Knowledge retention in the rural transport sector

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Outline

▪ Context

▪ Knowledge retention
  – Methodology
  – Implementation
  – Preview
Context: ReCAP Knowledge Management

- Strategic objective: Improving the access to, and dissemination of, rural road and transport services research evidence
- Including key expertise held by senior experts
- Declining pool
- Retaining and dissemination knowledge through:
  - Formal involvement in ReCAP (contractor, Technical Panel membership)
  - Knowledge retention project
  - Mentoring

ReCAP’s request to the market:

- Map and document the key expertise held by a set of approximately twenty (20) experienced senior rural transport experts
- Disseminate (freely and openly accessible)
- Capturing *explicit* and *tacit* knowledge
Explicit knowledge is tip of the iceberg...

Explicit

Codified knowledge found in documents, databases, etc. It is essential for transfer and storage

Tacit

Intuitive knowledge & know-how, which is:
- Rooted in context, experience, practice, & values
- Hard to communicate – resides in the mind of the practitioner
- The best source of long term competitive advantage and innovation
- Transferred through socialization, mentoring, etc. – IT mainly as support

Methodology applied during knowledge acquisition

- 23 Experts selected, 20 participating
- Online survey to guide knowledge mapping
- Semi-structured interviews (tacit knowledge)
- Thematic videos:
  - Identified knowledge areas
  - Cross-cutting topics
- Both interviews and survey result feeding into knowledge mapping
Project outputs

- Knowledge maps along three pillars, including:
  - Key publications
  - Key learning
  - Knowledge gaps
  - Current challenges
- Expert profiles
- Short (4-6min) thematic videos integrating contributions from multiple experts
- (Dissemination recommendations)
Key Publications

- IRF Rural Roads Bulletins.

Key Learnings

- From the design phase, there is a need to consider:
  - What the road will be used for and what type of vehicles will be using it?
  - What funding is available for construction.
  - What funding will be available for maintenance later (continuity of service).
- There is still a need to develop and institutionalise adequate standards and specifications.
- Materials do not behave the same as in temperate countries and a lot of progress has been made regarding the use of local materials.
- Local resource-based approaches for construction and maintenance are successful.
- Local champions are the key to making any approach sustainable.
- Long-term support is needed to ensure continuity.

Knowledge Gaps

- Socio-economic impact of rural roads: evaluations are still focusing on the technical aspects of road construction. There is a need to get a better understanding of the socio-economic impact of rural roads and look at these projects in terms of a rural access continuum.
- Climate resilience: still little research on how to build more resilient rural roads.
- Rural roads and motorcycles: with the increasing use of motorcycles in rural areas, there might be a need to better understand what roads are more suitable for motorcycle use.
- We're now seeing more motorcycles - are we making assumptions about the roads that work best for motorcycles?
- Materials and aggregates: there is still research to be done on materials, better use of local materials, use of waste materials and how the choice of materials can reduce the initial construction and lifetime costs of rural roads.
- Building and sustaining local capacity (government authorities, private sector, quality insurance, research capacity).
- Financing for rural road construction and maintenance.
- Introduction and institutionalization of local standards and specifications.
- External factors (new actors and investors).
- Policies and institutional framework for rural road development and maintenance.
- Introduction (approval, institutionalisation) of local standards and specifications.
- Climate change and vulnerability of rural roads.
- Changes in types of transport using rural roads (e.g., large increase in motorcycle usage).
- Pressure to bituminise all roads and lack of consideration of the advantages of gravel roads and local seals.
- Failure to uptake a lot of good research that has been done.
Selected Video Themes

1. Provision of Rural Access (infrastructure)
2. Management of Rural Road Infrastructure (maintenance)
3. Network Planning
4. Access to Rural Transport Services
5. Road Safety
6. Impact of Climate Change (provision and preservation)
7. Socially Inclusive Rural Access
8. Future developments with impact for rural transport

Final steps

- Thematic videos have been prepared, have undergone review and are being finalised;
- Other deliverables being finalised;
- Online launch foreseen in March/April 2019, both on ReCAP and Transaid websites
8. Future Challenges
Thank you for your attention

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