cost benefit and reaffirmation of the decision to strategically shift the program away from quantity (i.e. #km of roads) to focus on quality (i.e. pavement treatments).

**Effectiveness of Management Arrangements:** Overall the R4D team has sufficient skills and experience to implement and achieve desired outcomes, however the program has at times suffered with key positions remaining unfilled which has resulted in some implementation delays. In terms of governance, R4D would have benefitted from the formulation and implementation of a high-level steering committee but in moving forward would be better served by two strategically placed groups to support technical and management requirements.

**Impact Orientation and Sustainability:** R4D has made tentative steps towards the realisation of positive impacts for both men and women along the rural road network. However, additional work is required to consolidate the immediate gains at the institutional level through on-going capacity, systems and process development. For sustainability, R4D has sought sustainable outcomes from the commencement of the program and has sought to effectively and efficiently measure sustainable results both at the institutional

and operational level applying a range of methodologies and in close consultation with MPWTC.

promote a greater sense of transparency, accountability and cost efficiency.

**Recommendations & Lessons Learned**

**Recommendations**

**Relevance** **Recommendation 1:** To maintain continued relevance, R4D need to coordinate and plan a strategic and operational approach towards the DUA for R4D-SP. Work should involve an updated review of existing documents, policies, the DUA priorities to a small retreat to discuss and prioritise work programming and planning.

**Recommendation 2:** R4D Advisers to to be assigned key management counterparts to devote effort into ensuring the full implementation and adherence of the RRMPIS.

**Validity of Design** **Recommendation 3:** R4D to undertake annual reviews of all relevant strategies, policies and commitments to ensure continued alignment to MPWTC and DFAT priorities and programmes.

**Effectiveness** **Recommendation 4:** R4D and MPWTC to consider options to strengthen the governance arrangement of R4D-SP through the establishment of two government groups – a “steering committee” and a “technical working group” each with their own strategic intent and purpose underpinned by clear terms of references.

**Recommendation 5:** R4D to develop in consultation with MPWTC standardised drawings, specifications and manuals for rehabilitation and maintenance works. This is an essential product of support from R4D to the MPWTC.

**Recommendation 6:** R4D to immediately strategically engage with Estatal to determine the current status of decentralisation and to ensure alignment to Estatal processes and procedures with regards to working with municipalities and the role of rural roads in the process.

**Efficiency (Resources and Management)** **Recommendation 7:** R4D to initiate a cost-benefit analysis to determine the efficiency of use of different road surfaces. In addition, R4D to analyse the cost effectiveness of combining rehabilitation and maintenance works under single contracts. This will determine further contracting arrangements.

**Recommendation 8:** R4D to analyse assess the option of separating rehabilitation and maintenance components of contracts into separate items to

**Lessons learned**

**Lesson No.1:** Strong political support and commitment from national stakeholder institutions to provision of sustained resources (capital and operational funding, Personnel), are key to successful implementation of ca

**Lesson No.2:** The adoption and adherence to appropriate and coherent national rural roads policies, strategies and plans such as the RRMPIS developed under R4D, will ensure a unified approach to implementation and prevent different development programs (SEPFOPE, PNDS, etc.) from pursuing different strategies and using different standards.capacity development initiatives such as R4D.

**Lesson No.3:** Strong governance arrangements are important in establishing strategic direction and ensuring adequate commitment and buy-in from government counterparts. Without direct involvement and oversight program quality, effectiveness and efficiency diminishes as a result.

**Lesson No.4:** Capacity building in an environment characterized by high shortage of technical skills should be complemented with strategies by government and the private sector, for engaging and retaining dedicated, passionate and committed local technical staff to understudy technical assistance support such as that being provided by the ILO under R4D

**Lesson No.5:** The use of a number of M&E methodologies to demonstrate change and impacts is essential in communicating clear messages about the success, or lack thereof, of a project intervention are critical. Importantly, simple yet rigorous M&E is critical in promoting effective utilisation-centred studies that generate relevant data and information for use by stakeholders

**Lesson No.6:** Staffing arrangements need to be resolved quickly to ensure on-going momentum. Long delays in recruitment and unfilled positions tend to place significant work burdens upon other

team members. Technical backstopping is critical for the success of the program, particularly advice and support to senior management (e.g. CTA) level

**Lesson No.7:** Promotion of appropriate labour-based approaches to rural roads construction and maintenance do not only ensure the delivery of good quality and durable road assets, but also significantly contribute to local economic development through the provision of good access to markets and social services like schools, clinics and most importantly the huge wage income paid to the local workforce from the total project cost (about 15 -25%) that remain in the project areas and evenly distributed to the different population groups.