



Procurement – A tool to address key development and social issues

By Dejene Sahle, ASIST – Africa, Zimbabwe

Procurement is a tool through which a client acquires services from a service provider. Procurement documents define the roles and responsibilities of both parties, *i.e.* client and service provider, during the delivery process. There are several different procurement documents currently applied to obtain services in different sectors, countries, *etc.* The source of funding for the service under consideration often dictates the type of procurement document applied in the delivery of process (*e.g.* Federation Internationale des Ingenieurs-Conseils (FIDIC),



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donor and/or financing agency procurement documents, procurement documents developed by projects, *etc.* Most of these procurement documents, however, do not make full provisions for addressing key development and social issues that are in the interest of the client.

The lack of development goals in the current procurement systems has resulted in under utilising the potential of procurement in supporting governments' development objectives. It is limited to a simple means of infrastructure and service delivery. If properly planned and executed, procurement could be used to address and meet long-term development goals and contribute towards poverty reduction. In most developing countries, the public sector is the major procurer of services, including the construction and maintenance of

infrastructure. In 2000, low-income countries spent 20% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP),¹ about US\$ 216 billion, for the procurement of goods and services. If a pro-development procurement system was in place, this investment would have made a major contribution towards poverty reduction and local capacity building through the increased participation of small local entrepreneurs and technical service providers. Different projects and government agencies have started to develop procurement processes that accommodate social and development goals.

Pro-development procurement process

The conventional and currently widely applied procurement systems

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Decentralisation

An opportunity for pro-poor delivery of infrastructure services

World wide, there is a trend to decentralise government functions. Generally, the motivation is from political imperatives, although it is based also on the economic rationale of improving the efficiency of the allocation of resources and the responsiveness of policy making. In addition, decentralisation is perceived as a more effective way to reduce poverty.

The degree and form of decentralisation vary from one country to another. One of the main principles, however, is that responsibility for the delivery of government services is given to the lowest level of government that can perform functions effectively and efficiently.

Common sense would suggest that providing the authority and responsibility to organisations that are closer to the eventual beneficiaries would result in services being provided that are more related to people's needs and that emphasise the use of local skills and resources. We know, however, that there are major constraints at the decentralised levels to the more effective delivery of infrastructure services.

The ILO, of course, is concerned that the implementation of infrastructure works maximises the benefits to the local population in terms of employment, skill development and participation in the decision-making process. Nevertheless, whilst the emphasis is on the eventual provision of basic social and economic services such as physical access, water supply, health centres, schools, irrigation systems and markets, this needs to be seen within the broader framework that includes the financial, administrative, managerial and technical issues surrounding the provision of services.

Decentralisation has the potential to be more pro-poor in the infrastructure investments that are made. The local population will be able to have a say in the type, location, and manner of implementation of the infrastructure services. They will also benefit both from

the provision of the services they require and the opportunities that it will provide for access to employment, transport, health services, education, irrigation and markets. The major constraints to achieving this potential are recognised as being:

- inadequate financial management and control systems
- unfamiliarity with proactive, participatory planning systems
- inappropriate procurement and contract administration procedures
- inadequate resources for and limited understanding of effective maintenance procedures
- political interference.

The ILO, amongst others, has worked to provide a comprehensive approach to capacity building for improved service delivery. It has found that the potential exists to introduce a framework to infrastructure development that responds to the actual needs of the rural population and that can be administered by local officials.

Although governments and key players in this sector are increasingly understanding the importance of placing local authorities in the driver's seat, in many instance the changes required may appear ambitious and fraught with a high degree of risk. This is often the sentiment experienced at the start of any initiative to promote the role of local government institutions. However, experience has shown that if the local institutions are provided with the means to handle new responsibilities, they respond well to their new duties.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that decentralisation and capacity building at local level should be closely linked to the management requirements of local government. This implies that capacity building should be carefully measured out to meet the envisaged works programmes in the immediate future. As part of this, effective decentralisation needs to be developed together with the involvement of the local construction industry. The development activities required to reach the

objectives of an efficient infrastructure programme will require resources in the form of training, technical assistance, strengthening of management structures and development and introduction of new administrative and managerial procedures. This will demand considerable resources and the mobilisation and use of these resources needs to be justified.

Some may see decentralisation as a major obstacle to the effective provision of infrastructure programmes. For the ILO, decentralisation offers a major opportunity to provide the local population with infrastructure that responds to their needs, that makes use of the local resources, that provides transparency in decision making, that can be targeted on the poor and is sustainable. The centrefold addresses these issues further.

Decentralisation has of course to be looked at within the institutional framework where it is taking place. Overall guidelines and policies need to be set at the centre which provide the enabling environment for employment-intensive infrastructure development such as:

- procurement systems with provisions that are conducive to development goals such as creation of decent employment and the development of the local construction industry
- infrastructure planning procedures that permit the full involvement of the beneficiaries at the decentralised levels such as the Rural Accessibility Planning tool
- ensuring financial provisions made at the national level for key activities for which the local authorities have limited resources, such as maintenance.

Inside this bulletin we look at these and other issues.

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Labour-based methods – Are they socially sustainable?

By J. de Veen, *Employment-intensive Investment Branch (EMP/INVEST) ILO, Switzerland*

SINCE the mid 1990s, a significant share of the policy and project development work of ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) has been twofold: building capacity of the private sector to carry out employment-intensive construction works and promoting the quality of jobs in this sector. EIIP's approach in respect of these issues is defined in the recent ILO guides dealing with employment-intensive infrastructure programmes: "Labour Policies and Practices" and "Capacity Building for Contracting in the Construction Sector."

Of course, the principal aim of the ILO work in this field remains the reduction of poverty through the creation of large numbers of quality jobs in the construction sector in developing countries. This requires both mainstreaming and sustainability, and for this, a regular and substantial flow of funding is a first requirement. Different strategies to increase the availability and regularity of fund allocations for public construction and

maintenance works have been developed and applied by international financing agencies, donors and governments. In addition, a great deal has been written on this subject.

Once regular funding is available, technology choice becomes the issue. Here two things are vital to ensure the sustainability and large-scale application of labour-based work methods. First, it is essential that workers be treated fairly, so that they view labour-based projects as a good employment opportunity and not as a last resort when all other possibilities are exhausted. Second, labour-based enterprises must remain competitive, even when they are applying all labour regulations and provide good working conditions.

All this raises a number of questions. Who pays the costs of better conditions? Who monitors the application of labour laws and regulations? What happens if labour laws and regulations are ignored? Will socially responsible firms be penalised when they compete with firms that do not provide acceptable working

conditions? What can be done to improve international and national labour regulations and contract conditions?

Construction industry characteristics

A first issue concerns the characteristics of the construction industry and the type and location of the works. By their nature, construction contracts are generally location-bound, and therefore subject to locally prevailing rules and regulations. This implies that, in principle (although not in practice) and in terms of legislation and labour conditions, the playing field is level for different types of construction firms. Monitoring and enforcement are essential to ensure compliance with existing laws and regulations. New regulation may need to be developed where there are gaps threatening basic worker rights.

Second, construction works range from large-scale, multi-million and technically complicated projects to simple, relatively inexpensive, community-level works. The former can be executed by firms operating on a multinational level or by large national firms, with a proven record of accomplishment for works of this nature. Here it is a necessity that the rules for international bidding promote socially responsible business practices, and that social responsibility is not penalised. The medium- and smaller-scale projects (such as the multi-donor-funded feeder roads programme in Ghana) are generally executed by (inter) national enterprises of different categories, depending on the overall size of the programme concerned and the type of funding. In this case, the size of the firm and the contract have a major influence on the choice of technology and – by implication – the employment characteristics of the project.

For large-scale projects the usual objectives of (inter) national guidelines for procurement are efficiency and cost-effectiveness, quality of goods and services, transparency, and competition among qualified suppliers. With regard

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primarily use cost as the main parameter for comparison. This cost-based procurement approach makes it difficult to address social and development goals. Governments, faced with the challenge of tackling poverty, acknowledge that providing decent employment will assist in the fight against poverty and lead to sustainable development. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to have a new generation of procurement systems that allow for setting development goals.

Development programmes have increasingly shown interest in having a procurement system that will:

- provide decent work to the unemployed with the relevant applicable labour standards incorporated
- offer technology choice and support skills transfer
- encourage and support the participation of small local entrepreneurs and technical service providers in the construction industry
- assist in addressing key social issues identified by the client, such as unemployment, empowerment, HIV/AIDS, *etc.*
- have potential for countrywide acceptability for both major and minor work with as little modification as possible.

Pro-development procurement systems should balance between the different bid assessment parameters including price, competence, and meeting set development and social goals. The whole procurement process, including adjudication and project management processes, must be transparent and able to verify the achievement of the set goals. Innovative monitoring tools that are not limited only to cost and

The South African experience

Through its Preferential Procurement Policy (PPP), South Africa used public procurement as a tool to meet development goals that include addressing gender imbalances, poverty reduction through employment, and supporting emerging local contractors. Targeted Procurement (TP) was one of the tools developed by the government based on PPP principles to meet specific objectives. The procurement process balances financial costs of the work with meeting the government's development goals. Bid evaluations and contract award procedures are specifically designed to meet these two important award criteria.

progress, as is currently the case, have to be in place. The monitoring tools should have a mechanism through which the level of achievement of the set development and social goals can be verified. In the absence of such monitoring tools, it will be difficult, and at times impossible, to gauge the performance and impact of the procurement system in place. This was evident during a recent assessment of the South African Targeted Procurement (TP) system (see text box): "In the absence of a suitable monitoring and evaluation mechanism, the effectiveness of TP as an instrument of social policy was hard to judge².

Social and development goals

Some of the social and development goals that could easily be accommodated in procurement documents to advance government objectives include:

- creation of employment
- creation of an acceptable working environment
- support and encourage participation of emerging contractors.

Employment creation

Employment-centred development plans contribute towards poverty reduction. For this reason, governments and development partners are increasingly promoting employment-intensive

Under TP, the client specifies the expected minimum development goals that the service provider has to meet. To facilitate the award process, award points are allocated for meeting each of the set development goals. The final contract award is based on combined points gained from the financial proposal and meeting development goals. The independent assessment of Targeted Procurement held in February 2002 concluded that irrespective of the challenges met in the implementation of this unique procurement tool, TP has been effective in establishing emerging contractors and in creating employment opportunities.³

approaches for the maintenance and improvement of infrastructure. The application of employment friendly methods of work, however, are somewhat confined to a given class or type of infrastructure. This narrowly defined area of application has limited the level of employment created in the delivery of services. Promotion and application of procurement documents that encourage technology choice will help optimising employment creation in the delivery process. The final award of works could be made using a variety of award parameters, including cost, achievement of various development goals such as employment creation, quality of work, *etc.*

Decent working environment

A decent working environment motivates workers, leading to increased productivity. Workers should be remunerated as set in the national legislation, in full and on time. Health and safety issues should also be given special consideration, including equipping workers with the appropriate protective gear, ensuring the availability of first-aid kits on site and defining special work methods to avoid accidents. These conditions should be stipulated in procurement documents. The procurement document developed by the Lesotho programme (described in the text box) clearly stipulates that

¹ *The World Bank: World Development Indicator 2002*

² *T. E. Manchidi and I. Harmond: Targeted Procurement in the Republic of South Africa: An Independent assessment – April 2002*

³ *T. E. Manchidi and I. Harmond, "Targeted procurement in the Republic of South Africa: An independent assessment," April 2002.*

health and safety issues have priority and that the contractor is obliged to meet the set safety standards. The client's contract management team monitors adherence to these standards.

Support to small local contractors

Small private contractors that use employment friendly methods of work in the maintenance and improvement of infrastructure are increasingly participating in the construction sector, thus partnering governments in meeting their objectives of delivering services and creating employment. Experience has shown, however, that the existing environment, including the procurement process, does not encourage the growth of these contractors. Usually, the local bidding procedure is too complex, not suitable for the type and level of work at hand and puts more financial burden on the emerging contractors by setting higher qualification criteria. In the process, small contractors are excluded or their participation reduced significantly. Procurement documents can be and have been used to support emerging contractors by levelling the playing field.

