



Waterways & Livelihoods

Improving rural access
and mobility through
the development of rural
water transport



Rural water transport [RWT] is defined as inland water transport that is used by poor people. It mostly consists of small family owned boats or canoes that ply with rivers, canals, lakes and seas. These country boats are used for a wide range of purposes including providing transport services, trading opportunities, employment and food (through fishing and access to markets).



The International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD) provides a framework for collaboration between individuals and organisations interested in issues of access and mobility.

Collaborating partners

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A Resource for
Promoting Improved
Policy and Practice



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Waterways & Livelihoods

A Resource for Promoting Improved Policy and Practice

In today's transport climate dominated by motorised vehicles and roads, traditional waterways have been neglected and de-prioritised. This Toolkit promotes the **integration** of Rural Water Transport (RWT) both within the transport sector and across other development sectors. Not for its own sake but because it has the potential to eliminate poverty and reduce isolation. For many of the poorest people in the world water transport is their only means of mobility and access to basic services. It provides jobs and access to other employment opportunities, and also presents enormous potential for addressing isolation while minimising impacts on the environment.

So why is RWT a marginalized form of transport ignored by policymakers and shunned by donors? Research carried out for the Waterways and Livelihoods programme identifies 3 prevailing factors; lack of **visibility** locally, nationally and internationally, **poor perceptions** of RWT as outmoded, old fashioned and unsafe, and an **unfair playing field** through which RWT suffers in comparison to other transport options.

This toolkit aims to remove these obstacles to integration by providing you the user with tools to promote RWT and integrate RWT issues into policy and practice.



Using this Toolkit

This toolkit comprises three complementary resources;

- this Folder,
- a CD-Rom
- a Website.

The Folder provides a brief overview of RWT issues and advice on how to promote these issues to key audiences, i.e those individuals and organisations who can help you to incorporate RWT issues at a policy level and in practice.

The CD Rom is an information resource. It contains information (facts, figures, photos) that can be used to support the existing information you have and to illustrate the value of integrating RWT in transport planning.

The Website is an information & networking tool. It contains the same supporting information as the CD-Rom and also provides a portal through which to access people, organisations and further information resources that may be helpful to you in your work on RWT.

Integrated or Ignored?

An Integrated Solution?

Water transport on its own will not solve all of the people's problems all of the time. But, supported alongside other transport options in a complementary and integrated fashion it can open the door to better mobility for some of the world's most vulnerable people. Instead of leaving remote areas without any infrastructure because roads are difficult or expensive to build, such as in Nicaragua and Madagascar, with the appropriate political and financial support it should be possible to increase people's mobility by utilising existing waterways or renovating those fallen into disuse.

These boxes identify the key reasons why RWT has failed to make it onto the international agenda for transport and development; poor visibility, poor perception and an unfair playing field. Understanding these obstacles will help you to shape strategies to promote effective policy and practice.

An Unfair Playing Field

With little comparative data on the costs of road construction versus waterway development, especially in fragile ecological environments, it is difficult for policy makers and planners to make informed choices. This has exacerbated the neglect of isolated areas where road building is difficult and expensive, and has led to investments that have a negative impact on the ability of poor women and men to use RWT effectively.

Hidden subsidies disguise the real costs of competing forms of transport, particularly roads, and create the illusion that RWT is an unviable alternative. For example in Indonesia imported public transport vehicles are tax exempt whereas boat engines are not. In Madagascar, Indonesia, Cote d'Ivoire and Cambodia individual boat owners cannot access credit from private banks and micro credit institutions while land vehicle owners can.

Invisibility & Perception

For many who make policy at national level RWT is either invisible or a symbol of a rural unsophisticated past they prefer to forget. It is difficult to quantify the importance of RWT or establish trends, due to the lack of reliable statistical information on the sector. Even in Bangladesh where RWT has been comprehensively studied the available data is dubious. A World Bank data review and other studies have produced widely conflicting results. This lack of accurate data is a direct reflection of the lack of official interest in, and recognition of, the RWT sector.

