

Retaining Rural Access Knowledge of Experienced Rural Transport Sector Experts

Dissemination Report



KMN2131A

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Contents

Abstract	iv
Key words	iv
Acronyms	iv
Executive Summary	v
1 Background	1
1.1 Phase Three: Dissemination	1
2 Dissemination Strategy	2
2.1 Short Film Themes	2
2.2 Dissemination Strategy Recommendations.....	3
3 Project Extension Recommendations	5
4 Conclusion	6
5 References	6

Abstract

The project Retaining Rural Access Knowledge of Experienced Rural Transport Sector Experts was awarded to Transaid in April 2018, whereby, Transaid was tasked with mapping, documenting and storing the knowledge of senior rural transport experts, and then packaging this knowledge into electronic formats appropriate for dissemination to a wider audience. This assignment will produce a series of short films based on core themes and will feature interview footage with the selected rural transport experts. In addition, the short films will link to the key published materials of each of the targeted senior rural transport experts. This report documents the progress so far on Phase Three: Dissemination. As well as providing a status update, the report expands on the dissemination strategy designed initially and goes on to make recommendations for the extension of this assignment.

Key words

Knowledge Management, Senior Transport Experts, Interviews, Videos, Tacit Knowledge

Research for Community Access Partnership (ReCAP)

Safe and sustainable transport for rural communities

ReCAP is a research programme, funded by UK Aid, with the aim of promoting safe and sustainable transport for rural communities in Africa and Asia. ReCAP comprises the Africa Community Access Partnership (AfCAP) and the Asia Community Access Partnership (AsCAP). These partnerships support knowledge sharing between participating countries in order to enhance the uptake of low cost, proven solutions for rural access that maximise the use of local resources. The ReCAP programme is managed by Cardno Emerging Markets (UK) Ltd.

www.research4cap.org

Acronyms

AfCAP	Africa Community Access Partnership
AsCAP	Asia Community Access Partnership
GRSP	Global Road Safety Partnership
HDM-4	Highway Development Maintenance software version 4
IFRTD	International Forum for Rural Transport and Development
ReCAP	Research for Community Access Partnership
RFP	Request for Proposals
SSATP	Africa Transport Policy Program
UK	United Kingdom (of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
UKAid	United Kingdom Aid (Department for International Development, UK)

Executive Summary

This assignment - Retaining Rural Access Knowledge of Experienced Rural Transport Sector Experts – aims to capture the existing knowledge, both explicit and tacit, held by what is a relatively small pool of very senior rural transport experts that have worked or continue to do so, in the fields of rural road infrastructure and transport services. In alignment with ReCAP’s Knowledge Management Strategy, Transaid has been commissioned to acquire, package appropriately and disseminate this knowledge to a wider transport practitioner audience.

This assignment will seek to map, document, store, and package the key expertise of a selection of between 12 and 20 senior rural transport experts through a combination of desk research, the use of a specifically designed online survey and filmed interviews with the experts themselves. The project activities are grouped into four phases:

- Phase One: Inception and Methodology
- Phase Two: Knowledge Acquisition
- Phase Three: Dissemination
- Phase Four: Final Report

This report focuses on the dissemination of the planned final output related to this assignment with a proposed strategy to ensure a broad audience engages with this resource. The short films will be presented in line with the following eight themes, which in turn are aligned with ReCAP’s Research Strategies:

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
7. Socially inclusive rural access (infrastructure and services)
8. Future developments with impact for rural transport.

A proposed dissemination strategy is presented which draws on the existing online platforms at both ReCAP and Transaid, and the existing expertise within each organisation. ReCAP’s *Rural Access Library* and Transaid’s *Knowledge Centre* are both platforms through which to promote this resource, and linked to these, online newsletters or *e-shots* present an opportunity to tap into existing subscribers to both organisations. Transaid’s social media platforms, which includes linkedin, a dedicated programmes twitter account, facebook and Instagram will also be utilised to promote this project, and a specific social media strategy will be developed to ensure coverage is regular and targeted to specific audiences.