The Lesotho experience

Under funding from the World Bank and technical assistance from the ILO, the Government of Lesotho launched a local contractor development programme in 1994. The objective of the programme was to introduce a new group of private contractors that partner the government in its objectives of providing a reliable road transport system and creating employment in the delivery process. As part of the contractor development process, a procurement document to support the active participation of the newly trained local contractors and the creation of employment was developed.

From the start, it was made clear that restrictive bidding, *i.e.* where work is restricted to the small local contractors trained by the programme, would not be acceptable. The alternative was to draw a strict definition of eligibility to bid and drew up parameters to scrutinise bidders' qualifications and experience through carefully drafted qualification information. The contract award was then based on competitive bidding among the eligible contractors.

The new procurement document supported the growth of emerging

contractors, thus contributing towards the government's objective of gradually building its local construction sector and increasing its employment-creation capacity. The programme is the second highest single employment institution in Lesotho, employing over 2,500 workers and providing work for about 0.3% of the total workforce countrywide.

The procurement system developed covers:

- health and safety issues
- preferred technology – by defining employment goals and equipment type
- compliance with the necessary labour laws of the country
- practical monitoring system that helps the client verify achievements of the set goals and conditions, including the full and timely payment of wages to workers.

Between 1995 and 2000, the programme trained 56 contractors. As of March 2000, the contractors had carried out road maintenance and improvement works valued at more than US\$ 15 million to the standards set by the client.

A contractual mechanism to curb the spread of HIV through migrant workers involved in infrastructure works

By UNDP/UNAIDS South East Asia Regional Task Force on Mobility and HIV Vulnerability

There can be little dispute that the world has an HIV/AIDS crisis. Increasing numbers of people have been dying from AIDS and even more have been contracting HIV, which leads to AIDS. Ninety percent of the 40 million people living with AIDS are in developing countries. Government- and donor-financed projects could and should take advantage of the opportunities they present to help deliver HIV- prevention messages to those in contact with development programmes.

The execution of an infrastructure contract can involve hiring a large labour force that is either indigenous to the area or comes from elsewhere. Mobile populations, including casual, semiskilled and skilled workers, are often part of this work force. Such mobile populations are particularly

vulnerable to, and contribute towards, the spread of HIV. How can the vulnerability of mobile populations (affected by infrastructure programmes) be reduced?

Existing contracts do not provide incentive for a contractor to establish an HIV-prevention programme, even if the employer, who is often the government, sees this as desirable and necessary. UNAIDS has developed a contractual mechanism for construction projects that provides a starting point to address the issue of HIV/AIDS. The documents include an Invitation to Tender note, Contract Clause and Model Agreement. These are designed to help the employer/owner (often the government) create conditions that will facilitate a reduction in vulnerability to HIV/AIDS amongst all workers involved in the execution of an infrastructure contract, as well as in the

local community. Though this contract has been designed particularly with mobile populations affected by infrastructure programmes in mind, it can be adapted for use in a variety of other situations. Contracts include, but are not limited to, the creation of infrastructure (roads, power plants, ports *etc.*) the provision of services (haulage contracts, port operation contracts, mining contracts) or even general office work.

These documents are available from the following web site: <http://www.hiv-development.org> or Lee-Nah Hsu, The Mobility Task Force Manager, UNDP East Asia HIV and Development Project, UN Building, Rajadamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand. Fax: +66 2 280 1852; Tel: +66 2 288 2165; Email: leenah.hsu@undp.org. Alternatively, through the ASIST Programme offices in Asia Pacific and Africa.

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to construction projects, objectives relating to social aspects, *i.e.* labour standards, working conditions and employment impact, are often not addressed. In the view of the ILO, minimum social standards and a level playing field for competing firms should be ensured. The development and implementation of independent monitoring systems and auditing instruments at different levels will be a prerequisite to accomplish this. Both worker and employer representation will be essential for this to be credible.

To date, the EIIP has primarily dealt with employment-intensive medium- and smaller-scale construction contracts. In low-wage countries such projects can be executed competitively (generally 10% or more below standard market value) using locally available human and material resources. This means that in the majority of countries that currently apply labour-based techniques for public works it should be feasible to introduce relevant labour standards and good working conditions without compromising competitiveness.

In higher wage countries¹, the costs of raising working conditions may influence the choice of technology towards less labour-intensive methods and, consequently, substantially reduce employment opportunities. Technology options should therefore be analysed in terms of their overall economic and social benefits, and shadow pricing may need to be applied to arrive at the optimum choice. The setting up of Policy Planning Units or Employment Cells in one of the economic or planning ministries have been found as a useful means of spearheading and co-ordinating such work. Research will be required to identify the costs and benefits – in terms of productivity increases – of various measures to augment social protection, raise safety and health standards, and introduce better working conditions for different types of construction projects.

At community-level construction, procurement generally concerns project work that is small in scale, not complex and requiring local co-

operation (*e.g.* school buildings, water supply systems, and local road maintenance).² As you would have noticed in the last bulletin from ASIST, ILO has issued documentation on the community contracting approach and is working to develop this further. The World Bank (WB) is currently preparing guidelines to facilitate the design, disbursement, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of WB projects of this nature. At the design stage, the aim is to take local culture, norms, and capacity into account, and to keep procedures simple, while they remain transparent and ensure accountability. At this stage, the ILO aims to promote (at a realistic and achievable level) conditions relating to employment, labour standards, working conditions and social protection.

Introduction of new, decentralised work methods and responsibilities at community level means that a great deal of effort has to be made on awareness creation, systems and procedures development and training. This applies particularly to the social aspects of infrastructure works – “decent” work as advocated by the ILO – because workers are generally unaware of their rights and implementers are primarily concerned with the managerial and technical aspects of the project.


Promoting compliance

The application of labour standards and the provision of acceptable working conditions include monitoring the use and effectiveness of incentives and sanctions in different circumstances. The principal difficulty at all levels is not so much the introduction of core labour standards and basic acceptable working conditions into contract documentation, but rather ensuring the application of these standards and conditions in practice. At international level the fund providers, international organisations and federations have an important role to play in creating awareness of the social issues at stake and promoting the status of labour standards and working conditions in contract documentation. At national

and project levels important efforts are required to provide the stakeholders with relevant information and training, as well as with the financial and physical means to comply with the legislation and regulations.

Where do we go from here?

The ILO is now initiating discussions with the major stakeholders in this sector (international financing agencies, employers’ and workers’ organisations active in the construction sector, donor agencies, engineering federations). It is proposed to set up an international task force for this purpose. The subject of discussion will be how to increase productive employment in construction, how to make progress in introducing standards and working conditions into loan agreements and contractual documentation, and how to ensure compliance. Some issues are politically sensitive in this regard, particularly those that relate to costs and (international) competitiveness.

Studies will be carried out and initiatives undertaken to make progress in this area. Following the studies, an international workshop for the task force members and selected stakeholders is proposed for 2003. The objectives of the workshop would be to: analyse the results of the consultants’ and agencies’ work; and to provide guidance on how the process could ensure the inclusion and appropriate monitoring of labour standards, improved working conditions and employment concerns into international and national contract documentation. 

¹ *In respect of road construction and maintenance works, for example, World Bank Technical Paper 347 (Washington, 1996) states that the competitiveness of employment-intensive alternatives should be seriously considered in countries with daily wage rates of US\$4-\$8. Increased social expenditure in these cases could tip the balance towards the use of capital-intensive methods.*

² *See, inter alia, J. Tournée and W. van Esch, “Community contracts in urban infrastructure works: Practical lessons from experience,” ILO Geneva, 2001.*

Decentralisation, good governance and local level capacity building

Mainstreaming rural access planning in Indonesia

By Robert Akyuwen, Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia, and Chris Donnges, ASIST – AP, Thailand

Indonesia embarked on a major decentralisation exercise in 2001. Other than foreign policy, defence, security, judiciary, monetary and fiscal matters, and religious matters, almost all other responsibilities are being devolved to local governments, which comprise 31 provinces and over 370 districts and municipalities. The magnitude and complexities of responsibilities devolved to local governments, however, are not commensurate with their current capacities. There is concern that their lack of capacity could hinder adequate provision of social services, thereby adversely affecting poverty reduction efforts.

Most public services, including education, health and infrastructure, will be delivered by districts and cities, with provinces only performing the role as co-ordinator. Decentralisation is normally justified on the expectation that it will improve the supply and delivery of public services by moving decisions closer to users. The rapid expansion of functions of local governments in Indonesia requires technical and financial support from the national government and international community to strengthen the necessary local administrative, technical and political capacity. The effectiveness of decentralisation in Indonesia will eventually be judged by the local



District planners identifying access needs of rural communities

Source: ASIST – AP

government capacity to deliver development that benefits the population of the country. Local governance structures will need adequate support to make decentralisation work for the people.

ASIST – AP, on a limited scale, is contributing to this capacity building process, in particular in relation to the function of rural infrastructure development. It is generally acknowledged that the development of infrastructure could contribute to poverty reduction if it enhances the access people have to basic, social and economic goods, services and facilities. Infrastructure development is a main area for resource allocation in many countries. An estimated 60% of a developing country's investments go to infrastructure development. This percentage is likely to be even higher at the local level. Using infrastructure development as an entry point for capacity building, therefore, offers an excellent opportunity for supporting the decentralisation process and promoting good governance.

Mainstreaming IRAP

To support the capacity building process, in particular in relation to the function of infrastructure development and improving rural accessibility, ASIST – AP and the Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta have started to collaborate and implement a local level capacity-building process for rural infrastructure development in demonstration areas. A Memorandum of Agreement between ASIST – AP and Gadjah Mada University was signed in 2001 to co-operate in applying the Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning or IRAP approach.

The work has progressed well and the demonstration phase is coming to an end. On several occasions, local governments have demonstrated their interest and appreciation for the process. This was confirmed during a recent regional workshop. The project implementation team has received requests for assistance in developing similar activities with other local governments.



Practising preparing access maps

Source: ASIST – AP

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Decentralised rural infrastructure development in Cambodia – Asian Development Bank takes the lead



Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Rural road rehabilitation, Prey Veng Province

By Pisit Tusanasorn and Bjorn Johannessen, Thailand¹

Introduction

Through the loan financed Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (RIIP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) in Cambodia has proven that labour-based construction methods can be effectively applied in large scale investment programmes for improving the rural road network in the country. Based on the positive results of the RIIP, the key design concepts of this project such as labour-based work methods, small-scale contracting and decentralised implementation arrangements have been replicated in a number of new rural development projects which the ADB is financing in Cambodia. Indeed, a number of agencies, who have worked with the Ministry for some time, are subscribing to the labour-based approach and utilise the capacities developed so far in the public and private sector.

The Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project (RIIP)

The overall objective of the RIIP was to improve the conditions and economic opportunities of the people living in the southeastern parts of Cambodia. Within the framework of this overall goal, the project had two very distinct and specific immediate objectives:

- (i) to effectively implement a set of rural infrastructure interventions contributing to the improvement of the conditions of the people in the six project provinces, and
- (ii) to develop the capacity of the MRD and its provincial offices to effectively plan, design, manage and implement rural infrastructure improvement works.

The project was designed to contribute towards rural development and provide economic opportunities through a series

of interventions related to rural infrastructure such as:

- improving the efficiency of markets,
- providing immediate and direct income from labour-based construction and maintenance of roads,
- improving critical small scale civil works, and
- developing the local construction industry.

The project began in 1998 but because of delays in recruiting the implementation consultant, the project duration was reduced from six to four years. Planned outputs included 600 km of rural roads, 16 rural markets and an unspecified programme of special infrastructure works.

The total project value was US\$ 30 million and was implemented by MRD. At the time, MRD was a newly established institution that had limited capacity in terms of implementing rural infrastructure works. Moreover, at the start of the project the Ministry was weakly represented in the provinces in

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terms of implementation capacity for civil works.

