4.9 COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

Problem: **Community roads, tracks and paths are unlikely to be managed and financed through central or local government departments. This type of infrastructure is neglected in national and local transport planning.**

Solution: **Communities need to take a more pro-active role in deciding their transport and non-transport priorities and in forming the necessary partnerships to fund and manage infrastructure. Community Driven Development is a way for them to exercise real choice over priorities.**

BACKGROUND

The total allocation by most governments to road maintenance falls short of the amount needed for network preservation. The shortage has been particularly severe at lower levels of the network. In many countries, recurrent budgets have withered to the point where they barely cover staff salaries and administrative expenses, leaving little for spending on the actual road. In this context there is very little hope that in the near future there will be sufficient funding to support the rehabilitation and maintenance of the community network of paths, tracks and roads.

Given the low levels of traffic volumes on access roads and paths, and the constrained finances of governments, communities should expect to provide a substantial proportion of the finances for infrastructure within their community. This may require cost-sharing arrangements between local institutions, Community Based Organisations (CBOs), beneficiaries and central government, and such arrangements can provide important leverage for scarce resources at all levels. If communities are going to provide additional resources either in the form of in-kind labour or funds it is important that they have the ability to prioritise investments. If communities are to exercise true choice over infrastructure projects it is important that the mechanism allows for choice between sectors i.e. water, health, education, transport. In this way rural transport infrastructure may not be prioritised.

COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

The World Bank and others are currently promoting community driven development (CDD) as a means for supporting rural development by promoting poor people and their institutions as assets and partners in the development process. In the World Bank PRSP source book (Alkire et al, 2001) CDD is defined as:

CDD gives control of decisions and resources to community groups. These groups often work in partnership with demand responsive support organisations and service providers including elected local governments, the private sector, NGOs and central government agencies. CDD is a way to provide social and infrastructure services, to organise economic activity and resource management, to empower poor people, improve governance, and enhance security of the poorest.

The source book continues to state that CDD usually includes:

1. Strengthening and financing accountable and inclusive community groups or CBOs
2. Facilitating community access to information through a variety of media and increasingly through information technology.
3. Forging functional links between CBOs and formal institutions, and creating an enabling environment through appropriate policy and institutional reform.

FUNDING COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

Cost sharing

This involves several communities joining together to commission road maintenance services or physical works. It fulfils the following functions (Malmberg Calvo 1998):

- Expands the revenue base
- Constitutes a financial incentive for communities to organise themselves
- Verifies demand for investment
- Improves allocative efficiency through economies of scale

Contracts need to be set up between the communities and a local road agency, an NGO, or a road fund board to agree what will be contributed by whom. Informal cost-sharing agreements can exist, but are better formalised through written contracts. These arrangements may require that communities organise themselves into road associations in which there is considerable community involvement. Enabling legislation may be needed for this approach to be adopted.

Community financing

Communities can sometimes raise local resources to pay for high priority investments. Payment is sometimes in cash but, more often, it is in kind. Communities can raise cash in a variety of ways, such with a crop levy, an income generating project, or though household contributions. Collection of cash for recurrent expenditure is more difficult. Contributions in kind can be through the donation of materials or through communal labour. However, relying on such contributions can be difficult and inequitable. A number of factors determine the potential for self-help in rural communities (Malmberg Calvo, 1998):

- The road or path needs to be considered important by the community from choices across all sectors
- Motivation is through a strongly felt need and a sense of fairness
- Commitment by political and village leaders is important, as is the ability to organise themselves
- Past experience with forced labour
- The need may be to ensure access rather, such as by the provision of water crossings, than for roads between these

Social funds

Social Funds allow poor people to become actively involved in their own development. Social Funds support small projects ranging from infrastructure and social service training and microenterprise development which have been identified by communities and presented to the social fund for financing. Social Fund programmes tend to be donor supported, but are also financed and managed by local governments and NGO's. Social Funds are demand driven mechanisms whereby beneficiaries instigate their own development, and exert greater influence and decision making power than regular funding mechanisms. Management of Social Funds programmes tends to be decentralised, and important activities such as monitoring and evaluation, undertaken by sub-contractors. The first Social Fund was established in Bolivia in 1987 as an emergency mechanism to help the poor during a crisis. There are currently Social Fund mechanisms operating in almost every country of Latin America and the Caribbean, with an additional 24 programmes operating in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Operating and managing a social fund

Social Funds are autonomous agencies that have two unique characteristics:

- **Function**: The agencies select and finance projects but do not themselves identify, design or implement them.
- **Status**: The agencies enjoy special status in terms of independent legal persona, control over the project approval process, and exemptions from specific public sector rules and regulations.