A proposed series of webinars, highlights the opportunity for this resource to be a catalyst to generating discussion worldwide on the abovementioned themes. Previous experience in setting up ‘link-up’ hubs in several countries in parallel can stimulate debate both locally and internationally, and across sectors.

Additionally, harnessing the existing professional networks to which many of the participating rural transport experts belong, will contribute to enhancing the credibility of this resource within practitioner circles. The types of networks would include individual professional networks, those emanating from universities and other academic institutions and the various communities of practice. Linking the further promotion of this resource to future ReCAP-organised events worldwide, such as workshops and seminars contribute greatly to this resource’s dissemination.

The recommendations made in this report point to the potential that this resource will have in generating wider debate, and more inclusive participation in solving the day to day mobility challenges experienced by many rural communities in low income countries today.

1 Background

The Research for Community Access Partnership's (ReCAP) Knowledge Management Strategy aims to improve access to, and dissemination of, information and evidence relating to rural road and transport services research. Efforts to acquire and improve access to relevant and diverse types of rural transport knowledge, including tacit knowledge from experts, are part of ReCAP's Knowledge Management Strategy. In addition, from the observation that the existing pool of experienced senior international rural transport experts is small, with some approaching retirement age, there is a recognised need to harness their knowledge and increase access to this knowledge to a wider rural transport practitioner audience. This assignment, Retaining Rural Access Knowledge of Experienced Rural Transport Sector Experts, is a response to this concern.

The assignment was awarded to Transaid and commenced on 23rd April 2018 and activities are being carried out over a period of 7 months between April and November 2018. The activities are grouped in four phases:

- Phase One: Inception and Methodology
- Phase Two: Knowledge Acquisition
- Phase Three: Dissemination
- Phase Four: Final Report

The objective of this assignment is to map, document and store the key expertise of between 12 and 20 international senior rural transport experts. The knowledge mapping and documentation will include both explicit and tacit knowledge, to be captured in a format that is easily accessible by the wider rural transport audience. The results of the assignment will be presented in two key outputs:

1. **A complete mapping exercise** to document the key expertise of the senior rural transport experts, including tacit knowledge such as beliefs, values and attitudes;
2. **A collection of video interviews** of the transport experts to be used for wider dissemination, presenting the key messages, lessons and issues that they chose to convey to future generations relating to their key areas of expertise.

This Dissemination Report provides details of the recommended dissemination strategy for this project, as well as recommendations regarding a potential extension of the assignment.

1.1 Phase Three: Dissemination

This report will expand on the initial dissemination strategy designed for this assignment, as the project progresses, making recommendations on a possible extension of the programme and the production of a hard copy output.

Phase Three encompasses the following activities, as per the approved workplan and terms of reference:

- i) To compile and edit the acquired information into a final electronic file to be initially held on the ReCAP website;
- ii) To make recommendations on a possible extension of the programme;
- iii) To make recommendations on the production of a hard copy output;
- iv) To prepare a Dissemination Report covering the above-mentioned recommendations.

2 Dissemination Strategy

The dissemination strategy relating to the outputs of this project i.e. the expert profiles, the knowledge mapping and the themed short films, should logically build on the methodology employed throughout the period of this assignment to capture explicit and tacit knowledge, which proposed that the filmed interviews with multiple experts be edited according to relevant themes based on the key subject areas covered. Key to this process will be integrating the various contributions made by the selected rural transport experts with 'b-roll' footage and still images from projects that the experts have participated in during their careers. This will make sure that the short films are engaging and easily digestible for a wide variety of different audiences.

There are two principal online platforms where the materials could initially be hosted: ReCAP's own website and Transaid's Knowledge Centre. Both organisations could also use their newsletters, e-shots and various social media platforms to further promote this resource. Relevant platforms hosted by other organisations could also be approached to further support dissemination efforts. Some examples include SLoCaT (a partnership of many relevant organisations with a focus on sustainable transport), similarly SuM4all, the International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD), the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), the Africa Transport Policy Program (SSATP).