Implementation arrangements

Due to the geographically dispersed nature of the works, responsibilities for implementation were decentralised to provincial authorities. Because the capacity of the provincial authorities was practically non-existent, an entirely new civil works organisation needed to be established in each of the provinces. This involved developing more or less from scratch the technical, managerial and administrative capacity in each of the provincial offices of MRD. For the technical component, engineers, technicians and supervisors were recruited and trained in all aspects of civil works planning, execution and supervision. Equally, administrative and financial support staff were engaged and trained to achieve fully independent and capable province-based rural infrastructure works agencies. For these teams to work effectively, a complete set of administrative, financial, planning and management procedures were developed.

A small unit at central level co-ordinated the works in the provinces. The unit was mainly responsible for

Physical Outputs	
600 km of secondary and tertiary roads	
Average direct costs:	US\$ 12,500 per km
Percentage costs:	unskilled labour 40, skilled 11, structures 15, laterite 20, equipment O&M 8, and other 6
No. of culverts:	988
Cost per culverts:	Ø 0.60 = 450 US Ø 1.00 = 800 US\$
No. of bridges:	98
Cost per linear metre:	Single span (4-7m) \$ 1,200 Double span (10-20m) \$ 1,550
Peak labour force:	9,500
Accumulated employment generated:	3,223,807 workdays
No. of contractors involved:	206 small contractors
No. of civil works contracts awarded:	657

overall planning, co-ordination of funds disbursement, reporting and monitoring, development/ introduction of new guidelines and procedures and staff training.

Small-scale contracting

An important feature of this project was the involvement of the domestic construction industry. The project sought to employ various types of contracting firms already operating in each of the project provinces. A

complete contracts management package was tailor made for the works carried out and a comprehensive training programme was designed for government staff and contractors. Local builders were engaged on simple culvert works, building contractors were engaged for bridge works and smaller petty contractors were hired for routine maintenance of the rehabilitated roads. Equally, construction firms with some limited experience in carrying out civil works were trained and engaged

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ASIST – AP is now developing a strategy for mainstreaming the planning procedures in Indonesia. Mainstreaming technologies takes time as recent experiences in Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, and Nepal have shown. Mainstreaming will take place at three levels.

- At the local level, we will apply IRAP in as many areas as possible to raise awareness about the tools and create a demand from local governments (Kabupaten). We have developed a proposal for financial support, which is being considered by a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Trust Fund. Various local governments have indicated their willingness to co-finance the IRAP activities in their localities. It is anticipated that through the

National League of Local Governments (APKASI) information about IRAP will spread.

- At the regional level, we hope to work with government or donor funded capital investment programmes to link the planning procedures to investments. This requires that the IRAP procedures be integrated in country investment programmes and demonstrate impact at a larger scale. Currently, this is the weakest link in the process of mainstreaming as no government or donor funded programme has been identified yet. The IRAP procedures are rather new to Indonesia and need to be demonstrated on a larger scale before programmes are willing to

incorporate them. The Public Works and Regional Development department (KIMPRASWIL) has shown some interest in using the process as part of its urban-rural linkages programme, and collaboration for future mainstreaming of the IRAP procedures is being explored.

- At the national level, we work with the National Infrastructure Committee to develop a strategy for the country to maximise the impact of rural infrastructure investments on poverty alleviation and employment creation. It is envisioned that the IRAP procedures will become part of this strategy together with labour-based technology, small-scale contracting and decent work elements.

Source: Bjorn Johannessen



Compaction of gravel surface, Kampot Province

in road works construction utilising labour-based appropriate technology (LBAT).

Maintenance

During project formulation, a major concern was the future maintenance of the created assets. Cambodia, as many other developing countries, has a rather lacklustre track record when it comes to maintaining its road network. For this reason, the project developed a full maintenance management system at an early stage, which was installed immediately after the first roads had been completed. As a result, the MRD can now boast that it has the best maintenance programme in the country. Petty contractors, recruited in the vicinity of the roads, carry out the regular maintenance work required to keep roads open through terrain that floods annually.

Physical outputs

By decentralising full implementation authority to the provinces, the Ministry in effect created six independent works agencies (one in each project province), and thereby managed to establish quickly an impressive implementation capacity. The involvement of the locally based private construction industry further strengthened this capacity.

In terms of physical works, all envisaged outputs were completed in advance of the original schedule. All 600 km of rural roads construction and rehabilitation were completed before 2002, well within the original budget

estimates. The road works also included the construction of 988 culverts and 98 small bridges. The quality of works has been proven as the roads, bridges and culverts all withstood damage from major floods during the last two years.

Rural Markets

The rural market component got off to a slow start because it was necessary to establish real user requirements before designing the markets. In addition, a viable maintenance and operation system for the improved markets had to be established. Even so, with the late start of construction works, 16 rural markets were completed on time before the loan completion deadline.

Other Infrastructure


The project also allocated considerable funds for unspecified rural infrastructure works improvements. Priorities set at provincial level included the rehabilitation of primary schools, irrigation structures, water supply, and new office facilities for the provincial authorities. Although the management capacity was developed mainly to cater for the road works, it was apparent early that the capacity established in the provinces was also appropriate for dealing with other types of civil works such as markets and other rehabilitation works.

Future

The RIIP has provided valuable inputs to the formulation of the implementation strategies for rural infrastructure provision in Cambodia.

Since 1992, most donor-supported rural infrastructure works were executed directly by the aid organisations themselves, leaving limited involvement to central and local government organisations. Through the RIIP, the MRD clearly demonstrated that the government is capable of managing large-scale investment programmes for the provision of rural infrastructure.

In recognition of the government's capacities, the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank have been significantly increasing their lending programme to this sub-sector in Cambodia in recent years. Equally, they are comfortably vesting the implementation authority with the Ministry of Rural Development, hoping to tap into the successful experience of RIIP. Since the RIIP started, the MRD has been selected to manage other similar size programmes: the Emergency Flood Rehabilitation Programmes of both the WB and ADB, the ADB funded Northwest Rural Development Project, the road component of the Stung Chinit Project and other projects currently under preparation. Because of this, the management systems and procedures originally established in the six provinces of RIIP are currently being established in 10 additional provinces.

In addition, both development banks are currently supporting the government in launching a number of new rural infrastructure investment programmes. In all the new programmes, the government has decided to apply the implementation arrangements of the RIIP. Key features in this policy are: the use of LBAT, decentralised implementation authority, appropriate contract management procedures purpose designed for rural infrastructure works, sound financial management and full involvement of the private sector. 

Further information can be obtained from Ministry of Rural Development, Corner of Street 166 and Russian Federation Blvd., Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Tel: +855 23 428 049; Fax: + 855 23 428 049.

Preliminary results of cost-study in Cambodia

By David Stiedl, Independent Consultant, UK, and Paul Munters, ASIST – Asia Pacific (AP), Thailand

Background

The first results of a study to compare the costs and potential benefits of the various approaches with infrastructure provision were received just before this issue of the *ASIST Bulletin* was printed. The study will assist and inform the Government of Cambodia in its policy setting for current and future operations related to infrastructure provision. The study, headed by former ASIST – Africa Director David Stiedl, supported by the Cambodian consultant Douk Narin (data-collection) and ASIST – AP (technical backstopping), confirms that labour-based infrastructure works have a positive impact in Cambodia. The following is a summary of key findings.

Labour-based construction programmes have played an extremely important role in the rehabilitation of Cambodia's rural infrastructure over the past decade. Indeed, it could be said that road construction by labour-based methods has been the most important delivery mechanism for reinstating community access, which was largely destroyed or neglected during 30 years of upheaval.

The labour-based works reviewed were found to be cost-effective and of good quality, and have provided employment opportunities that other approaches may have precluded. The approach is not being adopted by all agencies, however, and is viewed in some circles as being more expensive than conventional equipment-based methods.

Rehabilitating road networks

Cambodia is embarking upon a significant programme to rehabilitate and upgrade its state, provincial and rural road network through equipment and labour-based methods using force account and contracting systems. In the study, labour-based projects included the ILO-managed Labour-based Rural Infrastructure Works

Programme and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project, which have created over 1,000 km of rural road. Equipment-based projects included some NGO-funded rural roads. Mainly, however, they were national roads undergoing rehabilitation by force account equipment-based teams, under the direction of the Department of Roads Ministry of Public Works and Transport, and urban works carried out by contractors in Phnom Penh.

The study contradicts the assumption that on average labour-based, machine-assisted methods are more expensive than machine-based approaches for constructing rural gravel-surfaced roads in Cambodia. However, owing to the current ready availability of cheap second-hand construction equipment, some local contractors are able to undercut the labour-based price for small contracts, although there is some doubt about the quality of their work. Applying a simple proxy for shadow labour costs indicates that, in economic terms, labour-based methods are competitive even with these small contracts.

The employment potential for labour-based techniques is high. Eighteen times more employment for unskilled labour was generated compared with an equipment-based approach. The break-even wage-rate of US\$ 2.1 is more than double the currently prevailing wage used in labour-based road works.

The study estimates that using labour-based methods to carry out a programme of rural road upgrading, combined with labour-based maintenance of the existing maintainable road network, could generate between 3.7 and 6.6 million days of work

per year, depending on the extent of the programme. Taking the maximum figure, this is equivalent to 33,000 full-time jobs and would create opportunities for 100 rehabilitation contracts and 270 maintenance contracts per year.

Further, labour-based methods could also have an application for the primary and secondary road restoration programme, particularly where these roads are being restored to a gravel surface, or where alternative more durable surfaces can be adapted to a labour-based approach.

Conclusion

The study concludes that labour-based methods as currently developed in Cambodia should be adopted as the standard approach for all rural road rehabilitation and maintenance, if the government wish to maximise the employment impact in the rural areas. This should have no negative implications for the efficiency, cost effectiveness, or quality of the business of managing the rural road sector. The scale of the benefits in terms of the government poverty alleviation strategy is clear. Significant employment can be generated by the adoption of an appropriate policy without the necessity to allocate any additional funding, other than that already earmarked for the restoration of the national road network.



Final levelling in Kampot Province

Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Institutional frameworks at policy level

The experience of Namibia

By Gamelihle Sibanda, ASIST – Africa

NAMIBIA is one of the African countries that has decided to harness local resources in its fight against poverty. One strategy to attain these national development objectives of creating employment opportunities and economic growth involves the multisectoral adaptation of labour-based methods (LBM) piloted and mainstreamed in the road sector in recent years.

At a 1994 stakeholders' conference, delegates agreed on the multisectoral application of LBM as a contribution to the national development objectives. The stakeholders also realised, however, that a policy framework would be required for such initiatives to succeed. In November 1995, the Namibian Cabinet directed that such a policy be developed. In 1997, a multidisciplinary team produced a Green Paper on the multisectoral application of LBM. Subsequently, all stakeholders debated the paper during regional workshops. A Draft White Paper (building on the Green Paper and contributions from stakeholders) was developed; in 1999, the Cabinet and National Assembly adopted it as a Government Policy Paper (White Paper).

Following adoption of the White Paper as a policy document, a task force (comprising professionals drawn from the government, employers, unions and ASIST – Africa) was appointed to spearhead the formation of a statutory body, the Labour-Based Works Forum (LBWF). The LBWF was to become the hub of labour-based works and link the policy and its implementation to the direct role players (government line ministries and private sector). The envisaged functions of the Forum included, but were not limited to:

- assessing the potential for LBM in various sectors
- advising implementers and other stakeholders on labour-based methods/issues
- co-ordinating and promoting research
- raising public awareness for labour-based technology
- advising and assisting in the

harmonisation of standards, procedures, specifications, *etc*

- making recommendations to government on various issues such as incentive schemes and amendment of legislation to create an enabling environment for LBM
- raising funds for the promotion of labour-based works.

The LBWF was envisaged to consist of a Stakeholders' Council that would meet annually to raise/discuss issues of concern to various constituencies. A lean functional Board would be responsible for implementation and a Secretariat would carry out the day-to-day operations of the Board. The Stakeholders' Council, Board and Secretariat would constitute the Forum, with institutional linkage to the government at the highest possible level.

