National Highway No.1 Bridge Rehabilitation Project (I-1) (I-2) (I-3) (II-1) (II-2) (II-3)

Contributing to more efficient road transport in Vietnam by rehabilitating and replacing bridges

**Effects of Project Implementation (Effectiveness, Impact)**

After the completion of this project, travel time on National Highway No. 1 fell by half and average travel speed doubled on National Highway No. 1. For example, the travel time between Dong Ha and Nha Trang (630 km) dropped from 21 hours to 10 hours, while the average travel speed for the same section rose from 30 km/h to 63 km/h. The annual average daily traffic for 2006 between Dong Ha and Hue and the subsection between Hue and Da Nang fared well, recording 170% and 300% of the planned values, respectively. However, the same data fared badly in most sections and subsections along the highway (20-60% of the planned values). Major factors for this may include overestimated traffic demand forecasting, and some discrepancies between the traffic monitoring points for the planned values and those for the actual values. Overall traffic on National Highway No. 1 has been on the rise. A total of 27 provinces / municipalities along the highway sections covered by this project have been experiencing rapid industrial development. A total of 55 industrial parks are already in operation and 34 others are in the works in these provinces / municipalities (with a total population of 44 million or half of the national population). A beneficiary survey of residents and enterprises along these sections has shown that improvements in transportation, logistics and socioeconomic conditions, as well as increased business opportunities, are among the recognized positive changes resulting from the project. Negative changes that have been noted in the survey include an increase in traffic accidents and increased flood hazards in the rainy season due to poor drainage associated with this project.

Therefore, this project has largely achieved its objectives and its effectiveness is high.

**Relevance**

This project has been highly relevant with Vietnam’s national policies and development needs at the times of both appraisal and ex-post evaluation.

**Efficiency**

The project period was longer than planned while the project cost was lower than planned; therefore the evaluation of efficiency is moderate. The project completion was two years and ten months behind schedule. It cost less than planned although additional works resulted in more outputs than expected. Yet the period needed to produce the planned outputs was almost the same as the planned duration.

**Sustainability**

No major problems have been observed with the technical and structural aspects of the executing agency or the organizations responsible for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of the highway. However, O&M budget allocations should be increased to reasonable levels. Therefore, the sustainability of this project is fair.

**Conclusion, Lessons Learned, Recommendations**

In light of the above, this project evaluated to be highly satisfactory. The evaluation team proposes three recommendations. First, it is necessary to build the capacity of the executing agency and organizations responsible for land acquisition and the resettlement of the residents, especially that of local governments. Secondly, road authorities should take measures to ensure traffic safety in both physical (e.g., grade-separation of intersections) and non-physical (e.g., information campaigns) forms. Third, continued efforts should be made to secure financial sources for O&M, including the setting up of a fund dedicated to road maintenance.