Objective

This evaluation examined the Bank Group’s assistance to Cameroon from the perspective of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The evaluation also drew relevant lessons to improve future strategy and operations.

Findings

Relevance

Relevance is considered satisfactory. The Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) are aligned with the national strategy: We could rephrase this read the 2013 poverty reduction strategy paper and the 2010-2020 Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) which operationalizes the country’s Vision 2035. The strategic positioning on the governance and infrastructure pillars is relevant and consistent with the strategic priorities of the country and the Bank. However, the Bank’s operations lacked selectivity in the area of governance because the scope of its intervention was too wide and the number of direct beneficiaries too high.

Effectiveness

Overall, the effectiveness of the Bank’s interventions in Cameroon was considered to be moderately satisfactory, with varying degrees of success from one sector to another. Bank assistance achieved tangible results in infrastructure, and it has contributed to regional integration through road projects. The Bank has been less successful in the area of governance, where reforms did not attain their objectives due to a lack of influence and to fragmentation of the Bank’s resources across too many areas. The potential for collaboration with the private sector was well utilized through successful public-private partnerships in the energy sector.

Efficiency

Despite the efforts made to improve portfolio performance and the recent positive trend, generic problems and specific project implementation difficulties (weak capacity of Project Implementation Units and service providers, problem of compensation) are the main factors responsible for the delays which resulted in efficiency being rated as moderately unsatisfactory.
Sustainability

Sustainability is considered moderately probable. It is more likely for infrastructure, especially energy, but less for governance. With regard to governance, sustainability is affected by weak ownership, the Compartmentalization of ministries and insufficient participation in the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies.

Recommendations

1. Strengthen the strategic positioning by developing programmatic synergies. The focus on infrastructure remains highly relevant particularly with a view to increasing the volume of resources.

2. Develop risk management and define conditions (identification, planning and monitoring of mitigation measures) in the design and monitoring of the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) and projects to ensure their efficient and coordinated implementation as well as their full ownership by the stakeholders concerned.

3. Ensure the sustainability of transport infrastructure investments. Strengthening infrastructure management, especially in the transport sector, through an efficient road maintenance fund is necessary to ensure the sustainability of investments and effective public spending.

4. Contribute to the strengthening of local enterprises. To that end, the Bank should fine-tune the sizing of lots for the development of the structures under the projects it finances in order to enable local enterprises to compete for them. Another useful option could be to prepare an updated directory of competent local companies.

About IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) of the African Development Bank is an independent and autonomous unit. It carries out independent evaluations of Bank operations, policies and strategies, working across projects, sectors, themes, regions, and countries. By conducting independent evaluations and proactively sharing best practice, IDEV ensures that the Bank and its stakeholders learn from past experience and plan and deliver development activities to the highest possible standards.

Management Response

On the whole, management endorses the outcome of the evaluation which will inform future Bank operations in Cameroon. IDEV evaluation recommendations have already been taken into consideration in the Joint Completion Report on the 2010-2014 Country Strategy Paper (CSP) and Country Portfolio Performance (CPPR) along with the outline pillars of the 2015-2019 CSP. In addition, the Bank’s field office in Cameroon (CMFO) has taken into consideration the evaluation’s findings and recommendations in the revision of the 2015-2019 Cameroon CSP.

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