

## POLICY FORMULATION AND ACTION PLANS

### 3.2 DEVELOPMENT OF A RURAL TRANSPORT POLICY

---

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Rural transport development is a cross-sectoral issue that has no obvious advocate within government.</b>
<b>Solution</b>	<b>Inter-ministerial collaboration is essential to develop a strategy for rural transport development within the wider rural development context</b>

---

#### BACKGROUND

Rural development is promoted, and often given high priority, within a national development context for a number of reasons which include:

- To constrain rural-urban drift, and hence take pressure off the urban centres
- To support agricultural production as part of import substitution, export and food security programmes
- As a means of fostering equitable employment, growth and income distribution amongst the whole population
- Similarly, as a socially equitable policy
- As a contribution to maintaining established settlement patterns, which may be important in terms of water supply, land drainage, land-use, service and food distribution systems, the organisation of educational and health provision, national security and the like
- As a means of encouraging greater economic independence in the regions, and hence weaning them off non-sustainable central support and subsidy.
- As a means of alleviating the impacts of rural poverty which drains a nation of its gross national product (GNP)

From a more pragmatic stance, politicians who ignore rural areas do so at their peril, even where the urban centres are the hubs of the national economy.

A rural development policy cuts across most, if not all sectors including transport. In this sense a stand-alone rural transport policy may not exist, particularly so if rural roads and rural development are the responsibility of different sector ministries. Rural transport development is more likely seen as a component (and probably a minor component) of the much wider rural development policy, and its (transport) programmes would be expected to conform and contribute to the wider goals of the rural sector. In this respect, the role of transport could vary significantly, dependent on, for example, the type of rural health-care delivery system that is promoted in the rural policy.

The position is further complicated in that the development of transport as a sector may have its own goals and policies. For example, the transport sector is one that has been particularly subject to commercialisation policies promoting private participation and 'user-pays' principles. As such, many erstwhile parastatal transport companies have been privatised, while transport operating subsidies have been abandoned. The impact of these policies has probably been most felt in rural areas, and may run counter to policies which rural development objectives might demand.

There is yet further complication where roads and transport are administered by two or more sector ministries: for example, national roads may come within a roads ministry, rural roads under a local ministry, and transport operations under a transport ministry. Such division of responsibility is a recipe for conflict. Thus specific statements within a rural development policy concerning transport are likely to be both few and broad-brush in nature, reflecting general government principles and policies and taking such simple forms as, for example:

- ‘rural access and mobility will be improved by creating the appropriate enabling environment within which private transport enterprise can flourish’.
- ‘rural communities will be facilitated with sustainable approaches to the construction and maintenance of rural transport infrastructure’

Interpreting and implementing policy is subject to the problems of cross-sectoral interests. Clearly, sector ministries (local government, transport, education, etc) ought to work together on these issues, both at the policy-making and technical levels. Such inter-ministerial collaboration is, however, rarely implemented in an effective way, and initiatives are left to an individual sector ministry, which can lead to conflicting planning. Zambia, for example, has an inter-ministerial technical committee on transport (organised through the Rural Travel and Transport Programme office of the Ministry of Local Government). There is also a ministerial transport committee set up by the transport sector minister that has the brief to investigate and advise on support to the rural transport sector. An inherent weakness of such separation is that each body will provide conflicting advice to the two sector ministries involved; fortunately in this case many of the members sit on both committees.

## KEY PRINCIPLES FOR RURAL TRANSPORT POLICY DEVELOPMENT

### Ministerial responsibility

The development of rural transport should be seen within the wider context of rural development policy. As such, the lead ministry for rural development (most commonly the local government ministry) should co-ordinate rural transport interests, irrespective of their own sector responsibilities for rural transport. Inter-ministerial committees representing ministers and policy-makers at one level, and technical advisers at another, should meet regularly to identify issues, policies, strategies and programmes, all of which receive cross-sectoral endorsement.

### Setting objectives

The objectives of transport development will largely reflect the fact that transport is a service to other sectors. Transport should be efficient, but also effective in the service it provides to these other sectors (refer to **Appendix G** for a case study of the Rural Access Programme in Nepal). In this broad context, the objectives to which transport must contribute are typically:

- Economic growth through the efficient mobilisation of human and physical resources
- Poverty relief by providing economic opportunity and inclusiveness, and by reducing vulnerability
- Service delivery effectiveness (health care, education and food security)
- Reducing gender inequalities
- Ensuring sustainable resource use and environmental care

### Policy initiatives

For the most part, it is likely that the rural development objectives take precedence over other more general transport interests. Thus, rural development may require road and transport incentives to be provided by government, even where transport is more generally operated on commercial principles, and roads are justified on economic criteria. The important thing is that these initiatives are administered efficiently through competitive mechanisms, and that they contribute to the wider rural development goals in an effective way.

The accompanying table sets out a framework for the development of a rural transport policy. It is based on addressing the broad objectives outlined above, and the policy focus that can be adopted. Any strategy that is developed must consider both the institutional aspects of implementation, as well as the instruments that can be deployed. Many of these processes and tools are common to the achievement of several of the broad objectives. Section 4.1 - 4.14 examine these in greater detail.

