

External Evaluation

**Community Empowerment Initiatives Component
ADB Road Sector Improvement Project**

**Timor Leste
June 2009**



Photo Credit: Joy-Anne Headley

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Acknowledgements

The external evaluator would like to thank the entire CARE/TL team for their remarkable level of support during the fieldwork for the final evaluation. A special vote of thanks goes to Mr. Luis Bere Buti, National Project Manager, and Ms. Jeanne Everett, International Project Manager, both of whom were extremely generous with their time and insights. Many thanks to the entire local staff team in Maliana, who not only provided wonderful logistical support but also organized the Multi-Stakeholder Impact Workshop. Of course, the most important people to thank are the community members of Aiassa, Nuntana, Raifun Foho, Lactil, Odelgomo, Oalgomo, and Aisalgusun. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the evaluator.

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CDE	Centro de Desinvolvimentu Empresarial (Training Partner in Maliana)
CEIC	Community Empowerment Initiatives Component
DA	District Administrator
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MOI	Ministry of Infrastructure
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSIW	Multi-Stakeholder Impact Workshop
PMU	Project Management Unit
RSIP	Road Sector Improvement Project

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Executive Summary

CARE International in Timor Leste (CITL) has been working with the Department of Public Works to implement a \$610,000 Community Empowerment Initiatives Component (CEIC) of the ADB supported Road Sector Improvement Project (RSIP). The evaluation consisted of two distinct phases, each of which was designed to capture the complex and multi-faceted nature of this pilot project. Data generated during the qualitative evaluation demonstrates a high level of success in most project areas.

The project achieved several major successes. First, the project has resulted in the rehabilitation and maintenance of 15 kilometers of road and the construction of 5 kilometers of new road. Second, the project has succeeded in creating a tremendous sense of ownership over the development process at the community level. This ownership is largely gender-balanced and represents a substantial achievement. Third, the project has succeeded in enhancing capacity, developing important skills, and delivering effective and appropriately designed training on a variety of lifeskill topics. Fourth, the project has achieved impressive results in the challenging area of gender equity. Fifth, the project has generated a substantial economic impact in the short-term among very vulnerable communities. Sixth, CARE and the PMU have succeeded in being nimble, flexible, and adaptable to changing circumstances.

The project has succeeded in meeting or surpassing all of the expected outcomes in the project logframe.

Impact 1 states that: Rural feeder/service roads sustain transfer of goods and services and links to rural institutions. The project has exceeded the original expected outcome by 33%. It is apparent that conditions are somewhat variable across the seven aldeias in the project area. Questions of sustainability and long-term maintenance remain. Although the new output-based model of road maintenance shows great promise, it had yet to be implemented and tested at the time of the external evaluation.

Impact 2 states that: Improved livelihood security of rural poor, especially women. While the short-term data about increased livelihood security is inconclusive, the data shows that many of the necessary preconditions for livelihood security have been created or enhanced by project activities. Given the tremendously vulnerable and precarious position of most communities prior to the onset of the project, this constitutes a major accomplishment. The project has succeeded in achieving similarly positive impacts for women and men. Although the data is mixed, it is clear that the project salaries enabled at least some beneficiaries to invest in livestock or small businesses.

Recognizing the need to increase the number of direct beneficiaries, CARE modified the pilot design mid-way through the project and expanded the number of full-time crew. This change was significant and it greatly increased the number of direct beneficiaries. However, the data from the various evaluation methodologies shows that most stakeholders believe that future projects should increase the number of direct beneficiaries even further.

Impact 3 states that: Rural women are recognized as agents of development. Despite the fact that this expected result was perhaps the most ambitious, this pilot project has been resoundingly successful at making progress in this impact area. Indeed, the gender impacts are the most impressive part of this pilot project. Despite many protestations that the 55% target was too high, the project succeeded in achieving this ambitious goal.

Interestingly, both the quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates that, in most cases, women achieved greater results than men in the project. In comparison with other projects that have utilized a less ambitious gender target, it seems to be the case that the critical mass of women greatly empowered many

women to become agents of development in their community. Women exhibited these leadership skills throughout the project, as well as during the evaluation fieldwork.

Beneficiaries demonstrated a high level of awareness and understanding of the major concepts discussed during the gender training. The pilot project has clearly succeeded in changing the knowledge of both men and women. Follow on activities should build on that success and work towards changing attitudes and practices.

Unfortunately, the pattern of remarkable success with respect to gender equity that was established during the first portion of the project was not continued once the project switched to the “output based” work model. This failure is especially disappointing because it undermined the major gender accomplishments of the first phase.

The project experienced major and persistent problems with the procurement and timely delivery of appropriate road building materials. The project experienced major and persistent problems with transportation. The project experienced some persistent problems with the timely payment of salaries to beneficiaries. The output-based system developed at the end of the project generally seems to be well thought out and well planned.

This pilot project is an ambitious one that contains several overlapping (and sometimes competing) objectives. Despite this, the project has clearly been successful overall. The evaluation generated seven major recommendations for the future implementation of follow-on projects in RSIP.

First, Both RSIP and CARE should consider carefully how they would weigh the competing importance of the 3 expected results at the impact level. Second, CARE and RSIP may also want to re-examine the expectations of livelihood security that are reasonable given conditions on the ground. Third, any future follow-on project should maintain the gender focus, enforced by a substantial and ambitious gender target. Fourth, any future project should develop a more comprehensive, more participatory and more gender sensitive Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system. Fifth, future iterations of the project should consider developing different labor and implementation models for the activities associated with road rehabilitation versus road maintenance.

Sixth, future projects should continue to work towards improved quality of road rehabilitation and maintenance. Seventh, going forward RSIP should incorporate the “added impacts” that CARE was able to bring on board during the pilot – above and beyond the original targets. Eighth, future projects should contain enough administrative structure to allow for smooth functioning of payroll, materials transfer, and so on but allow for flexibility in design at the community level to encourage community engagement and ownership of the process. Ninth, the project should continue to improve the systems of payroll payment and materials acquisition. Tenth, RSIP should continue to work towards supporting the planned decentralization process in Timor Leste. Eleventh, RDIP should think creatively about possible ways to balance the request for an increase in the number of direct beneficiaries with the donor’s desire to make sure that impacts are significant for individuals.

In general terms, the CEIC Pilot Project, has been remarkably successful, innovative, and adaptable. It has clearly and ably demonstrated that a community-based and gender-balanced approach to road rehabilitation and maintenance is not only possible, but actually preferable, in the Timorese context.

Such an approach enabled the project to take full advantage of the “pilot” nature of this project and the programmatic and administrative experimentation has resulted in a great number of “lessons learned” that the ADB will be able to utilize as it moves forward to design the scale-up of the RSIP.

A. Background

CARE International in Timor Leste (CITL) has been working with the Department of Public Works to implement a \$610,000 Community Empowerment Initiatives Component (CEIC) of the ADB supported Road Sector Improvement Project (RSIP). The project started in December 2006 and will be completed on July 30th 2009.

The goal of the CEIC pilot project is to strengthen the capacity of rural communities to respond to the risks and opportunities associated with increased connectivity to the national road networks, mainly through three interventions:

1. Sustainable rehabilitation and maintenance of selected rural feeder/ access roads
2. Life Management Skills Training. Including, health awareness modules; hygiene, disease, sanitation and HIV/AIDS prevention, and also business skills and self help group development.
3. Enhancing women's employment opportunities

The pilot project focuses on developing the capacity and providing technical assistance to rural poor and vulnerable communities, particularly women and youth. In integration with the CEIC project, CITL is also implementing a smaller Mini-market ¹and Bus Waiting Shelter Construction Project (est. budget US\$17,000). This smaller project is funded by CARE Australia, to be implemented between September 2008 and July 2009.