"The water transport authority has very little capacity to carry out and fulfil its responsibility properly and its activities mainly focus on the international wharfs despite the fact that in the Bluefields region of Nicaragua water transport is almost the only means of transport."

*Myers 2003 - Nicaragua Case study
See CD Rom or www.ruralwaterways.org*

Below: Road infrastructure can threaten the use of traditional waterways. Here a vessel just clears a low bridge in Vietnam



Why Promote Rural Water Transport?

An introduction to the issues

Sceptics argue that rural water transport is not important to the majority of the world's nearly 6 billion people. This is true, but for many of the poorest people in the world water transport is the only means of mobility and access to basic services. RWT users are mostly poor and isolated and therefore invisible. If policy makers, donors and practitioners genuinely want to reach the 'poorest of the poor', improving water transport is one strategy that holds much promise.



Above:
Mobility for the whole family.
Madagascar

The consequences of allowing RWT to remain outside of mainstream transport and development planning are manifest

- in the deterioration of traditional thoroughfares
- in conflicts between waterway use and land transport interventions.
- in lost opportunities for poor people to improve their livelihoods through access to basic services and economic opportunities,
- in the lost potential to develop ecologically and financially sustainable transport technologies.

Access to Basic Services

Access to basic services such as schools, health centres, markets, government services and clean water is the basic right of all citizens. But these services are not equally accessible to all people, and those living in remote rural communities are the most likely to suffer.

People living on the islands in the middle of Uganda's Lake Victoria and in Cambodia's floating Kampong Lournng commune have to travel long distances, using water transport, to get to hospitals and schools on the mainland or in the district centre. In some parts of Madagascar the only way to get to hospital is by motorboat. Vietnam, a country with a longer history and greater dependence on water transport, has produced creative alternatives including boat ambulances that bring health services to people, and boats that take children to and from school. Similarly in Brazil floating courts bring legal services to remote communities of the Amazon.

*Uganda, Cambodia & Peru Case Studies
See CD-Rom or www.ruralwaterways.org*

Enhancing Economic Opportunities

RWT facilitates poor people's access to economic opportunities. Water transport can help poor people to access employment in the cities while living in less expensive locations and it is an integral part of fishing and fish marketing livelihoods.

For many communities water transport is an important source of employment, based on skills such as boat building that have developed over generations.

The sector can be of national importance to a country's economy; Uganda earned US\$ 8.8 million in fish exports caught by fisher folk using small boats. It can also be of importance to local communities; 18,000 fishermen living along the Pangalanes in Madagascar rely on motor boats to take fish daily to the nearest market.

RWT also provides an indirect source of employment. In India's Southern State of Kerala, up to 2000 people are employed in houseboats and other motorboats that cruise the inland waterways filled with tourists

An economically and ecologically sustainable transport solution

The technological choices for RWT are often limited in a particular area or location but viewed as a whole the sector demonstrates a wide range of options and a high level of innovation. Some poor communities, in for example Madagascar, use imported and inefficient technologies such as outboard motors that were originally developed for completely different conditions, and have little knowledge of alternatives. By contrast in countries such as Vietnam there are a wide range of very effective RWT technological options that could be adopted for use in other locations.

Because boats can be built locally, using locally available skills and materials, they offer scope for innovation to respond to changing markets and operating conditions. Most boats using diesel

In Bangladesh men work as boat operators transporting goods and passengers along the waterways. It is estimated that the boats provide 60% of all employment in the transport sector and are the main source of income for 4 million people supporting 10 million dependants.

*Chowdhury 2003 Bangladesh Case Study
See CD-rom or www.ruralwaterways.org*



Above: Boats are an important vehicle of trade, they carry consumer products and medicines to remote communities and serve as shops for their owners (often women). Floating markets are widespread in the Mekong delta and without water transport, the farmers of the Mekong Delta would be unable to take fertiliser or seed to their fields or to carry away the resultant crops.

