



Forum

News

International Forum for Rural Transport and Development

Making Services Work for Poor People

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Transport – The Missing Link?

'Making Services Work for Poor People' is the title of the World Bank's 2004 World Development report (WDR). This edition of Forum News is an unofficial supplement to the report, highlighting the cross-cutting issue of access as a key component of effective service provision for the poor.

The IFRTD Secretariat and a team of network members were involved in the extensive consultation process undertaken by the Bank in preparation for the publication of the WDR. Here we profile the issues that the team raised during the consultations and fill the gaps that we felt remain in the published report.



Paul Starkey

Access to water in Mauritania

The WDR identifies myriad factors contributing to the successful delivery of services to the poor, including the direct role that transport can play in providing access to and delivery of health, education, water and sanitation services. Transport is mentioned in the opening chapters as a contributory service: "governments and citizens need to make the services that contribute to health and education – water, sanitation, energy, **transport**, health, and education – work for poor people". However, this focus is not sustained through the report, and the more indirect impacts of transport constraints on the quality and use of services are unexplored.

Although factors such as staffing issues, resource availability and the social and political networking of communities are recognised by the WDR, their relationship with transport issues, and the resonance of this relationship in the rural context, is not acknowledged. In urban areas high density populations and economies of scale enable services to be brought closer to the user. In rural areas the poor are more isolated from basic services by geography, economic constraints, poor transport infrastructure and a lack of appropriate transport services.

Examples of the indirect impact of rural mobility on service provision include:

- **Compromise in service quality** – long and difficult journeys to school can lead to absenteeism of teachers and children and reduce the amount of time available for school assignments. Similarly, arduous journeys make it difficult to attract quality skilled staff (also evident in the health sector).
- **Exacerbation of time poverty** – preventing people from fully utilising available services. This is particularly relevant to women and children who traditionally share the greater burden of domestic tasks.

- **Poor sustainability of services** – poor access makes it difficult to consistently resource services. For example, in Tanzania inadequate maintenance of rural roads has been seen to severely delay or halt deliveries to replenish the drug stocks of rural clinics.
- **Inequitable service distribution** – existing infrastructure and transport services can dictate the distribution of services. For example, in Cambodia road networks have determined the distribution of water-wells as construction materials need to be transported by road.

As well as identifying mobility constraints, it is important to highlight the complexity of addressing them in rural areas. Reference is made to the role of physical infrastructure but transport services and the political, economic and gender factors that may affect the mobility of service users or suppliers are largely ignored. For example, cultural constraints on female use of crowded buses in Pakistan, or male control of household IMTs (Intermediate Modes of Transport) in Madagascar.

IFRTD recommends the highlighting of access as a cross-cutting issue in any discussion on services, the broader term of access providing an umbrella not only for transport (mobility) issues but for other facilitating services such as energy. The discussion of access and mobility issues at the planning stage of service provision will stress the importance of complementarity between services and provide an external influence on transport sector spending that has traditionally been focused on large-scale infrastructure and urban areas.

The 2004 World Development Report is available from:
The World Bank
P O Box 960
Herndon, VA 20172-0960, USA
Web: <http://econ.worldbank.org/wdr/wdr2004/>

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Part of the Process?

IFRTD is mandated to raise the profile of access and mobility issues faced by the rural poor, not only within the transport sector, but within wider development debate. The World Bank's World Development Report is an influential annual publication that helps to set the global development agenda and, as such, is an appropriate focus for IFRTD's advocacy activities.

IFRTD became part of the consultation process for the 2004 WDR in 2002. A team comprising members of the Secretariat and representatives of the Cambodia, Indonesia, Tanzania, South Africa, and Guinea NFGs prepared inputs for a consultation in London. This was followed by consultations in Dhaka and Kampala attended by representatives of the Bangladesh and Uganda NFGs.

Although pleased with the opportunity to participate, IFRTD found the process quite limiting. The Secretariat had difficulties sharing the draft outline documents, which were only available in English, with network members in Latin America and West Africa, despite expressions of interest from these regions. It was also disappointing that the Southern consultations did not take place until after the writing of the first draft.

