



Belgian contribution to the Electricity Access-Roll Out Programme (EARP)

Executive summary of the Final report

BE-EARP Benchmark Review and the End Term Review of component 3

BE-EARP Intervention: “Improve the Access
to Reliable On-grid Electricity Services for
Households, Priority Public Institutions and
Enterprises in Rural Rwanda”

RWA1208111 (BE1-EARP)

RWA1509411 (BE2-EARP)

RWA 1509511 (BE3-EARP)

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Executive Summary

Context

Thanks to profound reforms, Rwanda offers a specific and a well-structured institutional and regulatory framework for the energy sector. The national strategy to reach Universal Access by 2024 is very ambitious and the GoR puts the means to achieve its ends and mobilize the Development Partners in an efficient way through several multi-donor programmes (EARP, RUEAP).

The Belgian Government contributed to the nationwide Electricity Access Roll-out Programme (EARP) through Enabel's BE-EARP interventions. For 8 years (2014-2022), the 3 interventions (BE1-BE2-BE3) indeed contributed to the improved access to quality and affordable power for households, public infrastructure and businesses through extensions of LV & MV line and upgrading of existing grid (lines, transformers, substations). In addition, the programme contributed towards strengthening, planning, supervision, coordination and management capacity of the Rwandan energy sector at large.

Evaluation approach and methodology

Mandated by Enabel (ToR in annex 1), ADE's consultants conducted an end-term review (ETR) of the last component BE3 coupled with a macro-level assessment and a benchmark of the whole BE-EARP intervention in relation to the global energy market in Rwanda.

The overall objective of this evaluation for Enabel is to learn from this major infrastructure intervention (namely, to collect information on the added value of Enabel's approach and contributions, their strengths and weaknesses compared to other development partners as well as their coherence with other interventions) and receive recommendations for further programmes.

The evaluation was conducted from the end of March to May 2022 by a team of two experts (one international and one national), specialized in energy access and evaluation. Relevant information has been collected as requested in the ToR from project documents review, local interviews and field visits by using adapted generic and specific Evaluation Questions.

Findings and Conclusions

The BE-EARP programme implemented by Enabel over 8 years, and co-managed with EDCL, contributes efficiently to the national EARP programme focussing on grid extension and upgrading, and on capacity building of the main stakeholders.

BE-EARP experience demonstrates that Enabel can play a great role in the energy infrastructure sector, in particular in such specific contexts as in Rwanda. The level of financial contribution of Enabel in Rwanda (49M€ grant for 8 years programme) is more than honourable compared to other bilateral donors. Even if the sector funding is dominated by few proactive multi-lateral donors such as the World Bank or the AfDB, a large part of their financial support is provided through credit schemes (concessional loans) while other smaller donors as Enabel provide grants, even for on-grid investments.

Despite the disturbances linked to the COVID pandemic, the BE-EARP mixed intervention (infrastructure + capacity building) has been globally successful (achieved objectives) and within reasonable delays (14 months excess out of 8 years).

Through the End-Term Review (ETR), the last intervention BE3 (2014 - 2022) has been globally assessed 'Partially Satisfactory' according to DAC criteria (Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness,

Impact, Sustainability, Coherence), mainly due to various delays and to some not completed/revised activities.

The three BE-EARP interventions (BE1-BE2-BE3) demonstrate that Enabel played a great role in energy infrastructure development and in capacity building in the specific context of Rwanda.

The success of BE-EARP is due to various factors that can be summarized as follow:

- Well-structured national institutional framework (REG, EDCL, EUCL, Mininfra, RURA)
- Knowledgeable and committed partner (EDCL)
- Flexible managerial approach of Enabel to adapt to changing context and priorities
- Clear design of the intervention and stakeholders (TFF)
- Mutual understanding and trust between key individuals (DI, IM, ICM)
- Intervention in high economic development zones (industries & tourism)

Enabel's contribution through EARP has been very much appreciated by all local stakeholders and development partners. The specific approach of Enabel with a unique co-management modality with EDCL and a high flexibility in management and financing was successful and frequently highlighted by the various stakeholders.

In conclusion, the added value of Enabel's intervention via BE-EARP has been very positive through the support to (i) infrastructure investment (grants not only for grid extension but also to reinforce the existing LV/MV grid), (ii) capacity building (close, continuous and adjusted support mainly to the partner EDCL, REG, MININFRA but also to other institutional stakeholders) and (iii) coordination between development partners to match efficiently the needs of the Rwandan partner (Enabel has been a proactive facilitator for a multi-year term). Synergies with other Belgian interventions (promoting the use of electricity for instance) could have been better developed and highlighted.

However, the main unfavourable factors identified for BE-EARP are:

- the Covid-related delays in manufacturing and logistics,
- the delays originating from the contractors' side for some of the EPCs,
- decision time for major procurements of supplies and works, and cancellation of some key tenders and budget reallocations at the later stages of the projects,
- and the restrictive frameworks and procedures (following Belgian rules) for bidding process & goods procurement, including Enabel non-objection procedures.

But Enabel's flexibility and project design allowed to adjust the timeframe to the actual implementation.

Lessons learned

Here below are the main general lessons learnt from BE-EARP that could be applied to other infrastructure projects implemented by Enabel:

- An **8-year funding program divided into 3 consecutive intervention phases** allows great **flexibility** in the management of activities and budgets, and in the achievement of objectives.
- **Coordination** with national institutions and other development partners is essential to **avoid overlapping** and to set up bi-or multi-lateral synergies.
- A **well-structured institutional framework** in place facilitates the co-management model and the achievement of the objectives.
- Having an **embedded intervention manager** (and other experts) in the partners' building for continuous support and funding **dedicated in-house staff** contribute to **efficient management** and to build a **climate of trust** with the partner's team.

- Creating a **spirit of co-management** helps to find common solutions and to move forward with implementation.
- Adding a **capacity building component** to the infrastructure component remains essential to **ensure sustainability**, even when the institutions are already well developed and competent.
- The flexible financing and managerial approach of Enabel significantly enables to **adapt to changing context and priorities** and **adjust the timeframe**.
- **Good communication**, and mutual understanding and trust between key individuals (DI, IM, ICM) is essential.
- Intervention in high economic development zones (potential for industries & tourism development) reduces the risks of low impact but doesn't serve the most deprived populations (where grants should go).

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed for future interventions of Enabel in the Energy sector:

Recommendations	
•	Grant for Off-grid subsector might be more relevant than for grid extension or upgrading
•	Develop innovative financing mechanisms to better support private sector emergence and to leverage fundings, either alone or in partnership with other DPs
•	Continue to prioritize co-management modalities wherever conditions allow it
•	Support national training centers in the Energy sector
•	Prioritize multi-donor programmes where synergies between DPs and national institutions is fruitful and essential
•	Develop synergies with other cross-sectoral projects (education, health, agriculture, business development, etc.) to increase the impact of electricity use, in particular for off-grid interventions