Before the LBWF was established, however, a portfolio of employment creation was added to the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation in 2000. In view of this development, stakeholders met several times and discussed how the LBWF and the new portfolio could be harmonised. It was agreed that the Ministry should be the future institutional driver of the Forum. Nevertheless, the Forum would retain its characteristic of a public-private sector partnership.

Subsequent meetings at ministerial level have paved the way for the creation of a national employment creation body, incorporating and building on the work that has already been done towards creation of the Forum. The new body, physically located outside government to ensure participation of the private sector, would focus on employment creation beyond labour-based methods.

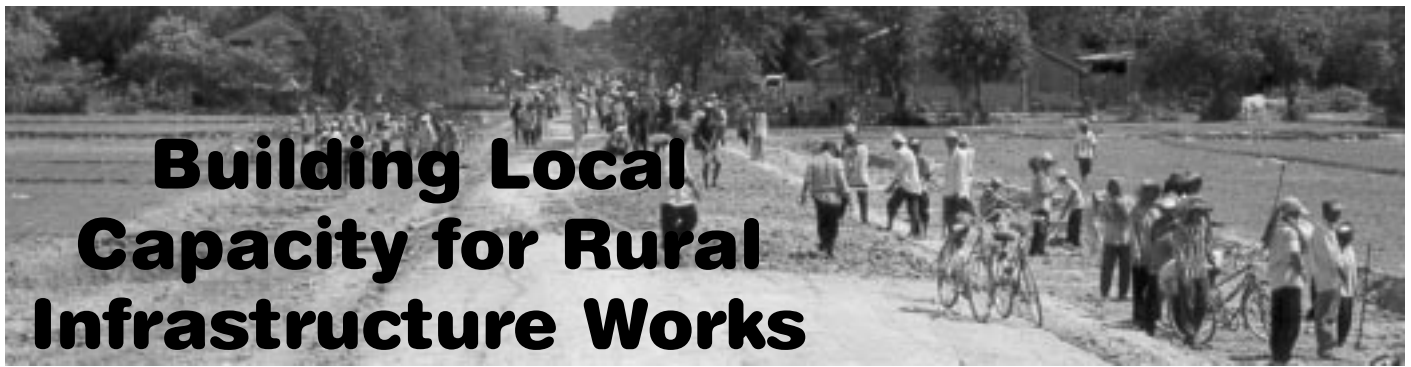
A stakeholder-brainstorming workshop was held in April 2002 and mapped the way forward in terms of the work that needs to be done, resources needed and timeframe. It is hoped that a statutory body established through an Act of parliament will be functioning within the next two years. Some activities that do not require a legislative framework have already started.

Lessons learnt

The following are some of the lessons learnt from the Namibia experience to date:

- Employment-intensive works can contribute to national development objectives such as poverty reduction and economic growth.
- A national policy is important for a co-ordinated multisectoral application of employment creation initiatives.
- Policy alone is not enough, there is need to set up a catalytic unit to spearhead the adoption and implementation of the policy.
- Such a unit needs legislative framework to be effective, *e.g.* for role players such as government ministries to provide it with information, to be able to mobilise funding both in country and through bilateral and multilateral donors, *etc.*
- Whilst government departments can be instructed what to do by way of directives, the private sector can only be enticed to implement socio-economic objectives by creating an attractive environment, whereby implementation of an employment intensive approach still makes business sense.
- Developing an enabling legislative framework is a process, not an event. Consequently, the process can take a long time depending on various factors such as the political commitment by decision makers, the lobbying skills of the group driving the process, the capacity and flexibility of the legal system, *etc.*
- Implementation of the policy should start even before the legislative framework is fully in place.

The Namibia experience is a good model that other countries can adapt to their own circumstances. Enquiries on the details of the model have been received from many countries including Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Ecuador in South America.



Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Building Local Capacity for Rural Infrastructure Works

Providing employment and market prospects for the private sector

By Bjorn Johannessen, Senior Rural Infrastructure Management Specialist and Geoff Edmonds, Programme Coordinator, ASIST – Asia Pacific

Introduction

In recent years, there has been a general trend worldwide to decentralise government functions and services directly related to local communities. Typically, there have been two motives behind this change. Firstly, the political decision to introduce more democratic forms of management of public assets and services at local level, and secondly to improve the efficiency in the management of resources allocated to the provision of rural infrastructure assets and services.

Yet the real issue is not whether this process is appropriate for the purpose of rural infrastructure provision. Rather, the question for planners and managers is how such works programmes are best organised within the framework of the responsibilities and authorities currently vested with local government structures.

Work carried out by the ILO, and other organisations, to provide a comprehensive approach to capacity-building for improved service delivery indicates that there is the potential to introduce a framework for infrastructure development that both responds to the actual needs of the rural population and can also be effectively administered by local officials.

Local capacity

Rural infrastructure works often consist of a large number of comparatively small sub-projects dispersed over a large geographic area. It is well known that programmes of this nature are difficult to supervise due to the demanding logistics requirements. As a result, agencies such as road administrations, works ministries and irrigation departments usually set up depots and offices at regional, provincial and district levels.

Having to engage large-scale contractors from the capital cities and rely on staff from central government agencies for supervision and management subsequently involves high mobilisation costs.

The alternative is to rely on locally available resources – local materials, local builders, smaller construction firms located in the vicinity of the works locations – and local government agencies for technical and managerial skills.

Forms of decentralisation

Deconcentration, often referred to as administrative decentralisation, describes the transfer of specific functions to peripheral agencies of the same central government institutions (*i.e.* district offices), without the transfer of the authority away from the central government with the effect that local representation and involvement remains limited.

Delegation is the assignment of certain specific functions to other semi-autonomous or para-statal institutions, which execute them independently, without owing direct responsibility to either local or sectoral, central government institutions.

Devolution refers to the transfer of specific functions to local authorities together with the legal basis and required means and capacity. Decentralised agencies in this context would normally have little reliance on the central government, except in the form of technical and managerial guidelines and procedures, however, leaving selection and prioritisation of works to be decided at local level.

Finally, **privatisation** refers to a complete and final transfer of a package of government services to private organisations. Privatisation is often a measure which is combined with one of the other forms of decentralisation, by limiting its scope to certain task or functions, *i.e.* technical designs, works implementation.

Source: Feeder Roads Programme (FRP) Mozambique



Culvert casting, Centre de Formação (CFE), Mozambique

Experience

Experience from a number of rural infrastructure development programmes indicates that for these types of interventions to be effective and sustainable, there is need for solid capacity at local level for planning and implementation of works, particularly for supervision and maintenance.

All created infrastructure assets require a sound maintenance management system to safeguard the investments carried out during the development phase. With maintenance under the supervision of local authorities, which are accountable to the real users of the infrastructure, the concern of maintaining the created assets may be safeguarded.



Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Timely and skilled supervision, Savannakhet, Laos

Opportunities

Integrated planning

When rural infrastructure is planned as part of a central government programme, it is often considered in relation to the development of a particular sub-sector alone. With the authority to define work programmes vested in local authorities, all types of infrastructure such as roads, clinics, schools, irrigation and water supply schemes can be planned using an integrated approach in which various infrastructure development initiatives can be seen in relation to each other. The tools developed by the ILO for Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) clearly demonstrate how efficient planning can be carried out at local level.

Locally-identified needs

Funds allocated by central agencies tend to be spent in accordance with defined targets or norms set by the central authorities in a particular sector. Moreover, the level of funding is defined in accordance with the central line agencies' budgets. When funds are disbursed at local level they tend to relate more strongly to actual needs and budget



Source: FRP, Mozambique

Local workers spreading gravel, Mozambique

Strengths, weaknesses,

Strengths

- ◆ Decisions taken at local level by user representatives.
- ◆ Funds used for locally defined needs.
- ◆ Increased opportunity for community involvement.
- ◆ Decentralised supervision allowing for regular inspection of work sites and improved progress monitoring.
- ◆ User involvement in monitoring of performance.

Weaknesses

- ◆ Lack of clarity of decentralisation – often related to central agencies attempting to retain authority.
- ◆ Vested interest from local politicians.
- ◆ Lack of capacity, in terms of technical and managerial skills.
- ◆ Lack of qualified staff, for work design and supervision, accounting, overall planning and management, etc.
- ◆ Lack of funding due to poor local taxation resource base and limited funds being allocated by central authorities.

allocations are seen in relation to the overall budget and works programme of the local administration.

Increased community involvement

Local authorities are directly accountable to all members of the local communities. Correspondingly, local authorities are able to more effectively promote community involvement, and communities themselves can more easily demand to be involved. Through this interaction the potential for the involvement of the communities in both setting priorities and how local resources are used is significantly increased.

Decentralised supervision

Providing the technical capacity is present, local authorities are in a position to ensure timely and regular supervision of works. Furthermore, the quality of such services and how they are performed can be easily monitored by the end users of the created assets. Here, the main issue is that local authorities are held responsible to the users for their actions. When works are managed by personnel who report to any central agency, such pressure from the local population is diluted. As central agencies and their staff take their orders from superiors situated in the capital they are not directly accountable to the end users of the created assets.

Challenges

Lack of capacity is often cited as the excuse for not decentralising functions and services. Equally, local authorities often underestimate what is involved in taking over this responsibility. Yet with a comprehensive approach to institutional development and training, the short-comings of local capacity can be averted.

opportunities, challenges

Opportunities

- ◆ Enhanced potential for participation in planning and supervision from future users of the assets.
- ◆ Improved scope for multi-sectoral planning.
- ◆ Concentration on the use of local resources and local solutions.
- ◆ Developing local industries through improved market and job prospects.
- ◆ Local government capacities developed through their increased responsibilities and work programmes.
- ◆ Greater sense of ownership since the investment priorities are defined through consultations with the users.

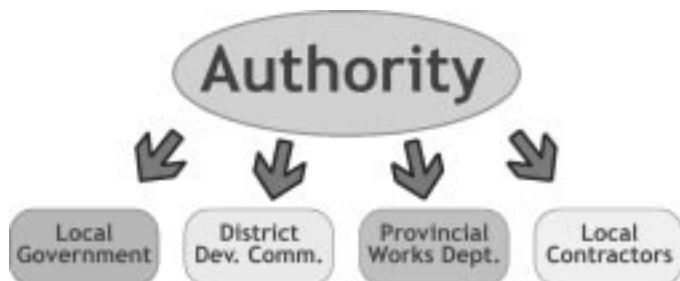
Challenges

- ◆ Improve financial management systems.
- ◆ Develop implementation capacity at local level.
- ◆ Introduce proactive, participatory planning systems.
- ◆ Establish appropriate procurement and contract management procedures.
- ◆ Identify resources for and increase understanding of effective maintenance.
- ◆ Develop effective human resource development programme.
- ◆ Provide purpose oriented skill training programme.
- ◆ Secure sufficient funding, enabling local authorities to meet their new responsibilities.

In order for local authorities to assume the role of main service provider, it is crucial that the financial and professional means for fulfilling this function are in place. With this authority previously vested with centralised organisations, local institutions were left with limited resources and responsibilities. Thus, the current drive to delegate authority to local government needs to be carried out hand-in-hand with the transfer of the required resources.

When combined with a comprehensive training and technical assistance programme, experience clearly shows that local authorities can deliver the expected services required in a rural infrastructure development programme.

Appropriate levels of authority



The degree and form of decentralisation varies from one country to another and must be designed to meet the specific requirements of the works and services to be provided. There are a number of key features that are crucial to effective planning and sustainable implementation of rural infrastructure works. These are appropriate choice of technology, identification of correct interventions, *i.e.* meeting user performance requirements, adequate works



Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Maintaining district access, Dedza, Malawi

supervision and management, timely and sufficient levels of funding and others. All these issues need to be considered when establishing an effective organisation structure to complement the work and at the same time ensure the participation of the future users, the local authorities as well as involving the local construction industries.

