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Rural Transport Services: key issues

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Outline of presentation

- Need for access: infrastructure and services
- Crucial importance of ‘first mile’ connectivity
(motorcycle trails and trail bridges)
- Types of transport services
- Key issues in rural transport services
- Lack of proactive planning from authorities
- Recommendations



Rural people need access to livelihoods, markets, health services, education and numerous economic, social and civic opportunities

Proximity of services

Infrastructure to reach services (rural roads, trails, trail bridges, waterways)

Means of transport and transport services

Most rural people in low income countries do not own motorised transport and so depend on **transport services**



Appropriate infrastructure and transport services are crucial for poverty reduction, rural development and meeting SDGs

Rural men and women want transport services that are:



Timely

Affordable

Carry goods



Appropriate and safe



In many countries it is illegal to mix passengers and freight!

'First mile' connectivity

- Many villages are not yet on a road.
- Research shows greatest benefits to rural health, education and agriculture comes from connecting villages for the first time for motorised transport (even if motorcycle trails and trail bridges)
- AsCAP is interested to support research in Asia on **How can light vehicles, including motorcycles, safely link villages to the road network?**





Rural transport services

- Buses (mainly inter-urban roads)
- Minibuses (need quite good infrastructure)



- Jeeps and rural taxis





- Passenger trucks and passenger pickups (strong, very flexible and appreciated)





- Motorcycles and motorcycle taxis
 - Transforming rural transport in many countries
 - Villages 2 km from road can be ‘on the road’



- Power tillers



- Three wheelers





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Rural transport services

- Bicycles, tricycles



- Animal power





Rural transport services characteristics

- Informal sector, some associations
- Often owner-operators or operators renting vehicles on daily basis
- Often old vehicles (low capital costs)
- Need full (or over-full) loads to cover costs and make modest operating profit
- Wait for full load (inconvenient, large vehicles problematic, small vehicles higher fares)





Rural transport services issues

- Most rural people want transport that carries people and small freight (mixed transport)
- Availability/frequency and price are crucial
- Safety looks very poor, but little evidence of key concern (insufficient disaggregated data)
- Enforcement weak as rural enforcers sympathetic (some corruption)
- Cartels can be serious problem (eg, Nepal).





Rural transport services authorities

- Small and underfunded (compared to roads agencies)
- Urban based, urban perspectives
- Concentrate on administrative regulation
- May engage with urban and inter-urban transport services
- Often not present at devolved rural level
- Any rural regulation is negative prohibition
- No proactive positive planning for rural transport





Recommendations

- Develop integrated approaches to rural infrastructure and transport services (road agencies to engage with mobility)
- Ensure some 'first mile' connectivity to all villages (m/c trails)
- Understand rural transport needs and options from the point of view of rural people: be tolerant and do not over-regulate
- Seek solutions that positively improve rural access and mobility
- Develop sustainable integrated transport systems with several complementary transport modes



Thank you for your attention

AsCAP would welcome ideas for collaborative research on improving rural transport services

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