

ABSTRACT OF EVALUATION REPORTS

Report No. 15

Date November 1984



EVALUATION DIVISION

African Development Bank

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THE TWO INTERNATIONAL ROADS: ATHI RIVER NAMANGA AND ELDORET TORORO ROADS IN KENYA (ADB/PPLR/84/05)

1. The project consisted of the reconstruction and upgrading of the Athi River-Namanga (135 km) and the Eldoret-Tororo (117 km) roads located in Kenya. It was the first financed ADB project (cofinanced with USAID with ADB's share totalling BUA 2.3 million out of a total cost of BUA 8.2 million).
2. The main objective and justification for the project was based on the fact that the two trunk roads were of national as well as international importance. Both roads are sections of the Great North Road which connects Dar-Es-Salaam (Tanzania), Nairobi (Kenya) and Kampala (Uganda). The project was envisaged to help the three East African countries exploit their immense economic potentialities in terms of tourism and other natural resources under the aegis of the East African Community (EAC).
3. The implementation of the project took four years, instead of the 2 years projected at appraisal. There were a number of factors which contributed to this delay. The problems may be categorised as personal, internal financial problems of the contractors, delays in procurement and poor logistics brought about by the separation of the project sites. But due to financial prudence on the part of the participating financiers the projects cost was within and as a matter of fact below estimates, even though there was tremendous time overrun of two years. The works completed were up to standards and the overall quality of the roads were satisfactory.
4. The role and effects of the roads have been positive in the areas in which they are located. The Eldoret-Tororo (Malaba) road has provided an important link for the movements of goods and services not only to Uganda but also to Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire. However its maximum impact was minimised by poor maintenance. The Athi River-Namanga section was hampered by the closure of Tanzania-Kenya border at Namanga in 1977. Considering the circumstances, the available data indicates that these roads have lived up to expectations as far as the investments were concerned. The traffic growth figures and the general economic activities do demonstrate that the roads have had the intended effects within their areas of influence.

5. Representing the Bank's first finance, the project can be considered a success. Lessons learned include the following: (i) that for a road project and for that matter for most transportation investments to realise their full potential, there is the need for complimentary investments in other sectors of the economy (ii) that the realization of the full benefits of such multinational projects (which are supposed to benefit more than one nation) may be hampered by political problems (collapse of the EAC and the closure of the border at Namanga).

6. The report recommends that as a matter of urgency the Borrower i.e. Kenya create effective machinery and establish the necessary financial framework to tackle the recurrent cost problem of maintenance of the project roads and transportation system in general in Kenya. It is recommended to the Bank to enforce its policy on maintenance by continuously monitoring completed projects. The Bank is also urged to review the area of road maintenance with a view to providing tangible assistance to member countries.