Local-level authority needs to be clearly divided between the appropriate parties and institutions that are best equipped to deal with the various responsibilities related to a public works programme. Development committees and similar institutions representing the users of the infrastructure also need to be involved in the identification and prioritisation of the works. Within local government,



Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Management training at local level

Capacity building

In practice, this implies that a series of institutional development issues need to be properly addressed:

- ◆ new divisions of authority clearly defined,
- ◆ resources transferred directly to local government instead of through central technical agencies,
- ◆ professional teams developed within local government at appropriate levels,
- ◆ efficient management procedures which are responsive to the local requirements and environment developed,
- ◆ adequate funds transfer and accounting procedures established,
- ◆ new contract management practices introduced to facilitate the involvement of the local contracting industry,
- ◆ adequate provision of funds and appropriate management procedures for maintenance established under the direct responsibility of the local authorities.



Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Development planning, Takeo, Cambodia

technical agencies should be given full responsibility for the design and supervision of the works. Finally, and of no less importance is the involvement of local construction industries in the execution of the works.

The above table lists some key tasks and responsibilities that need to be clearly allocated to government at national, provincial, district and community level. As the table shows, there are a number of activities which need to be dealt with at local level, just as there are tasks that are more appropriately addressed by central authorities.

This division of responsibilities would obviously vary from one country to another as well as with the type of works and the conditions in which they are carried out. Here, it must be emphasised that these divisions of responsibilities relate specifically to public works programmes. In community development programmes where self-help initiatives play an important role, the arrangements of authority would naturally focus more on the community. It is particularly important that the division of authority between the various parties is clarified thereby ensuring that each level of government is aware of their individual responsibilities.

The development of capacity at local level is best achieved through a controlled and measured approach. Capacity requirements should be carefully estimated in relation to the envisaged works. Equally, capacity development should not be planned in relation to a single works project in isolation but should cater for all the requirements of a local authority in the immediate and the more distant future.

This is a strong argument against the establishment of project implementation offices. Capacity established at local

Division of Responsibilities				
Level	National	Provincial	District	Commune
Data Collection			✓	✓
Planning	✓	✓	✓	
Budgeting	✓	✓	✓	
Plan approval		✓	✓	
Budget approval		✓	✓	
Funds Generation	✓	✓	✓	
Standard setting	✓			
Authority to classify	✓	✓	✓	
Implement Improvement		✓	✓	
Implement Maintenance			✓	
Supervision		✓	✓	
Awards contracts		✓	✓	
Monitoring	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accounting		✓	✓	

level should be developed on a sustainable basis beyond the duration of individual projects. As a result, it is more appropriate to build up the capacity within the existing structures of local government and utilise any existing establishment and available resources to the fullest possible extent.

Private sector involvement

Local contractors can play a key role in the implementation and maintenance of rural infrastructure. Once again, the dispersed nature of rural infrastructure and the limited size of each of the work sites makes engaging local builders and contracting firms far more appropriate.

To facilitate such a scenario not only involves the further development of the skills of the contractors, but also the establishment of an efficient contract administration capacity within local government agencies. This includes the development of appropriate procedures for the announcement of works, bidding, submission and evaluation of bids, contract award, inspection and payment of works, resolving disputes, etc.

With an efficient contracts management system installed within local government, the local private sector can play an important role in the efficient and cost-effective provision and maintenance of rural infrastructure.



Source: Bjorn Johannessen

Access road to the market, Cambodia



Source: FRP, Mozambique

A completed gravel road, Mozambique

Coping after donor pullout – The Zimbabwe experience

*An interview with Eng. N. Kudenga, Director of Roads, Ministry of Public Works, Zimbabwe
Reported by Gamelihle Sibanda, ASIST – Africa, Zimbabwe*

I take a peep through the window from the 16th floor and see the street below is bustling with traffic – it's business as usual in the city of Harare. In fact, if you were a newly arrived tourist, you might not understand why Zimbabwe is making negative headlines in the international press. Things at their supposedly worst state since independence still appear better than in some countries at their best. Anyway, I quickly take my seat since the Director of Roads, Eng. N Kudenga, has kindly granted me this interview at short notice. Just as I start to recap on the objective of my visit, the Deputy Director of Planning and Designs, Eng. G. Nhemachena, enters. I become anxious that maybe some crisis has come up and our interview will be cut short. However, to my relief and joy Eng. Kudenga invites his right-hand man to join the meeting.

I should state at the outset that the questions and answers are not verbatim, although they capture the essence of the discussion. Since I have always fancied myself as an investigative journalist, I will hereafter refer to yours truly as Reporter. Although Eng. Nhemachena answered some of the questions and elaborated on some of the answers Eng. Kudenga gave, I will refer to their combined answers as Director. I believe I can do this under “journalistic licence.”

Reporter

Zimbabwe is facing a plethora of challenges such as: inflation hovering above 135%; a critical shortage of foreign currency estimated at two days cover; an escalating parallel exchange rate for US dollars, currently trading above one to over ZWD\$650 (Zimbabwe dollar) as opposed to the official rate of one to ZWD\$55; brain drain of your engineers to Europe; occasional fuel shortages; withdrawal of donor support, etc. A number of people, especially those outside Zimbabwe, are keen to know how you are coping in such an environment. In some countries we have seen phased

withdrawal of donor support to ensure sustainability, yet in Zimbabwe's case the withdrawal has been drastic, especially during the period before and soon after the presidential election in March 2002. As a point of departure, what impact has donor pullout had on your operations?

Director

The donor pullout has hampered mainly capital projects; both equipment-based and labour-based. Routine maintenance is least affected because it is funded from the Roads Fund, which came into existence in mid-2001. The government has also stepped in to reduce the funding gap. Our operations are continuing, albeit on a reduced scale.

Reporter

How many donors were active in the road sector before the elections and how many are still supporting you? What are the prospects for future support?

Director

There were over six donors, and currently one remains. We understand they will stay until the end of the project. There are no planned donor-funded projects for the future.

Reporter

Using mainly donor funds labour-based contractors were trained and 16 were equipped. You mentioned that labour-based projects were adversely affected by the donor pullout. Are we going to see a collapse of these contractors?

Director

The contractors will not collapse. We will continue to give them work, although it will be on a reduced scale. Furthermore, there is potential work in other areas such as Rural District Councils (RDCs) where Road Fund money is available. Handling of Road Fund money inculcates a sense of accountability. As RDCs become more accountable, they will become eligible for more Road Fund money. Furthermore, food-for-work projects are coming up to mitigate the effects of

the drought. Labour-based methods lend themselves to such social safety nets.

Reporter

Are you suggesting Road Fund money is adequate to fund all maintenance work?

Director

The Road Fund is not enough. Nevertheless, currently some RDCs are not getting the maximum they should because they lack capacity to implement projects or to account for the money they have spent – a precondition for accessing additional funds.

Reporter

What is the impact of the shortage of foreign currency on your operations and how are you dealing with the challenge?

Director

The shortage affects mainly materials and equipment. For example, instead of importing bitumen we are now going to use the locally available tar. For the running coat, we will use a tar-PVC blend to improve the elasticity/durability properties of the binder.

Regarding equipment, the major problem is procuring spare parts such as those for stone crushers. The costs of hiring such plant have soared, presumably reflecting the landed cost of spares procured using funds sourced from the parallel market.

Reporter

Presumably, heavy plant owners are also reeling from the same problem of obtaining spares. How are they coping?

Director

Some have temporarily moved their equipment to neighbouring countries due to the slump in construction work.

Reporter

How is the high inflation affecting your budgets and output?

Director

Naturally, we are affected. As the year progresses we build or maintain a shorter road per given amount of money. This is due to the increase in the costs of inputs.

Reporter

You are losing engineers in large numbers, mainly to Europe. Why are they leaving and how are you coping with the situation?

Director

It is unfortunate that we are losing our experienced engineers. They work hard, but they are not remunerated adequately. For example, 86% of our maintenance budget goes to actual works. By comparison, a utility in a similar but different sector spends about 80% of its budget on salaries.

We are losing mainly the middle-level engineers and we are replacing them with inexperienced recent graduates. University graduates with one-year industrial attachment tend to perform better compared with the graduates with primarily theoretical training with minimal industrial attachment.

Reporter

On the issue of remuneration, is it true that a nurse who qualifies after a three-year diploma course after O levels earns more than an engineer who qualifies following a four-year degree after A levels does?

Director

I am not sure about that. (He picks up the telephone and asks somebody in personnel to find out). It is unfortunate that those who can hold the nation at ransom are paid better. For example, if those in the medical profession go on strike the impact is felt in less than 24 hours. On the other hand, if engineers were to go on strike the impact would be felt after several months.

Reporter

Donors have traditionally procured vehicles, which are handed over to the Department of Roads at the end of the projects. How are you going to procure an adequate fleet of vehicles in the prevailing harsh economic environment?

Director

We may not be able to afford all vehicles we need. We are going to procure vehicles using government funds. Already, each of the eight provinces has procured a new vehicle for supervision.

Development and institutionalisation of international courses at Kisii Training Centre

By Sam Orwa, Kisii Training Centre, Kisii, Kenya



Field work during a training of trainers course at KTC

Labour-based roadwork in Kenya began in 1974 by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in four selected districts representative of all regions considered for inclusion into a larger programme. These regions were representative in respect of topographical, climatic and socio-economic factors.

The results were encouraging, and a national programme of labour-based road construction and improvement known as Rural Access Roads Programme (RARP) evolved. The Ministry soon realised that work methods, techniques, and procedures in the various districts needed to be standardised if the programme was to be put into effect on a national scale. This led to the formation of a training site in one of the initial districts. As the programme grew, all new engineers coming into the programme were attached to the training unit before being appointed to implementing units in other districts.

In 1978 a training unit was established in Suneka - Kisii and a small temporary facility was constructed with the help of Swiss funding. This led to the beginning of a more formalised training for the programme.

Meanwhile, the Rural Access Roads Programme was so successful, both in terms of its own objectives and in terms of national political enthusiasm, that labour-based methods were introduced to the classified road network in 1985, resulting in the creation of the Minor Roads Programme (MRP). To cope with the training for MRP, a more permanent training centre was built at Kisii the same year. This complex is the present day Kisii Training Centre (KTC), where all labour-based roads training for Kenya, sub-Saharan Africa and beyond is carried out.

In 1988, the ILO, with Swiss funding, developed and ran an international engineer's pilot course on labour-based road construction and maintenance at KTC. This development

was prompted by the need to utilise the institution to the maximum and the opportunity foreseen in the rising demand for labour-based roadwork technology training in sub-Saharan Africa. This first pilot course gave birth to the international courses for engineers and managers. The ILO continued to run the courses at KTC over the next two years using the KTC staff, consultants and lecturers from ILO and Kenyan government programmes.

KTC, with the support from ASIST, continued to develop and conduct three international courses annually for engineers and managers; senior technicians; and trainers. Meanwhile, study tours were developed and conducted for senior managers and policy makers to labour-based roadwork projects in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The study tours have made senior managers more amenable to facilitating the training of their staff in labour-based roadwork technology.

ASIST role in development of international courses at KTC

ASIST supported KTC in developing the curriculum for international courses, provided support and input for the training process and administrative functions of the international courses. Not only have ASIST personnel been part of the lecturing team, but the direct links to regional projects both for marketing and content variations have been equally important. ASIST has also been instrumental in building the capacity of KTC staff by attachment to various projects, thus building their capacity in managerial and training fields.

Another area of co-operation with ASIST has been in the introduction of rural travel and transport concepts. These have now been incorporated in local and international training programmes run at KTC.

KTC is now pursuing new interests in urban unplanned settlement upgrading. This is an extremely important facet in the provision of service and infrastructure to the urban poor. With support from ASIST, KTC and Kenya Water Institute (KEWI) have

developed a new course entitled Labour-based and Community-managed Urban Upgrading Course. The aim of the course is to equip site foremen with knowledge and skills to supervise the urban infrastructure upgrading projects in low-income settlements. The target group includes site supervisors (foremen level) from communities, municipalities and contractors.

