



# Project for Economic and Social Reconstruction in Urban Areas, PRESU

## FINAL EVALUATION Summary

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### PRESENTATION

The **Project for Economic and Social Reconstruction in Urban Areas (PRESU)** was designed and implemented in the Central African Republic (CAR) in response to poverty, political and security instability, and institutional weakness.

**PRESU** targeted the Sara/Yakité, Miskine and KM5 neighborhoods located in the 3rd and 5th neighborhoods of Bangui, addressing multiple socioeconomic and institutional factors of fragility. It was financed under the Bêkou Trust Fund (€16.8M).

The project was implemented between March 2015 and June 2022, in two successive phases: the first phase aimed to respond to infrastructure rehabilitation and social cohesion emergencies. The second phase, rather structuring, targeted urban improvement of local facilities, the institutional strengthening of the Bangui local Commune and medium-to-long term urban planning. The Bêkou Trust Fund has signed two Delegation Agreements (PRESU I and PRESU II) with the French Development Agency (AFD).

#### EXPECTED RESULTS OF PRESU

- R1: Enhanced access to basic urban services
- R2: Mitigating the impact of flooding and waterborne diseases on public health
- R3: Improvement of general socioeconomic situation
- R4: Strengthening the role of local actors
- R5: Strengthening community dialogue
- R6: Rehabilitation of roads in the Sara/Yakité, Miskine and KM5 neighborhoods

#### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION FEATURES

- Implementation period:**  
March 2015 to June 2022
- Budget:** 16.840.000€ (EU) ; 3.430.103€ (BDEAC) ; 2.500.000€ (AFD)
- Partners:**
- The French Development Agency (AFD)
  - NGOs: ACTED, OXFAM, DRC and GRET for emergency actions and social cohesion activities
  - AGETIP-CAF: delegated project manager (MOD) of infrastructure works in phases 1 & 2

#### LOCAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

The Project was led by the **Ministry of Economy, Planning and International Cooperation (MEPCI)**, with the following contracting authorities:

- the Ministry of Equipment and Public Works and;
- the Ministry of Urban Planning, Land Reform, Town Planning and Housing;

As well as the Bangui City Hall and the 3rd and 5th neighborhood councils.

# MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS



## Health: the Mamadou M’Baiki Urban Health Center

Construction of a new Health Center, an essential medical unit for the area, with a capacity to accommodate up to 50 patients a day.



## Education: the Miskine high school

Constructions and rehabilitation of the Miskine High School, with 30 new classrooms and 16 rehabilitated classrooms, a media library, and latrines. Capacity increased to 10,000 students, while decreasing the number of students per class: 100 instead of 150 before construction.



## The blacksmith's workshop

The blacksmith's workshop offers greater visibility to the local blacksmith community, which is an important economic activity for the neighborhood. This workshop is crucial for the growth and development of the blacksmith industry in the neighborhood.

## Road: the new Idriss Deby Avenue

Construction of a backbone avenue of nearly 1.6 km made out of bituminous concrete. This is an important connecting road for the population of Bangui, and the project was an important source of work for the local population of the two districts of the capital.



## Drainage: the Bouagba collector

Construction of a 923 meter long open sewer to address soil sealing caused by the buildings, roads, and parking lots, limiting risks of flooding.



## Women's Community Center

The Women's Community Center provides an essential meeting place for the inhabitants of the 5th neighborhood. It promotes idea-sharing among women and is also used to train them in various skills such as sewing, cooking, market gardening, and others.



# EVALUATION RESULTS

1

## RELEVANCE - EXCELLENT

The objectives of the PRESU and its design were aligned with the needs of beneficiaries in terms of emergency and structural needs, as well as to the policies and priorities of the local institutions. The identification of priority actions was relevant, as these have been validated and transcribed into the Central African Republic government's policy: 2014 Emergency Plan, followed by the 2017 national recovery and peacebuilding plan (RCPCA).

2

## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COHERENCE - EXCELLENT

The PRESU project was in line with the EU cooperation policies, and it was consistent with other interventions implemented in related areas by the Bêkou Trust Fund and other donors, such as education, sanitation, infrastructure, socioeconomic development, roads, and capacity building.

