

## **C2.5 RURAL ROADS AND ACCESSIBILITY**

The meeting of TC2.5 examined 2 topics from which the following lessons were drawn;

**Rural roads are a factor in the development of the local economy in the fight against poverty.**

The construction of rural roads constitutes a method of reducing rural poverty, primarily due to the employment that is generated. The experiment nearing completion in Nepal showed the impact of the mobilization and the implication of the local populations in carrying out this work. The problem remains though that to overcome the noted issues surrounding quality and the difficulty to ensure future maintenance was also illustrated in the debate for similar experiments in Africa.

A new approach for the identification of rural roads in Morocco based on the rate of accessibility considers the criterion of access to a practicable road at any time, with less than 1 km for a population living in a locality of more than 50 households. This new approach aroused great interest among decision makers of developing countries and meets an important need to find an alternative to the economic justifications by a criterion of financial profitability for internal road projects (TRI, VAN) in countries where the traffic is weak.

It is recommended aid agencies should be associated to the application of such an approach in the poor countries in order to better understand the local specificities of rural roads, note their interest and accept their financing.

The multicriterion analysis is an alternative to the traditional financial justification of the projects whose example of application in Bangladesh was presented. This method however poses a problem of subjectivity in the determination of the weighting of the coefficients of the various criteria.

## **Involvement of the local population**

This involvement can intervene at several stages including the planning of the roads, their construction or their maintenance. The keys to success which arise from the experiments of various countries are:

- The financial participation or in kind of the population increases the feeling of appropriation of the infrastructure. The rate of 10 % was mentioned as minimal level of this participation.
- The population adhesion is a factor of the permanence of the infrastructure.
- The involvement of the population at the time of planning, but also at the time of implementation, allows facilitation of the acquisition of land, of supply, the installation of the construction site, etc
- The diaspora of the region can constitute an important source for the financing of the road projects (i.e. Haiti, Tiznit)?
- An analogy was proposed to assimilate the service of road accessibility to an access service to drinkable water or to electricity, which allows consideration of invoicing the cost of the infrastructure to the users.
- To involve the local population, it is essential to develop communication adapted to the rural road projects.
- The contractualisation of the partnership is also a factor of success.