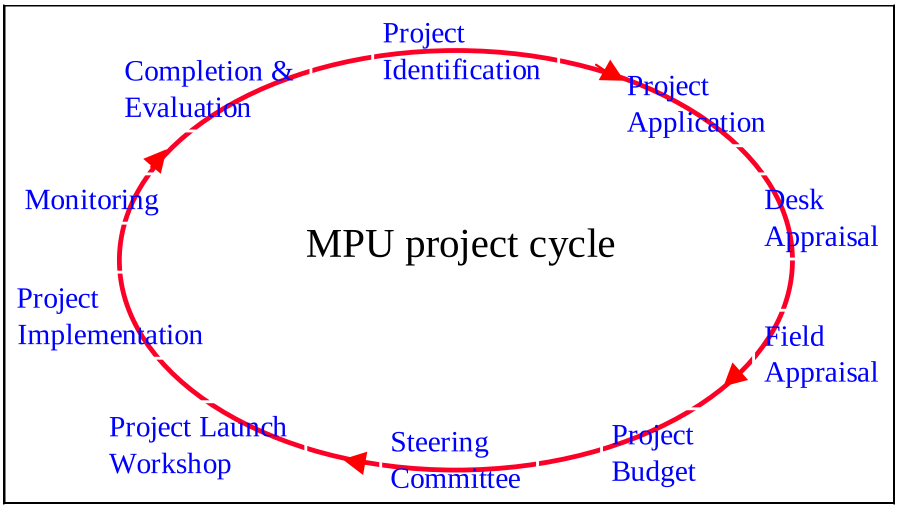
Social funds are characterised by community based programmes implemented across sectors, which complement poverty reduction programmes and include the provision of infrastructural improvements using local resources and labour. **Figure 1** shows a Public Works Programme funded under the Egypt social fund.

Social fund programmes operate independently of each other, and apply different selection criteria for the basis of funding individual project applications. For the Community Transport Infrastructure (CTI) component of Zambia's Social Recovery Project (SRP) (which supports maintenance and rehabilitation of community roads), the following guidelines for project selection prove effective. Selection considerations for SRP funding require that:

- The road should lead somewhere (another village, existing passable feeder roads, basic services – health
  clinics, schools, an area of economic activity)
- The road should reduce travel time
- The road should improve public transport possibilities
- Technical requirements should be simple, in design and supervision
- Mode of execution of works will be labour based
- There should be evidence of sustainability by way of maintenance committee or existing maintained Structure

Figure 2 illustrates the operational process and life cycle of SRP projects from project identification, application for funding, SRP intervention and monitoring and evaluation. Each stage of this process is critical in identifying community need, allocating limited resources and ensuring the community has the capacity to continue further maintenance works after the withdrawal of SRP funding.

Figure 2: Project Cycle of the Microprojects Unit in Zambia



Source: Brief on Social Recovery Project and Micro-Projects Unit, Zambia

Characteristics of projects financed by Social Funds:
- Projects are usually identified and designed by local groups.
- Co-financing from the beneficiaries – often in kind in poorer communities
- Projects are usually implemented by NGOs, the communities themselves or small contractors using labour-intensive techniques

Social Funds finance:
- Microcredit, counselling program, credit program, nutrition interventions, school feeding programs, drainage, local roads, sanitation, water supply, clinics, schools etc.

LIMITATIONS OF SOCIAL FUNDS

- Social Fund projects need to incorporate design mechanisms that prevent the biasing or manipulation of demand expression, for example manipulation by government officials, social fund staff or private contractors.
- Social funds face a trade off between rapid implementation of projects and building institutional and technical capacity, particularly in the poorest areas where more time, training and technical assistance is required.
- Investments should be sustainable once social fund financing ends. Social fund investments should incorporate monitoring and maintenance to ensure that projects reach completion and are made sustainable by the community.

SELF HELP

There have relatively few documented cases where self help has been successful and subsequently promoted by government and donors. However there are cases where it can be promoted given certain pre-conditions (Winkelmann, 1999):

- Road access is a definite need for the evacuation of cash crops and other trading opportunities. There is a general sense of isolation.
- Communities are willing and able to provide self help and there is a tradition for doing so.
- That Self help is encouraged by government attitude and policy.
- There are technically and socially feasible opportunities for road projects.
- The community infrastructure will connect with an established network of roads and vehicles.
- External agencies leave ownership of projects to communities concerned.

Box 1: Voluntary self help labour in Flores: "Gotong Royong"

Voluntary self help labour is a long established tradition in Indonesia. Like a "tax paid in kind", the construction and maintenance of infrastructure through voluntary labour by local communities plays an important economic role in regions such as Flores. Most village-based "Gotong Royong" is truly voluntary and up-held by social motivation and control. It is promoted by ethnic and religious coherence, a high degree of socio-cultural interaction between villages and the absence of severe income disparities.

In a project funded by Intercooperation, the Catholic Church of Manggarai has been assisting local communities in constructing district roads using low cost, labour based methods. Since 1994, the project has been supporting traditional self-help initiatives of local communities in the construction of village roads and motorable tracks. Local foremen and surveyors were trained under the project, and technical and financial assistance was provided where villagers did not have the capacity to provide it themselves. By 1998 local communities had constructed 85 km of village access roads using self-help labour, and a further 165 km of existing roads were made passable. The cost of providing these roads was no more than US$3,000 per kilometre, and as a result of its successful implementation, the project has been expanded in four neighbouring districts.

Source: Winkelmann (1999)

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