

Dear colleagues,

This is the electronic news bulletin of the "mobility desk" within the Social Development Division of SDC. We are sending this message to people who we believe are involved in mobility and transport related subjects and initiatives. If you do not wish to receive this twice yearly mailing, please send a message to <mailto:transweb@skat.ch> with the subject line "unsubscribe mobility news".

This medium lives through interaction. You are invited to send us your suggestions, requests and information flashes to <mailto:transweb@skat.ch>. The editors are grateful for any contributions received!

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- *** Mobility at SDC

SDC has been involved in rural transport since the early 60' by supporting mainly road/bridge construction & maintenance in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Today transport is a substantial part of SDC's country programmes in Nepal, Bhutan, Tanzania, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and an integrated part of many rural livelihood programmes world-wide. In 2002 the SDC thematic desk changed its name to "Mobility", reflecting the wish to deal with transport in a much broader way. Based on an assessment of the Swiss experiences and comparative advantages as well as in line with the current trends of the sector, a profile outlines SDC's future engagement in the field of mobility and describes the way in which those activities are supported through the Social Development Division (SoDev).

Availability and sustainable O&M of transport infrastructure, services and means are the main focus of SDC's involvement in mobility. Together with the desks dealing with socio-economic services, mobility contributes to finding solutions

for improved access of poor people to livelihood assets and services for the targeted use and equitable distribution of resources. The mobility desk supports the thematic and geographical divisions of SDC as well as implementing organisations in gearing their activities towards realising SDC's overall strategy of poverty reduction and acts as an important link in the knowledge and experience exchange between field and headquarters. It contributes to institutional learning and retro feeding of capitalized experiences in development cooperation. In order to fulfil its mandate and to provide an appropriate offer, the mobility desk fosters partnerships with IFRTD (programme contribution to international networking) and Skat Consulting (support mandate to a professional resources centre, see next article).

The SDC mobility profile is online at <http://www.skat.ch/ti/netw/download/Profile.pdf>. For further information, please contact Thomas Zeller <mailto:Thomas.Zeller@deza.admin.ch>

*** The new SDC support mandate 2004-06 in Mobility

The new SDC Mobility support mandate 2004-06 Skat Consulting is entrusted with, aims at putting into practice the concept laid out in the mobility profile (see preceding article) and through it, supporting SoDev according to its objectives and its strategies in the field of mobility. Specifically, the mandate builds up and supports the offer and services of the mobility desk in:

- a) Documentation & innovation (documentation centre activities, capitalisation of best practices, provision of training, conducting R&D, elaboration of concepts/tools, etc.)
- b) Networking & knowledge sharing (animation of TransNet, maintaining international linkages, collaboration with IFRTD, edition of the Mobility newsletter, moderation of the TransWeb, etc.)
- c) Provision of professional services (advisory/policy support to SDC, Q&A service to SDC / implementing organisations / individuals, activities on behalf of SDC, services on demand, etc.)

For doing this, Skat can build on its comparative advantages like the established experiences as an SDC backstopper (since 1999) and its familiarity with most of SDC's mobility & transport programs/projects, its extended and vibrant international and national networks and its recognition as a professional resource centre. The close interplay between consultancy and resource centre are further a strength of Skat allowing that a wealth of up-to-date knowledge enriches the resource centre activities.

For further information, please contact Roger Schmid <mailto:roger.schmid@skat.ch>

*** Road safety is no accident - World Health Day 2004

World Health Day 2004, held on 7th April, was a unique opportunity to raise awareness about the health impact and societal costs of road traffic injuries, highlighting the particular vulnerabilities of certain groups of road users including pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and passengers; and to issue a call for action to increase efforts to prevent road traffic injuries.

Road traffic injuries are a major but neglected public health challenge that requires concerted efforts for effective and sustainable prevention. Of all the systems with which people have to deal every day, road traffic systems are the most complex and the most dangerous. Worldwide, an estimated 1.2 million people are killed in road crashes each year and as many as 50 million are injured. Projections indicate that these figures will increase by about 65% over the next 20 years unless there is new commitment to prevention. Nevertheless, the tragedy behind these figures attracts less mass media attention than other, less frequent types of tragedy.