*Tran Quoc Tuyen 2003 Vietnam Case Study
See CD-Rom or www.ruralwaterways.org*

engines and modern design concepts can be combined with traditional building skills to produce boats that are fast enough to compete with road transport while retaining the advantages of accessibility and local input. The longtail boats of Thailand, Cambodia and Peru are a far cry from the old paddle steamers and manually propelled craft of the past, and carry passengers and goods at great speed. They are an example of the sector's ability to innovate and meet changing demands. Where people have been able to use locally available technology the operators avoid a high dependence on imported technologies, and therefore retain control of developments, ensuring reliable operation, maintenance and repair.

The technology of water transport is energy efficient in operation and more sustainable than road transport, with energy use per unit transported demonstrably much less than on roads.



Below:
A Journey by Land and Water in Madagascar.
Rural waterways provide a vital interface between disconnected land routes.

Influencing Change

Advocacy – another word for influencing – is not rocket science. All of us consciously or unconsciously influence people that we meet, or events that unfold around us every day. Moving from a position of *wanting things to happen* and *making things happen* requires you to do little more than think clearly, act strategically, and be realistic in your ambitions.

To be an effective advocate, you need to think before you act. Don't think alone: work with others to analyse the issues and plan your strategy. Collective thinking, like collective action, harvests the best ideas, forms enduring relationships, and learns from past experience.

Ask yourself six questions: What? Who? Why? How? Where? and When?

community at district level etc.) to ensure that they are long-lasting.

Identify the problems that you can do something about. If you don't know all of the facts, either commission research to complete the picture, or work with others who can complement what you know. Set out your long-term goals, and identify some short-term objectives that capture the kinds of changes you are trying to bring about. Your objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound).

Do a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) for your organisation, or network, or team, that will be working together to bring about the changes, to make sure that you are about to embark on advocacy work that **builds** on your reputation and capacity, and **works** with others to strengthen your weak areas.

You can't do everything, so don't try because you will fail. Rather do one or two things well. Prioritise the advocacy objectives you want to tackle first. To prioritise ask yourself; what is achievable? (you need rewards early on to encourage you to keep advocating!), what is opportunistic? (i.e. makes use of imminent policy changes, or new governments, or funding sources etc.) Or what can you afford? (influencing takes time and time is money).

Below: Overloaded in Bangladesh

You may need to advocate for improved safety regulations in boat use



The What?

What are the changes you are trying to bring about?

Try to unpack the root causes of the problems that you see (e.g. poverty, isolation, unemployment brought about by remoteness from services and jobs; political invisibility; restricted access to places of employment because of seasonal floods etc.). The solutions that you seek should tackle the deeper, root causes of the problems (e.g. improved transport services; increased representation of the

The Who?

Who can bring about the changes you desire?

Even if your target is an institution, for example the Ministry of Transport in your country, it is **people** that actually make the decisions. You should identify **how** decisions are made, for example by mapping the decision-making process with others who understand the system, and **who** makes the decisions that you are trying to influence. Your primary targets are those with the power to make and take

decisions: your secondary targets are those people who can influence the primary targets. It is often easier to influence secondary targets. The more you know about your targets, the more likely you are to successfully interact and influence them. Identify their Awareness, Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviour (AKAB) on your issues and decide which of these you're trying to change (e.g. are you simply trying to make them aware that water transport is an additional option for poor people, or to actually elicit a commitment of 8% of the transport budget to water transport?)

Don't always choose the most senior position as your influence target: they may be unreachable by you and your collaborators, or they may be immovable on your issue. Invest time in developing relationships with strategic allies. Recognise your 'enemies', anticipating their opposition to your cause and preparing your defence in advance. Identify neutrals who are not yet convinced by your case but might be: they will turn into allies and supporters. Don't overlook the power of the media in getting behind your cause, but recognise that you cannot control the message once it is in their hands.

Who should you be working with to make a credible case?

Once you understand how your target thinks and makes decisions, you will be in a better position to identify what kinds of people you will need to convince them of your case. For example, senior government civil servants will listen to their peers, but perhaps not so easily to those without any power, so you might need to commission research from a reputable 'think tank' that will be heard in such circles, or include noted academics as stakeholders in making your case.

