

Community Contracting for Rural Roads Maintenance – Experience Of a Latin America Country

Introduction:

Routine road maintenance with micro enterprises are specifically oriented to promote routine management of secondary and minor roads based on microenterprises between national or regional governments and municipal administrations responsible for fulfilling that function.

Background:

The project emphasizes the connection of the benefited rural communities with a well - integrated and reliable road system through rehabilitation and maintenance of a "core" road network composed of rural roads and connecting primary and secondary roads. It introduces local governments to the principle of "network" management (including the informal network of non-motorized tracks), which is key to improving transport services.

Details of the Intervention:

In the year 1996 in Peru introduced rural roads maintenance programme called PCR. The programme decentralized from the Communication and Transport Ministry (MTC), which operates with financing from the Peruvian government as well as from the World Bank and inter-American Banks. Between 1996 and 2000, 411 microenterprises were created. They oversee 2,800 km of minor roadbed roads (ballasting, dirt roads), which enabled the generation of 4,780 direct and permanent job positions in extreme poverty-stricken areas of the country.

Microenterprises were made up of 8 to 14 people living close to the road, to carry out manual routine maintenance activities on approximately 15 to 50 km. The project financed all activities related to promotion and development of microenterprises, providing timely supervision and monitoring, creating awareness and sensitising the local natives about benefits of microenterprises.

The project aims at setting up a system of routine maintenance of roads. Contracting of labour-intensive works to micro-enterprises or local cooperatives is undertaken while equipment-intensive works are contracted to small and medium contractors. Rehabilitation on critical sections (spot improvements) is undertaken prior to start of maintenance activities. The road maintenance activities consist of simple works regularly performed throughout the year to maintain the drainage systems (ditches, culverts, vegetation) and the running surface (filling potholes and ruts, maintaining the surface camber). Apart of improving road quality, these microenterprises have also become an important means to enhance local development in rural communities.

Impact:

Microenterprises have proven to be able to guarantee an optimal transit-ability level of the roads assigned to them and at lower costs than those generated by traditional maintenance methods. These microenterprises have proven to be able to guarantee an optimal transit-ability level of the roads assigned to them and at lower costs than those generated by traditional maintenance methods. This boost is achieved through permanent and quality job generation in microenterprises as well as provisional jobs during the restoring phase, routine maintenance, or road improvement. The involvement of local microenterprises allowed for the generation of 4,900 direct, permanent and good quality jobs in Peru. Through microenterprise fee payments, economically depressed areas get an important financial boost. These microenterprises have spurred local consumption and have enabled the production and accumulation of local capital.

In 2001, the Peruvian experience has been declared one of the three most successful World Bank projects in the world for that year.

Source: The World Bank, Infrastructure and Operations Division Country Department III, Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office. (1995). Rural Road Rehabilitation and Maintenance Project.