Institutional capacity building at KTC

KTC has developed its lecturing and management capacity to conduct the international courses to a sustainable level, by taking the following initiatives:

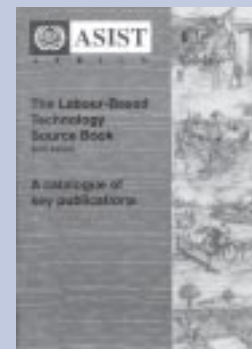
- sponsoring instructors to institutions of higher learning to improve on their academic qualifications through continuous learning
- attaching instructors to projects and programmes as counterparts across the region
- ensuring that instructors undertake courses in training methodologies, workshop facilitation skills
- ensuring that the training sites are under the direct control of the institution, thus enabling the instructors to develop practical, oriented curriculum for demonstration of proper engineering design standards, material specifications, cost efficiency and high productivity
- diversifying courses to suit market demand. The centre has the flexibility to adapt to changes in the technology and to new areas of application. Recently emphasis has been on contract supervision and community participation in labour-based roadwork technology.
- developing a management guide on marketing, preparation, conducting and evaluation of international courses at KTC, and a guide to conducting study tours. These are available to staff as reference material
- ensuring a pool of seasoned instructors with experience in labour-based infrastructure work

and management is available for KTC to draw upon during each course

- developing an appropriate incentive scheme for instructors
- establishing a library to serve clients within the institution is at advanced stage with support from ASIST.

We must acknowledge here that the Swiss donor funding and expertise provided to the institution since its inception contributed immensely to the success of these courses. This support came to an end in the year 1997. The international courses are now fully institutionalised at Kisii Training Centre and form part of the annual training programme.

Kisii Training Centre is under the Kenya Institute of Highways and Building Technology (KIHBT), Ministry of Roads and Public Works (MORPW), and the courses are encouraged and fully supported by the Kenya Government. See the forthcoming events overleaf for the courses programmed for the year 2002/2003.



The Labour-Based Technology Source Book – A Catalogue of Key Publications. Sixth Edition 2002

The sixth edition of the source book of key publication is now available in print and on the ASIST web site. The source book seeks to put together a selective list of key publications covering all aspects of labour-based technology for infrastructure development from the policy and planning to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of works.

Forthcoming Events

Courses

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE OF THE ILO, TURIN, ITALY

Sub-regional workshop for the promotion of tools and good practices in improved urban service delivery and employment creation

Date: 14th – 18th October 2002
Venue: Nairobi, Kenya
Details: The objective of the workshop is to strengthen participants' capabilities in planning and implementing city-wide employment initiatives that contribute directly to poverty reduction through the creation of sustainable jobs and improved services. The focus will be on community-managed labour-based urban infrastructure upgrading and service delivery through small enterprise development, with particular attention to aspects of *Public-Private Partnership* in the implementation of such strategies. The workshop is organised jointly with ILO/ASIST, ILO In Focus Programme on Small Enterprise Development (IFP/SEED) and UN-Habitat.

Interregional workshop on employment-intensive investment policies and programmes – Putting employment at the center of public investment and poverty reduction processes

Date: 26th – 28th November 2002
Venue: Turin, Italy
Details: Targeted towards government, donor, private sector or other representatives from anglophone African countries.

Contact: *International Training Centre of the ILO, Employment and Skills Development Programme, Viale Maestri del Lavoro, 10, 10127 Turin, Italy. Tel: +39 011 6936999; Fax: +39 011 6936451; E-mail: emp@itcilo.it. Web site: http://www.itcilo.it*

KISII TRAINING CENTRE (KTC), KISII, KENYA

2002

International engineers course in labour-based road construction and maintenance

Dates: 7th October – 16th November 2002
Venue: KTC, Kisii, Kenya
Fees: US\$ 5900
Details: For practitioners holding a university degree involved in the planning, management or implementation of labour-based roadworks.

2003

International Contract Supervisors Course

Dates: 3rd – 30th March 2003
Venue: KTC, Kisii, Kenya
Fees: US\$ 4,200
Details: Contract supervisors who are engineers or senior technicians of labour-based road construction and maintenance projects.

Urban Site supervisors course in labour-based and community-managed upgrading of urban low income settlements: Basic Course and Skills Course

Basic Course Date: 10th – 28th February 2003

Skills Course Date: 9th June – 27th June 2003

Venue: KTC, Kisii, Kenya
Fees: US\$ 3205 (US\$ 2564 for Kenyan citizens)

Details: The target group is site supervisors from communities, municipalities and contractors. The Basic Course is aimed at

improving attitudes and sensitising site supervisors on the essential aspects of community participation and labour-based approaches, and equipping them with basic skills and knowledge for supervision of urban upgrading works. The Skills Course provides knowledge and practical skills to supervise and execute urban infrastructure works using labour-based community-managed approaches.

International course in labour-based road construction and maintenance

Dates: 6th October – 15th November 2003

Venue: KTC, Kisii, Kenya
Fees*: US\$ 5900 (*Fees cover tuition, fieldwork, course materials, transport during the course, safe travel insurance, accommodation and meals.)

Details: For practitioners of labour-based roadworks (should have a university degree)

Contact: *The Resident Instructor, Kisii Training Centre (KTC), PO Box 2254, Kisii, Kenya. Tel: +254 381 30699 or Tel/Fax: +254 381 21634. Email: courses@kihbt-ktc.com or info@kihbt-ktc.com.*

Conferences and Seminars

WATER, ENGINEERING AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (WEDC)

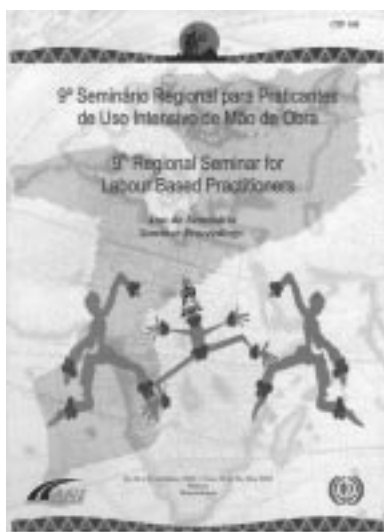
Sustainable environmental sanitation and water services

28th WEDC Conference

Dates: 18th – 22nd November 2002
Venue: Kolkata (Calcutta), India

Contact: *wedc.conf@lboro.ac.uk*

New Publications



LABOUR-BASED TECHNOLOGY:

A review of the current practice. Proceedings and papers of the ninth regional seminar for labour-based practitioners. Maputo, Mozambique, 20 – 24 May 2002.

Edited and compiled by David J Mason

National Road Administration (ANE)
ILO/ASIST. 2002

The papers and proceedings from the ninth regional seminar – Towards appropriate engineering practices and an enabling environment – are available in print and on the ASIST web site <http://www.ilo.org/asist>.

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE FOR ENGINEERS AND TOWN PLANNERS:

Sustainable community-managed and labour-based upgrading of low income settlements. Trainers' Notes/ Workbook/ Handbook.

Jan Fransen and Hamish Goldie Scot

ILO/ASIST. 2002

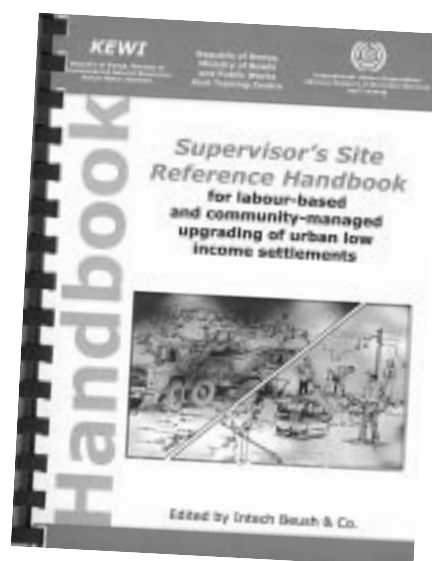
These materials were developed for training engineers and planners responsible for infrastructure provision and services in urban low-income settlements. The handbook provides a

concise overview of the essential principles and practices of community-managed and labour-based upgrading of low income settlements and can be used as a reference source on its own. The workbook guides participants through the development of a project proposal. The trainers' notes provide detailed information on the course content and methodology.

SITE SUPERVISORS COURSE FOR LABOUR-BASED AND COMMUNITY MANAGED UPGRADING OF LOW INCOME SETTLEMENTS:

Basic Course Manual / Skills Course Manual / Supervisors Site Reference Handbook.

Kisii Training Centre (KTC); Kenya Water Institute (KEWI); ILO/ASIST. 2000



These manuals were developed for the training of site supervisors involved in labour-based and community managed upgrading work. The course is divided into two sections: Basic Course aimed at improving attitudes and sensitising site supervisors on the key aspects of community participation and labour-based approaches, and equipping them with basic skills and knowledge for supervision of urban upgrading works. The Skills Course provides knowledge

and practical skills to supervise and execute urban infrastructure works using labour-based community-managed approaches. The manuals provide the reference material for each course. The Supervisors Site Reference Handbook provides useful data and guidance and comes in a handy format for reference on site. The Handbook is designed to be used for reference separately from the course.

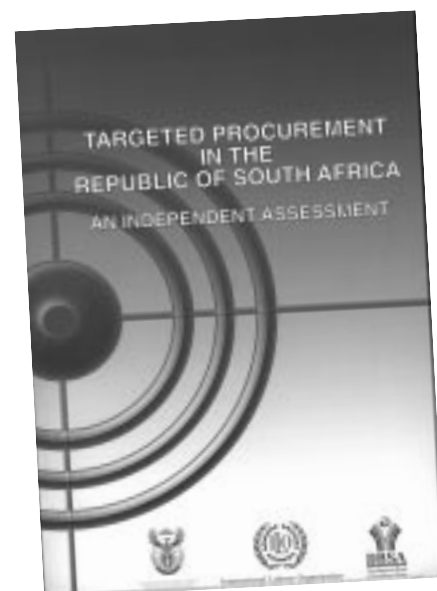
TARGETED PROCUREMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA:

An Independent Assessment

T. E. Manchidi and I. Harmond.

Department of Public Works (DPW), South Africa; Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA); ILO. April 2002

An assessment of the supportive legislation, effectiveness and impact of Targeted Procurement, an innovative procurement system aimed at addressing government development objectives in the course of service delivery. Key lessons learnt during the procurement process and recommendations that will lead to the achievement of the intended objectives are provided. Data from different projects that applied targeted procurement are provided.



Book Review

SERVICES FOR THE URBAN POOR: Guidelines for policymakers, planners and engineers

Andrew Cotton and Kevin Tayler

Water, Engineering and Development Centre
(WEDC); GHK Research and Training Ltd. 2000
ISBN 0-906055-77-6

This set of manuals offers detailed guidance on action planning, design, implementation, operation and maintenance of basic services for the urban poor based on the principles of user involvement and partnerships.

The first two sections, **Section 1: Guiding Principles** and **Section 2: Working with Partners**, are aimed primarily at policy makers but are also of direct relevance to urban engineers and planners. The remainder of the books is aimed at urban engineers and planners. **Section 3: Action Planning Guideline**: proposes a framework for action planning. **Section 4: Technical Guidelines** provides different tools for detailed planning and design of a range of urban services *i.e.* drainage, water, sanitation, access and paving, solid waste management and power supply and lighting. The tools cover different technical options for service improvements and ‘handy tips’ for construction and maintenance. **Section 5: From Action Plans to Implementation** provides guidance on administrative procedures for technical and financial approval and different options for procurement and contracting. The final Section **Operation and Maintenance** covers an often-neglected area and present different strategies for managing O&M and how these can be applied to produce detailed plans. The books offer practical advice based on sound principles. One area lacking is actual construction of the works. The guide would therefore be usefully supplemented by the manuals of ILO’s *Site Supervisors Course for Labour-based and Community Managed Upgrading of Low Income Settlements* for guidance on work implementation including labour issues.