Published at the occasion of WHD 2004, The "World report on road traffic injury prevention" is the first major report being jointly issued by the World Health

Organization (WHO) and the World Bank on this subject. It underscores their concern that unsafe road traffic systems are seriously harming global public health and development. It contends that the level of road traffic injury is unacceptable and that it is largely avoidable. The report is available at http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2004/infomaterials/world_report/en/

- - CURRENT ISSUES & TRENDS - - - - -

*** Global trends within the mobility & transport sector donor community (by R. Schmid and Juerg Christen, Skat Consulting)

Donor support for mobility & transport issues in developing countries must be seen against the decreasing resources allocated for development in general. There appears also to be an increasing fatigue with rural development, with some donors reducing their inputs to the transport sector. It is encouraging that the rising focus on poverty, and the greater emphasis on livelihoods and ecological sustainability begin to have positive effects on the type of transport solutions proposed (e.g. the reawakened interest in non-motorised transports). There also seems to be a growing interest within the donor community about "promoting and disseminating" lessons from projects and research towards building up a global knowledge base. The World Bank / DFID "Transport and Rural Infrastructure Services Learning and Sharing Project" aims to strengthen the demand for, and improve access to relevant knowledge for stakeholders working in transport and rural utilities in developing countries.

Similar trends can be observed across the like-minded donor community (Danida, Sida, DGIS, Norad). Although large proportion of the sector's investments still goes towards creation of transport infrastructure (especially roads and bridges for motorized transport), sector strategies and policies are thematically more and more geared towards "soft" issues (sector reform, decentralisation, maintenance, financing, road safety, networking, knowledge exchange) and cross-sector issues (poverty reduction, health, non-transport elements in general). Participation, gender equality, HIV/AIDS, private sector strengthening and income generation are some hot issues (amongst others) that are addressed through transport programs supported by the North European donor community.

To assist clients to reduce poverty by improving the efficiency and equity of transport policy and interventions, the World Bank works with the public and private sector and communities to enhance the capacity of transport institutions to provide sustainable infrastructure and services. In the 90's, the Bank's focus shifted gradually from the infrastructure business to social sectors and governance, in the hope that the private sector would pick up the slack. Since 1997, the sharp drop in private investments in infrastructure has belied this hope. With its recent action plan, the Bank intends to re-establish infrastructure as a key to its mandate, combined with an emphasis on sound sector policies, enhanced capacity building and more efficient use of existing financial instruments. To increase infrastructure investments, the approach tends towards Public-Private Development-Partnerships.

Overall, it can be concluded that within the donor community there is a growing recognition that intensified and specific engagement in the transport sector is essential to begin to address the vast unmet needs for transport systems delivery and mobility. Transport systems delivery starts to be seen as a key for poverty reduction and economic growth and for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Nevertheless, the donor community still is dealing with the paradigm shift from the traditional preoccupations with efficient transport systems to focusing on the role that mobility & transport plays in meeting the needs of poor people and strive for defining the significance that it should have in their policies, strategies and support activities.

SDC needs to follow this evolution and to materialize this paradigm shift in it's own interventions. Through the new support mandate in mobility, the SDC thematic desk deals with this issue by assessing new trends, documenting the current state of the art, informing and enabling SDC programs to put it into

practice as well as by shaping the sector discourse through contributions to relevant fora.

For questions or feedback to the authors, you are invited to send an e-mail at <mailto:transweb@skat.ch>

- - PROJECT MILESTONES - - - - -

*** Nepal: Working in conflict - the Trail Bridge Sub-Sector Programme
(Observations from the TBSSP external review mission in Feb./March 2004)

In recent years Nepal has been present in the international media mainly through headlines about the massacre of the King's family and the ever - worsening Maoist insurgency. In this complex environment the Swiss Government, through Helvetas, is supporting trail bridge building in the Trail Bridge Sub-Sector Programme (TBSSP). Since 1972 532 bridges on main trails and 1285 local community bridges have been completed in the hilly districts of Nepal.

