



The Development of a District-Based Health Transport Management System, Coast & North East Provinces, Kenya

Project Location:	Coast & North East Provinces Kenya
Project Start Date:	2006
Project Duration:	9 months

Introduction:

In October 2005, Transaid assessed the options for developing a District-based Health Transport Management System (TMS) in Kenya. This study evaluated current transport, assessed the effective management and use of transport resources for efficient delivery of health services, and assessed the organisational structures and competencies of health workers to effectively use and manage transport resources for improved delivery of health services.

This report found that there was no effective TMS in the area, transport management was not integrated with other aspects of health service delivery, much of the vehicle fleet was in poor condition, there was a lack of clearly defined transport management roles and responsibilities and a lack of documented transport policy.

These observations led to the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) recognising that an efficient transport system was essential for delivering Primary Health Care Services. This resulted in commissioning Transaid to support the development and implementation of a TMS for the delivery of health services that enables District Health Management Teams to manage their available transport resources efficiently and effectively. Transaid worked in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and provided the technical support for the development of efficient and sustainable transport in Coast Province. Danida agreed to support a plan for the procurement/replacement of vehicles that were uneconomical to operate and causing a strain on the MOH's finances. Additional inputs included the delivery of transport management and operational training programmes for health administrators, drivers, motorcycle riders and other support staff involved in the delivery of health promotion and disease prevention services at district and sub district levels.

Methodology:

The main stages of the project were-

- Transport Management Systems Training including the following components;
 - Fleet Management
 - Vehicle Replacement
 - Vehicle Maintenance System
 - Vehicle Maintenance
 - Operational Management
 - Transport Management Information System
 - Human Resources Development
- Development of Computerised TMS
- Road Safety and Driver Proficiency training
- Road Safety and Motorcycle Rider Proficiency training
- Development of Transport Management Guidelines

The TMS training programme consisted of two three-day training courses for two groups of participants from the seven districts in the Coast Province in February 2006. The main areas covered at training sessions included the seven components of the TMS. At the end of each training session, the participants were organised into groups to formulate District Action Plans (DAPs) to improve health service delivery programmes. Districts were required to appoint Transport Officers to develop effective means of communications with all stakeholders on operational controls and local procedures. They were also required to establish a culture of shared responsibility for a functioning transport service that meets various competing needs.

A three-day training course was conducted as a follow-up to the initial training in February in order to review progress on the implementation of DAPs and develop guidelines for the safe and efficient operation of transport resources at provincial and district levels.

The final training for Transport Officers involved the use of computerised TMS software, which was used to analyse information on transport operation and management.

Road Safety and motorcycle rider training was organised over a two-week period and aimed to enhance the riders' prior knowledge and establish the principles of safe driving. Participants were given basic instructions on Traffic rules and regulation, the principles of the Highway Code, Accident and Emergency Procedures and Basic First Aid.

Transport Management Guidelines were developed through regular meetings by a working group representing various districts and was circulated to the senior management to ensure they were implemented.

Fleet management procedures were also implemented to prevent the disintegration of vehicles and improve vehicle specification, procurement, maintenance, replacement and disposal. This included providing authorities with information regarding the cost benefit of vehicle replacement. Danida began the tendering process for a number of replacement vehicles in the Coast Province.

A vehicle maintenance systems review was conducted to identify recommendations for maintaining Kenyan MOH fleet of vehicles. Consequently, most of the Coast province's vehicles were repaired and serviced in Mombasa. Consultants assessed vehicle repair standards, technical capacity and associated cost of maintaining MOH vehicles at garages operated by dealers in Mombasa.

Operational management is intended to ensure that transport resources are operated in accordance with transport policy and to meet the aims of service delivery. In order for this to be done effectively, it includes planning and scheduling, use of trip authorities, vehicle pooling, fuel control, vehicle logbooks and parking regulations. Transport Officers were encouraged to provide

operational management at a given location within agreed policy and operating guidelines.

