

## **First International Focus Group Meeting on Rural Road Engineering**

The first meeting of the International Focus group (IFG) on rural road engineering will be held at the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) in the UK between 7 and 11 January 2002.

The IFG provides a technical forum to focus on technical issues arising from a number of rural road research projects that TRL is carrying out on behalf of DFID and a number of other Donors. The following projects form the central themes for the first meeting:

- **Minimising the Cost of Sustainable Basic Rural Access (DFID KaR R7790)**
- **Reducing Whole Life Costs: Environmentally Optimised Design (DFID KaR R7783 )**
- **Revision of Overseas Road Note 1 (DFID KaR R7781)**
- **Increased Application of Labour-Based Methods Through Appropriate Engineering Standards**

All of the projects draw heavily on existing knowledge, techniques, experiences and methods and seek to increase the local knowledge base by exposing project collaborators to “new” information, approaches and experiences available from others. Although the projects are built around a limited number of collaborating countries, an important element of their design is provision of a platform whereby other interested parties can contribute and communicate at all stages. This is a primary function of the IFG.

Around 20 delegates, from 10 countries in Africa, South America and Asia are expected to attend the meeting. These include National Focus Group (NFG) co-ordinators from the principle collaborating countries in addition to representatives from Roads Departments, Ministries, Executing Agencies, International Agencies, NGO's, the private sector, and regional research centres.

Whilst the IFG provides a forum to manage opportunities for dissemination, participation will also:

- Provide opportunities for NFG co-ordinators to meet
- Promote ownership, and build regional and international partnerships
- Exchange experience, data and strengthen the local knowledge base
- Increase local research capacity
- Promote rapid acceptance and implementation of project outputs

The IFG will meet once a year, with the venues rotating between project countries.

Representatives from institutions in other countries are encouraged to participate on the IFG. Where direct input is not possible, communication and input would be encouraged through contact with the IFG and the [transport-links.org](http://transport-links.org) web site.

**Background to First International Focus Group Meeting on Rural Road Engineering**

**Presentations will be made by delegates from Brazil, Cambodia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, UK, Zimbabwe**

**Theme 1: The Management of District Roads: Focus on Overseas Road Note 1**

ORN 1 was written 14 years ago. Since then the sector has changed in many ways, not least in treatment selection, prioritisation, and execution. Discussions will focus on suitable ways of deciding on required treatments, managing a network with limited funds and involving the public and private sectors in road contracts.

*Expected Presentations:*

- Introduction and Overview
- Managing Rural road Networks
- Rehabilitation and Maintenance Contracts

**Theme 2: Minimising the Cost of Sustainable Basic Rural Access:**

The aim of the project under this theme is to reduce the cost of basic rural road access provision (very low volume unsealed roads). The intention is to capture data on appropriate and innovative engineering tools, procedures and practices and to use this information to prepare a manual for district engineers and other rural road engineers. The theme covers the impact of different, relatively small-scale road works such as spot improvements on passability and access. The methodology adopted being adopted in the project itself will rely, as much as possible, on existing construction and maintenance activities to provide the information required.

*Expected Presentations at the IFG*

- Introduction And Overview
- Format And Approach
- Prioritisation Of Interventions For Basic Access
- Passability Criteria For Unpaved Roads
- Lengthman Project In Kwazulu-Natal
- Tanzania Labour Based Roadworks Technical Manual
- Culverts And Small Structures:
- Floating Roads
- Bamboo Reinforced Concrete
- Bamboo Reinforced Concrete Paving
- Dressed Stone Paving
- Low Cost Surfacing
- Emulsion Stabilisation

**Theme 3: Labour-based Engineering Standards:**

The aim of the project under this theme is to reduce the life-time costs of unpaved rural roads by promoting appropriate engineering standards, planning tools and works procedures for labour-based construction and maintenance. This project itself is being carried out in co-operation with ILO/ASSIST and will determine the effects of different construction standards, materials and climates on the life cycle costs for labour based unpaved roads. Methodologies for on-site works approvals are also being targeted for development.

*Expected Presentations:*

- Introduction And Background
- Monitoring And Data Collection
- Labour Based Contractor Development In Ghana
- Engineering Standards For Labour-Based Roads In Uganda
- Compaction Standards For Labour Based Roads
- Construction Standards And Performance Of Labour-Based Roads In Zimbabwe:
- Materials Testing And Approvals (CSIR Test Kit)
- Materials Testing And Approvals (Including A Method Specification Approach)

**Theme 4: Reducing Whole Life Costs: Environmentally Optimised Design**

The aim of the project under this theme is to develop a new framework for low-volume sealed road design that recognises the influence of the principal environmental parameters that contribute to deterioration. This growing area of research follows on from previous research in southern Africa in which environmental factors were found to be more important than traffic in the deterioration of many roads. This earlier work is now being extended to countries with different climates, materials and terrain and further expanded to determine appropriate methods of quantifying the environmental risk factors that influence road performance.

*Expected Presentations:*

- Introduction And Overview
- EOB South Africa Component: Overview
- Overview Of Roads Sector In Uganda
- Low Volume Sealed Roads: What Is Different
- Life Cycle Analysis
- Overview Of The SADC Guideline For Low-Volume Sealed Roads
- Labour Based Sealing - Current Status In South Africa
- Assessment Of Pavement Materials
- Alignment Surveys (Design By Eye; RDB)
- Low Volume Sealed Roads: Current Practice In SA (Specs, Designs, Stabilisation)
- Construction Over Swamps
- Labour-Based Sealing: Experiences From Mozambique
- Has Labour-Based Sealing Got A Future?
- Experimental Approaches Bitumen, Cement And Polymers
- Labour-Based Sealing In Zimbabwe
- New Surface Treatment Methods For Ghana
- Low Cost Surfacing Approaches In Zimbabwe: Case Study Marondera-Musami-
- Stabilisation: The Ghana Experience
- Stabilisation: The Uganda Experience
- The Design Approach: How Do We Achieve It

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