



# Ensuring links to basic services

**Jeff Turner**  
Programme Manager  
Africa Community Access Programme (AFCAP)  
[jeff.turner@afcap.org](mailto:jeff.turner@afcap.org)  
[www.afcap.org](http://www.afcap.org)

Rural Roads Convention, Arusha, Tanzania  
26<sup>th</sup> November 2009



## Ensuring links to basic services

- Rural Roads are crucial for economic development of rural areas
- Rural roads are vital for rural communities to access external opportunities and services (including health, education, employment, markets and social and political networks).
- Rural roads are worthless without an integration with rural transport services and hence the need to focus on community accessibility
- Without improvements in community accessibility, policies to reduce poverty, deliver agricultural growth and meet the MDG's will fail



## **Ensuring links to basic services**

### HOWEVER

- There are still questions about being able to justify community access investments vis-à-vis to others opportunities across the transport sector
- There are still challenges to having government and development partner resources focussed on community access
- There still issues around other sectors dis-attending to the importance of community access in delivering their policy objectives
- There is still a lack of attention to regulating and improving the quality of rural transport services and promotion of IMT's
- There is still a challenge to implement sustainable, least-cost, all-weather, locally-owned access for poor rural communities.



## **Developing arguments for economic justification**

- **IFPRI Study on Road Development, Economic Growth, and Poverty Reduction in China (2005)**
- found that low-quality (mostly rural) roads have benefit–cost ratios for national GDP that are about four times greater than the benefit–cost ratios for high-quality roads.
- As far as agricultural GDP is concerned, high-quality roads do not have a statistically significant impact while low-quality roads are not only significant but also generate 1.57 yuan of agricultural GDP for every yuan invested.
- Investment in low-quality roads also generate high returns in rural non-farm GDP. Every yuan invested in low-quality roads yields more than 5 yuan of rural non-farm GDP.



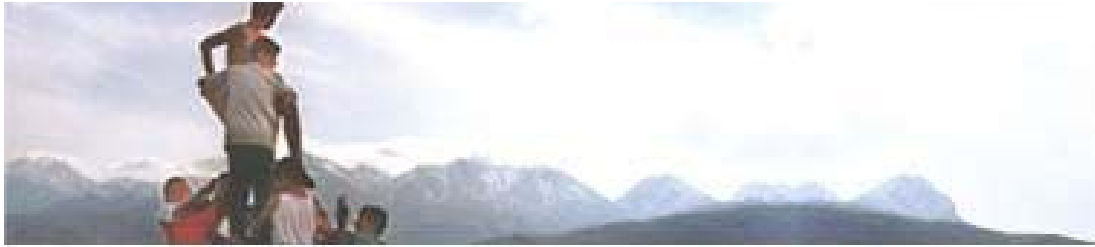
## Developing arguments for poverty reduction justification

- There is a relationship between mobility, power and well being.
- The impact of constrained mobility on bargaining also has its impact on what comes to be available as resource and service within local constraints.
- No better demonstration of these constraints can be found than in Africa's portrait of maternal mortality: constraints on mobility and on the resources for mobility and accessibility have devastating consequences for women's health on the African continent.
- Maternal mortality ratio in Africa remains the highest in the world with the average actually increasing from 870 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 1,000 per 100,000 live births in 2001.
- **MDG Target 5:**  
**Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.**



## Developing arguments of poverty reduction justification

- The majority of poor rural women give birth at home partly in the absence of means to transport them to a health facility
- The financial and time cost of travelling to health facilities and their low status and negotiating power within the household may mean there is a trade-off for rural poor women which may delay the decision to seek care.
- If they seek care most women will walk (availability of bicycles and improvised stretchers to be used in emergencies is often localised and ad-hoc) – which delays arrival at the point of care.
- Rural health facilities often have large catchment areas and often lack trained staff, drugs, equipment and effective transport and communication referral systems which delays the provision of adequate care
- It is becoming accepted that poor community access may play a role in maternal deaths and conditions such as Fistula, but little research available on how important this is and what may be effective interventions



## **Developing arguments of poverty reduction justification**

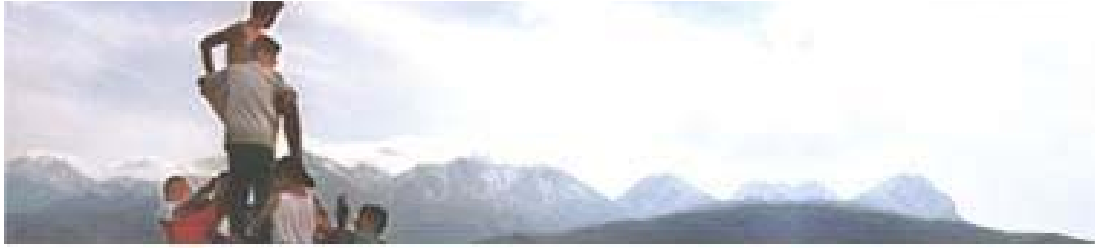
- Within the policy discussion there is a need for:
  - more accurate measurement,
  - more focused solutions,
  - more sensitive social scientific analysis of the relationship between mobility, gender and health.
- There is now a policy goal of dramatically reducing maternal mortality in Africa and there is a body of evidence which speaks to the scale of the problem
- However, the literature on concrete measures for bringing about this goal and the operational activities of development agencies in pursuit of this goal are thin on the ground.
- Particularly in respect of the transport and maternal mortality link.



## What is AFCAP?

- AFCAP is an initiative to use research evidence to promote the development of sustainable, least-cost, all-weather, locally-owned access for poor rural communities
- AFCAP is a 5-year programme funded by the UK government, with a budget of £7.5 million
- AFCAP implementation started in June 2008
- AFCAP develops research collaboration between 8-10 African countries (currently Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia)
- AFCAP funds research, knowledge-exchange and training





## **AFCAP Progress to date**

- Initiated dialogues about research and collaboration with AFCAP in more than 10 countries.
- Established national ownership of AFCAP through AFCAP National Coordinators and AFCAP National Steering Groups in 5 countries.
- Organised consultation processes on research priorities that will identify the AFCAP research agenda in 5 countries.
- Established 38 projects and activities of which 13 have been completed and 6 are being actively implemented. A number of additional projects are in the pipeline.
- Identified significant demand for community access research in the participating countries.



## Summary

- It is recognised that sustainable, least-cost all-weather community access is vital for rural communities to access external opportunities and services.
- There are challenges to winning the argument for resources within the wider development dialogue
- There are developments in the economic justification for community access
- There are developments in the justification of community access in meeting maternal health goals
- There is a developing research programme (AFCAP) to support the development of community access in Africa
- There is however considerable need for greater research that influences the delivery of community access in rural Africa



# Ensuring Links to Basic Services

The End