

EX POST EVALUATION OF CEB GRANT PROJECTS
Supporting refugees and internally displaced people in southeastern Europe
November 2008
Abstract

The evaluation covered two grants provided by the CEB to a southeastern European country for implementation by an international organization, in order to mitigate the negative social effects of a crisis in 1999 and civil unrest in 2001.

In 1999, the CEB approved a first grant of 1.1 m€ to finance improvements of communal water infrastructure in two villages (22 000 beneficiaries). **Results:** The technical design of the water supply system was up to standards and the project contributed to attaining almost full coverage of water supply in the target areas; according to the public utility, most households were connected to the water supply system. However, adaptation of the sewage infrastructure to the increased water quantities was addressed only rudimentarily. Better access to safe drinking water resulted in improved health due to reduced water-related diseases and possible epidemics. The overall objective was reached. The improved water supply contributed to facilitating the social integration of refugees and Roma into society and hence to lowering possible inter-ethnic tensions. Overall, the grant project was rated **satisfactory**.

In 2001, the CEB approved a second grant of 1 m€ to finance the Immediate Community Rehabilitation Support Project to aid refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) following conflicts in one part of the country. The project had two phases. Phase I (260 000 €) provided emergency food supplies to IDPs (40 490 beneficiaries). Based on available information, Phase I was fully implemented and effective, but for methodological reasons an evaluation of the food distribution is no longer possible. Within the limitations of available evidence, this Phase I is rated **satisfactory**.

Phase II (574 000 €; estimated beneficiaries: 23 000) financed water supply and sewer construction and rehabilitation in the wider conflict-affected area. Once these planned constructions were complete, the CEB approved the request to use remaining funds (144 000 €) to build the first part of an elementary school. **Results:** The local water demand increased with the population, as most IDPs settled in the project region. The population in the municipalities now benefits from increased water availability and 20% of the population benefits from the constructed sewers. However, a permanent water supply has not been achieved. Major shortcomings were identified, starting with the technical design of the water supply/sanitation components in two locations. One borehole provided is located near a medical waste disposal pit, thus bearing the risk of groundwater contamination, and has not been used for years. Clearing the site was not possible for lack of funds and for cultural reasons. Design deficiencies prevent use of the water supply system at one site and people still use the old gravity system. The area of sewer construction has only irregular water supply, risking the obstruction of sewers. Connection to these sewers is satisfactory, but in the absence of a treatment plant, sewage is channelled into the river, shifting health risks to other regions. The school built thanks to the budgetary surplus contributed to easing inter-ethnic tensions by providing better schooling conditions, temporary employment and integrating IDPs locally. Nonetheless, the overall rating of Phase II is **marginal**.

Conclusions: Both projects funded rehabilitation measures (except Phase I of the 2nd grant) with longer term effects and relied mainly on technical designs prepared by the local water utilities. The designs did not address environmental assessments and advocacy for water conservation, fee payment and leak detection/water loss reduction. Although the defined indicators were appropriate, they were limited to physical infrastructure. Agreements on assessing the impact were imprecise. The follow up on final reporting was not sufficiently tight.

Recommendations:

- Project agreements should clearly document the intervention logic of a project, with objectives, outcomes, indicators and targets, and foresee problem-oriented reporting. Adjustments should be documented.
- At the planning stage, the prevailing conditions on-site should be assessed carefully. All stakeholders should agree on the action to be taken. Environmental impact assessments should be part of planning. Responsibilities should be clearly defined.
- For water supply and sanitation projects, the CEB should ask recipients to assess alternative/complementary means of increasing household water availability, including loss reduction and the management of water utilities. The systematic inclusion of sewage treatment to prevent health risks should be considered.
- Grant projects should be monitored sufficiently closely by the CEB to ensure that correct designs are being implemented. Technical missions should be carried out at design stage or earlier during implementation, and be more frequent.
- Multi-faceted interventions requiring several technical inputs within a small grant should be avoided.
- Before surplus funds are used for new activities, the functioning of installed components should be verified.