In addition to these key points, which build on the initial proposal and methodology as described in this assignment's Inception Report, the team have identified two additional opportunities for dissemination:

- To harness the networks of the selected rural transport experts themselves so that this resource can be shared widely within the relevant practitioner fields
- To engage participants at international events (workshops, seminars, conferences), including those hosted by ReCAP, to broaden the audience and ensure effective dissemination amongst practitioners further afield.

2.1 Short Film Themes

During the first pre-editing review of the filmed interviews, the team defined the eight themes to guide the video editing process (see Table 1). An additional short film will be produced which will include short introductions to each of the experts that have participated in this assignment.

Table 1 Final short film themes

	Theme	Topics captured
1	Provision of Rural Access (infrastructure)	Rural road design, construction methods and rural road materials & aggregates
2	Management of Rural Road Infrastructure (maintenance)	Rural road maintenance
3	Network Planning	Network planning and design, link with transport services
4	Access to Rural Transport Services	Covering passenger transport and transport of freights and goods (include rules and regulations)
5	Road Safety	Road safety (infrastructure, services, rules and regulations)
6	Impact of climate change	Impact of climate change on infrastructure provision and preservation
7	Socially inclusive rural access (infrastructure and services)	Access to rural transport services by women, children and vulnerable groups
8	Future developments with impact for rural transport	Future developments impacting rural access and link with Sustainable Development Agenda

These themes are aligned with ReCAP’s ‘Way Forward Strategy’ and its strategic pillars, as depicted in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Final video themes and ReCAP’s strategy

2.2 Dissemination Strategy Recommendations

As outlined previously, there are two key online platforms where the materials could sit: ReCAP’s website (and YouTube channel) and Transaid’s own Knowledge Centre. This section therefore provides recommendations on how these two platforms can be used to provide easy access to the materials, as well as recommendations about the best platform to host the videos and the use of webinars, expert networks and ReCAP organised events as dissemination tools/opportunities. A brief recommendation is also made regarding the production of a hard copy output for this assignment.

- **ReCAP’s website (and YouTube channel)**

There are two locations where the materials would best be suited on the ReCAP website. The first of these would be a dedicated section outlining the aims and scope of this particular assignment and would include a section relating to the knowledge mapping exercise and the expert profiles (this in turn would include the key *explicit* knowledge linked to each expert). Furthermore, we would provide a brief but thorough explanation accompanying the short films that would prove useful when promoting this resource via social media and/or e-shots (as outlined above). This would be the ideal home for many of the other non-film related resources associated with this assignment such as the reports submitted to ReCAP by Transaid. Links to each of the short films would also be located here.

The short films themselves, would most likely be best placed to sit as part of ReCAP’s YouTube channel to ensure that access is not limited by the constraints of the website. With links from ReCAP’s website or the Rural Access Library the audience would be able to search based on topic, country, expert, or keywords. An initial investigation of the Rural Access Library’s search capabilities indicates that by using the above-

mentioned search criteria, the films should be visible to broad user searches. A better knowledge of the Rural Access Library's reach, as well as profiling of its user audience could be incorporated and would maximise online traffic to this resource.

With the short films on ReCAP's YouTube channel, take up could be easily monitored in terms of the number of views and comments via Google Analytics. As already mentioned, YouTube can easily be included on web pages and in emails, and would mean people wouldn't need to download each film individually.

Using YouTube would also mean that paid promotion could be utilised if desired. Paid marketing would allow ReCAP to select specific target audiences to promote the films to. A small trial could be conducted to see if the desired target audience were responding to the advertising, and then rolled out up to a certain financial figure, should the results be positive. This would have the potential to drive genuine views from new audiences that were previously unaware of the project. With a budget of around £150, an extra 6000 to 7000 views could be expected, based on previous experience of using this service.