The project team is based in Dili and in Maliana. Although the start-up phase included a slightly larger staffing profile, by the implementation phase the team consisted of 1 International Project Manager, 7 East Timorese staff (National Project Manager-Trainee, Officer/Deputy Project Manager for training, Officer/Deputy Project Manager for Monitoring and Evaluation, Junior Engineer and 2 drivers) and an Indonesian Senior Engineer. The pilot project works in 3 villages/sucos (7 aldeias) in Maliana and Bobonaro sub-districts of Bobonaro district.

Based on the good progress of the pilot phase, the ADB has approached CARE about developing a proposal for the expansion of the pilot project. At the same time, CARE is planning to further integrate road construction and maintenance activities with other CARE rural development projects in the area.

B. Methodology Design & Implementation

Despite the comparatively small dollar value of this pilot project, the project is quite multi-faceted and complex. The linkages between various sub-component are quite multi-valent. The potential for "multiplier effects" appear substantial. As a consequence, the methodology utilized for the evaluation was quite extensive. Following an initial review of the project documents, the external evaluator drafted a series of methodological recommendations. While the full document is available in Annex A, the major components are discussed briefly below.

In order to capture the full range of activities, outputs, and impacts, the evaluator recommended utilizing best practice in methodology design including: data triangulation; holism; iterative and phased research design; a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies; multiple sampling protocols; and a socially-inclusive and gender-responsive research design.

¹ A total of 3 mini-markets were built by the project: 1 financed by ADB-CEIC and 2 financed by Care Australia.

During Phase I of the evaluation, from January to May of 2009, the CARE team developed and administered many of the quantitative research components with only limited assistance from the external evaluator. While this report does not analyze these results in detail, the subsequent evaluation activities were constructed on the base of this initial data. Data tables for in the endline survey are presented in Annex B. while the data tables for the road survey are presented in Annex X.

EVALUATION Phase I Research Methods

- Pre and Post-Tests for Major Training Events (e.g. HIV/AIDs)
- Endline Survey for direct and indirect beneficiaries
- Quantitative traffic count (implemented by CARE)

B.1. Key Evaluation Questions

During field-based Phase II of the evaluation, the external evaluator was specifically asked to complete the following key research tasks:

- Evaluate extent to which the stated project outcomes as identified in the **logframe** have/ have not been achieved;
- Review **project management structure** and support mechanisms, and provide recommendations for the management of future programmes.
- Consolidate **lessons** from managers', staff's and beneficiaries' experience with the project and make recommendations to guide future work of RSIP and CARE in the sector.
- In all of the above, the evaluator will closely examine and provide recommendations on the **gender** aspects of the project.

The complete logframe is attached in Annex C. The following provides the anticipated higher level impacts and outcomes.

Logframe Analysis Summary

Impacts

1. Rural feeder/service roads sustain transfer of goods and services to markets and links to rural institutions.
2. Improved livelihood security of rural poor; especially women
3. Rural women are recognized as agents of development

Outcomes

1. Increases access/utilization of maintained selected rural roads.
2. Improved basic health and hygiene practice by the project participants.
3. Women participants performing road maintenance work, construction work, and business.
4. Local Govt. Administration participate/are involved with project implementation.

- Source: Logical Framework Analysis Revised on April 13, 2007

B.2. Evaluation Phase II Research Methods

Phase II of the evaluation was conducted by the external evaluator from May 16- June 3, 2009. During the fieldwork, several more in-depth qualitative methodologies were developed and implemented by the external evaluator. Each methodology was chosen with careful consideration of the methodological principles described above. Special attention was given to the need for gender disaggregated data. While the quantitative data collected in Phase I generally did a good job of answering the question: “*what* happened?”, the qualitative methods in Phase II were designed to elicit more in-depth answers to the question: “*why* did it happen?”

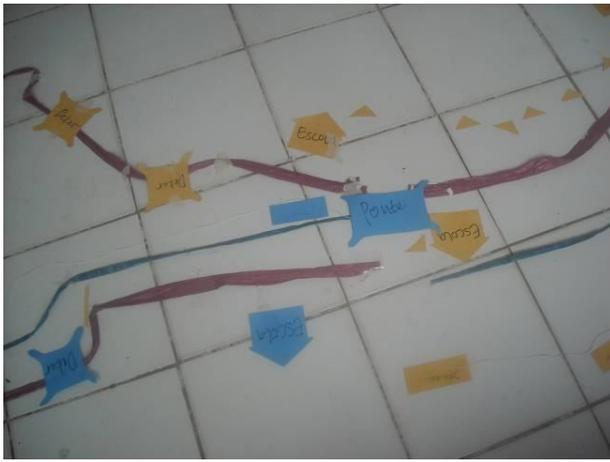
EVALUATION Phase II Research Methods

- Multi-Stakeholder Impact Workshop including:
 - Participatory Mapping
 - Stakeholder Impact Matrix
- Focus Group Discussions
- Semi-Structured Key Informant Interviews
- Direct Observation of Road Maintenance and Construction Activities
- Review of “Lessons Learned” from Previous Project Reporting

The **multi-stakeholder impact workshop** was conducted on May 21, 2009, in the meeting hall of the District Administration office. A range of different stakeholders, from the District Administrator to male and female crew members from each community, and community members who were not directly involved with the project, were actively engaged in a series of participatory research exercises throughout the day-long workshop. The total number of participants from the community was 27 including 13 women and 14 men. In addition, representatives from the PMU, the MOI, CARE, the District Administration, and Sucos were active participants.

The first tool utilized during the workshop was a **comparative participatory mapping exercise** in which participants worked in small groups to complete a detailed map of their community before and after road construction/rehabilitation. After completing the before and after picture, groups were asked to contemplate their future hopes for their community. Each of these time phases (before, after, and future) were illustrated with different colors on the physical maps.





The process of completing the maps was interactive and highly participatory. Both men and women participated equally and there was a fair amount of discussion back and forth about where to position specific engineering features (e.g. bridges) as well as commentary about the extent of work that each group had accomplished. The completion of the maps enabled community members to reflect back on the experience of having completed a major road rehabilitation and to visually see the impact of their own work. The visual nature of the methodology enabled non-literate members to participate equally.

Following the group presentations of their work, the District Administrator pointed out that he would not have had the knowledge to do this exercise himself. He commended the communities for their knowledge and expertise. Following the completion of the physical maps, each group transferred their insights on to flipchart paper and presented their overall findings to the larger group. These maps were later returned to the communities and placed in the community hall or house of the xefe for future reference. Participants were clearly proud of their work – both on the roads and during the mapping exercise. The exercise reinforced the kind of empowerment and capacity-building that the project sought to engender during project implementation.

The second tool utilized during the workshop was a **stakeholder impact matrix** in which participants worked in the following small groups: male direct beneficiaries; female direct beneficiaries; community members (mixed gender); local and national government officials. Each group worked in a participatory fashion and provided their evaluation of the impact of the project (very good, fine, not good) according to 9 specific criteria that were chosen by the project staff in conjunction with the external evaluator as well as one open-ended category so that participants could comment on any other aspect of the project not previously discussed. While the rankings themselves are interesting, participants were also asked to explain why they made the choices that they did and how they might recommend improvements for future projects.

A total of **nine Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** with a grand total of 145 participants were completed on May 26, 27, and 28, 2009. FGDs were conducted in all 7 communities and lasted between 1-3 hours each. FGDs were conducted by the external evaluator in Tetun (with occasional simultaneous translation into local languages). The sampling protocol included both single gender groups (e.g. men's and women's FGDs in Nuntana) and mixed gender groups (e.g. Raifun





Foho) as well as FGDs with only permanent crew members (e.g. Lactil) and those with non-crew members also present (e.g. Nuntana).. A more complete discussion of each FGD is presented in Annex D.