You may need to forge strategic alliances with unlikely partners for the purpose of realising your advocacy goals, because they have resources/ credibility/ access to targets that you do not have. When choosing partners think about (a) the attitude of each stakeholder to the issues (b) the importance of the issues to your stakeholder (c) the influence of the stakeholder over the issues. Take care with these relationships: make compromises to reach your goals but do not yourself be compromised.

Consider different ways of organising yourselves to carry out activities, including networks, co-ordinated operations, coalitions, and alliances. Each structure has advantages and disadvantages and you will need to choose the most appropriate for your task at hand.



**Below:
Riverside
community, Peru**
Demonstrate the link between poverty and the isolation experienced by riverside communities.

The Why?

Why should things change (or what is the case you're making)?

Imagine that you have just two minutes with the person you're trying to influence. What will you tell them? Is your message short, to-the-point, credible, articulate, persuasive? Do you have the kind of evidence you need to convince them on the spot? Do you have enough to make them want to hear more? In short, why should they listen to you?

Try to understand what incentives people need to change their attitudes or working practices, and work with others to try to provide them. Anticipate their reasons for *not changing* and try to provide practical ways in which they can move closer to your own position. For example, a civil servant working in the Ministry might be sympathetic to your cause, but unable to introduce change because of lack of resources or capacity to add new things to his or her workload. Young engineers might be keen to make their work more poverty-focused, but unless the universities are willing to update their curricula, it will be left to the isolated 'enthusiasts' to do what they can.

The How?

How you make your case depends on the topic you're dealing with, the circumstances in which you work and the nature of your target audience. Your case needs to be factual, accurate, and credible. It needs to tell a story, to describe a problem and propose practical solutions to it. You need to communicate it in a way that informs and persuades your audience: this means tailoring the message to suit the person or people you're trying to influence. Remember that *a message is a concise and persuasive statement that captures what you want to achieve, why, and how*. When crafting your message, think about content, language, messenger, format (e.g. a poster or a radio slot?) and the time and place of delivery. If using a variety of messages to reach different audiences, make sure that they do not contradict each other.

Do your research properly and don't 'load' the facts with too much of your bias: this will make your case seem one-sided. Try to show that you understand the context and are not advocating RWT **in place of** all other kinds of transport: this will not win people to your side.

Find out how your target accesses information (i.e. do they read professional journals, attend conferences, rely on a handful of internet sites?), and to whom do they turn for advice. Be aware of the nature of the public debate around your issue (if there is any), as reflected in the media and/or specialist press and on the conference circuit. Try to imagine yourself in your target's position: what are the constraints that they are working under, for example shortage of resources or capacity to take on new work.

Use your stakeholder analysis to identify people and institutions that have credibility with your target, and use them to deliver the information.

Don't ignore the media: they are powerful advocates and can work for – or against – you and your cause. Again, start with your target audiences and work backwards: identify newspapers that they read and radio or television programmes that they listen to. Try to develop relationships with the journalists who produce and report on these programmes in order to get coverage. This will not happen overnight! Think creatively about how to command the attention of these extremely busy

men and women whose jobs are to generate stories *that their readers/audiences will find interesting*. The more work you can do for the journalist, the more likely they are to run the story. Identify other communicators e.g. information brokers that can be used to disseminate information about RWT.

The Where and When?

The case you're making, while important, is unlikely to grab people's attention **on its own**. You need to think strategically about where and when to deliver your message for maximum effect. What events and opportunities exist to reach your target with well-prepared advocacy materials? If you have evidence that RWT has the potential to benefit marginalized communities and your target is about to present a paper about 'reducing poverty' at an international workshop, craft your message appropriately and produce it as a briefing paper. If your national newspaper is running a supplement on Education, suggest an article about RWT making schools more accessible to children.

As with all things in advocacy, **WORK BACKWARDS!** That is, find out what your target is doing/interested in over the next six months and make a connection between that and RWT. Find out what events are already planned, and think of ways to weave your issues onto their agenda: these can be local, national or international events. You may want to create your own opportunities to raise awareness, e.g. one-day workshops with local NGOs to generate interest in and understanding of RWT issues, and to get them integrated into broader poverty programmes. Use your allies to extend your reach into these other events, and to increase capacity to get things done.

