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Economic Cooperation and Development

Management Response

Evaluation of the Ghana Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project (GUMAP)

By Mr Pablo Vaggione

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1) Background

In September 2023, SECO (Infrastructure Financing Section WEIN) has mandated an external evaluator, Mr. Pablo Vaggione, to conduct an evaluation of the Ghana Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project (GUMAP), including a review mission to Ghana conducted in October 2023.

The GUMAP implementation started after the signing of a project agreement in June 2016 and was expected to be finalized in March (now May) 2024, for technical assistance and capacity building (representing 80% of project volume), and in November 2024 (now March 2025), for completion of the last investment measures (junction improvements).

The GUMAP objectives and main components are:

I. Development objectives (Impact)

Improved accessibility and mobility in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA)

II. Project Objectives (summary of outcomes and related activities)

a. Improved integrated urban mobility planning (a1) and public transport operations and regulations (a2) in GAMA through technical assistance (studies) and capacity building for GAPTE (Greater Accra Public Transport Executive) and six GAMA metropolitan municipal assemblies (MMAs).

b. Improved traffic planning and management in GAMA (b1) through technical assistance (studies), capacity building and selected investment measures for the Department of Urban Road (DUR) and six GAMA MMAs, and in Ghana (b2) through the development of a master's program at KNUST University (supported by EPFL).

III. Project outputs (13) as listed in the GUMAP Logframe and appraised in the evaluation report (see there).

The objectives of the evaluation were an appraisal of the GUMAP against OECD DAC criteria and a stock-taking of achieved results against its logframe. The evaluation was accompanied by a Scoping Study for an urban mobility project in Ghana, which could be either a second phase of GUMAP or a new project.

2) Appreciation of the Report: Structure, Methodology & Process

In line with the terms of reference, the evaluation was conducted through a desk-top analysis of relevant documents as well as interviews with project stakeholders (beneficiaries as mentioned above, the executing Ministry of Local Government Decentralization and Rural development MLGDRD, the implementation consultant and project implementer for most technical assistance Transitec Consulting Engineers), including a mission to Ghana in October 2023. The international evaluator, Mr. Pablo Vaggione, was therefore supported by a national consultant, Mr. Bernard Abeiku Arthur, who has over 20 years experience in urban development and transport in Ghana and is equally independent to the GUMAP.

The evaluation report well captures the evolution of the GUMAP implementation and its so-far available results. It covers all components and sub-components of the project, with the exception of the still to be implemented investment measures (acquisition of automatic traffic counters and implementation of safety and mobility improvements at selected junctions in the beneficiary MMAs). The report captures numerous outputs and outcomes of the GUMAP and provides the requested appraisal against the (6) OECD criteria, as far as possible at this stage. It contains a detailed appraisal of outcomes and outputs against the GUMAP logframe and substantially responds to specific evaluation questions as outlined in the ToR.

The conclusions are clear, albeit with a significantly more positive appraisal than ours (WEIN and the Swiss Cooperation Office in Ghana, SCO). This is partially due to the assumption that all remaining activities, and notably the investment measures, will be successfully (and timely) concluded.

3) Key Findings and Lessons learnt

The main results of the GUMAP evaluation are:

- Key stakeholders, including MLGDRD, the beneficiary MMAs and GAPTE all recognized the timeliness of GUMAP, as filling a key gap after the demise of the World Bank's GUTP (Ghana Urban Transport Project), and the high relevance and good quality of its outputs.
- GAPTE, which could not assume its role of urban mobility regulator in GAMA, in particular complained about lack of funding (and that GUMAP did not address this). The departments of urban transport (DoT) of the participating MMAs valued GUMAP as their (thematic) lifeline and recognized progress on their capacities, insights and improved coordination on urban mobility and traffic issues.
- GUMAP was found coherent with regional and national policies, the Swiss cooperation strategy for Ghana and WEIN's (urban) development portfolio. The proposed investment measures were however described as too limited.

