



## South Africa Department of Health Transport Management Project

<b>Project Location:</b>	All Provinces of South Africa excluding Eastern Cape.
<b>Project Start Date:</b>	1995
<b>Project Duration:</b>	7 Years

**Introduction:** A Save the Children/Transaid transport management programme supported the health systems of 8 provinces in South Africa from 1995 to 2002. The programme increased the recognition of the critical value of good transport management in the support of effective health service delivery. Key management controls were introduced to improve the efficiency of transport and establish greater management controls on vehicles. A considerable emphasis on performance indicators with regular monitoring gave provincial health departments a clear sense of the cost of health transport.

Through intensive and field based training, the Transaid programme improved the confidence and abilities of transport officers within provincial health departments. Their role was enhanced through this investment. Senior managers within provincial departments became more sensitive to the importance of good transport management both in terms of cost effectiveness and more secure health delivery. The Transaid programme provided a highly effective mentoring approach which is now sustained by committed transport managers in the provinces.

Out of this training, came an acceptance of the need for a distinct career structure in transport management within the health sector. Provinces such as Limpopo and the Free State established a transport management structure which has provided improved motivation for transport officers.

In North-West province the Transaid programme saw a cut in the number of vehicles used by the Health Department from 2,300 vehicles to less than 1,000. This reduced fleet is able to support the same level of service delivery and has delivered a massive saving in costs to the provincial Department. The Transaid emphasis on cost effectiveness and emphatic provincial transport management has removed old and redundant vehicles from a number of fleets left by old administrations from the Apartheid era. Obsolete vehicles were costing too much money and it was rational to remove them from the fleet. Across the provinces, vehicle availability remains high.

Transport is no longer seen as a major constraint within the provinces in expanding health care. Transaid has provided transport staff in the provinces with tools, skills, knowledge and a strong set of ideals to address health delivery problems.

There is a good body of evidence to support Transaid's "Champions" approach where key individuals such as Transport Officers are empowered and encouraged to promote the rationalisation of transport. The quality of the transport systems and its corollary of superb management information has been the hallmark of the work

in North-West undertaken by David Mamatela there. It is no wonder that the transport fleet has been cut by 60% and is still delivering the same level of availability. This alone could justify DFID's investment in the project. The Limpopo provincial managers have also been highly effective proselytizers and have advocated Transaid's precepts strongly. Their enthusiasm has been infectious. It gave a considerable boost to the profile of transport managers within the province.

The Transaid programme was an extremely effective developer of management capacity in the 8 provinces. It boosted the morale of transport staff. They were particularly appreciative of Transaid's efforts to develop a new professional qualification in public sector transport management. The new qualification is based on Transaid's own training modules. It has been a lasting legacy of Transaid's involvement in South Africa.

**Methodology:** Considerable programme resources, both time and money were targeted at capacity building within provincial departments of health and / or social welfare through:

- familiarisation and orientation workshops and seminars directed at senior management;
- awareness and skills training for champions and transport officers;
- targeted skills training which included a period of secondment outside provinces of work and in some instances outside South Africa itself and;
- limited support to direct users in the form of driver proficiency training

Much was done to develop an enabling environment; senior managers were sensitized about the project, Transport Managers were recruited and job descriptions developed for them, policies were developed and ratified.

Skills training focussed on building the capacity of Transport Managers at the provincial level. Specifically training focussed on:

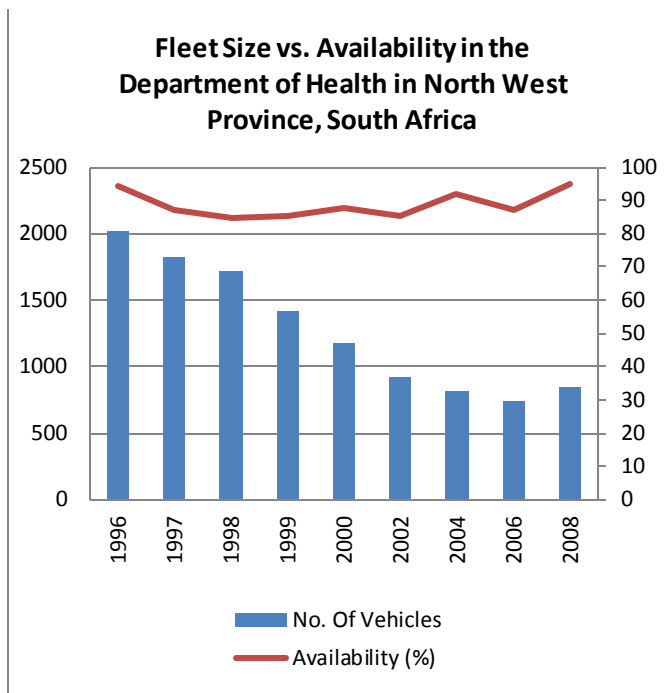
- Fleet Management (inc. procurement, planned preventative maintenance and disposal)
- Policy Development
- Management Information
- Financial Management
- Human Resources

Specifically within the Management information component, the Transport Managers were taught how to collate data and calculate Key Performance Indicators:

- Kilometres travelled – total kilometres in a month
- Fuel utilisation – kilometres per litre of fuel used
- Running cost per kilometre – including fuel, tyres, maintenance
- Availability – how much time is a vehicle available for use?
- Utilisation – how many days is the vehicle being used if it is available?

- Needs satisfaction – number of authorized trips which were met.

**Outcomes:** Due to the significant investment made by DfID, the project was evaluated frequently and in some depth. Qualitative analysis showed a significant mindset change at all levels regarding the need for transport to be effectively managed. Quantitative assessments highlighted the significant impact achieved during the project in areas such as fleet size, vehicle availability and cost savings. The chart below highlights the impact made in one of the 8 provinces:



During a 2004 visit by a DfID consultant, vehicle availability scores were on target and needs satisfaction, a measure of the ability of the fleet to meet health service needs, was up to 100% in some locations:

- **Klerksdorp District** – availability-91%; utilisation - 56%; needs satisfaction -90%
- **Limpopo Province, Head Office** – availability- 78%; utilisation – 51%; needs satisfaction 95%.
- **Capricorn District** – availability – 75%; utilization – 55%; needs satisfaction – 94%
- **Free State, Head Office** – availability –97%; utilisation – 68%; needs satisfaction – 100%.

**Conclusion:** The DFID-Transaid partnership has shown that a long term relationship with an NGO with a special niche in development can achieve significant and sustainable gains in health delivery. It is doubtful whether DFID could have made these improvements through a purely bi-lateral relationship with the South African Government. It was Save the Children's and Transaid's well tested field model in Ghana which provided the intellectual and managerial foundation for the South Africa programme. The programme was carefully managed with an effective and knowledgeable Project Manager in South Africa, and the judicious use of consultants in the transport industry. That approach is also a model of good practice. Certainly, DFID should be making use of the Transaid model wherever it is working in health systems support in Africa.

Well managed transport saves money which can be invested in other areas. It ensures that vehicles such as ambulances are available when needed. It ensures that planned preventative maintenance is executed so that vehicle breakdowns don't interrupt pharmaceutical distribution schedules to rural facilities. Well managed transport is a foundation of health service delivery.

**Tools Utilised:** Transaid Fleet Assessment Tool, Transaid Transport Management Assessment Tool, Transaid Transport Management Manual

**Partners:** The programme was funded by DfID, and conducted in partnership with the Department of Health in all provinces of the Republic of South Africa except Eastern Cape.

#### 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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