Basic topics covered during all FGDs included comparison of pre and post project conditions of:

- Roads (including physical condition of road and discussion of who uses it)
- Health Status
- Impact of Employment (how people spent their money)
- Gender Equity
- Other Impacts as Identified by Participants

While the data generated during the FGDs is discussed in more detail in the sections on Lessons Learned and Recommendations, it is worth noting that community members were active and engaged participants in most of these discussions. Men and women generally participated openly and equally. In many instances, they did not agree with one another but were able to articulate their differing opinions and hear other perspectives. CARE staff commented on how much levels of engagement and participation had increased since the beginning of the project. In two communities, the FGD was largely dominated by the xefi.

The evaluator also completed **over 15 semi-structured key informant interviews** with a diverse sample of stakeholders from the donor, government, CARE, and local communities. Interviews focused on the main evaluation questions identified in the Terms of Reference and also included a discussion of the initial data results from Phase I and the Multi-Stakeholder Impact Workshop. A sub-set of 6 interviewees also completed the same Stakeholder Impact Matrix that was utilized during the Multi-Stakeholder Impact Workshop. A complete list of interviewees is attached as Annex E.

The Phase II methodology also included **direct observation of road maintenance and construction** activities in 3 communities, as well as observation of road use and community conditions during field visits to the mini-markets, roads, and communities. Finally, the evaluator re-analyzed the **lessons learned** from previous project reporting in light of the data from the fieldwork.

C. Detailed Research Findings

While it would be impossible to provide a detailed discussion of each and every research tool utilized during Phase II of the evaluation, an overview of the major findings from the mapping, stakeholder impact matrix, and FGD tools is presented here.

C.1. Participatory Mapping:

The maps produced by participants at the workshop were quite impressive and demonstrated a high level of technical knowledge of topography, geology, hydrology, and construction techniques. Both the project engineer and the District Administrator noted the high level of technical capacity illustrated through the map-making activity. Additional photos are presented in Annex F.

The high level of technical proficiency in the maps shows that two major objectives of the project were achieved – 1).project participants have “acquired skills and knowledge on diversified issues e.g. road maintenance and construction” (Output 3); and 2). “Required numbers of construction work completed as per design in plan by the crew members.” (Indicator 3.2.1)

The evaluator also was able to discern important data points from her observations of the *process* of the mapmaking during the workshop. Participants, both female and male, were equally engaged in the technical work of creating the maps. In all groups, participants demonstrated excellent teamwork, listening and debating and coming to consensus without undue discord or conflict.

The impressive level of gender equity and excellent teamwork observed during the mapping exercise clearly demonstrates that the training provided during the project succeeded in creating group cohesion and gender equity among participants. It was clear from the reactions of male community members and male government officials present in the room that “rural women are recognized as agents of development.”(Impact 3)

C. 2. Stakeholder Impact Matrix Results:

The overwhelming majority of responses indicated that all stakeholders felt that the project had done “well” (*diak*) or “fine” (*ladun diak*) in all ten response areas. No group indicated that the project had been “bad”(*la diak*) in any area. The chart below summarizes group responses.

Stakeholder Impact Matrix Results

	<i>Diak</i>	<i>Ladun Diak</i>	<i>La Diak</i>	<i>Comments or Future Recommendations?</i>
1. Process of Recruitment	W,M, G,C			G-Transparent and open to everyone in community; C-Better system once increased from 11; C- good to give opportunities to more people
2. Labor System	M,C	W, G		W- Whole community should benefit; G- Should increase # of beneficiaries
3. 60% Gender Target	W,C	M, G		W- W & M worked together, have to be united; M – Need fewer W; M - W not as strong, leading to construction delays; G-Consider decreasing to 50% b/c some tasks are still only for M; C- Good b/c W have the same rights as M

4. System of Payment	M,G,C	W		W- some delays; M- every 2 weeks is good; G- good b/c direct to beneficiaries in BNU; C- should increase payment to \$5/day b/c of inflation
5. Road Quality	M, G	W,C		W- some still incomplete; G- good but should be enhanced to meet ILO standard of roads; C-Length of road completed but some work unfinished (e.g. water drains)
6. Trainings	W,M,G			M- trainings enhanced our teamwork; G –Appropriate methodology for non-literate people
7. Distribution of Materials	G,C	M		M- Transport delays slowed work down
8. Stakeholder Coordination	M,G,C	W		M – Need even better coordination in future; G-Better to coordinate more in advance and be mindful of lack of decentralization
9. Program Duration		W, M, G,C		W- not long enough; M- want 5 year project; G- reduce amount of time for participation but increase number of workers (in rotation); C-increase to 6 year project
10. Other			W	W want more income generation activities

W-Women crew; M- Men crew; C- Community/ non-crews; G -Government

C.3. Focus Group Discussions:

The data generated during the FGDs reinforced the general patterns uncovered in both end-line survey, road count, and during the multi-stakeholder workshop. The major findings for each topic area are summarized below.

Each FGD covered the four topics identified by the interviewer and also included a fifth, open-ended topic that enabled participants to identify project impacts from their own perspective.

Focus Group Discussion Summary Results

					<i>Other Comments</i>
After Project	*Cars and trucks come to our village	*Nurses can come by motorbike to the community	*We are able to pay for our kids to go to school	*Women and men work together	
Before Project	*We can sell more produce at the market	*Ambulances can reach us	*Bank savings used for small businesses	*Women and men are united	*We want to change to a system of rotation for working groups
	*We can rent a truck to take our produce	*We now have medicine in the clinic because the nurses can bring it by car	*Bought some Livestock	*Women also can work and do the same work as men	*We want all people in our community to be able to work
	*We have transport for medical needs	sub-district for medical care		*Women can do men's work	*Road quality should be better
				*Men and women have the same rights	*Road should be made from asphalt
				*Thanks to CARE's training, we have more unity	
				*We were surprised that women can do the same work as men	
				Women worked only in the kitchen and only men worked outside the home	

D. Major Project Successes

In general terms, the CEIC Pilot Project, has been remarkably successful, innovative, and adaptable. Before entering into a detailed analysis of the outcomes as compared against the logframe targets, it is worthwhile to mention some of the major, macro-level accomplishments generated during the life of the project.

First, the project has resulted in the **rehabilitation and maintenance** of 15 kilometers of road and the construction of 5 kilometers of new road. Those figures represent accomplishments 33% above original targets. This is a substantial accomplishment.

Second, the project has succeeded in creating a tremendous **sense of ownership** over the development process at the community level. During the FGDs, participants in every community proudly discussed the results of “our project” (not the CARE project). The participatory mapping exercise demonstrated how clearly the entire community (crew and non-crew alike) feel this ownership.

This ownership is largely **gender-balanced** and represents a substantial achievement. It is clear from the FGDs that both women and men feel a tremendous sense of pride and ownership in their accomplishments. Several FGD participants (male and female) commented how “surprised” they were to learn that women actually can do this work.

The level of **community empowerment** as a direct result of this project is commendable. Proof of this empowerment can be seen in the many results which have been achieved above and beyond those initially anticipated including savings groups, additional mini-markets, and the construction of several new roads at the community’s request. These successes can be explained, in part, by CARE’s clear commitment to participatory models of development at the grassroots.

Third, the project has succeeded in **enhancing capacity**, developing important skills, and delivering effective and appropriately designed **training** on a variety of lifeskill topics. The quantitative data from the post-tests shows a remarkable level of success for the majority of the trainings. For example, 100% of participants scored 6/10 and above on Malaria/Nutrition post-test and 94% of technical training participants from the new crew scored 6/10 or above in July 2008. Given the low levels of literacy and numeracy among the beneficiary population, this is a very impressive accomplishment.

Fourth, the project has achieved impressive results in the challenging area of **gender equity**. This has been accomplished through a combination of effective training, enforcement of gender targets, and ongoing support and discussion from the CARE staff. In the FGDs, men and women alike commented vociferously about the “equal rights of women and men to work in Timor Leste.” In the end-line survey, 100% of women and 93.9% of men said that “men and women benefit the same” from the project.