Employment-Intensive Investment Programme News

By Terje Tessem, *Employment-Intensive Investment Branch (EMP/INVEST), ILO, Switzerland*

The ILO, like other large organisation, has numerous people working in a diverse number of programmes and projects. As often occurs in such environments there is some degree of compartmentalisation of work resulting in people not really knowing what others are doing outside their own unit. Whilst information is shared through Intranets, printed documents, and briefings and presentations are made regularly, it is difficult to keep abreast and fully know what’s going on outside one’s own unit. Unfortunately in such environments, information reaching top management is often very concise and condensed; finer detail and substance on programme strategy and achievement are rarely dealt with at this level. Opportunities to discuss individual programme strategies and achievements are therefore often few and far between.

Following almost ten years with dark clouds hanging over the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (we believe there was a period in the nineties when EIIP was marginalised within the ILO), there have now been rays of sun shining upon the programme on many fronts. It was against this backdrop that the programme held a meeting with the Director General (DG) of the ILO to discuss the programme strategy and some of the achievements. The meeting focused on core business and the products EIIP is selling. The well-briefed DG went into some of the core issues of our programme enabling an in-depth discussion on policies and practices of employment-intensive investments in infrastructure. The meeting proved to be a very exciting

exercise for us and we believe for the DG. The proof of this appreciation came during the following ILO Governing Body¹ (GB) meeting discussion on the technical co-operation report. The EIIP was highly commended by the Danish government as an excellent example of solid technical co-operation work. In his response to this compliment, the DG confirmed his personal appreciation of the programme’s work disclosing to the GB that he himself had recently discovered this hidden pearl of the ILO!

This has given us extra mileage and we are now profiting from the additional fuel provided to our programme. We recently got the approval of a special allocation from the regular budget of the ILO to work on “Socially Responsible Investments in Construction”. Following a longer lobbying process for this project, it appears that the above mentioned internal dialogue efforts worked out. As can be seen from a couple of articles in this issue of the bulletin, the EIIP is now focusing on the process of dialogue with major stakeholders in this field in order to arrive at a common understanding of the actions needed to increase productive employment in construction and to improve terms and conditions of employment in the construction industry. This will include work on procurement systems and procedures. The major stakeholders include selected standard setting agencies, major financing institutions, specialised consultants as well as the social partners of the industry. Whilst work will probably be channelled through a Task Force organised by EMP/INVEST, this initiative is a tall order and the entire EIIP team will be pursuing issues in their individual work that will contribute to the programme’s approach to Socially Responsible Investments in Construction.

¹Governing Body meets three times a year and comprises representatives from governments, workers and employers of the member States. The GB is the ILO “Board” taking decisions on policies and programmes.

ASIST – Africa News

By the ASIST – Africa Team, Zimbabwe

Since our last issue of the bulletin, March 2002, ASIST – Africa has been involved in several new initiatives as well as continuing with ongoing activities. The highlight of the last six months was definitely the Ninth Regional Seminar for Labour-based Practitioners held in May in Maputo, Mozambique. This well-organised seminar was hosted by the National Roads Administration of Mozambique and attracted 188 participants. The full text of the papers and proceedings are available on the ASIST web site www.ilo.org/asist. The tenth regional seminar will be held in Tanzania in 2003.

During the past months there have been moves to streamline and expand the knowledge management system within the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) and integrate contribution from Geneva, Lima and the ASIST programmes in Africa and Asia. The ASIST Nairobi office stationed at the Intermediate Technology Development Group, Eastern Africa (ITDG-EA) Regional Office continues to offer Information Services. A core collection of employment-intensive infrastructure development and local level planning publications has been integrated into the resource centre there. This compliments and adds value to the already well established and known ITDG-EA resource centre, which focuses on intermediate technology.

Over this period, Jan Sakko came to the end of his contract and left the programme. His contribution to the work of ASIST is very much appreciated, particularly in the areas of socio-economics, contractor development, and accessibility planning. We will miss him and wish him the best for the future! Camilla Lema has joined the programme as a Senior Technical Adviser responsible for access planning and rural employment. Camilla brings a wealth of experience in rural transport and



accessibility planning and construction management drawn from Tanzania and other parts of the world.

Some of country activities we have been involved in over the past months include:

Kenya

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which highlights employment creation as central to achieving poverty reduction, adopted the Roads 2000 Strategy, which incorporates labour-based methods of work for road maintenance and rehabilitation. The Roads 2000 strategy was formulated by the Ministry of Roads and Public Works (MoRPW) with inputs from ASIST – Africa and other development partners.

Following a request from the MoRPW, ASIST – Africa has submitted a proposal for capacity building and the introduction of small- and medium-scale contractors into the Roads Sector. The proposal aims to support the now operational Kenya Roads Boards (KRB) to increase its implementation capacity and improve delivery of an adequately maintained road network, through private/public partnership in the implementation of Roads 2000 Programme.

The Ministry of Local Authorities is carrying out a major reform programme aimed at improved service delivery. ASIST has, upon a request from Urban Development Department in the Ministry, prepared a concept note outlining how ASIST could support the policy development on employment-intensive investment approaches, in particular for urban development. A task force comprising the Ministry and

other development partners including ASIST was established to take this further.

Lesotho

Support to the Urban Upgrading Project continued and funds from Lesotho Fund for Community Development were released for the commencement of roadworks. The Maseru City Council has decided to engage contractors trained under the Department of Rural Roads due to the heavy workload. A workshop on community leadership was carried out to raise awareness about the project and to discuss the way forward.

Somalia

The ILO InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction has commenced a programme for *Promotion of Economic Recovery, Employment Creation and Support to Decentralisation in Somalia*. The objective of the three-year programme is to contribute to the economic recovery of Somalia through local economic development and in the framework of countrywide rehabilitation and reconstruction. The Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) for the project is Joe Connolly. ASIST is providing labour-based technology documentation and promotional material, and is helping organise training activities.

South Africa

ASIST – Africa, in close collaboration with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and the South African Department of Public Works,

carried out an independent assessment of Targeted Procurement (TP). The assessment established the impact and effectiveness of the TP process in meeting the various development goals set by the government and made recommendations for possible improvement. The three partners officially launched the report in July 2002.

The first part of the training programme for small contractors under the Labour-intensive Rural Roads Maintenance Programme in the Limpopo Province was carried out in Lesotho by Department of Rural Roads. The second part of the training, *i.e.* trial contract, will commence soon on sites identified within the Province. On completion, the small contractors will be able to execute maintenance and improvement of works using labour-based technology.

Tanzania

The University College of Land and Architectural Studies (UCLAS) requested ASIST – Africa to partner in a proposal for World Bank funded upgrading in Dar es Salaam. The proposal with ASIST input was submitted to the World Bank. UCLAS and ASIST held an urban awareness workshop for local authorities in early September. The workshop built on the experiences from the community-managed labour-based Hanna Nassif project. A review of ongoing and planned urban development work in Tanzania was commissioned, which will provide a useful overview of activities in the country.

Zambia

ASIST participated in the final evaluation of the Feeder Roads Project, Eastern Province that ended in December 2001. One of the outcomes of the evaluation is that further support will be provided, using unspent funds, for the integration at central level of the experiences gained from the project.

ASIST has finalised the Sustainable Lusaka Programme (SLP) water training material after feedback from the pilot courses held in late 2001. The

final training material for both water provision and waste collection entrepreneurs is being put onto CD-ROM for easier distribution.

A follow-up training session for the water enterprises trained under SLP was carried out. ASIST continued with the Lusaka Water and Sewerage Company on the details of an agreement between the Company and the water enterprises, through which the water enterprise would continue to receive technical back-up support.

Lusaka City Council plans to set up a Development Co-ordination Unit to co-ordinate development initiatives in the city and carry on work of SLP. Support for this is being provided by several development agencies. ASIST will support the unit to hold a stakeholders workshop focusing on employment focussed urban service delivery options (including small enterprise development, labour intensive approaches and community contracting). The workshop would feed into policy development and be a source of capacity building for the unit.

Global

Research on the increased application of Labour-based Technology (LBT) through appropriate engineering standards

ASIST – Africa, in close collaboration with Transport Research Laboratory (TRL), UK, continued the above-mentioned research in Ghana and Uganda. In Ghana, 16 test sections were identified, and in Uganda 17 were established. National Project Steering Committees were formed, and the project teams recruited and trained in both countries. At the end of May 2002, ILO signed an agreement with Danida Zimbabwe to continue ongoing research in Zimbabwe. Under the Zimbabwe component, a guideline entitled “Procedures for Site Selection, Commissioning and Monitoring” was produced. In Lesotho, the Department of Rural Roads (DRR) expressed interest to participate in the research with possible funding by Ireland Aid. ASIST and TRL undertook a joint mission to develop the project proposal for the Lesotho component. A proposal was submitted to

both the DRR and interested development partners for funding.


Urban Planning

A concept note to develop tools to incorporate employment into urban planning processes was developed by a “virtual team” of ASIST – Africa, ASIST – Asia Pacific, EIIP Latin America and EIIP Geneva in partnership with UN-Habitat.

World Urban Forum

ASIST participated in the World Urban Forum held in Nairobi in May 2002 and in a joint ILO-UN Habitat session on employment strategies to reduce urban poverty. ILO funded officials from Lusaka and Dar es Salaam City Council to participate in the presentation. ASIST–Africa has initiated further discussions with UN-Habitat to establish agreements at programme level to strengthen co-operation between the agencies on urban activities.

World Summit for Sustainable Development

The Director, Graham Johnson-Jones, was part of the ILO delegation that attended at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in August/September. Consequently, whilst the reason for Graham’s attendance was primarily related to employment-intensive strategies for decent work and enterprise development, he was very much part of the ILO team and participated actively in the two ILO sessions “Sustainability @ Work” and “The World Commission for Social Aspects of Globalisation”. Some very valuable linkages were made in terms of rural and urban infrastructure development, the latter in partnership with UN-Habitat. One of the highlights was when the ILO Director General, Juan Somavia, lent his support to Ann Herbert and Graham by coming to meet with the Director General of the FAO to press the social issues at the launch of the new Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) initiative. Full credit must be made to the hosts for the excellent way in which they accommodated such a large summit. 

ASIST – Asia Pacific News

By the ASIST – Asia Pacific Team, Bangkok, Thailand

SINCE the last issue of the ASIST bulletin, ASIST – Asia Pacific (AP) has carried out an internal evaluation, initiated surveys on decent work in rural infrastructure, continued its policy and strategy advisory support, and has developed further collaborative efforts with both governments and donors/financing agencies to operationalise sustainable infrastructure development. In the region, the political situation has limited our work in Nepal and India. Nevertheless, encouraging developments have taken place in Indonesia, Lao Peoples Democratic Republic (PDR), Thailand and Vietnam.

India

Travel restrictions are making it difficult to develop the ASIST – AP programme in India. There are good possibilities for collaboration on the Kolkata Urban Services for the Poor (KUSP) programme on issues relating to decent work and employment generation. There are also possibilities for collaboration within the urban sector programme, particularly those that involve multilateral agencies.

In the rural sector we are discussing with the Ministry of Rural Development how we may further assist with the massive Prime Minister's Rural Roads Programme (PMGSY) in areas of small-scale contracting, maintenance, planning and labour-based approaches. The World Bank has requested that we give special attention to rural road maintenance, and we expect to initiate a small study on this later this year.

The two Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP) pilot teams in Rajasthan and Orissa are in the final stages of developing and testing data gathering tools (questionnaires and map presentations). The two teams will then meet to discuss the results of these exercises and plan further activities.

Bangladesh

ASIST – AP participated in a Department for International Development (DFID) mission to help develop the Chars Livelihoods Programme in Bangladesh. The programme documentation is being finalised for funding approval. The project aims to improve and strengthen the livelihood options of the inaccessible poor people who live on the shifting sand islands (Chars) of the main rivers that run through Bangladesh.