Transport Management Information Systems are intended to improve direct data collection efforts to ensure that appropriate relevant information is readily available. To achieve this, vehicle logbooks were given to all vehicles in the districts, vehicle records were regularly updated and training was given to Transport Officers on the use of TMS software to maintain and analyse vehicle records electronically. Having this information readily available allows management decisions to be made.

Finally, in order to ensure the existence of a competent, trained and committed workforce, there must be clarity of understanding of the roles and responsibilities of individuals. Therefore a structure was developed that had the capacity and authority to oversee transport management at all levels. It was also ensured that workers have the necessary skills for all aspects of the management of transport.

Outcomes:

Following the completion of this project, there have been the following outcomes:

- An information-based Transport Management System implemented at provincial level and in each of the districts
- Skills and software are available for manual and computerised generation of key performance indicators
- A District Transport Officer in post in each district
- Vehicle scheduling procedures in place in each district
- A number of riders and drivers trained to a basic level
- A system in place to evaluate vehicle maintenance work undertaken by private sector service providers
- A partnership agreement was drawn up between provincial MOH and Mombasa Polytechnic to train senior drivers from each district in PPM techniques
- The system is in place to link operational and replacement costs to district and provincial budgeting procedures

Conclusion:

Although all the systems for implementing a TMS are in place in the Coast Province, there are still some challenges that could be benefited by further improvements. Effective transport management requires a clearly defined organisational structure within a well-managed organisation. Transaid recommended the appointment of a Provincial Transport Manager and establishment of Transport Management Unit to make a significant difference. This is an essential measure to sustain the project.

In the case of the North East province, the project inputs were limited by design and activities. It was envisaged that the proposed delivery of the introductory TMS training programme for Health Administrators in the province would enhance their knowledge and understanding of the challenges regarding health service delivery and transport. This is usually the first step towards the successful implementation of the TMS in any organisation.

Danida's suggestion for the development of a computerised TMS, so soon after the project launch, provided an opportunity to evaluate the use of ICT in strengthening TMS processes. Whilst it being theoretically useful and beneficial, only 3 of the 22 participants that took part in the programme actually completed the ICT element. This was possibly a result of the fact that some of the participants were newly appointed and unfamiliar with TMS and, also, 50% of the participants had not used a computer before. Therefore Transaid recommended the development of a paper based system first so that

participants can learn the basics of TMS, and be evaluated for their ICT understanding, before a computer based TMS is rolled out.

The TMS implemented by Transaid and Danida has contributed to the promotion and improvement of the health status of Kenyans by making services more effective, accessible and affordable. Improvements in the management and operation of transport is one of the many factors that contribute to the achievement of the goal of making health care services more accessible to communities, and in particular the citizens of the Coast and North East Provinces.

Tools Utilised: Transport Management Handbook, 'The Development of a district-based health transport management system, coast & north east provinces, Kenya' report.

Partners: DANIDA, Ministry Of Health Kenya, Provincial Medical Officers of Health in the Coast and North East Provinces, District Medical Officers of Health, Kitui and North East Polytechnics, Royal Mail UK

About Transaid:

Transaid is an international UK development charity that aims to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods across Africa and the developing world through creating better transport. Transaid was founded by Save the Children and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport. Our Patron is HRH The Princess Royal. Transaid specializes in the following:

- Building the capacity of public health authorities to provide effective, safe and cost efficient transport management systems to promote equitable access to primary health care services.
- Developing and improving logistics and supply chain systems to enhance the delivery of medicines, equipment and relief services to vulnerable communities.
- Promoting effective partnerships to support and enhance community participation in developing sustainable transport solutions in rural areas.
- Developing and delivering transport and logistics training and qualifications for public and private sector operators.

Transaid has the capacity and reach to lead projects throughout the developing world, but is equally capable of providing niche technical assistance to large scale health systems strengthening projects. Transaid maintains strong relationships with a number of leading international organizations including donor agencies such as DfID, DANIDA and USAID, and implementing organizations such as Health Partners International, Options Consulting, John Snow Inc. and Management Sciences for Health.

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