Fifth, the project has generated a substantial **economic impact** in the short-term among very vulnerable communities. The combination of salaries, savings, and a limited number of business investments have combined to **enhance livelihood security** in these communities. 39.4% of men and 48.5% of women report owning “a lot more” or “a little more” livestock at the end of the project. Further, 81.8% of men and 100% of women running businesses by the end of the project reported that the project has had a “good impact” on their business activity. Fully 81.8% of men and 77.2% of women report that their savings has increased at least “a little bit” because of the project. The averages amount of cash reported was \$203 at home, \$90.20 in the bank account, and \$59.60 in the self-help group.

Sixth, CARE and the PMU have succeeded in being **nimble, flexible, and adaptable** to changing circumstances. Because this was a pilot project, it was important to test out a variety of different implementation models. Examples of innovations include: the increase in number of beneficiaries; the switch to an output-based model for road maintenance; and the development of lump sum contracts for mini-market construction.

E. Project Outcomes Identified in Logframe

E.1. Impact 1 – Rural feeder/service roads sustain transfer of goods and services to markets and links to rural institutions

Despite the fact that some stretches of road are not of the technical quality envisaged initially (and despite two major landslides during the recent rainy season), most of the roads in the pilot project have succeeded in this impact area. Data from both the qualitative methods and the endline survey clearly demonstrates that beneficiaries feel that the project has strongly succeeded in this impact area.

The following data points from the endline survey were confirmed with FGDs, direct observation, and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders.

Endline survey results:

- Over 79% say that trips are more comfortable
- 83% say they are better able to transport goods
- 95% agree or strongly agree that access to schools and health facilities has improved
- 80% to 85% agree or strongly agree that more goods are sold into and out of the aldeia
- Over 83% say that travel time has been reduced

Source: CEIC Endline survey, March 2009, CITL. These figures are not the result of research conducted by the evaluator

The following illustrates the new and increased traffic on the project roads as reported by community members during the FGDs and stakeholder workshop. Additional data from the quantitative road count is presented in Annex G.

New and Increased Traffic on Project Roads

- Ambulances and MOH vehicles attending weekly clinics
- INGOs implementing new projects (e.g. water pipes, solar panels for schools)
- UN Police Patrols
- National and International Visitors (e.g. Ambassadors, MOI Officials)
- Angunas, Trucks, and Rented Vehicles for Public Transport
- More Horses & Pedestrians

Road Passability



In all seven communities, data demonstrates a substantial pattern of new (or enhanced) road usage by a variety of actors. Although there is no formal baseline data, it is clear that most of the rehabilitated roads had limited or non-existent road access prior to the project. Participants report that all of the roads were completely impassable during the rainy season prior to the project. The data shows that all roads are now passable, even during all but the very worst days of the 2009 rainy season.

Transfer of Services

The following were the most frequently mentioned new users of the roads: ambulances; Ministry of Health vehicles; CARE vehicles for new projects; UN Police Patrols; Ministry of Education vehicles; and a variety of commercial transport options (e.g. angunas, trucks).

Transfer of Goods

Several communities reported the increase in commercial traffic and the comparative ease with which they can now transport their agricultural products to market. Both the endline survey and the focus group discussions demonstrate a decrease in both the time and the cost required to get goods to market. This is the result of improved roads, easier access to mini-markets, and more frequent public transportation in some communities.

Other Links Stemming from the New/Rehabilitated Roads

Equally important from a community perspective, beneficiaries cite the increased ease with which they can visit and be visited by family members from nearby communities. This improvement enables community members to meet their ritual (*adat*) responsibilities, facilitates the exchange of agricultural products through barter, and greatly enhances rural peoples' quality of life.

Technical Quality of Road Construction and Maintenance

Although this evaluation did not include a specific technical analysis of the condition of all of the roads, it is apparent that conditions are somewhat variable across the seven aldeias in the project area. Several key stakeholders, including the District Administrator, expressed mild disappointment with the technical quality of the roads.

Several factors seem to explain the variability of the technical specifications of the roads. These include: CARE's relative inexperience with road construction; length of time each community has worked with the project; leadership style of the village xefis; technical challenges and topography; and the varying levels of motivation and "ownership" exhibited by different communities.

Given CARE's limited experience with road construction and rehabilitation, it is perhaps not surprising that the new/refurbished roads are of variable quality. Several lessons learned should help improve the quality and consistency of the technical road quality in the future:

- 1). Utilize the low technology methodology of sacks filled with earth;
- 2). Review and incorporate relevant national and ADB road construction specifications mentioned to the evaluator by the PMU;
- 3). Consider separating the road rehabilitation and road maintenance activities (e.g. using small machines for road rehabilitation) and
- 4) Attempt to incorporate best technical practices from other models of road construction being tested in Timor Leste.

Other Remaining Challenges

In Oalgomo and Odelgomo, interviews with the xefis report that no **governmental services** (e.g. health, education) have come to the community since the road has been rehabilitated. The CARE staff is working with the community to make sure that the relevant ministry personnel learn that these roads are indeed passable. Additional mechanisms may be required to assure that various government agencies carry through on the promise to provide services once rural roads are rehabilitated.

Questions of **sustainability** and **long-term maintenance** remain. Although the new output-based model of road maintenance shows great promise, it has yet to be implemented and tested. Several potential areas of concern include: disagreement about the amount of money paid per kilometer; source of future materials for construction needs; and mechanism for addressing major road damage caused during rainy season landslides and other major events.

Recommendations:

- 1). *Continue to improve technical quality of road construction.*
- 2). *Ensure that road construction is consistent with national standards.*
- 3). *Develop a partnership or mechanism to address major road repair (e.g. landslide damage) so that communities are only held responsible for “routine maintenance”*
- 4). *Develop specific activities to increase road usage by service providers (e.g. MoH)*
- 5). *Continue to engage with the GoT about the appropriate payment level for ongoing road maintenance going forward. Advocate for a higher rate for rural roads (due to the fact that paved roads are easier to maintain.)*
- 6). *Consider partnering with engineering firm or other organization with construction experience to limit the technical and logistical burden on CARE staff, especially for road rehabilitation activities.*
- 7). *Budget larger amounts for higher quality road construction materials, especially surfacing materials.*

E.2 Impact 2 – Improved livelihood security of rural poor, especially women

The ADB estimates that the number of people living below the poverty line in Timor Leste at 90%, with over 40% living in extreme poverty. Although no specific baseline data exists for the 7 aldeias in the project area, it is clear that the vast majority of people living in these communities suffer from extreme livelihood insecurity. The communities were (and are) incredibly isolated and have little access to the formal cash economy.

Because the majority of people live mostly a subsistence lifestyle and have a difficult time articulating their household budget, it is difficult to draw too many conclusions from the data concerning the direct economic benefit of the project. However, both the quantitative and qualitative data confirm some general trends.

Potential for Longer-Term Improved Livelihood Security

While the short-term data about increased livelihood security is inconclusive, it is far too early to know if the project will result in a long-term improvement in livelihood security in these communities. However, the data shows that many of the necessary **preconditions for livelihood security** have been created or enhanced by project activities. Given the tremendously vulnerable and precarious position of most communities prior to the onset of the project, this constitutes a major accomplishment.

Results stemming from the project which enhance preconditions for increased livelihood security include:

- improved basic health and hygiene;
- heightened access to education;
- enhanced technical skill of participants in construction field;
- introduction to and familiarity with the banking system, including knowledge about how to save and plan;
- increased knowledge of how to establish and run a small business;
- dramatically heightened sense of ownership and empowerment as agents of their own community development;
- improved road access enabling enhanced implementation of livelihood enhancing projects from government and the international community

Catalytic Impact of Road Projects

Many other potential positive impacts on livelihood security are possible now that these communities are less isolated. The completion of the road has facilitated the implementation of other projects in these communities. For example, the current CARE project to provide potable piped water to all these communities will enable women and children to decrease the amount of time that they spend on the arduous task of hauling water, thus increasing the amount of time they have available to dedicate to productive tasks. Other projects, including an agricultural project which is introducing improved varieties of vegetables designed for sale, has been facilitated due to easier road access for project staff, equipment and supplies. Given the track record to date, it seems likely that the newly rehabilitated roads will facilitate other future development activities in the target communities as well.