ASIST – AP will be following up on an initial visit to Bangladesh to develop ideas that have been identified in both the rural (roads and irrigation) and urban (secondary towns) sectors with donors, NGOs and the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

The Philippines

The Department of Labour and Employment is concerned that insufficient attention is being given to the employment potential of infrastructure investments. We have provided background papers and proposals to be discussed in the inter-ministerial Infrastructure Investment Committee. The intention is to assess how infrastructure investments can be more pro-poor oriented by relying to a greater extent on local resources.

A team representing the Philippine and Dutch governments, and the ILO evaluated the technical assistance support project to the nation-wide IRAP programme. Several recommendations were made, which the project team is now operationalising. This project support will end in December 2002. IRAP is now the preferred planning tool for rural infrastructure in the Local Government Units.

ASIST – AP has spent considerable time finalising the contract with the government for the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded ASIST – AP support to the INFRES project, a major rural infrastructure development project

covering 40 provinces expected to start later this year.

Indonesia

In the light of the ongoing decentralisation process, the Indonesian government is undertaking to define a national rural infrastructure policy. The process involves a technical working group of key ministries and an overall co-ordinating committee to whom the technical group provides advice and recommendations. ASIST – AP staff from Bangkok and Jakarta are providing secretariat support to the technical working group. Such a process requires time and effort to build the necessary consensus amongst the stakeholders. However, the process itself has generated considerable interest amongst a wide range of technical ministries.

ASIST – AP continues to support the application of the IRAP process in several Kabupatens (districts). The results so far are very encouraging and the ASIST – AP supported technical team at Gadjah Mada University in Jogjakarta is now receiving requests from other Kabupatens to replicate the process. The team has also been asked by a private oil company, UNICAL, to assess how IRAP could be used to select community projects to benefit from a fund they have set up for community development.

Nepal

Four districts of Nepal are piloting IRAP with the support of ASIST – AP, which is providing technical assistance to the Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agricultural Roads (DOLIDAR) of the Ministry of Local Development. Selection of districts and various preparatory activities were undertaken before the start of this year, and an orientation workshop was organised at the start of this year. Subsequently, a brochure on IRAP was published in Nepali. An arrangement

was made to collaborate with Rural Access Programme (RAP) to promote IRAP in Nepal, and efforts are being made to include IRAP as the local-level planning tool in the forthcoming Local Governance Support Programme.

A participatory training workshop for district officials and other stakeholders in local level planning was organised from 29 April -1 May. IRAP District Teams have been formed in each of the four districts. Currently, an IRAP piloting exercise is going on in six districts (including two RAP districts).

ASIST – AP had previously participated in the supervision mission of the Rural Infrastructure Project funded by the World Bank. In June, ASIST – AP was asked to participate in the final review of the project. The review mission recommended that the project be extended for one more year and that additional training be provided in labour-based technology (LBT) during the extension period. ASIST – AP was asked to identify a training expert to develop and initiate the training.

Laos

Support to the rural road component of the ADB-funded Shifting Cultivation Stabilisation Project in Houaphan Province continued. The design, carried out jointly by local authorities and ASIST – AP, of two LBT roads has been completed. Training for this purpose was first provided on-site by the Telecom and Communication Training Institute and an ASIST – AP consultant. Based on the completed surveys, ASIST – AP has prepared a set of contract documents adapted to the specific conditions prevalent for rural roads in Laos and the introduction of LBT. After the local competitive bidding is completed, the award of contracts is expected to take place and works are expected to commence in the last quarter of 2002. ASIST – AP will continue its support through the implementation phase through provision of classroom and on-the-job training in contract supervision and contract management and technical assistance.

ASIST – AP also provided a feasibility study on the use of LBT for the roads component in the planned Smallholder Development Project of the ADB. This study follows the same implementation strategies developed for the Houaphan Project. The ADB and the government have accepted these recommendations.

The government is currently reviewing its geometrical standards for rural roads. With limited traffic in the remote areas of the country, it was felt that new standards were required that gave more emphasis on access rather than mobility. ASIST – AP is involved in the development of the new standards.

ASIST – AP has commenced collaboration with the government on the further improvement of road maintenance, with the objective of arriving at a general implementation model to be applied as a national standard. During the third quarter of 2002 a workshop will be arranged to formulate a plan of action addressing this objective.

Vietnam

ASIST – AP has now completed two studies, one dealing with the potential for the use of IRAP in local-level planning, and the other reviewing current practice in the field of small-scale contracting. Both studies were carried out to better understand the current environment within which rural infrastructure is implemented and how ASIST – AP services can be provided most effectively to this sector. Both reports have been well received by the Vietnamese authorities and the donor community and have already led to increased collaboration between the government, donors and ASIST – AP.

Thailand

Thailand has recently embarked on decentralising rural infrastructure provision to the local authorities. As experienced in other countries, this will require a considerable capacity building process in which ASIST – AP is involved. ASIST – AP is currently collaborating with the Thai government on developing appropriate local-level planning procedures, and developing

contracting procedures that will allow an increased participation of local small-scale contractors in the construction and maintenance of rural infrastructure.

HIV/AIDS Prevention

A mission to design an HIV/AIDS prevention campaign that will be mainstreamed into the World Bank-financed Highlands Highway Rehabilitation Project in Papua New Guinea is planned to take place in October. This ASIST – AP mission will be paid for by the DFID, the World Bank and the ASIST – AP programme. The HIV report will feed into the Project Appraisal Document, which will be submitted for World Bank Board approval in December.

Other donors are showing interest in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS prevention into road projects, particularly amongst host populations (those living near new or rehabilitated roads), construction workers, truckers and other transport providers.

Decent work

ASIST – AP has recently initiated a new sub-programme on labour policies and practices in the infrastructure sector. The objective is to formulate and promote best practices on these issues for civil works programmes with high labour/capital ratios.

A series of studies have been initiated in Nepal, Philippines and Thailand. National consultants will interview labourers, employers, client engineers, insurance providers, contractor associations, infrastructure line agencies, trade unions, departments of labour and employment and their respective labour inspection units. The document “Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes: Labour Policies and Practices” will guide the consultants in the preparation and analysis of the assessment.

The assessments intend to provide recommendations to governments, their social partners (*i.e.* representative organisations of employers and workers) and the ILO itself to address shortcomings between actual and recommended labour practices and policies.

Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) – Latin America News

By Serge Cartier van Dissel, Alessandra Molz and Raul Fajardo, ILO Employment-intensive Investment Programme (EIIP), Latin America

With an ASIST programme not yet on the ground in Latin America, services are being provided by a team currently comprising Alessandra Molz and Mario Tueros in the ILO Lima Multi-Disciplinary Advisory Team (MDT), Serge Cartier van Dissel in the ILO Regional Office, and Raul Fajardo and his team in the ILO project in Nicaragua. They are supported by different ILO partners in promoting and implementing labour-based technology (LBT), contractor development and local-level planning.

EIIP activities in Latin America mainly focus on the Andean and Central American regions. Their main aim is awareness raising through pilot projects and the development and adaptation of documents and training material.

In the Andean countries, funding from the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) focuses on a pilot programme on road maintenance co-operatives, the development of training methodologies, training-of-trainers courses for sub-national authorities and supporting the creation of an enabling environment.

In Central America, activities are primarily the involvement in disaster mitigation projects. This involvement is resulting in broader programmes in Nicaragua and El Salvador and an interest from neighbouring countries.

Peru

Past support to the Peruvian Rural Roads Programme (PCR) resulted in greater flexibility in the use of municipal budgets to include infrastructure maintenance. This support included assessing municipal capacity to take over the funding and management of PCR-promoted road maintenance co-operatives,

In addition, the ILO has been requested to provide assistance in the areas of maintaining co-operatives and

local-level planning to the Peruvian Social Investment Fund. The fund seeks to put greater emphasis on maintenance, capacity building and sustainability of its activities

Bolivia

In Bolivia, a new ILO project on local employment promotion through support to municipalities has recently started. As a result of a workshop held with municipal representatives, two municipalities will be receiving assistance in the promotion of small construction and maintenance enterprises using LBT.

Another municipal-level LBT project supported in the past is to be replicated at national level. Co-ordination with a national Danida infrastructure project on the development of maintenance co-operatives also is underway.

Ecuador

In Ecuador, EIIP is providing support to an inter-ministerial employment commission to formulate a national LBT policy in public works. The commission has initiated a study to estimate the amount of employment generated by different infrastructure programmes.

A pilot project on the promotion of two road maintenance co-operatives in Azuay Province has achieved important multiplier effects. Currently, four more co-operatives are being promoted in Azuay and six other local governments will be visiting Azuay for training in order to promote similar co-operatives in their own provinces.

Nicaragua

After a previous ILO project in response to hurricane Mitch and the recognised benefits of LBT, a new project funded by Luxembourg has recently started in Nicaragua. The project will focus on LBT and Small

and Medium Scale Enterprise (SME) development through capacity building and policy recommendations. The project works in close co-operation with national institutions for municipal development and technical training. Priority activities this year include the assessment of existing public contract and payment systems and procedures, and pilot demonstration projects using LBT in the construction of houses, water channels and paved streets.

El Salvador

EIIP activities in El Salvador have included identifying partners, studying the national contracting legislation, identifying pilot projects for execution by the Social Investment Fund, and developing a project proposal for national-level promotion of LBT.

The ILO InFocus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction (IFP/CRISIS) project in response to the earthquakes in 2001 is focusing on SME development, LBT promotion and strengthening the local construction industry in the Department of Usulután.

**Vimbainashe Emmanuel Chipuru, Director
Heart Geotechnical Engineers (Pvt) Ltd,
Harare, Zimbabwe**

Tragically killed in a car accident on 3 August 2002 in Harare, his untimely death robbed us, and indeed the rest of the region, of a dedicated engineer with so much to contribute. Eng. Chipuru recently worked with ASIST in the development of the standard footbridge designs, he supervised the construction of the model suspension footbridge and trained over 20 engineers in Zimbabwe (see lead article in the ASIST Bulletin no 12 September 2001 for full details). His death came just as ASIST – Africa was about to ask him to replicate this work in other countries in the region. May his soul rest in peace.

ASIST – Africa Staff

Advisory Support Information Services and Training (ASIST)

ASIST is a programme providing advisory support, information services and training on employment-intensive strategies and local resource utilisation in the provision of sustainable infrastructure. It is a programme of the Employment-Intensive Investment Branch (EMP/INVEST) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

The goal of the programme is to reduce poverty by mainstreaming employment-intensive strategies in the provision of infrastructure and services for improved and sustainable livelihoods and local economic development.

ASIST currently comprises two regional support programmes in Africa and Asia working within the framework of the EIIP. Their objective is to increase the use of cost-effective employment-intensive local resource based strategies in the provision of sustainable infrastructure, and in so doing create employment with fair working conditions for men and women.

Advisory Support

ASIST provides comprehensive policy, planning, and technical advice. ASIST advises on project and programme design, co-ordination, monitoring, and review of urban and rural employment-intensive infrastructure programmes and local resource utilisation.

Information Services

ASIST actively gathers, synthesises and disseminates relevant published and unpublished information on and related to employment-intensive approaches for infrastructure development and local resource utilisation. ASIST provides a Technical Enquiry Service to respond to specific requests for information. ASIST maintains a database of persons and institutions working towards the reduction of poverty through employment creation in the provision of sustainable infrastructure and services.

Training

ASIST supports capacity building essential for the mainstreaming of employment-intensive strategies in infrastructure provision through a wide spectrum of training activities including: training needs assessments, curricula and training programme development, training material and technique development, as well as the evaluation of training activities. ASIST also supports and facilitates workshops, seminars and conferences to stimulate information sharing and networking.

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Selected ASIST Publication on CD

ASIST – Africa has recently put together a CD-ROM of selected publications in full-text. The CD includes the past papers and proceedings of the ASIST supported bi-annual regional seminars for labour-based practitioners, ASIST technical briefs, source books and guidelines and past issues of the bulletin. The CD provides a wealth of knowledge on the creation of decent work through employment-intensive investment approaches in infrastructure development.

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