### KEY REFERENCES

Robinson, R. and Banjo, G. (2001). Rural transport policy development process. The Rural Transport Knowledge Base. *Crowthorne: TRL Limited*. [www.transport-links.org/knowledgebase.htm](http://www.transport-links.org/knowledgebase.htm)

Broad objective	Transport policy focus	Strategies	Institutions and processes to be considered	Instruments that could be deployed
<b>Economic growth (mobilisation of human and physical resources)</b>	<p><b>Access and mobility</b> Improve the ability and efficiency of accessing and distributing goods, services and productive capacity.</p> <p><b>Resource allocation</b> Optimise allocation of resources.</p>	<p>Improve use of existing infrastructure and transport equipment, and/or provide new facilities.</p> <p>Encourage private sector participation.</p> <p>Implement user cost pricing and cost recovery.</p> <p>Redress market imperfections.</p>	<p><b>Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministerial roles, responsibilities and capabilities.</li> <li>• Degree of government decentralisation and effectiveness</li> <li>• Role of Local Government.</li> <li>• Funding requirements, mechanisms and organisation.</li> <li>• Identification and role of other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Degree of Government involvement in administration and operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Direct operation</li> <li>– Autonomous corporations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Level of regulation and control</li> <li>• Enforcement mechanisms</li> <li>• Degree of privatisation</li> </ul> <p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process for 'joining up' government.</li> <li>• Implementing any legislation and capacity building as identified and needed.</li> <li>• Implementing private participation</li> <li>• Implementing funding mechanisms</li> <li>• Identifying standards</li> <li>• Process for data gathering and storage for identifying, planning and monitoring interventions.</li> <li>• Economic appraisal of transport development projects.</li> <li>• Project prioritisation process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning guidelines and controls</li> <li>• Investment policies and criteria</li> <li>• Direct investment</li> <li>• Subsidies</li> <li>• Credit legislation and sources</li> <li>• Infrastructure user charges, fuel pricing, etc</li> <li>• Taxation</li> <li>• Subsidies</li> <li>• Taxation levels on IMT</li> <li>• Road traffic regulations</li> <li>• Technical standards of infrastructure</li> <li>• Physical controls relating to infrastructure use, including traffic management measures</li> <li>• Operator entry/exit controls through licensing and franchising</li> <li>• Regulation of operation and businesses</li> <li>• Tariff controls</li> <li>• Business regulations</li> <li>• Monopoly and merger regulations</li> <li>• Tariff regulations</li> <li>• Vehicle construction and use regulations</li> <li>• Foreign exchange controls</li> <li>• Regulation of operation</li> </ul>
<b>Poverty relief through opportunity</b>	<p><b>Access and mobility</b> Improve the ability to access goods, services and employment opportunities.</p> <p><b>Employment</b> Secure or create jobs in the transport sector</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above plus:</p> <p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing the balance between efficiency and equity in project appraisal.</li> </ul>	<p>As above</p>

Broad objective	Transport policy focus	Strategies	Institutions and processes to be considered	Instruments that could be deployed
<b>Poverty relief through reducing vulnerability</b>	<p><b>Transport safety</b> Reduce the risk of accidents associated with transport</p> <p><b>Transport security</b> Reduce the level of crime associated with transport.</p> <p><b>Isolation</b> Use transport to reduce fear of isolation, and facilitate access to social infrastructure.</p>	Improve the regulation, control and enforcement of safety and security standards.	<p><b>Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the appropriate organisation(s) to have oversight and responsibility for safety and security issues.</li> <li>Establishing funding mechanisms and administration to finance and organise action.</li> </ul> <p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a safeguards policy statement, and action programme.</li> <li>Implementing necessary legislation and capacity building to underpin institutional responsibilities</li> <li>Information capture and storage for planning interventions and for monitoring achievements</li> <li>Enforcement levels and procedures</li> <li>Using Social Impact Analysis in project preparation</li> </ul>	As above
<b>Poverty relief through inclusion</b>	<p><b>Empowerment</b> Involve all stakeholders in the transport development process.</p> <p><b>Networking</b> Provide a means to access networks</p>		<p><b>Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the organisational responsibility and mechanism for involving stakeholder participation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing and implementing the participatory platforms and techniques for informing development.</li> <li>Using Social Impact Analysis in project preparation.</li> </ul>	As above
<b>Achieving health care, education and food security targets</b>	<p><b>Logistics</b> Improve the transport component of service delivery in these sectors, and/or influence the need for transport.</p>	Work with and understand the requirements of other sectors; in particular examine alternative approaches to the logistics of service delivery, and the impact on transport	<p><b>Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing the institutional mechanism for involving transport policy development in the planning of other sectors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing and implementing joint planning initiatives with other sectors.</li> </ul>	

Broad objective	Transport policy focus	Strategies	Institutions and processes to be considered	Instruments that could be deployed
		provision and cost.		
<b>Addressing gender inequality</b>	<p><b>Access and mobility</b> Improve the ability to access goods, services and employment opportunities.</p> <p><b>Employment</b> Secure or create jobs in the transport sector for women</p> <p><b>Empowerment</b> Involve women in the transport development process.</p>		<p><b>Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the appropriate organisation(s) to have oversight and responsibility for gender issues with respect to transport development.</li> <li>Identify the mechanisms for involving women in the transport development process at both national and local levels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a statement of policy towards transport and gender, and monitoring its implementation.</li> <li>Identifying standards, and implementing mechanisms for their enforcement.</li> <li>Implementing any required legislation to underpin initiatives in gender interventions.</li> <li>Establishing criteria for assessing impacts of transport interventions on women</li> </ul>	
<b>Ensuring sustainable resource use and environmental care</b>	<p><b>Sustainable resource use</b></p> <p><b>Environment</b> Control and mitigation of environmental damage and pollution created by transport development.</p>		<p><b>Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the mechanisms through which transport policy development is included in the development of environmental policy and standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapt environmental impact procedures to transport enquiry.</li> <li>Apply Environmental Impact Analysis in project preparation (even if not a statutory requirement).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle and emission regulations</li> <li>Fuel types</li> </ul>
<p><b>Others such as:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defence</li> <li>Political unity</li> <li>National prestige</li> </ul>				

Source: based on a draft report by Banjo and Robinson (1999)