Similar Impact on Women and Men

Both the qualitative and the quantitative data demonstrate marked similarity in women's and men's experiences with livelihood security. Both genders report prioritizing household expenditures and school-related expenses over investments in productive assets (e.g. animals) or small businesses. Both women and men report similar positive impacts in terms of enhanced livelihood security in the short-term (e.g. enhanced ability to purchase food) and demonstrate comparable levels of capacity for long-term livelihood security.

It is a major accomplishment that the project has been able to successfully achieve relative equity in livelihood security impacts among female and male beneficiaries in the project. Of the many new skills which create the necessary preconditions for increased livelihood security in the longer term, several were reported as especially significant by women during the FGDs. These include:

- heightened access to education (FGD quote: "we are able to send our children to school; this is our future";)
- enhanced technical skill of participants in construction field; (women and men during the participatory mapping exercise noted how much they had learned since the beginning of project);
- introduction to and familiarity with the banking system, including knowledge about how to save and plan; (FGD participants reported that they never thought an 'ema kiik' like them would be able to have a bank account);
- increased knowledge of how to establish and run a small business; (FGD participants repeatedly and vociferously explained how much they learned about small business management)
- dramatically heightened sense of ownership and empowerment as agents of their own community development; (During the Multi-Stakeholder Workshop, women were vocal and actively engaged in the discussions about how development should happen in the future.)

Short Term Economic Expenditures

The data clearly demonstrates that the income generated during the project greatly increased livelihood security for direct beneficiaries during the project implementation period. Fully 47% of men and 39% of women reported that household goods and better food was their biggest spending category during the project. During the FGDs, most participants reported using the salary that they earned during the project for “routine” household expenses such as soap, salt, and food for their household consumption. FGD participants reported that these basic expenses simply went unmet prior to the project period. Although it is impossible to quantify this result, it seems likely that food insecurity decreased as a result of the project.

Long Term Economic Investment Strategy: Children’s Education

The second most common use for salaries was a long-term investment: education for their children (e.g. school fees, shoes for children, school supplies). In the endline survey, 23.5% of women and 23.7% of men reported that education was their biggest category. Most respondents in the FGDs prioritized this long-term investment over short-term economic gains. One FGD participant told the evaluator that her “children are her investment.” Other women in the same group laughed at her use of the technical term “investment” from the business training and several concurred that children’s education would provide a better rate of return than that from a kiosk. Undoubtedly, the expenditures on school supplies, shoes, and clothing will improve livelihood security in the long term despite the apparent lack of immediate economic return in the short run.

Medium-Term Economic Investments

A significant minority of participants did report making economic investments in economic activities that have the potential to increase livelihood security in the medium term. Several of these beneficiaries provide examples of “success stories.” In Raihun Foho, for example, six women joined together to form three small businesses. Anecdotally, some respondents indicated that mostly beneficiaries without school-aged children invested in these economic opportunities.

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|---|
| <p>Examples of Initial Investments Towards Livelihood Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livestock purchase (cows, goats) • Small Business Development (kiosks) • Creation of Rotating Savings and Credit Groups • Continued Use of Bank Savings Accounts |
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Mixed Data about the Impact of Salaries on Major Economic

Investments

The data from the FGDs, semi-structured interviews, and the end-line survey do not clearly answer the question of whether and how much participants were able to utilize their cash earnings (and savings) to make substantial economic investments. Data collection was constrained by a number of variables including: lack of baseline; lack of control data; and inconsistent data analysis within the survey.

Sample data obtained from the endline survey which was implemented by CARE are presented below:

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| <p>Endline survey results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average crew saving (\$347 for M & \$359 for W) 10 x higher than non crew • % W crew investing in livestock in last 2 years is 1.87 x that of W non-crew and short term reserve • % of M crew investing in livestock in last 2 years is 1.3 x that of M non-crew and short term reserve • 37% of W and 33% of M crew say they have a lot more livestock than before the project, compared to 8.3% of W and 12.5% of M non crew. • Project end: % crew Bs owners 3 x % non crew Bs owners (32% vs. 10%). • % of crew w/ small Bs (33% & 32% for M & W) x 2.2 since beginning • BUT: % people who increased crop was 2x higher among non crew vs. crew (33% for 16%). % of people who reduced their crop was higher by 1/3 among crew vs. non-crew. |
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For example, data generated during the stakeholder workshop and the FGDs demonstrate that most participants felt that the salary level was insufficient for major investment in businesses or livestock. While the endline data shows that 42.4% of men crew and 52.6% of women crew invested some of the money from the project in livestock, versus 32.5% and 27.7% of men and women non crew respectively, 93.9% of men 68.6% of women reported that they would have been able to make those investments if they had not received money from the project.

On the other hand, the endline survey data shows that female crew members purchased livestock at a 1.9 times the rate of women surveyed who were not permanent crew. The comparable rate for men was 1.3 times the rate of non-crew. Because the sampling protocol included both reserve labor and non-crew, it is difficult to determine whether reserve labor participants purchased livestock at a greater rate than non-crew. It is impossible to know how representative the non-crew sample was. However, during FGDs and the Multi-Stakeholder Workshop, participants downplayed the significance of these purchases. Only 5.9% of men and 23.7% of women reported that livestock was their biggest expenditure. These expenses ranked behind household goods, education, and household improvements.

Interestingly, many FGD participants did demonstrate a detailed understanding of the need for and benefits of saving money. Many beneficiaries reported that they hoped to utilize what they had learned about saving for investments in the future but reported that they simply needed their entire salary to meet their basic needs for the time being. Although most participants indicated that they had to spend the 75% of their salary that they received in cash, FGD participants spoke favorably about the 25% mandatory savings in the bank account. The endline survey illustrates that participants still have an average of \$90 in their savings accounts. Only 18.1% of respondents indicated that they have \$0 of savings left in their account. This data demonstrates that some savings have been generated directly by the project.

Although the data is mixed, it is clear that the project salaries enabled at least some beneficiaries to invest in livestock or small businesses. Given the vulnerability and livelihood insecurity in these communities, this is a major accomplishment. It is also important to note that insufficient time has passed to really measure the long-term economic impact of the project at the household level.

Limited Number of Direct Beneficiaries

There was universal agreement among all stakeholders at the field level that future projects should greatly expand the number of direct beneficiaries from roads projects. Government officials, CARE field staff, and most vociferously, all community members articulated a strong preference for a wider distribution of the cash benefits of a project. While this view might be expected from those who were not employed by the project, direct beneficiaries were equally adamant that it would have been better if they had not been employed full-time for the full duration of the project.

The reasons given for increasing the number of direct beneficiaries included:

- desire for everyone in the community to receive at least some cash;
- perception that the road is a community asset – everyone will benefit from the improved road so everyone should contribute to its maintenance;
- discussion of potential for social jealousy and conflict within the community;
- perception that the salary received was insufficient for most households to make a major investment;
- perception that the salary received was low relative to the amount of time required away from other productive activities (e.g. gardens);
- perception that all members of these isolated communities have legitimate livelihood security concerns;

- preference for culturally appropriate communal, as opposed to individual, model of development; and
- acknowledgement that total community size is quite small

Recognizing the need to increase the number of direct beneficiaries, CARE modified the pilot design mid-way through the project and expanded the number of full-time crew from 44 to 78 and the number of reserve labor from 17 to 46, for a grand total of 124 beneficiaries. This change was significant and it greatly increased the number of direct beneficiaries. However, the data from the various evaluation methodologies shows that most stakeholders believe that future projects should increase the number of direct beneficiaries even further.