You will not achieve victory overnight. But the sooner you start your journey, the sooner you will reach your desired destination. Remember the ABC of advocacy:

- A**lways be clear about what changes you want to bring about;
- B**e determined and enthusiastic about the case that you're making;
- C**ommunicate clearly.

**Advocacy advice from Megan Lloyd-Laney
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Audiences

The audiences for our advocacy on waterways and livelihoods will vary depending on the country or region in which we are advocating. Here we try to look at four different types of generic audiences – or the **WHO?** of our advocacy strategy. The descriptions of these different groups are designed to provide guidelines for identifying audiences, their Awareness, Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviour, the evidence we need and what strategies we may use to influence them to bring about the changes we desire.

PLEASE REMEMBER that at best these are stereotypes or caricatures – the people you want to influence will not necessarily fall neatly into one or another category, and their position will vary with time and place.

Below:
Complementarity
of transport
options in
Bangladesh



Group 1: People Working in the Transport Sector

What are their interests? What do they know?

People working in the transport sector are most likely to be focused on land transport, on technical and institutional aspects of road construction and maintenance. Conventionally they have concentrated on highways and road corridors that improve connectivity for the purpose of linking to international markets. It was assumed that once such connectivity was provided, the private sector would provide the transport services to move goods and people.

More recently the transport sector has begun to look at feeder road construction in rural areas and aspects of rural road engineering. They have also recognised the need to stimulate the provision of transport services – through development of market networks etc. There is also a growing group of transport professionals focused on road safety issues.

People working in this sector are most likely to be engineers, economists or transport planners. They will be familiar with techniques such as

'modelling' and are comfortable with the use of technical and economic indicators to measure the impact of transport interventions, usually infrastructure. In the current climate they will be under pressure to take into account their agency's or their government's poverty reduction goals, and will be working within the frameworks developed by governments and agencies (eg. the Poverty Reduction Strategies, the Sector Wide Approaches etc). They will see transport development as contributing to economic growth and as such, to poverty reduction. Those working on road safety could have some experience of working on community road safety campaigns. But few in this group are likely to be familiar with the issues relating to rural water transport, particularly the priorities of the users.

What is the change that you want from them?

- To take rural water transport into account in the design and implementation of large scale land transport schemes so that the movement of poor women and men on rural waterways is not restricted but is made complementary to land transport.
- To broaden the road safety agenda to include transport safety and rural water transport safety.

Why would they make these changes? (or what is in it for them?)

- Because they could demonstrate that more people will have improved mobility and access than with a road-only approach.
- Because marginalized communities will benefit (this will be relevant only if professionals have to report by category the people benefiting from their intervention)
- Because they will be able to make the link to poverty alleviation (which is an increasingly necessary indicator for donor agencies and governments, and could be useful for politicians)
- Because there could be increased markets (This can be a useful incentive for transport operators who are always looking for new customers).

What do you need to tell them about waterways and livelihoods?

This audience will respond to:

- Statistical facts and figures relating to
 - the contribution of rural water transport to the economy (eg. the amount of goods transported by waterways, numbers of people employed in the sector etc),
 - the extent of rural water transport usage (how many country boats are there?),
 - the incidence of poverty among rural water transport users etc
- Evidence of the impact (positive and negative) of the development of land transport on waterways and livelihoods of poor people and the need for a level playing field.
- Practical suggestions for enhanced complementarities between the development of rural water transport and land transport with examples of where this has worked in other countries or localities
- Practical suggestions on improvements to rural water transport infrastructure and possibly technical improvements of boats
- Evidence-based description of how road only transport interventions have failed to bring promised benefits, e.g. unaffordable maintenance, promised routes not delivered because of funding shortfalls, reduced budgets internationally for road construction etc.

This group is unlikely to be convinced easily. It will be necessary to identify where potential opposition might stem from. They could be concerned that their budgets will be diminished if money goes to water transport or that their expertise will be irrelevant if RWT is mainstreamed. Communication strategies need to highlight the complementarity of RWT with other transport interventions.

