

The Chad case study

Chad was an intermediate case, with a relatively dynamic OF and strong government sectoral priority, but with a confused and uncoordinated institutional framework, and low institutional and individual capacities. The proposed procedure was applied step-by-step and also produced satisfactory results.

PRESENTATION OF THE PASET PROGRAMME

Starting in 2007-8, the EC has put in place a comprehensive institutional development intervention based largely on a paradigm of counterpart-based (mentoring) TA. The project aims at strengthening the domestic transport network so as to satisfy demand for transport in the country in a durable way. It supports the government strategy for the sustainable development of the Chadian economy and the reduction of poverty.

Four results are expected:

- i) The domestic network is maintained annually and periodically, with levels of satisfactory service
- ii) Local SMEs take part in road maintenance
- iii) The economic axis of the South of Chad (Moundou road - Doba - Sahr) is usable all year round
- iv) The layout of an axis to opening the access to the East Chad (Sahr - Abéché), preserving the park of Zakouma, is adopted.

ENABLING FACTORS

PASET'S QUALITY CRITERIA

Suitable design for the sectoral context. The EC's intervention reflected the evolving economic requirements and strategic plans for the country. A more effective road network was needed to enable the country to exploit its natural resources, to ensure its geopolitical security in times of conflict, and to enable its far-flung villages and cities to gain access to markets.

Sufficient demand and high buy-in by the Government. Chad also committed to road improvements in regional fora, in line with its strategy of reducing consumer prices through reductions in transport costs. These vectors were recognised but the relatively hazardous hypothesis was made that the country's leaders would adopt a champion role in the sector, particularly with respect to its institutional capability, in a sustainable manner. Indeed, studies done in 2004 and 2008 confirmed that the sector agencies were weak in almost every aspect.

Harmonization. The EC plays the major role in the transport sector in the country. The World Bank and the African Development Bank follow, while other donors do not participate, or provide only marginal contributions. Donor programs in the infrastructure sector entail expenditure of several tens of millions of euros, but there is as yet no coordination mechanism for enhancing policy dialogue with the government on institutional and policy reform.

Link to results. The explicit strategies of the interventions financed under the PASET do not contain institutional targets, for example indicators related to new institutional capabilities and responsibilities (including management standards and risks), and linked to achievement of the project's results. Most indicators were exclusively focused on the project's inputs and activities (technical, financial, operational).

Peer relationships. Two large contracts were put into place that provided for a significant number of traditional short- and long-term TAs assigned to the Secretary-General(s) who was (were) ultimately responsible for the results of the interventions. The EC also provided "devis-programme" (programme estimates) funding and provided monitoring and quality control services, among others. The priority given to implementation of the project activities compared to the institutional results favoured a 'replacement' approach in the implementation of the TA.

ASSESSMENT OF THE OPPORTUNITY FRAMEWORK

Historical momentum. Chad opened the 21st Century with dramatic economic growth boosted by oil exports. Big investments in infrastructure were planned and partly implemented using the oil surpluses. In the meantime two major crisis factors have characterised the country: corruption supported by the oil economy, which has hampered establishment of a coherent development strategy and weakened any

State-building process; and the political destabilisation of the region, which has plunged the country into a deep civil war between the north and the south.

Institutional development. The State-building process is complicated and weakened by this mix of resource boom, corruption and high political instability. Public service standards and hiring policies in the public sector are very poor, salary levels are so low as to force individuals to work on two or three jobs (often simultaneously), an absence of professional motivation on the part of most technical staff in the public sector, and a decision-making culture that relies on the political head (the minister) not only for decisions but also for direction.

Sectoral policy. A first sector reform plan took shape in 1989 and a National Transport Strategy was proposed for the 2000-2010 period, responsibility for the sector being vested in one ministry that was split in two in August 2011, creating in essence one focus for public works and another for transport policy. Indeed, the strategic plans of the transport sector show very few links to other strategic plans. During those many years the EC has supported the capacity development of the ministry(ies), of the private sector, and of key road maintenance-related agencies (mainly AGER). Transport was perceived as a key element in development by both the government and its partners.

VOLATILE AND UNAPPROPRIATED CAPACITY OUTPUTS

Despite record-setting levels of public works, institutional development was clearly not a priority. Institutional and capability objectives and standards were not clearly identified by the GoC, and the TA focused on ensuring implementation of the project's operational outputs.