While most stakeholders disagreed with the original labor system used in the project, the data from key stakeholder interviews with the donor and the senior management of CARE indicate that they would prefer to maintain a smaller number of direct beneficiaries. The reasons for these preferences include:

- substantial administrative burdens of completing payroll with large number of beneficiaries in remote areas;
- desire to create a sense of ownership and teamwork among a specific group of people;
- interest in creating strong technical skill base in road construction; and
- need to distinguish the ADB model from other road construction models in Timor (e.g. ILO).
- perception that there are more chances in sustainably improving beneficiaries' lives if a deeper impact is concentrated on fewer targeted individuals, versus a minor impact on a broader population.

Given the conflicting evaluations of the impact of the labor models utilized in the pilot project, it seems prudent to recommend that the donor and implementing partner dedicate substantial time to trying to find a compromise solution that might address the legitimate concerns of both the donor/senior CARE management and the stated preferences of all other stakeholders at the grassroots. Several possible models are sketched out in rough detail in the "Recommendations for Future Work" section at the end of this report.

Recommendations

- 1). *Given the extreme livelihood insecurity in most target communities, it is important to continue to develop activities which will create the necessary preconditions for longer term, sustainable livelihood security. Such pre-conditions must, by definition, be met before actual livelihood security activities can take root in a substantial way. The project should recognize the importance of these and take credit for their important accomplishments in this area.*
- 2). *Consider changing the expected results and performance indicators to reflect both the limited short-term impact on improved economic livelihood security and the important investment in longer term economic strategies. (E.g. instead of an indicator about the % of women who start businesses, consider indicators such as % of women who open a bank account and demonstrate an understanding of basic investment concepts or % of households that are better able to send children to school.)*
- 3). *The project should not undervalue or underestimate the impact of “just” providing cash-for-work to a number of very vulnerable individuals. The number of people who report using their income for “basic expenses” such as food is a clear indication of how little cash is currently circulating in these communities. While longer term impacts are laudable, those can only be achieved if people can eat in the short term as well. At this juncture in Timor’s development trajectory, it may be too early for a modest program such as this one to greatly impact long-term livelihood security. Indeed, the bigger developmental impact may stem from focusing on meeting basic needs and also laying the groundwork for future food security (e.g. knowledge of banking, small business development, education).*
- 4). *CARE/ADB should continue to consider novel approaches to continue to expand the number of direct beneficiaries in future projects. Potential models are discussed in more detail later in the report but might include: non-permanent crew model; rotating team model; community work model; an “A Team” of workers who complete road rehabilitation with “B” and “C” teams to follow with road maintenance.*

E.3. Impact 3 – Rural women are recognized as agents of development



Despite the fact that this expected result was perhaps the most ambitious, this pilot project has been resoundingly successful at making progress in this impact area. Indeed, the **gender impacts are the most impressive part of this pilot project.**

Surprisingly positive results – Virtually all of the data sources (e.g. key stakeholder interviews, Multi-Stakeholder Workshop, FGDs) demonstrate that stakeholders, although initially skeptical, concur that women have been substantially empowered by the project.

55% Participation of Women

Despite many protestations (by local staff, government officials, and community members alike) that the 55% target was too high, the project succeeded in achieving this ambitious goal. This figure, which is almost double the ADB requirement for

gender equity, is a very significant accomplishment. It is also clear that the data indicates that women and men worked side-by-side in the road crews without major drama or difficulty. In almost all cases, participants reported that men and women had only rarely worked together before the project. Despite trends noted in other countries, there did not appear to be any significant ‘backlash’ from men in these communities.

When asked about whether future projects should contain a similar gender balance, all women interviewed concurred with the 55% figure and cited their “equal rights” as the reason. Most men, on the other hand, indicated that a 50%/50% balance would be better. Men cited women’s “inability” to do “some hard labor” as a rationale for their opinion.

Below are some **sample data from the endline survey** reflecting the empowerment of women in the community.

Endline survey results:

- Over 95% of Men and 80% of Women non crew thought the project positively changed role of Women in the community (both Women crew & non crew).
- Over 90% of crew respondents in general said that Women and Men benefited the same from various aspects of the project, although:
 - 23.5% said Men benefit more from technical training, and
 - 10% said Women benefit more from Self help group & business training.
- Among crew who give away part of salary to another household member:
 - Men are more likely to give to Woman than to another Man (72% vs. 3%),
 - Women more likely to give to another Woman than a Man (75% vs. 6.3%).

Source: CEIC Endline survey, March 2009, CITL. These figures are not the result of research conducted by the evaluator

Interestingly, both the quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates that, in most cases, women achieved greater results than men in the project. Women’s post-test scores are consistently higher than their male counterparts’ (despite having lower levels of education and generally lower pre-test scores). Local staff and xefis also report that women consistently completed better, more detailed, and more accurate construction work. Finally, CARE staff observed that women participants had a greater confidence with and a higher skill level in group management, leadership, and decision-making.

It seems that part of the reason for the overwhelming success of the gender indicators has to do with the critical mass of women who benefited directly from the project. Unlike other projects, where the gender target is set at 30% or 40%, women clearly were equal, or more-than-equal, partners in the entire development process. Their efforts and accomplishments were highly visible and impossible to dismiss as “atypical” or “exceptional.” Male crew members, female crew members, local government officials, and even CARE staff all commented on how “surprised” and “impressed” they were that women did as well, and often better, than men involved in the project.

The critical mass of women on each and every crew contributed to a very high level of self-esteem and self-confidence among women in the communities, and not only just among those who were direct beneficiaries. In the FGDs, women talked about how they felt supported and empowered by the other women in their work crew. In comparison with other projects that have utilized a less ambitious gender target, it seems to be the case that the critical mass of women greatly empowered many women to become agents of development in their community. Women exhibited these leadership skills throughout the project, as well as during the evaluation fieldwork.

Gender Training

Beneficiaries demonstrated a high level of awareness and understanding of the major concepts discussed during the gender training. Highlights include the rights of women, the need for women and men to work collaboratively, and the importance of gender equity to the future of development in Timor Leste. The training appears to have been highly successful and well adapted to the context of rural Timor. Indeed, in almost 20 years of working in development, the evaluator has never encountered a higher level of impact from a single gender training.

Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices (KAP)

Although both men and women demonstrated a substantial knowledge of gender equity concerns (and were able to repeat the major points from the training sessions), their attitudes and practices diverged substantially from one another.

While men could “parrot” the information presented during the gender training, when asked to elaborate, they continued to express an attitude of male superiority and entitlement. They clearly dominated most of the mixed focus group discussions. In single gender groups, then men were more willing to express the attitude that women were inferior. Some practices, such as arguing for a lower target for female participation in the “output based management system” also demonstrate that a great deal of work remains to be done.

Women, on the other hand, demonstrated a remarkable degree of change not only in their knowledge of their rights in Timorese society, but also in their attitudes and practices. In both single gender and mixed gender FGDs and activities during the Multi-Stakeholder Workshop, women discussed their enhanced self-esteem and their increased agency in their communities. They talked about their new ability to organize themselves and to work collaboratively across the community. They spoke with pride about their new technical skills and abilities as construction workers. Many of them openly challenged male attitudes and practices during mixed-gender FGDs. During the women-only sessions, they asserted that they would refuse to ‘go back’ to the old system of gender inequality.

Changing knowledge is a necessary first step before attitudes and practices about gender can change in any society. The pilot project has clearly succeeded in changing the knowledge of both men and women. Follow on activities should build on that success and work towards changing attitudes and practices.

Gender & Output-Based Management Model²

Unfortunately, the pattern of remarkable success with respect to gender equity that was established during the first portion of the project was not continued once the project switched to the “output based” work model. This failure is especially disappointing because it undermined the major gender accomplishments of the first phase.

