

Date: March 4, 2021
To: Berta Heybey, Managing Director Monitoring and Evaluation
From: Jack Molyneaux, Transportation Evaluation Lead and Julian Glucroft, Program Monitor
CC: Shreena Patel, Senior Director Evaluation

RE: Cancellations of IMPAQ International's and International Development Group's Burkina Faso Roads Evaluations (two evaluations)

This memo describes the decision to cancel Impaq International and International Development Group's independent evaluations of the Burkina Faso Roads Project

Decision to Cancel Evaluations

In 2010, MCC requested proposals for an impact evaluation of the Burkina Faso Roads Project that would be based on surveys of households and businesses with a 5km band on either side of the roads to be rehabilitated with MCC funding. IMPAQ International was awarded the contract in 2011, which also included the evaluation of the Senegal Roads project. In Aug 2011, a consortium of contractors known as "M&E-8" (after their contract number with the MCA) was hired to conduct the baseline surveys. De-identified data for that work is available on the evaluation catalogue under the [Burkina Faso - Roads Baseline Survey](#) entry.

In 2013, MCC underwent a peer review process that examined its evaluation approaches to road investments across its portfolio. This process generated key findings related to MCC's approach to evaluating roads projects., which is described in MCC's Principles into Practice paper: [Lessons from MCC's Investments](#).

- Many of the benefits to an improved road do not accrue to those located directly along the road. Those experiencing lower travel costs may begin or end their journey at points that are beyond the MCC roads. For example, many of the potential users of the Dedougou-Nouna-Mali Border would likely come from Ouagadougou or other major towns and are headed for destinations in Mali.
- The per capita benefits to road improvements are small. The large number of likely beneficiaries may make the investment economically justifiable. However, measuring the impact using a household- or business-based approach would require an unfeasibly large sample size. Even if this were possible in a particular situation, it would likely not be cost-effective.

In late 2014, MCC decided to not elect IMPAQ International's next option year and to re-procure the evaluation in favor of an HDM-4-based evaluation. Given various delays, that contract was not signed until Sept 2016. International Development Group was competitively selected for this evaluation.



However, the evaluation was indefinitely suspended in the Spring of 2018 due to an active investigation of the Office of the Inspector General's Investigations Division into the Burkina Faso Roads Project.

Based on the assessment described above, MCC canceled Impaq International's Burkina Faso Roads Evaluation in FY 2014 and determined to re-bid in favor of an HDM-4-based evaluation in FY 2016. International Development Group was competitively selected to implement that evaluation, which was subsequently canceled in FY 2018 due to factors outside its control. The evaluation will remain canceled and not be rebid because it will not be cost effective to do so at this stage.

Overview of Evaluation

MCC contracted IMPAQ International in 2011 to lead the independent evaluation of the Burkina Faso Roads Project. MCC estimates a total commitment of \$919,111.36 to this evaluation from FY2011 to FY2015, which likely does not include MCA funding to the M-E 8 data collection contract. The main objective of the evaluation was to measure key socio-economic outcomes of household and firms living within 5km of the road. This included but was not limited to access to basic services, income and consumption levels, and employment.

MCC contracted International Development Group in 2016 to lead the independent evaluation of the Burkina Faso Roads Project using an HDM-4 based approach. MCC spent \$522,943.59 to this evaluation from FY 2016 to FY 2018. The main objective of the evaluation was to estimate the ERR and net present value; examine MCC's assumptions related to maintenance and the sustainability of infrastructure improvements, examine how goods and people are traveling along MCC project roads, where they are going, and what the motivations for the journey are; and assess the transportation market structure.

Description of the Risk(s)/Risk(s) Mitigation

The risk with the initial impact evaluation design was primarily in being unable to detect impacts (due to the need for an unreasonably large, required sample size) and inappropriate target of beneficiaries as those benefiting from the road do not necessarily live within 5km of the road. MCC addressed this risk by pivoting to an HDM-4 based evaluation.

The reason for indefinitely suspending the second evaluation was due to an unforeseeable risk outside MCC's control for which there were no acceptable mitigation measures.

Relevant Evaluation Materials

The evaluation (titled: Burkina Faso Roads Project) is available online here <https://data.mcc.gov/evaluations/index.php/catalog/201>. This includes design reports from both evaluations. The M-E 8 data, which was not ultimately used by either evaluation, is titled Burkina Faso - Roads Baseline Survey and is saved <https://data.mcc.gov/evaluations/index.php/catalog/125/study-description>

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Approved M&E MD
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