Who will they be?

- Decision makers in national governments' planning, transport, public works ministries or road agencies.
- Decision makers in the infrastructure divisions of multilateral and bilateral agencies.
- Researchers in the engineering faculties of universities, scientific and technical institutions.
- Practitioners working in road agencies, transport departments of local and national governments.
- Transport operators, especially large scale operators of freight and passenger transport.

Remember, that people are different, and that not everyone that falls into the above groups will think the same way. You **MUST** do your own research.

How will you get your message to them?

- Professional forums seem to be the key to unlocking how to communicate with this audience. They have budgets for and show evidence of enjoying attending conferences so it may be worth identifying upcoming conferences and getting RWT on their agenda through paper submissions and influencing speakers.
- Many of the existing large scale, and heavily resourced transport forums (e.g. the Transport Research Board, the World Road Congress) have a very strong road bias, but are looking to broaden their focus to include 'access and mobility' issues – so this could be an opportunity to bring in issues relating to the complementarity of road and water transport.
- Academics and transport planners probably keep a watchful eye on professional journals and publications to see what the up an coming 'fashion' is.
- Government planners, engineers etc. probably have to work to Ministry priorities

which are increasingly set by external multi and bilateral agencies who then become a window through which to exert influence. Poverty Reduction Strategies, which are theoretically open forums in which to set national development priorities, provide opportunities to get water transport taken up and subsequently funded.

Who could be your allies in influencing this group of people?

- Peers in the government, donor institutions or universities with a stronger social development and poverty background or focus.
- Civil society or activist organisations lobbying governments for change, or representing communities living by major water bodies and looking to bring concrete benefits to them e.g. increased employment opportunities, access to markets, access to better health services, increased school attendance etc.
- National media. Currently national media tend to oppose rural water transport as 'dangerous', but if influenced themselves with the right information could be powerful allies.
- Inland water transport professionals with the technical capacity to deal with rural water transport issues.
- Professionals working with fisherfolk, since they will be familiar with some of the issues.

Below:
Appropriate waterways infrastructure would facilitate efficient loading and unloading of boats.
Bangladesh



Group 2: People Working on Inland Water Transport

What are their interests? What do they know?

This group will concentrate on developing waterways for integrating landlocked economies, transport freight to major ports, development of tourism potential etc. Though their focus is away from land transport, they are most likely to be working with macro economic issues and unlikely to be taking the needs of poor users of the waterways into account. Where they do, it is mainly with the idea that boats used by poor women and men need to be improved, modernised and ideally, standardised. This is not often a priority problem for the users. This group too is under pressure to link with poverty reduction – hence the support from the Mekong River Commission to the Waterways and Livelihoods work.

Below: The longtail engines of SE Asia are an example of an affordable and efficient technology that could be introduced to other countries.



The lists of people in each group are not exhaustive. There could be others. Neither are the groups homogenous. There will be people whose awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour will differ. You need to find out for yourself.

What is the change you want from them?

- Include the needs and priorities of poor women and men using rural waterways to meet their livelihood needs in their plans for the development of inland waterways.

Why would they make these changes? (or what is in it for them?)

- Because they will be able to make the link to poverty alleviation (which is a necessary indicator for donors, government planners, and politicians).

Making the link to poverty alleviation will be uncomfortable for this group, particularly because many of them will have little experience of working at a micro level with communities and will see this as detracting from their main business.

What do you need to tell them?

This audience will already have some technical background on water transport and so are likely to respond to:

- Statistical facts and figures relating to
 - the contribution of rural water transport to the economy (eg the amount of goods traded and transported by waterways, employment etc),
 - the extent of rural water transport usage (how many country boats are there?),
 - the extent of formal and informal trade at the local level on rural waterways
 - the incidence of poverty among rural water transport users etc

- Evidence of the impact (positive and negative) of the development of large scale inland water transport on poor people.
- Practical suggestions for development of complementarities between the development of rural water transport and large scale inland water transport e.g. using real examples from other countries of where it has been done well.
- Practical suggestions on improvements to rural water transport infrastructure and boats.
- Technical information about boats (this could be an entry point, but the tendency to take it as the only focus of potential interventions must be avoided).
- Suggestions for developing regulations for use of rural waterways and safety.
- Signs that powerful players e.g. bilaterals, regional economic blocks etc. are taking water transport seriously as a means of increasing mobility/reducing poverty.
- Links with groups working with rural water transport users.