ReCAP's quarterly e-Newsletter would be another excellent resource to promote this project. This would ensure that the wider ReCAP community were aware of the films, and would encourage people to watch and share them via their own networks. The films could be drip-fed over a fixed period of time, and additionally linked at the bottom of relevant articles or features in future e-Newsletters.

- **Transaid's Knowledge Centre**

Transaid's Knowledge Centre currently hosts more than 90 project case studies and 120 implementation tools online, covering work in more than 25 different countries. The site is regularly visited by people working within the rural access sector, and visitors to Transaid's Knowledge Centre downloaded documents on 1890 separate occasions in 2017.

In a similar way to ReCAP's Rural Access Library, Transaid's Knowledge Centre is searchable using keywords, countries and themes. Thematically a new rural access category could be created and added to the drop-down menu. In this way, it will be easy for the user to find and access this resource. In addition, Transaid will develop a dedicated page on its Knowledge Centre linked to this assignment and include clear instructions for the user as to how to access it.

On a quarterly basis Transaid sends a programmes e-newsletter to more than 2500 recipients, which is affiliated to its Knowledge Centre. This *e-shot* provides an excellent opportunity to highlight the findings and materials related to this assignment to a wider audience that includes development practitioners, and to a sizeable audience based in low income countries. Over a defined period, the e-shots could drip feed short films to Transaid's online audience as well as linking to the above-mentioned page on ReCAP's own website. Through ongoing analysis of download trends, materials that are promoted in this way receive significantly more views than the other content that is on Transaid's Knowledge Centre.

Linked to Transaid's Knowledge Centre is the Programmes Twitter feed (@TransaidProgs). This can also be used to drive traffic in the direction of the short films. By using a platform like Twitter, specific hashtags can also be attributed to the different films, and used in such a way to maximise the chances of reaching new audiences which were previously unaware of Transaid and/or ReCAP. ReCAP's social media accounts could similarly draw attention to the content through sharing Transaid's posts, but also by creating its own outputs, which then in turn could be shared by Transaid.

On the Transaid website a page within the Knowledge Centre can be created for this purpose, and likewise it would be a recommendation if the same was done on the ReCAP website. In this way viewers can easily move from one short film to the next without having to return to the search function each time.

- **Webinars as a Dissemination Tool**

For the purposes of promoting this resource further the use of a webinar would be a positive way of reaching a different audience, possibly hosted using for example the GoToWebinar platform which allows access for GBP 69-159 for a month. A webinar could be used to generate discussion according to the above-mentioned themes and be used as a potential platform to extract further knowledge from a wider pool of rural transport experts to contribute further to this assignment in the longer term. The webinar could also

be a forum through which policy makers, researchers and donors could respond to some of the points raised in each of the short films. An example of what the webinar objectives would be are as follows:

Transaid has experience of creating small 'link-up hubs' each led by a facilitator in various countries which enable people to come together and dial in with a speaker. This approach can remove some of the concerns about accessibility of webinar technology, thereby broadening the audience, and also create space for capturing wider discussion and input. For reference Transaid were commissioned by ReCAP to lead a webinar using this approach in 2017 (ReCAP ref: KMN2075C).

Transaid and ReCAP could collaborate in developing a potential list of participants that might include researchers, academics, practitioners, representatives from government departments/regulators, NGOs, donors and the private sector. Previous experience has shown that a group of 10 people for each 'link-up hub' promotes substantial meaningful discussion on the topics covered.

The facilitator's role (at least one at each of the 'link-up hubs') would be to welcome the participants, to ensure that the group is linked to the wider webinar at the appropriate time, coordinate the general discussion and/or questions, and record the key points covered both during and after the webinar.

- **Utilisation of the Experts' networks and ReCAP-organised events**

Furthermore, we would look to establish how the professional networks of those experts directly involved in this assignment communicate and interact to determine how best to use them for dissemination. The majority of the participants are still active in their respective areas of expertise and therefore continue to maintain extensive networks. Their willingness to support this assignment has to date been impressive and the offer of further support from each of them has been gratefully received. The opportunity to promote the short films to their wider networks would be a great opportunity in adding to the number of practitioners making use of this resource.