3

## EFFICIENCY - AVERAGE

The PRESU project overcame various challenges, including security, health, and economic crises, and incomplete technical studies during phase 1, thanks to the flexibility granted by the Bêkou Trust Fund. Furthermore, fluctuations in raw material prices and reorientations in infrastructure projects led to some budget increases, but the project efficiently managed its funds regardless of these factors

4

## EFFECTIVENESS - SATISFACTORY

The project delivered all of its expected outputs and achieved almost all of its performance indicators. However, the effectiveness of the project was diminished by inadequate coordination and mobilization of stakeholders at the institutional level, as well as the average level of capacity and skills of certain technical consulting firms, construction companies, and supervision firms.

# 5

## IMPACT - SATISFACTORY

The PRESU project has had perceptible positive impacts well before the end of the project. The emergency and capacity-building actions have allowed for better social cohesion and an improvement in the living conditions of the populations with the installation of kiosks, standpipes, and latrines.

# 6

## VIABILITY - AVERAGE

The sustainability of PRESU remains difficult to assess given the ongoing instability in Central African Republic. The evaluation notes a poor level of overall maintenance of the infrastructure, as well as the absence of a budget to ensure the maintenance of the works. However, an exit strategy has been developed within the framework of the Bêkou Trust Fund to consolidate the achievements and seek support from other Technical and Financial Partners, thus ensuring a certain level of continuity.

Rating scale: Excellent – Satisfactory – Average – Poor

## LESSONS LEARNT



### Coordination of a multi-sectoral / multi-stakeholder project

In an ambitious project such as PRESU, carried out in an uncertain environment and with weakened institutions, the establishment of inter-institutional coordination is essential to the success of such multi-stakeholder/multi-sector/multi donor project, which was not always the case during the implementation of PRESU.

### A complex project requires good governance

It is important to ensure good governance during the implementation of complex projects, including solid local governance, with a certain proximity to the populations, especially in fragile neighborhoods. Capacity building, professional training and the improvement of skills are fundamental measures for all actors to implement the best-practices of good governance.

### Protection of the State's assets

The Central African authorities have not adopted a long-term preventive maintenance plan and a dedicated budget. The PRESU experience shows that in this case, it becomes imperative to design a simple complementary maintenance mechanism and to approach other actors involved in the process to mobilize the necessary funds to maintain the works.

### Information System and Knowledge Management

The implementation and active use of an institutional and organizational Information Management System would be an important asset to institutional actors, especially in the case of important staff turnover. This would enable the creation of a real «Knowledge Management» system to capitalize on projects of this scale.

## RECOMMENDATION 1

### Pursue efforts to rebuild Bangui by capitalizing on the achievements of PRESU

PRESU's pilot experience involved rehabilitating and constructing essential infrastructures in key sectors such as health, education, urban mobility, and sanitation. The positive experience in capacity building (training, Labour-Intensive Public Works, direct support to beneficiaries and local communities, locally targeted actions of the Urban and Social Project Management) is certainly a project to be renewed, given (1) the fragile socioeconomic and security situation in the capital, and (2) the significant increase in population in some fragile neighborhoods. It seems highly useful to invest in institutional capacity-building activities, with technical assistance to support Central African partners and project owners and to ensure a transfer of know-how to the authorities.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

### Focus on roads and draining infrastructures

It is recommended to replicate a project similar to PRESU, but with a narrower scope of intervention. The most urgent issue in Bangui today appears to be the management of rainwater and river water, which cause severe flooding, leading to a standstill in the socioeconomic sector and having a significant impact on vulnerable neighborhoods. Optimal management of collectors, drainage, waste, gutters, and secondary evacuation networks appears to be the number one priority. This recommendation implies the mobilization of funding which focuses on structural projects, namely in good governance and infrastructure, inspired by the actions Urban and Social Project Management developed in the framework of PRESU.

## RECOMMENDATION 3

### Infrastructure Maintenance Management

To safeguard the assets of the State and ensure that water and sanitation infrastructure maintenance is carried out preventively and efficiently, it is recommended to implement existing maintenance plans in Bangui. This includes conducting an assessment of all existing fee collection points such as the Road Maintenance Fund, Water Management Fund, and other agencies under supervision, as well as the central and district town halls. Additionally, it is advised to establish an emergency action plan to create a fund for the maintenance of roads and infrastructures in the capital.

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