Services Have Failed Poor People

Lusikisiki Village, Eastern Cape, South Africa. The distance from Lusikisiki to its nearest health centre is not great, but in the absence of adequate transport infrastructure and services it is a lengthy, often expensive, and at times treacherous journey. Prior to the journey it may be necessary to hire one or more neighbours to carry the sick person uphill to the nearest road. At the road three or more hours can pass before an affordable means of transport is available. During the rainy season this journey is complicated further by a river in full flow, and once again people may have to be hired to carry the sick across the water. The potential outcomes of this health centre are comprised by its inaccessibility.

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Despite these limitations there is evidence that the IFRTD inputs to the WDR were utilised in the final publication, and some of our message, if not as much as hoped, has been incorporated.

Questions to the Bank

The IFRTD and its collaborators were not the only transport bodies lobbying for greater reference to transport issues within the WDR. The transport sector within the Bank were also involved in the consultation process and they supported our external inputs. Here Kate Czuczman from the IFRTD Secretariat catches up with Peter Roberts, Lead Infrastructure Specialist in the Transport and Urban division of the World Bank, to ask why physical access and mobility still didn't make it onto the agenda?

KC: *We have just managed to obtain a copy of the World Development Report 2004 Making Services Work for Poor People – Why does it so completely overlook transport services?*

PR: The first full draft of the WDR had a strong emphasis on health and education services together with water supply and sanitation. This revived a good deal of discussion in the World Bank about whether and how other infrastructure services (energy, communication, transport etc) should be covered. There were suggestions that aspects of these sectors could be addressed in a single chapter but this did not have the scope to be effective. It was particularly limiting for road transport for which this WDR's Citizens/Policy maker/Service Provider' model is only partially relevant – in view of the almost universal responsibility of the private sector for owning and operating vehicles. As a result, much road transport service is delivered on an own-account basis or through informal service providers. It is a particular challenge of the sub sector to link the provision of the road network (which is generally a public responsibility) to these services in an effective and sustainable manner. From an early stage it was the view of the leaders of the team that this would have to be the material of some other WDR in the future.

KC: *What about the important role of transport services in the delivery of and access to other key services, including health and education?*

PR: We raised these points with the WDR team at the outline stage. They acknowledged the importance of delivery and access but emphasised that transport is only one aspect in either case. I have only just seen a copy of this latest WDR myself, so I have not yet looked at it thoroughly, but it does seem that this part of the story is not given much attention. On the delivery side, as far as I can see, the report does not specifically address the problem of meeting higher unit costs to extend the coverage of most services to the more remote rural communities. Whilst these costs are initially manifest in providing facilities such as primary schools and clinics, it is the recurrent cost of managing the provision of key

inputs (such as teachers or health assistants), and of consumable supplies etc, that tend to be particularly high in remote areas with poor transport services. Yet it is well established that in poor countries there is a disproportionately high incidence of poverty in those same remote communities.

"...the main story of the important roles of access and mobility in improving key services for all people including the poor do indeed still remain to be told in another year's WDR."

In respect of access to services, there is mention in the health chapter of 'physical access' as being amongst the obstacles to achieving better health and nutrition, but the point is not developed. This means that the service users' contribution to costs (which are described only in 'out of pocket' terms) are significantly underestimated, particularly for the poorer households. This is underlined by our increasing recognition of the heavily committed time budgets of poor households and of the relatively high value which members of those households place on marginal time savings as a result.

There is some reference to 'mobile strategies' but, again, these are not elaborated. Neither can I see any consideration of the challenges for providing ambulance services, a common component of health systems to improve emergency access to life-support facilities.

Overall, there does not seem to be any consistent consideration of the problems faced by rural populations. Indeed each of the services which is discussed is considered as a separate challenge. So the opportunity has not been taken to examine the scope for improving the access of such rural communities to a bundle of key services, for instance by encouraging basic transport services which improve people's access and mobility or through forms of joint provision.

Interview – November 2003

Contact:

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Poverty Watch

Making Transport Count in Poverty Reduction

Poverty Watch is an IFRTD initiated programme that enables civil society to monitor transport investments and encourage pro-poor transport policies. Through this programme IFRTD affiliated networks in countries across Asia, Africa and Latin America will be reviewing the pro-poor agenda of national transport sector policies and ongoing transport investment programmes, and also examining the inclusion of mobility and access issues within key national development policies eg. PRSPs or National Development Plans. Through this process the networks aim to build a critical mass of interested stakeholders as a preliminary step towards the development of an informed civil society platform, capable of debating the issues and identifying key priorities for a transport and poverty agenda in each country.