- At output level, GUMAP has delivered a noteworthy number of much needed high-quality studies and provided substantial capacity building. However, it is unclear to what extent these (outputs) will be able to contribute to the achievement of the expected outcomes, as the appropriate uptake by the still insufficiently prepared (or “weak”) institutions is unsure.
- The appraisal against the logframe showed that, while the outputs have been predominantly achieved or are on track (except one), these did not so far translate into achievement of the expected outcomes and there is doubt in a substantial number of cases, that they eventually will.
- The delayed investment measures are expected to be eventually completed, but the dispersion of budgets (to service all six MMAs) limits the impact of a more transformative approach to road junction design.
- For various reasons, including Covid-19, the project implementation was delayed and the timeframe had to be extended from 4 to 8 years. As a consequence, the budget for implementation consultancy services had to be increased at the cost of other budget lines (from 14% up to 26.9% of the fixed project budget of USD 6'000'000). Including subcontracts, the share of local/national services exceeds one third in value, which seems adequate to the evaluator (but insufficient to the local stakeholders).
- GUMAP has enhanced the attention given to urban mobility at ministerial and MMA level but the high-quality outputs and gained capacities have hardly been translated into practical implementation measures by the MMAs. Local stakeholders, in particular the MLGDRD, complained of a certain lack of contextualization, which could have been improved by a higher reliance on local service providers.
- Despite gaining valuable insight and augmented capabilities, the beneficiary institutions are not yet ready to manage integrated urban mobility and efficient public transport. GUMAP sustainability is thus tributary to further support from the GoG and/or development partners. Thereby, reliance on international cooperation projects to fund recurrent costs should be reduced. Investment measures may be sustainable if proper O&M budgets are allocated.
- The EPFL-KNUST cooperation is expected to have a lasting impact, as the developed courses have been integrated into the curriculae for master's degrees.

The appraisal of the GUMAP by the evaluator against the OECD DAC criteria is summarized in the following table.

Criteria	Evaluator's appraisal
Relevance	Highly satisfactory
Coherence	Highly satisfactory
Effectiveness	Satisfactory
Efficiency	Satisfactory
Impact	Satisfactory
Sustainability	Satisfactory
Overall	Satisfactory

Main lessons learned are:

- The initial project design underestimated the administrative challenge of conducting numerous procurement processes and the necessary adaptation, enhancing the role of the implementation consultant to project implementer, effectively enabled the project implementation but also raised concerns about ownership and contextualization.
- The absence of a comprehensive uptake strategy at the outset of the project and a somewhat missing strategic thread have likely limited the usability of the GUMAP outputs and could thus affect its sustainability.
- The introduction of trilateral meetings, involving SECO, the MLGDRD and Transitec, has improved communication and reduced suspicion.
- The idea of a digitalization product (trotro management app) in lieu of investment measures does not reflect the needs or priorities of key stakeholders, including the involved public entities and the private operators. Note: One of the studies also showed that scheduled trotro services are not desired, neither by passengers nor by operators.

4) Shortcomings and other Important Considerations

The following points are raised by SECO WEIN and the Swiss Cooperation Office (SCO) in Ghana:

- While we concur with the findings of the external evaluator, our appraisal against OECD DAC criteria is less enthusiastic, in particular as far as outcome achievements and efficiency are concerned.
- Efficiency was heavily affected by a procurement-loaded initial project design, which gave the MLGDRD excessive responsibilities and operational tasks for which it was not prepared. The eventual implementation of GUMAP was only possible thanks to the effected project reorganization which transferred many of the MLGDRD tasks to Transitec.
- GUMAP can be titled as a successful Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Project which has increased the level of understanding of the beneficiaries in relation to tackling urban mobility and accessibility issues within GAMA but it did not entirely lead to the expected impact and outcomes.
- The key missing success factor was the political will to address institutional issues, such as the incapacity of GAPTE to meaningfully play its intended role of urban mobility regulator in GAMA. An attempt to address this issue by the GUMAP was not successful.