The capacity outputs produced by the TA were many: creation of a database and improvement of data collection; instructions for staff functions and sub-sector guidelines; contribution to the design and assistance to the implementation of new structures (FER, AGER, CER); improvement of systems (technical maintenance, rural transport,...) etc. Such outputs however were not appropriated by the beneficiaries and did not generate effective functions or skills in the institutions. Despite their actual use in the operational process, such outputs had little effects in terms of institutional development: they were often ignored and were mostly non-sustainable owing to transfers and abandonment. An important apparent exception is AGER which, at the time of the present assignment, was institutionally structured to accomplish its maintenance mission but had never been tested in practice, and the programme of work of which was not yet approved by the very ministry from which it was designed to be independent.

Sector ministries remain very weak in most areas, except contract management and supervision. Most of the engineering, construction and supervision functions, however, are carried out by contractors who, in turn, are monitored – but not necessarily controlled – by the ministries. It is recognised that the country was able to construct an important number of kilometres of primary and secondary roads as well as an impressive quantity of urban infrastructure. These results are based on a contracting-out strategy that did not feature in the Sector Strategic Plans and are heavily risk-laden. Key functions such as strategic planning, costing and quality control have only been mastered by a small number of senior managers who will soon retire. Adequate management knowledge, skills and aptitudes, and the systems needed to support them, are not in place. In general the ministries have not, over the years, actually defined the kind and levels of performance they require or the priorities needed for institutional development.

Basically the TA has concentrated its efforts on mentoring Chadian homologues. The mentoring process has not been as effective as planned. Many that were mentored have left the public service or are not doing the job for which they were trained. Much of the TA has gone toward substitution of employees instead of co-development with them, and some of the training was for systems that the ministries still have not mastered or for which alternative systems are still not in place.

A partial exception is represented by the capacity support provided to private enterprises, mainly in the area of administrative and technical improvement related to maintenance works. Here the motivation of the enterprises has allowed an internalisation of the support which has not occurred in the public administration.

ASSESSMENT OF THE CAPACITY OUTCOMES

Poor initiative and autonomy, with the exception of the private sector. Over the years covered by this evaluation, the office of the Presidency has controlled most decision-making and contract negotiation in respect of construction projects and has left only the mechanical tasks associated with construction and progress control (for progress payments) in the hands of sector officials. Sector ministries mostly do not push forward sector strategies or monitor and control their institutional development efforts. Indeed, this

was known at the time of the design of the program. An exception is represented by private sector operators who seem to have strengthened their capacity for participation.

No accountability for the strategic results. The sector ministries and agencies are not accountable for the implementation of the sectoral strategies, in part because they did not develop them. Systems are not supportive of strategic learning and decision-making, but are compliance- and monitoring-oriented. They respond to the contracts managed and works done, not to the strategic soundness, effectiveness or efficiency of the results achieved. The ministries do not seek to be seen to be accountable, nor are they held accountable.

Poor feedback and adaptation mechanisms. The lack of strategic accountability and the limited or absent institutional development objectives minimise any feedback and learning process within the public institutions involved.

Weak networking. There is no evidence of strategic networking, with other government institutions to enhance synergies, or public bodies such as the parliament. A certain functional (not strategic) networking may be seen in the relationship with the private sector, although this is based on operational reasons (information and services).

Low general level of governance. By and large, at the level of the public institutions involved, no significant improvement in systems design or use, or in the general level of governance (including transparency, coordination, human resource management), was perceived by the stakeholders interviewed. Most systems now in place are either legacy or are the result of initiatives in other ministries (such as PFM reform). Even in the private sector institutions this level of improved systemic coherence does not seem to have been achieved in terms of increased competitiveness and transparency of the enterprises.

LINKS BETWEEN CAPACITY-OUTPUTS AND CAPACITY-OUTCOMES

The evaluation concluded that only in the case of the increased administrative and technical capacity of the private enterprises has there been a positive correlation with the capacity outputs generated by the project. In the other cases, such outputs have not contributed to strengthening the capacity of the institutions involved, although they have been instrumental in the implementation of their operational outputs (construction works).

CONCLUSIONS

The important level of financial and technical support provided by the EC did not significantly improve the level of capacity of the ministries, which remain seriously handicapped in terms of delivering on the National Transport Strategy. The political and institutional conditions for the construction of such capacities were not there. GoC did not own the process and therefore did not take action to improve the quality of the CD.

The design of the EC's intervention was based on CD hypotheses that were known to be erroneous or risky, even at the time. The entire « program » should have been based on performance standards for each function and strong monitoring systems should have supported active management. Or else alternative options could have been adopted, instead of building such a relatively complex system of public institutions.