



1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 06/24/2002	
PROJ ID : P000411		Appraisal	Actual
Project Name : Hlth/fert/nutrition	Project Costs (US\$M)	48	18.45
Country : Cameroon	Loan/Credit (US\$M)	43	15.9
Sector(s) : Board: HE - Health (95%), Central government administration (5%)	Cofinancing (US\$M)		
L/C Number : C2684; LP167			
	Board Approval (FY)		95
Partners involved :	Closing Date	06/30/2001	06/03/2001
Prepared by :	Reviewed by :	Group Manager :	Group:
Roy Jacobstein	Anwar M. Shah	Alain A. Barbu	OEDST
2. Project Objectives and Components			
a. Objectives			
The Project objective was to help the Government implement key components of its population and health policies.			
b. Components			
The Project had three discrete components: 1) Assistance in the Development and Implementation of the National Population Policy and the Family Planning/Information, Education and Communication Strategy (\$1.8 million). 2) Organizational and Administrative Reform of the Ministry of Public Health to Strengthen the Management of Health Sector Resources and Promote Decentralization of Health Services (\$1.5 million). 3) Expansion of Primary Health Care Coverage and Improvement in the Quality of Health Service Delivery (\$34.7 million, 90% of total project cost), which was to cover half of Cameroon's provinces, and its two principal cities.			
c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates			
Total project costs at appraisal were \$48 million, with a Bank credit of \$43 million and Government contribution of \$5 million. Actual/latest estimate for total costs is \$18.40 million, with \$15.33 million of credit expended, and \$3.07 million Government contribution. A revised and significantly scaled back project was approved December 20, 1999. At restructuring, \$20 million of the credit was cancelled. An additional \$3.84 million was not disbursed by November 2001, more than 4 months after the project closing date. Overall, 36% of the credit was disbursed.			
3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:			
The project failed to achieve most of its objectives. The population policy was not further developed. Management of resources in the health sector did not demonstrably improve.			
Quality and quantity of health services did not improve/increase, and, in fact, health indicators were worse for those districts involved in the project than those not involved. Project-financed civil works were completed late, and were of shoddy quality, often lacked equipment and staff -- and hence were non-functional.			
4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:			
Just as little if any achievement of relevant objectives can be cited for this project, so too there were no significant outcomes or impacts to cite. The number of people who received training in some aspect of primary health care totals over 1000, though the link of that training to improved performance is unknown. Similarly, 13 new rural health centers and a new district hospital were constructed, but this seemed to contribute little to increased access and use of services.			
5. Significant Shortcomings (including non-compliance with safeguard policies):			
The project was overly complex and risky, and unrealistically ambitious. Project objectives were either vague or unrealistic, and lacked quantifiable baseline indicators for monitoring, management and evaluation. No assessment of the institutions that would have responsibility for implementation was done. The project scope was well beyond the Government's implementation capacities, and implementation was delayed because of poor project preparation, inexperience and rapid turnover of Government staff, and lack of timely availability of counterpart funding. The			

private sector, a significant source of health services in Cameroon, was totally ignored. Even at restructuring, the project remained unrealistically ambitious. Positive impacts on health cannot be demonstrated; indeed, aggregate, population-level data worsened over the project time frame, and district-level indicators were worse for project districts than for non-project districts. Most of the health facilities that were rehabilitated or built have not been equipped, and many are inadequately staffed.

6. Ratings:	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome:	Unsatisfactory	Highly Unsatisfactory	A Highly Unsatisfactory rating is justified because of the project's many major shortcomings, despite over \$15 million of the IDA credit having been disbursed. These shortcomings, from overly complex design to highly unsatisfactory implementation are well- and fully-detailed in the ICR, and thus it is likely that no essential difference in judgment exists between the ICR and ES assessments.
Institutional Dev.:	Negligible	Negligible	
Sustainability:	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely	Virtually none of the project's activities are likely to be sustained.
Bank Performance:	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Borrower Perf.:	Highly Unsatisfactory	Highly Unsatisfactory	
Quality of ICR:		Satisfactory	

NOTE: ICR rating values flagged with '*' don't comply with OP/BP 13.55, but are listed for completeness.

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

This project confirms a number of lessons from other Bank projects: overly complex and risky projects are unwise to embark upon, even in the presence of (understandable) political pressure to “do something.” Certainly to do so in the absence of dispassionate assessment of institutional capacity is unwise. This holds too for a realistic assessment of Government commitment, in terms of both financial and (appropriately-trained) human resources. Adequate management safeguards need to be in place prior to project approval. Similarly, Bank commitment of adequate supervisory resources, especially early on, is essential. Finally, proceeding with project design and approval in the absence of appropriate-level, quantifiable, baseline indicators for subsequent monitoring and supervision, is ill-advised, since it inevitably results in an inability to say subsequently with any degree of certainty what, if anything, a given project has accomplished.

8. Assessment Recommended? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The ICR is well-written, thorough, consistent, and admirably frank about the many shortcomings of the project, from its overly complex and highly risky—and generally ill-advised—design, to its highly unsatisfactory implementation, negligible government ownership, and lack of any significant achievement. The cover sheet appears to be in error in indicating a credit of \$29.5 million—subsequent text and Annex 2 indicate, correctly, the initial credit level of approximately \$48 million.