Due to complaints from people (presumably men) in the project communities, the project field staff allowed the target percentage of women to decrease to below 50% (to as low as 33% in some communities) during this phase. As a consequence, fewer women are participating and vulnerable households, including female-headed ones, are less likely to benefit from the new model.

² The Output Based Model was introduced by CARE in the last year of project implementation. Instead of paying participants a daily wage, the model pays a lump sum for the completion of a pre-determined outcome. (e.g. the community receives \$40 for each kilometer of maintained road)

The lower percentages also contradict the messages about gender equity that were so important during the first phase of the project.

In FGDs, women expressed frustration and disappointment that gender equity seems to have gone “backwards” in this case. Men, on the other hand, were at pains to explain that the new selection process was transparent and based on a lottery system. In one community, they tried (unsuccessfully) to convince the evaluation team that women were simply “unlucky” and that is why only 33% of the new crew members are women. When pushed about the discrepancy between their knowledge/rhetoric (“women have equal rights to work”) and their behaviors (66% of jobs go to men), they were not able to defend or justify the actions.

Subsequent conversations with women and with local staff confirm the conclusion that non-negotiable gender targets are needed at every step in the project process.

Recommendations:

- 1). Any follow-on project should clearly maintain a substantial gender equity component.*
- 2). The project should continue to use the tremendously successful gender training materials and seek to utilize the same excellent gender trainer for future activities.*
- 3). The gender target (e.g. 55%) should be consistent and constant throughout all phases of project implementation, including output-based components.*
- 4). The gender target should remain at least as high as 50%, both because the ambitious target of 55% was achieved with relative ease and because this critical mass of women beneficiaries contributed to many additional positive development impacts.*
- 5). CARE should continue to seek gender-balance in the field staff. Although this is challenging in East Timor, it is clearly beneficial for project outcomes if at least some local field staff are female.*
- 6). The project should consider the possibility of conducting some trainings in a gender-segregated fashion to enable greater depth of conversation about sensitive cultural topics (e.g. HIV/AIDs). Such separate trainings should be followed by joint trainings to discuss shared understandings.*
- 7). The project should consider building on the successful gender training to develop additional models which build on the knowledge acquired there. Such trainings might help to begin the transition to a change in attitudes and practices*

F. Project Management & Coordination Issues

Procurement

The project experienced major and persistent problems with the procurement and timely delivery of appropriate road building materials. These ongoing challenges created a major management headache for CARE and regularly delayed construction at the community level. The reasons for the challenges were multiple, including: lack of an adequate supply chain; inferior materials; insufficient budget planning for surfacing materials; delays in reimbursement from the PMU; and CARE’s general lack of administrative experience in procuring these specific materials on this scale.

Transportation

The project experienced major and persistent problems with transportation. Multiple vehicle repairs required the removal of key project equipment to Dili for extended periods of time. While CARE attempted to fill the gap with other CARE vehicles, many delays were unavoidable. The main reasons for

these challenges include: lack of vehicle repair facilities and spare parts in Maliana; the incredibly difficult road conditions in the project area; the small number of vehicles for the project (due to the project size); delays in reimbursement from the PMU; and the fact that CARE's fleet of trucks does not include many others that are appropriate for moving roadbuilding materials.

Salary Payment Systems

The project experienced some persistent problems with the timely payment of salaries to beneficiaries. The main reasons for these delays were: delays in reimbursement from the PMU; and CARE's lack of specific financial procedures to complete large cash payments in a timely fashion.

Output Based System

The output-based system developed at the end of the project generally seems to be well thought out and well planned. However, since implementation has just begun it is too early to actually evaluate the impact. In discussions with multiple stakeholders, a few issues of potential concern, including several that had already been identified by CARE, emerged. Challenges with sustainability, material supply, the cooperation of government, and the payment for maintenance will need to be addressed.

Recommendations:

1). Improve the implementation plan for the output-based model.

Key things to consider include:

- an additional mechanism to address major repairs that might be needed in order to bring a road up to "maintainable" condition (e.g. landslides after rainy season);*
- ongoing support for implementation of existing MoUs;*
- an increase to the negotiated payment from \$40/kilometer to \$50 or perhaps \$60/kilometer (Although the lower amount is set by the MoI at a national level, it seems more appropriate for the maintenance of paved roads) ;*
- work with the MoI to standardize the expectations for road maintenance*

2). Given CARE's relative lack of comparative advantage in road construction, consider partnering with another stakeholder to provide procurement and transportation assistance. Such a relationship might be achieved through a sub-contract, an MoU, or a different administrative arrangement.

3). CARE should develop a specific internal financial management system to address the high volume of payments to individual beneficiaries in remote areas. Given how different this project is, such a system might very well have to run parallel to the other financial systems within the organization.

4). The PMU should continue to work closely with CARE to resolve the extended delays in payments for goods and services. The proposed creation of an escrow account seems to be a viable and transparent way to address this issue.

G. Recommendations for Future Work of RSIP and CARE in the Sector

This pilot project is an ambitious one that contains several overlapping (and sometimes competing) objectives. Despite this, the project has clearly been successful overall. It has also generated a great number of lessons learned which can and should inform the process of designing the larger follow-on rural roads projects in Timor Leste. A number of possible changes, and the concomitant trade-offs that they would generate are discussed in this section of the report.

1). Both RSIP and CARE consider carefully how they would **weigh the competing importance of the 3 expected results** at the impact level: roads, livelihood security, and women's agency. The pilot project data showed remarkably good results in gender area; somewhat mixed, but mostly solid results for the impact of the road; and less stellar results in the livelihood security area.

Attempting to maximize the impacts in one result area might very well lead to decreased impact in another area. For example, while it is clear that the roads need to be maintained to a level that they are passable, it might not be necessary to rehabilitate roads to "perfect" condition if those resources could be better utilized to address livelihood security or gender needs in the community.

2). CARE and RSIP may also want to re-examine the expectations of livelihood security that are reasonable given conditions on the ground in the isolated rural communities where any expanded project is likely to work in the future. The reality is that many communities in rural Timor are probably not ready for sustainable livelihood security activities (at least not when the going wage is \$4/day, the program is time-limited, and people also need time for their other subsistence activities.)

Instead of attempting to improve livelihood security over the long term, any future project may want to focus instead on activities that both a). facilitate the **pre-conditions for livelihood security** in the future and b). provide for the **short-term household needs** (e.g. food, school supplies) for vulnerable community members.

The current model did a very good job of the former. Any follow-on project should continue to provide appropriate, hands-on, **training** in the areas of small business development, savings and banking, and health and hygiene. The follow-on project might want to consider adding additional trainings in adult literacy and numeracy. All of these activities contribute to the necessary first step of creating the pre-conditions for livelihood security among vulnerable communities.

In terms of providing for **short-term household needs**, the follow-on project(s) may want to rework the expected outcomes under livelihood security to capture the important benefit that beneficiary salaries provide for their families in the short run. Instead of "failing" to create long-term livelihood security through the creation of businesses, such a change would explain the "successes" that are happening as community members buy food and clothing that enables their children to do well in school, for example.

Although there is some understandable resistance to utilizing a "cash-for-work" kind of scheme, it is undeniable that the cash provided in such a project helps community members to meet otherwise unmet needs. Unless and until communities have other options, it seems likely that the ability to utilize wage earnings from short-term employment projects such as this one will provide an important contribution to short-term livelihood and food security. The current wage of \$4/day is an appropriate floor from which to work. Under no circumstances should community members be paid less than \$3/day.

Both the FGD and endline survey data indicate that the strategy of “forced” savings (placing \$1/day in a bank account that participants could only access at the end of the project) was a tremendous success. Any follow-on projects should seek to utilize a similar mechanism.

3). Any future follow-on project should maintain the **gender focus**, enforced by a substantial and ambitious gender target. The evaluation revealed that the 55% target was not only doable, but likely contributed to the high levels of positive results in several different areas. Any future project should maintain a **minimum level of 50% participation by women**. The evaluation data supports the continuation of the 55% level.

