



Operational Assessment of Concern Zambia's transport management

Project Location: Zambia

Project Start date: September 2007

Project duration: 3 years

Introduction: Concern Worldwide is an international NGO that has been working in Zambia since 2003 on two long-term programmes relating to livelihoods and HIV/AIDs. In September 2007, Transaid conducted an Operational Assessment of Concern Zambia's transport management. The assessment included an evaluation of Concern's operation with specific regards to:

- Situation Analysis
- Policy
- Operational Management
- Fleet Management
- Management Information
- Human Resources

Following the submission of the assessment report, Concern commissioned Transaid to deliver a course in the Basics of Transport Management for their four Transport Officers and a Driver Training Course for their five drivers in February 2008. Transaid were also requested to spend some time prior to the training courses analysing Concern's existing transport management data.

Methodology:

Transport system and practice review:

- Transaid reviewed all transport documents and reports. Key documents being the Transport Manual, vehicle files, logbooks and monthly reports.
- Transaid then identified weaknesses in current transport management system. This included examining the costs and analysing vehicle performance, fuel consumption and maintenance/servicing system/practice etc.

Training:

- Transaid conducted a 'Basics of Transport Management' course with supervisors which focused on data collection and analysis. In particular, training

was delivered regarding Key Performance Indicators, Economic Point of Replacement and Calculation of the Ideal Fleet Model. The training included practical exercises on analysis, planning, monitoring and reporting.

- Transaid also conducted a Driver Training Course with drivers which included topics on Basic Maintenance, Health and Safety, Off Road 4x4 Driving, Defensive Driving and Fuel Efficient Driving.

These two courses culminated in a joint session which- with Transaid facilitating- allowed the two groups to discuss some of the issues which had arisen throughout the training and also to consider the way forward.

Transaid also visited one sandy area within Mongu District in order to come up with any alternative and feasible transport options.

Findings/Outcomes:

Concern Zambia operates a fleet of 6 Toyota vehicles. It was found that all vehicles were functioning; however, the running costs of vehicles within the fleet presented significant disparities with some vehicles costing up to 3 times more to operate per kilometre without obviously providing an equivalent benefit for service delivery. Plans were made to procure 3 further Land Cruisers to replace the 2 Hilux and improve the running costs.

Plans were made for data collection - specifically for running costs (fuel and maintenance) - to become more streamlined in order to provide an accurate monthly picture for each vehicle rather than waiting 3 months for the consolidated management accounting reports.

The refresher training sessions conducted with drivers were found to improve drivers' awareness of road safety and remind them of road safety practices.

Following the completion of the two training sessions, a report was produced detailing Transaid's findings and key recommendations.

It is expected that as a result of this review there will be more effective utilisation of transport through:

- Increased access to transport for programme
- Reduced fuel, repair and maintenance cost



- Proper planning
- Proper monitoring

Conclusions:

There are three prerequisites for the improvement process within Concern to be successful. These are:

- senior management commitment and support for the process
- the identification and empowerment of a process champion
- effective communication and transparency

Through enhanced operational management processes Concern will be able to produce comprehensive monthly transport reports with little effort detailing utilisation, availability, needs satisfaction and running cost per km. Planning and scheduling can be improved via the use of monthly and weekly planning sheets, and the use of an hour by hour utilisation figure will allow for a more accurate analysis of Concern's vehicle usage.

Through a better approach to maintenance, with in house facilities, Concern stands to save time and resources by being able to maintain vehicles regularly without the need for outside assistance from either other maintenance facilities or the dealership from whom the vehicle were bought.

With a new, revised and localized policy processes can be clarified and responsibilities can be assigned to ensure effective management of the fleet. It is key that the new policy is signed by all individuals concerned with the use of transport to prove their understanding, and that the policy is approved and enforced by the Country Director.

Concern is in a critical position in which it can make significant improvements to the efficiency of its transport and thus improve service delivery to its beneficiaries. Concern has the potential to make these efficiency improvements hand in hand with improvements in health and safety; leading the way towards a safer and more responsible transport operation. These goals will only be achieved with the full support and effort of all parties within Concern, in particular senior management and the Country Director.

Tools Utilised: Concern Write-up and Concern Report

Partners: Concern Worldwide

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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