Related to this would be to use ReCAP's own organised events, such as workshops and seminars, as a way of disseminating the materials developed as part of this assignment. For example, the opening session of each workshop could include showing one of the videos relevant to the workshop topic. As the knowledge captured in these films is relatively broad within the rural transport sector, the content would apply to a significant number of the workshops taking place. The premise would be largely to make people aware that these materials exist, and drive further traffic to the online resource.

- **Production of a hard copy output for this assignment**

The production of hard copy outputs could be considered beyond the lifetime of this assignment. However, for this assignment, the materials are produced with a view to them being included in online platforms and resources and therefore in a format appropriate for doing so. ReCAP could consider including some of these materials onto promotional USB keys that are regularly dispatched at events.

3 Project Extension Recommendations

The process of delivering this assignment has been fascinating and has generated genuine interest amongst its participants in a wide variety of themes. In fact, the potential that the project team considers this resource to have is well beyond the scope of the original terms of reference.

With this in mind, the following recommendations present opportunities, which the project team hope will be considered to widen interest in rural roads and transport services, inviting new professionals from multiple sectors to contribute to improving the mobility of rural communities in low income countries.

- Broadening the targeted pool of senior rural transport experts:

The 18 filmed interviews present an opportunity to widen the scope of this assignment to include a broader range of both rural transport experts and topics within the rural road and transport services sector. Two notable gaps geographically, in terms of the current content, are experts based in mainland Europe and North America as well as any footage mapping the challenges that contexts such as Latin America and North Africa present to rural transport practitioners. A broader pool of experts would add differing perspectives to the materials developed.

- The inclusion of young professionals in the sector:

Carrying out a similar assignment inviting the participation of young professionals within the fields of rural roads and transport services would give the audience an interesting way of charting the development of ideas, concepts and implementation tools within the sector over time and between generations.

- Maximising use of the excess footage:

From the information gathered to date, there is likely to be a surplus of material which the project team will not be able to use. Each interview produced on average over one hour's worth of footage, only a portion of which will be utilised in the short films relating to this assignment. This material could be used to develop additional short films to provide further insight into sub-thematic areas.

- Using the momentum to generate discussion within the sector:

By using dissemination tools such as webinars (see Section 2.2) and the concept of 'link-up' hubs, the momentum gained from the development of this resource could be harnessed to generate wider discussion on the themes that each of the short films presents. By inviting representatives from academic institutions, government departments, regulators, development practitioners and donors to participate in webinars via 'link-up' hubs in several different developing countries, there would be the opportunity to add to the different perspectives according to theme and to broaden the understanding of key issues pertinent to rural roads and transport services, as well as being a forum to encourage the sharing of best practice.

4 Conclusion

This report provides a summary of recommendations that could contribute to the development of a comprehensive dissemination strategy for this resource. The potential that the planned short films have as a resource to a wide variety of practitioners, policy makers and professionals is recognised by both ReCAP and Transaid, and a firm ongoing commitment to achieving this vision must exist beyond the lifetime of this assignment.

This assignment attempts to introduce the themes mentioned in this report to a new audience and to package this resource in a palatable way that engages a wider group of people. However, on-going debate created through ReCAP organised events, and the proposed use of webinars have the potential to maintain the momentum which it is anticipated this resource will gather, based on a clear and well-defined strategy for its dissemination.

By engaging with new audiences and continuing to invite fresh perspectives, finding solutions to the mobility challenges faced by rural communities today will continue to be recognised as a priority in contributing to eradicating poverty and promoting social wellbeing, specifically in low income countries.

5 References

ReCAP 2017, Terms of Reference: Retaining Rural Access knowledge of experienced rural transport sector experts (Project Reference: KNM2131A)

Silva AL and Clark S [Transaid] (2018). Retaining Rural Access Knowledge of Experienced Rural Transport Sector Experts, Inception Report. London: ReCAP for DFID.