Community bridges, called Short Span Trail Bridges are being implemented in partnership with and substantial contributions by the communities and the district authorities. Bridges with longer spans (generally bridges along main trails) are called Long Span Trail Bridges and are being built by a specialised government agency from the Centre. The overall goal of TBSSP has always been to provide safe and economic river crossings to the populations of rural areas, particularly in poor and remote locations. Strategically, the project follows a clear policy that combines strategic and local trail bridge building in a sub-sector programme following a coherent process of decentralisation.

However, Nepalese democracy is still young and politically unstable; governance is correspondingly weak. Between the mid-term elections in 1994 and the general election of May-June 1999, Nepal saw six different government coalitions. In October 2002, the King dismissed the prime minister, dissolved the cabinet and postponed parliamentary elections indefinitely and the system of decentralized and democratically elected local bodies was re-centralized. In the absence of elected bodies, there is no legitimate government at local level. Although the Maoist insurgency has hardly affected TBSSP activities (being one of the few projects still operating in rural areas), the consequences of the conflict and the political crisis can be clearly seen at process, programme, institutional and political levels. Well-established implementation processes cannot be adhered to and democratic institution building cannot be exercised anymore.

The basic features of the project's process are that communities organise themselves, that they participate in decision-making and that they contribute substantially towards the accomplishment of the bridge. This process still works well. Seeking to address the possible exclusion of disadvantaged people, the project is also introducing a quota for women, low cast and poor community members. This positive discrimination is intended to give a voice to groups that are otherwise excluded through structural barriers. In addition, bridges are economically efficient and also have a remarkable equity record, providing substantial benefits for all social groups. Additional equity measures - such as equal pay for women and paying porters - have also been introduced.

TBSSP has become the main player in the bridge building sub-sector of Nepal, combining technical excellence with social competence. At the moment this cachet must be preserved, also as an effective contribution to conflict mitigation, as the Maoists tolerate the programmes' activities in the regions they control. However, there is a risk that if the political situation in Nepal deteriorates further, the Swiss Government may raise the question of a moratorium on further development activities. TBSSP is therefore dependent on how the Maoists, the Nepalese and the Swiss Governments assess and define the prevailing context. TBSSP must therefore be prepared to react swiftly and appropriately in response to changes in the current positions of any of these actors.

Juerg Christen, Skat Consulting

For questions or feedback to the author, you are invited to send an e-mail at <mailto:transweb@skat.ch>
For further information, visit also the TBSSP web site at <http://www.helvetasnepal.org.np/tbssp.htm>

- - RECOMMENDED READING - - - - -

*** Improving rural mobility: options for developing motorized and nonmotorized transport in rural areas (WB technical paper No. 525, 2002; Paul Starkey, Simon Ellis, John Hine, Anna Ternell)

The report focuses on improving rural mobility by facilitating the provision of affordable means of transport & transport services. The authors stress the interdependence and complementarity of different means of transport, motorized and nonmotorized, large and small, urban and rural, land and water. They also stress the need for an integrated approach to developing (and maintaining) infrastructure and transport services, with greater connectivity among transport systems (road, water, air, rail), types of service (long-haul, local) and operators (public, commercial, individual).

This publication assists transport planners, governments, transport service providers, community organizations, donor agencies, and development practitioners in other sectors. It discusses options for creating an enabling environment to allow efficient and profitable rural transport and increased mobility for disadvantaged groups. It suggests a holistic approach to planning that involves all stakeholders, governments, transport operators, and users and encourages networking across geographical boundaries and sectors to maximize progress.

The document is online at http://www.worldbank.org/transport/rt_over.htm

*** Implementing labour standards in infrastructure programs (SAC Sourcebook, 2003; Sarah Ladbury, Mary Jennings, Andrew Cotton)

Globally, the construction sector is one of the largest employers of temporary workers after agriculture and is therefore critically important to poor people as a provider of employment. The majority of these workers in Africa, South Asia and Latin America work on a temporary basis; they are not registered as employees and have no formal protection. Through the adoption of labour standards and being a good exemplar of "decent work", the sector can play a key role in improving the livelihoods of poor people.