The first phase of the programme, which involved national reviews and workshops, has been established in 14 countries: Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, DR Congo, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Bolivia, and Perú. These countries will take the issues and priorities raised forward into their phase two activities. IFRTD will support those activities that contribute towards the programme's primary aims: establishing the key principles for a transport and poverty-monitoring framework, developing indicators for the impact of transport on poverty, and directly involving poor groups and community based organisations in the monitoring process.

To promote synthesis and debate between national activities, the IFRTD Secretariat will be organising 4 regional workshops in 2004: an international email discussion, and a web portal through which programme related papers will be made available.

Contact:

The IFRTD Co-ordinator in your region for more information

See page 4 for contact details

Email: povertywatch@ifrtid.org for email updates

Eastern and Southern Africa Update

The National Forum Groups from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have carried out analyses of how their national transport and other related policies treat the issue of poverty. These papers were presented during the IFRTD Eastern and Southern Africa Regional meeting in July. A review of the papers has been carried out. The review points out that good pro-poor transport policies are reflected in two dimensions, consisting of the policy formulation process and the actual policy content. In respect to the process, developing a transport policy needs to be participatory, and explicitly designed to capture the concerns of poor and vulnerable groups in both rural and urban areas. The following features were identified as the key pillars of a pro-poor transport policy:

- Explicit articulation of the poverty reduction objective within the policy document.
- A cross-sectoral design, with particular emphasis on the service function of the transport sector.
- Support to the development of appropriate institutional and regulatory frameworks for a multi-modal transport system, and particularly focusing on transport services and modes utilised by the poor.
- It should be gender mainstreamed.
- Clear distinction between transport services and transport infrastructure.
- It should respond and mitigate against externalities particularly those that harm the poor.

The country papers are being finalised for dissemination and will be on the IFRTD website shortly.

Contact:

Peter Njenga

IFRTD Regional Co-ordinator – East & Southern Africa

See page 4 for contact details



Observatoire sur la Pauvreté
Poverty Watch
Vigilar la Agenda de Pobreza

Asia Update

In Asia the IFRTD (Sri Lankan NFG) complemented the micro studies carried out in their preparatory phase with an analysis of macro policies and donor supported initiatives, and presented these to a second workshop in August 2003. Overviews of transport sector policies have also been carried out in Indonesia and Nepal.

In Indonesia a decentralised policy making environment means that local government has an important role to play in policy making. The geographical and demographic differences in Indonesia mean that the policy review needs to be sensitive to this diversity and the three levels of policymaking, i.e. national, provincial and local. The Indonesian NFG has carried out a review of policy making in the West Kalimantan province and used the information to create a dialogue among other members of the NFG and with national policy makers.

In Cambodia the Cambodian National Forum Group (CNFG) has developed a proposal to work with communities along roads being rehabilitated/constructed by the Provincial and Rural Infrastructure Project (PRIP), funded by the World Bank, and being implemented by the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Rural Development. The CNFG will develop transport community associations which will organise participation in road construction and maintenance, and which will monitor the poverty reduction impacts of the road.

The Poverty Watch activities in Cambodia are particularly interesting as here we see the dynamics of advocacy reversed. We have predominantly seen Poverty Watch helping civil society to hold institutions and government agencies accountable for the poverty impact of their transport investments. In Cambodia, however, we see Poverty Watch helping government agencies (in which the CNFG is hosted) to encourage civil society to hold them to account.

Contact:

Ranjith De Silva, IFRTD Regional Co-ordinator – Asia

See page 4 for contact details

In the next issue we will catch up with Poverty Watch activities in Latin America and West and Central Africa

Services Can Work for Poor People

Upper West Region of Ghana. Here DANIDA has invested in a model transport fleet for health service provision for the region (4-wheeled and 2-wheeled vehicles). A Transaid (UK NGO specialising in transport operations) driver and rider training scheme, and a planned preventative maintenance system complemented these. DANIDA assessed the impact of the provision of transport by measuring increased health service delivery for activities dependent on transport. Amongst other improvements, they found an increase in vaccination coverage of over 100%, an up to 400% increase in antenatal attendance, and over 100% more outreach clinics. It was claimed that this degree of improvement would normally be expected after 5–10 years of project support. In this instance it was achieved in under a year; it was felt, due to the focus on transport.