5) Recommendations

Note: The recommendations also contain items outlined in a parallel scoping study

RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
A – Strategic					
Recommendation 1 (from Scoping Study): Taking into account the high relevance of urban mobility in Ghana, the still substantial gaps in local ownership and capacities to manage it, as well as the relative success of the GUMAP, SECO should consider favorably a continued involvement in urban mobility in Ghana.	Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree		
<u>Response:</u> while recognized as a pressing need, urban mobility is not the main focus of SECO/WEIN in Ghana (which is the energy transition) and GUMAP, while it may eventually be considered satisfactory, is not the most successful project. Budgetary pressures or scarce personnel resources (at SCO level) may affect an otherwise favorable consideration of SECO's further engagement in urban mobility in Ghana.					
<u>Measures:</u> Along with the evaluation, SECO/WEIN has already mandated a scoping study for a future activity in urban mobility in Ghana. Based on the evaluation and scoping study's results, WEIN is prepared to make a concept note for a decision on a future urban mobility project in Ghana and will therefore request the consultant to finalize the scoping with a concept.					WEIN mnd, kep 31.05.2024
Recommendation 2 In future urban mobility activities in Ghana, develop an umbrella strategic product that engages the political level, providing a cohesive framework for individual project components including	Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree		
<u>Response:</u> GUMAP was intended to fill gaps identified during the demise of the predecessor WB GUTP (Ghana Urban Transport Project). It consequently lacked a direct link to substantial investments in urban mobility infrastructure and at the same time did not provide holistic outputs (such as a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan SUMP for GAMA). In future project considerations, SECO will either embed its support into a larger urban infrastructure project (e.g. the WB's Kumasi Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project KUMAP) or define					

RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
studies and training.	holistic outputs (e.g. SUMPs for GAMA or other metropolitan assemblies).				
	<u>Measures:</u> Provided management agrees, WEIN will select one of two outlined options in the Scoping Study and prepare a concept note accordingly.			WEIN mnd, kep	31.05.2024
Recommendation 3 Simplify future urban mobility activities in Ghana by focusing on a smaller number of key beneficiaries (MMAs and MLGDRD as coordinator), by streamlining procurements and avoiding fragmentation of investment measures.	Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree	<u>Response:</u> In future projects, SECO intends to go for a project implementer right from the start for all TA and capacity building. Focus will be on MMAs in GAMA but potentially also in secondary cities (Tamale, Takoradi). Investment measures (quick wins) will be concentrated, one per city (excluding GAMA). And project implementation, including for investments should be at metropolitan (i.e. sub-national) level instead of the ministry (MLGDRD). The latter should be involved on policy issues and with a (limited) coordination role at the national level.	
	<u>Measures:</u> Structure future project documents in accordance with the above outlined principles and inform the local partners accordingly.			WEIN mnd; SCO	Tbd
	Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree	<u>Response:</u> This is an ongoing endeavor and part of a policy dialogue SECO and SCO have with all our local partner/beneficiaries.	
	<u>Measures:</u> Special attention will be given to potential new project partners (e.g. metropolitan assemblies in Tamale and Takoradi), when further engaging on future activities.			SCO	Tbd
B - Operational					
Recommendation 5 Before engaging in the future urban mobility project's activities in Ghana, conduct readiness assessments and	Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree	<u>Response:</u> It is assumed that principal readiness has been assessed along with the Scoping Study. Among the tasks of the project implementer will be a more detailed assessment of capacity gaps in each metropolitan area and the drawing of measures to enhance uptake. It is unclear to what extent MMAs	

RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSE			RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
prepare an uptake strategy for studies to be embedded in MMA's binding instruments.	have binding instruments into which these measures can be embedded.				
	<u>Measures</u> : Tasks to be included into the ToR of a future project implementer.			WEIN mnd	Tbd
Recommendation 6 Design capacity-building initiatives as on-demand and associated with specific policy instruments that an MMA has committed to do.	Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree	<u>Response</u> : Capacity building should address gaps appearing in the respective MMAs but also secure a certain overall level to be achieved by the project in all locations.	
	<u>Measures</u> : Task to be included into the ToR of a future project implementer.				
				WEIN mnd	Tbd

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