The document provides guidance on the collaborative process and contractual issues involved in implementing labour standards in the construction sector for formal or conventional contracting, for community contracting and for self-help schemes using unpaid labour. This sourcebook has been written for those wanting to implement labour standards in programmes they fund, manage, supervise or implement - government officials, procurement officers, development practitioners, engineers and contract supervisors as well as representatives from employer's and worker's organisations.

For further information and pdf of the sourcebook see: <http://wedc.lboro.ac.uk/publications/details.php?book=1%2084380%20017%209>

*** World transport policy & practice (2003, Editors: John Whitelegg and Gary Haq)

Transport is a critical problem throughout the world. Whether it is traffic congestion, crashes, noise, air pollution, landscape destruction, or greenhouse gas emissions, damage and costs from current forms of transport are dangerously

high and getting worse. Policies and practical measures that can reduce and eliminate these problems are urgently needed.

This Reader contains 16 important contributions on how to improve transport globally. A further 7 commissioned chapters provide informative overviews of the transport problems specific to each region of the world, while the editors' introduction and conclusion frames the discussion and lays out the scale of the challenges we face. The Reader demonstrates what steps can be taken to improve both transport provision and use, in both the developed and the developing world, while reducing environmental and health impacts. A sourcebook for anyone attempting to address the issues associated with world transport policy and practice, whether students, planners, business people or policy-makers.

For book details, table of contents and ordering, refer to
<http://www.earthscan.co.uk/asp/bookdetails.asp?key=3890>

*** Transport's role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (2002; TRL, NRI, IFRTD, ITDG)

The key purpose of this paper is to review the evidence that exists between transport and poverty, and hence to sharpen the focus of transport research on poverty reduction. Though there is no single over-riding indicator or relationship that demonstrates the link, the evidence presented endorses the fact that transport plays a very important role across all sectors and has a significant part to play in achieving each and every one of the millennium development goals.

The document is online at
<http://econ.worldbank.org/wdr/wdr2004/library/doc?id=22572>

- - UPCOMING EVENTS - - - - -

*** CONFERENCE: TRANSED 2004 - 10th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled People, Hamamatsu - Japan, 23-26 May 2004. "Universal Transportation and Road Design: Strategies for Success"
<http://transed.jp>
<http://www.icat-ciat.org/outreachdesk.htm> (The Outreach Desk for TRANSED 2004 at ICAT)

*** CONFERENCE: SAFETY 2004 - 7th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion, Vienna, Austria, 6-9 June 2004. This Conference provides an international platform for professionals and organizations involved in all aspects of the prevention, control and research related to violence, suicide, unintentional injury and safety promotion.
<http://www.safety2004.info/>

*** SEMINAIRE INTERNATIONAL: "Financement de l'entretien routier et gestion des fonds d'entretien routier" Formation continue de l'Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées, Paris, 23-29 juin 2004.
<http://www.metratech.net/spip/article.php3?id%20article=412>

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For further events or agendas you may visit
http://www.skat.ch/ti/netw/transweb/tw_events.html

- - LINKS TIPS - - - - -

*** International Focus Group on Rural Road Engineering (IFG)
The IFG is a partnership of practitioners from countries, institutions, and private sector with the vision to be the leading platform for articulating and disseminating information on rural roads engineering within the context of poverty reduction. Particular topics are sustainability issues, surfacing technologies and design, access roads and tracks and technology choice. Amongst

others, the site gives access to information notes, a discussion list and the "Basic Rural Road Access Website" capturing a range of engineering approaches to tackle accessibility problems and improve physical infrastructure.
<http://www.ifgworld.org>

*** Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP)

The GRSP is a global partnership between business, civil society and governmental organizations collaborating to improve road safety conditions in transition and developing countries. Initiated by the World Bank Group in 1999, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies hosts the Secretariat at its headquarters in Geneva. Over 200 organizations have taken an active role in establishing the GRSP and it is now active in over 10 countries.
<http://www.grsproadsafety.org>

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