Contact: Transaid

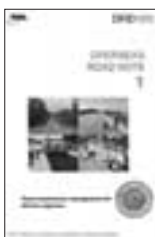
Web: <http://www.transaid.org/>



News and Events

Update to ORN 1

TRL have updated 'Overseas Road Note 1: Maintenance Management for District Engineers (3rd Edition)'. This new edition is aimed at district engineers in developing or transitional countries who do not have access to computer-based road management systems. The content of the Note has been enhanced to reflect the latest thinking on road network management practice.



ORN 1 addresses the management functions of programming, preparation (design and works procurement), and operations management. It covers asphalt, cement concrete and unpaved (gravel) roads with traffic levels of up to about 5,000 vehicles per day. It recommends a paper-based system of management that can be computerised using simple spreadsheets if necessary.

ORN 1 is available for distribution. Please contact: John Rolt, TRL Limited
Tel: +44 (0) 1344 770732
Email: international_enquiries@trl.co.uk

Mainstreaming Gender

26th September 2003 – Members of the Swiss TransNet network participated in an international workshop to discuss **Gender Equity and Poverty Reduction through Improved Mobility and Access**. The objective of the workshop was to gain a common understanding of rural transport and mobility and their relevance in the various social development processes related to promoting gender equality, reducing poverty, and empowering poor people. The event began with a general input about the 'state of the art' in mobility and access with respect to gender and poverty, followed by three thematic inputs (case studies) from Nepal, India and Madagascar. Working groups then analysed critical issues more thoroughly and the participants looked at how these issues could be or have been addressed in their own different spheres of activity. The workshop gathered 17 participants, including several who are working in a wider rural development context.

The workshop also provided an opportunity to officially launch *Balancing the Load, Women Gender and Transport*, an IFRTD publication. *Balancing the Load* is available free of charge to individuals or organisations in developing countries. For your copy please contact the IFRTD Secretariat (See About Us box for contact details)

Resources:

To download the workshop report:
http://www.skat.ch/ti/netw/download/TransNet_6.htm
For more information about TransNet: <http://www.skat.ch/ti/netw/netw.htm>

Waterways & Livelihoods Update

Members of the Waterways and Livelihoods network will be attending the Transport Research Board annual meeting in Washington, January 2004, to present the programme and its findings. This is a great opportunity to raise the profile of rural water transport issues within the transport sector.



The Waterways and Livelihoods' email discussion group continues to be a lively forum for debate and information sharing. Recent posts have discussed safety issues, artisanal exchange between countries, and a programme to introduce longtail engines in Madagascar.

Anyone with an interest in rural water transport issues can join by sending an email to ruralwaterways-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. The predominant language of the list is English. However, posts in Spanish and French are welcomed and will be posted as sent and also translated into English.

Resources: Website: <http://www.ruralwaterways.org>
Email: waterways@ifrtd.org

New Support to IFRTD Asia

The IFRTD Secretariat is very pleased to welcome Ranjith de Silva to the team. Ranjith completes the IFRTD Regional Co-ordination team as the Regional Co-ordinator for Asia. He joins the Forum from his position as the Senior Transport Specialist at the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG). He will be based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Please refer to the box below for Ranjith's contact details.

SUSTRAN Africa

SUSTRAN Africa is a regional networking initiative focusing on the promotion of sustainable, low Green House Gas (GHG) emission transport options and planning methodologies in Africa. SUSTRAN Africa provides an institutional framework for encouraging the replication of successful initiatives from one part of Africa to another, as well as providing linkages to global best practice.

A workshop to launch this sustainable action network was held at the United Nations Offices in Nairobi, Kenya between 8th and 10th September 2003. The workshop was organised by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat) in collaboration with the Institute of Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), and the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG East Africa).

For more information please contact:

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About Us:

The IFRTD is a global network of individuals and organisations working towards improved access and mobility for the rural poor. It provides a framework for collaboration, information sharing, debate and advocacy that bridges traditional geographic, academic and institutional boundaries.

Membership of the IFRTD is free. All members receive *Forum News* and any other publications that are made available to the network. In over 20 countries autonomous networks that subscribe to the vision of the international network have become affiliated to the IFRTD as National Forum groups (NFGs).

The IFRTD is facilitated by a small, decentralised Secretariat based in the UK, Senegal, Kenya, Sri Lanka and Peru.

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**Remember to take a look
at the IFRTD website
www.ifrtd.org**

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