

AFCAP

DFID Department for
International
Development



**Building Engineering Capacity for the Rural Transport Sector in Africa
Workshop, 4th-5th December, 2009.
Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort, Kampala, Uganda.**

Workshop Report

Prepared by

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23rd February, 2010**

CONTENTS

1. List of Participants

2. Agenda

3. Introduction

4. Discussion

5. Action Points

Appendix 1 – Presentations

Appendix 2 – Discussion Group questions

1. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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+ Note – not all listed participants attended all sessions of the workshop

2. AGENDA

Building Engineering Capacity for the Rural Transport Sector in Africa ILO-AFCAP Workshop, 4th-5th December Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort, Kampala, Uganda.

Friday 4th December, 2009

14:00 Introduction and Welcome - AFCAP

Session 1

Assessment of Capacity and Challenges for its development

Elzbieta Sadzik, – [Needs and Numbers Approach](#)

Andreas Beusch – [Outcomes of technical training initiatives](#)

Fred Addo Abedi - [Corruption, Professionalism and the Engineer](#)

15:30 Tea Break

16:00 Group discussions and report back

17:30 End of Day

Saturday 5th December, 2009

Session 2

09:00 *Building Capacity Initiatives*

Dawie Botha, SAICE - [Development of Professional Institutions examples of UK-Africa Engineering Partnership](#)

Christian Eggs, Helvetas, [Resource Centre for Rural Roads](#)

Niklas Sieber –[Transport Training Initiative](#)

10:00 Coffee

Session 3

11:30 *Rural Road Engineering Research Capacity*

Ato Muse Belew, Ethiopian Roads Authority – [Developing Rural Road Research Capacity to influence rural access-case of Ethiopia](#)

Md. Mahabubul Bari Infrastructure Adviser, Min of Infrastructure, Rwanda – [Developing Postgraduate education and research in the Rwanda Transport Sector](#)

12:00 Action Plan Development

13:00 Official Workshop Close and LUNCH

3. INTRODUCTION

There is widespread concern at the slow rate of development of professional engineering capacity in Africa. This is despite major investments in capacity building by governments and development partners through technical assistance and training programmes. Lack of professionalism leads to high unit rates, poor quality works, inappropriate use of scarce maintenance funds, and leaves the door open for corruption in the sector. It was decided that a workshop would be organised jointly between AFCAP (a rural access research programme funded by DFID), the ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) team and the Uganda Ministry of Works and Transport and held in conjunction with the 13th Regional Seminar for Labour-based practitioners in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop was held on the 4th-5th December, 2009.

The aim of the workshop was to encourage a frank discussion on the issues facing the development of professional engineering capacity in the rural road sector in Africa. The workshop agreed practical measures that should be taken address these concerns.

The workshop discussion was held under four broad topics -

- Assessment of current manpower capacity constraints in the sector ("Needs and Numbers").
- Review of the effectiveness of current approaches and models used to develop engineering capacity and professionalism,
- Corruption and the Engineer
- Building of research capacity in Africa for rural transport and rural road engineering.

The participants in this workshop represented a select group of key actors and concerned individuals who have responsibility for and/or experience of the development of engineering capacity in the rural road sector. A series of key note speakers assisted with the identification of issues under each topic of discussion, but most of the workshop programme was given over to interaction between participants.

As can be seen from the agenda there were a series of interesting presentations from a range of contributors. The full presentations are available on the AFCAP website at the following address:

<http://www.crownagents.com/AFCAP-Regional.aspx>

4. DISCUSSION

Following several presentations on current topics, the participants broke into two discussion groups. The outcome of these discussions was as follows:

GROUP A

This group highlighted the specific issue of capacity gaps in terms of the engineering aspects of rural road access programmes. The group felt that there was also capacity limitations in the number and quality of professionals, not only in terms of engineers and engineering skills but in also in terms of other disciplines and skills such as sociologists and sociological skills within engineers.

The group felt that there were a number of challenges to capacity development in this area. These included:

- How do we align and integrate efforts on capacity development?
- How do we overcome the often 'euro-centric', European-focused systems of engineering education and practice that may not consider fully African issues?
- How can we utilise local resources (human and natural) to develop our infrastructure?
- How can we promote the use and exchange of local knowledge (of professionals and communities)?

GROUP B

This group highlighted the engineering capacity limitations present at a variety of levels within a country. The group felt that limitations existed at:

- Government level
- Private sector level
- Student level

The group highlighted gaps in training with the need for greater focus on:

- Course curricula
- Training time (greater options for short course training)
- A greater focus on professional registration

The group felt that there was a need to improve the impacts of capacity building in the rural transport sector.

The group felt that there was a need to talk about engineering at every level of society. This particularly included in childhood. It was felt that there was need to motivate children as early as possible to learn and develop an interest in the area

of rural transport and other infrastructure areas and to develop an interest in the idea of becoming engineers.

The group also felt that there was a need for assessment of capacity to be undertaken throughout the African region

The group also felt that there was a need to stimulate demand for capacity development from national governments. This was felt as a key step in moving away from an externally imposed drive to build capacity. This demand would in turn begin to stimulate ownership of capacity development initiatives at the national level. From this it would then be possible to develop a study of capacity that was owned by national government than be externally impressed.

5. ACTION POINTS

The workshop agreed on a 4-point action plan. This would inform action within 2010 and highlight the role of different partners in its implementation. The 4 points of action were:

- Develop and maintain dialogue on capacity development in rural transport. It was felt that the workshop represented a useful bringing together of a range of actors on capacity development in the rural transport sector in Africa that did not happen frequently enough. It was felt that that networking opportunities should be re-created on a regular basis.

ACTION: AFCAP, ILO and participants involved in Capacity Development

- Interact with ongoing discussions on capacity assessment across Africa, particularly Southern Africa, with a view to support focused capacity assessment. It was felt that there needed to be a start made to assess capacity and gaps in the rural transport sector in sub-Saharan Africa. There were a number of discussions developing in Southern Africa, which it would be useful to connect to with a view to having some part of this to focus on the rural transport sector.

ACTION: AFCAP, South African Institution of Civil Engineers (SAICE), UNESCO and national governments

- Disseminate information on case studies of successful capacity development. It was felt that there needed to be more made of successful examples of capacity development. Examples of success included the self-financing Madagascar training programmes, the long-running Training Centres of East Africa and the significant take-up and delivery of the university courses on labour-based construction and infrastructure. It was felt that publications should be produced that highlighted the lessons that could be learnt from these successes and that these should be widely publicised.

ACTION: ILO, AFCAP and National Training Centres

- Re-energise research and higher education networks and partnerships in sub-Saharan Africa on the rural transport sector. It was felt that there was a need to re-energise historic research and training networks for the purposes of developing a vibrant research and higher education sector in the area of rural transport and infrastructure. It was suggested that AFCAP projects and perhaps AFCAP's own networking events could be a focus for such re-energising.

ACTION: ILO, AFCAP, Universities, National Research and Training Centres.

APPENDIX 1 – Presentations

Assessment of Capacity and Challenges for its development

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APPENDIX 2 – Discussion Group Questions

Session 1

- What is our assessment of capacity?
- Where are the capacity gaps?
- What lessons should we take from previous efforts and initiatives to develop capacity?
- What are the challenges for capacity development in future?
- What do we not know about capacity challenges and what can we do about it?