4). Any future project should develop a more comprehensive, more participatory and more gender sensitive **Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system**. It is imperative that future projects gather gender-disaggregated data, including baseline data on all major project variables. The lack of baseline data greatly hampered the ability to conduct an exhaustive evaluation of project impact. The project should consider continuing to use the kinds of comparative, visual and participatory methodologies utilized during the multi-stakeholder impact workshop (e.g. stakeholder mapping). A truly participatory M&E system would also enable individual communities to identify and take ownership over their own expected impacts and outcomes.

5). Future iterations of the project should consider developing different labor and implementation models for the activities associated with **road rehabilitation versus road maintenance**. The skills, labor inputs, materials, and resources needed are different for each. Discussions with multiple stakeholders during the evaluation led to the identification of several key components to consider. As the ADB thinks about the possibility of scaling up this model, it may not make sense to try to train members of each and every community to do the more technical road rehabilitation work. In theory, such work is a one-off. If the project aims to transfer skills which will be useful in the long-term, the techniques associated with road maintenance are more likely to be of use (and in demand) in the long-run. Although some skill transfer might be possible, it is not likely that 11 people from every village in Timor will be able to form their own construction company. It is, however, likely, that community members can be paid to conduct routine maintenance of their own roads in the future.

a). Consider the use of small-scale machinery for road rehabilitation. The careful use of shared machinery (e.g. one set per sub-district) could greatly enhance both the quality of the construction, the durability of the repairs, and the efficiency of rehabilitation.

b). Consider the use of specialized crews to conduct the more technical road rehabilitation work. Such crews might represent the “first group” in a particular community. After completion of the reconstruction, individuals from the first group could serve as leaders in the subsequent groups that are trained to do routine maintenance. Clearly, there would be trade-offs to any such change. For example, cultural sensitivities about people working outside their own aldeia might prove problematic. Similarly, a crew that is far from home would have difficulty meeting their livelihood security needs at home. One way to overcome this might be to recruit an “allstar team” including 1-2 people from each community. Another option might be to utilize an outside contractor or regional entity for some of the most technical rehabilitation components.

c). Consider recognizing and compensating the higher skill level required for road rehabilitation (e.g. higher daily wage) in ways that are consistent with national wage policy.

d). Develop mechanisms to address major road repairs due to landslides and other unforeseen events. Community members who are expected to do routine maintenance cannot be expected to

- have the skills or materials to complete more complex repairs, especially if the labor costs are not budgeted for such additional work.
- e). Work with the MoI and the national government to develop an appropriate level of compensation for road maintenance of rural roads. The current negotiated per kilometer rate is a national standard, which seems to have been mostly predicated on the maintenance of paved roads. The required on these roads (e.g. cutting back brush, filling the occasional pothole) is minimal compared to the work required on rural, dirt roads. Communities should receive more per kilometer for working more.
- 6). Future projects should continue to work towards **improved quality of road** rehabilitation and maintenance.
- a) Projects should follow national standards and learn from the technical approaches utilized by other road projects.
 - b) Projects should use better materials and set aside sufficient budgetary funds to do so.
 - c) Future projects should resolve materials procurement delays by considering creative partnerships with other stakeholders (e.g. sub-contractors, construction firms, other road projects)
- 7). Incorporate the “**added impacts**” that CARE was able to bring on board during the pilot – above and beyond the original targets. These activities were impressive and fit nicely with the existing structure of the project.
- a). Design, develop, and build mini-markets to encourage local commerce.
 - b). Promote and support savings and credit groups
 - c) Maintain flexibility to respond to community demands for activities such as some completely new roads (based on community initiative).
- 8). Create enough administrative structure to allow for smooth functioning of payroll, materials transfer, and so on but allow for **flexibility** in design at the community level to encourage community engagement and ownership of the process. Once they are engaged in a participatory fashion, most communities can self-identify the kinds of impacts they would most like to see in a project. One mechanism to consider would be the creation of a **small grants** process at the community level.
- 9). Continue to improve the **systems of payroll payment and materials acquisition**. Because this project was a somewhat unusual model for CARE, participants experienced numerous delays in receiving salaries and materials for road construction. Senior CARE staff expressed concern about the administrative challenges of paying such large sums at such a distance. Any future project (especially if on a larger scale), should think creatively about ways to overcome these challenges. One mechanism might include payment of salaries directly into bank accounts (not just the \$1/day) to minimize the risk of large payrolls. Another mechanism might include the use of escrow type accounts at the PMU. CARE or other implementing partners might very well need to create a parallel financial system internally in order to facilitate the work of district-based staff.
- 10). Continue to work towards supporting the planned **decentralization** process in Timor Leste. At the same time, any future project should be mindful of the limitations of decentralization to date. Unless and until District level government has budgetary authority over road rehabilitation and maintenance, it will be critically important that CARE (or other implementing partners) continue to engage both the national and the local governmental officials.
- 11). Think creatively about possible ways to balance the demand from multiple stakeholders that the number of direct beneficiaries be expanded to include more members of the community with the donor’s desire to make sure that impacts are significant for individuals.

It might be helpful to think about the various extant models as existing along a spectrum – from the purely rotational cash-for-work model used by the ILO on the one end, to the model originally used by this project on the other end. In the latter, only 11 direct beneficiaries were identified in each community. Based on feedback during the pilot, the CARE project moved more towards the middle of the continuum and expanded the number of direct beneficiaries extensively.

The evaluation data demonstrates that any project going forward should continue to modify the labor model and work to expand the number of direct beneficiaries whenever possible.

A variety of possible models were discussed by different beneficiaries throughout the evaluation process. Moving forward, the evaluator recommends that the RSIP think consult with multiple stakeholders to possible solutions, including but not limited to:

- a). “Expert Crew” recruited for the road rehabilitation, followed by “maintenance crews” who are led by team leaders from the expert crews. The former group would receive intensive training and support, while the latter groups would receive somewhat less. Most stakeholders recommended having a total of 2-3 crews for each community (working on a rotational basis)
- b). “Rotating Crews”- form as many crews as the community feels appropriate for their needs. Under this scenario, each crew would work for a set period of time (1 month? 2 weeks?) and then rotate off. Multiple stakeholders indicated that ALL crew members should attend some trainings (e.g. gender training). Under this model, those crews that are not “on duty” would not receive cash payments, even while attending trainings.

H. Conclusions

In general terms, the CEIC Pilot Project, has been remarkably successful, innovative, and adaptable. It has clearly and ably demonstrated that a community-based and gender-balanced approach to road rehabilitation and maintenance is not only possible, but actually preferable, in the Timorese context.

The project has resulted in the **rehabilitation and maintenance** of 15 kilometers of road and the construction of 5 kilometers of new road. It has succeeded in creating a tremendous **sense of ownership** over the development process at the community level. This ownership is largely **gender-balanced** and represents a substantial achievement. The level of **community empowerment** as a direct result of this project is commendable.

The project has succeeded in **enhancing capacity**, developing important skills, and delivering effective and appropriately designed **training** on a variety of lifeskill topics. It has achieved impressive results in the challenging area of **gender equity**. The project has generated a substantial **economic impact** in the short-term among very vulnerable communities. The combination of salaries, savings, and a limited number of business investments have combined to **enhance livelihood security** in these communities.

CARE and the PMU have succeeded in being **nimble, flexible, and adaptable** to changing circumstances. Such an approach enabled the project to take full advantage of the “pilot” nature of this project and the programmatic and administrative experimentation has resulted in a great number of “lessons learned” that the ADB will be able to utilize as it moves forward to design the scale-up of the RSIP.

Annexes

- A. Methodology Design
- B. Endline Survey Data Tables
- C. Logframe
- D. Focus Group Discussion Overview
- E. List of Interviewees
- F. Photos from Multi-Stakeholder Workshop
- G. Road Count Data