Because this group could be intrinsically uncomfortable with working with rural water transport, and because they will have a strong technical focus, their approach could be to focus on safety issues and improvement boat technology, even though improvement of boat technology may not be a priority issue for the users.

Who are this group of people?

- Decision makers in local and national governments and in international agencies dealing with transport on large rivers (eg the Mekong) and inland lakes (eg Lake Victoria).
- Decision-makers in organisations concerned with regional integration who see inland water transport as a means of achieving this integration.

- Technical personnel working on inland water transport.
- Regulators of inland water transport.

How will you get your message to them?

- Again, professional forums may be the key. So it will be important to get rural water transport on to the agenda of conferences etc where inland water transport is being discussed.
- Specialised journals and publications may also need to be targeted
- “Regional Trade” could be an overarching theme for this group – so it maybe useful to identify opportunities where the role that rural water transport plays in facilitating informal and formal trade can be highlighted
- National government processes for reducing poverty may also provide opportunities to get rural water transport interventions taken up and funded

Who will be your allies in influencing this group of people?

- Donor agency professionals who are supporting this sector and who have to demonstrate impact on poverty reduction.
- People with a poverty focus working in regional organisations concerned with ‘integration’ or ‘regional trade’.
- Civil society and activists representing communities living by major water bodies and looking to bring concrete benefits to them e.g. increased employment opportunities, access to markets, better health services, increased school attendance etc.
- Peers in government or academia who are working on social development and poverty issues.

Group 3: People Working on Poverty Issues

What are their interests? What do they know?

This group will have a good understanding of poverty and livelihood issues but will not necessarily be able to articulate the importance of improving access and mobility for poverty reduction. Their perspectives will differ depending on whether they work at the macro, meso or micro levels. Overall, unless they are working directly with communities that are users of rural water transport (eg in Cambodia, Vietnam or Bangladesh), their knowledge of rural water transport will be minimal, and they are likely to consider it a specialised issue related to small numbers of poor people.

Below:

Maintaining a longtail engine in India. Gender specialists may want to articulate the importance of water transport for women's mobility and economic opportunities.



What is the change you want from them?

- You want those **working at a macro or meso level** and not directly involved with users of rural water transport to recognise the importance of access and mobility for poor people to meet their livelihood needs. You want them to see that the underdevelopment of rural water transport, creates isolation and poverty and include these people and their priorities in the development of poverty reduction strategies and programmes.
- You want those **working at a micro level with communities that are NOT dependent on rural water transport** to recognise that waterways play much the same role for some isolated communities that roads and other means of transport do for others. It is important that these groups support and strengthen the advocacy of their colleagues working with communities using waterways.

Why would they make these changes? (or what is in it for them?)

- For those **working at the macro or meso level** including users of rural water transport in their target group will result in
 - a larger number of beneficiaries
 - a greater impact on poverty
- For those **working at micro level with communities not dependent on rural water transport**, including rural water transport on their agenda will enable them to strengthen their advocacy by broadening their constituency.

What do you need to tell them?

- You need to provide evidence of the link between transport and poor peoples' livelihoods in general, and rural water transport and livelihoods of poor people in particular.
- This group is likely to respond positively to people stories and case studies.

- They will be interested in the environmental issues, gender issues etc relating to rural water transport.
- They will also be interested in comparative information, and how problems in some areas can be solved with knowledge/ information from others and in low cost, appropriate solutions (eg. how the technology of long-tail boats in Vietnam could be used in Madagascar to improve rural water transport at a fraction of the cost).
- This group will also benefit from statistical facts and figures relating to
 - the contribution of rural water transport to the economy (eg the amount of goods transported by waterways),
 - the extent of rural water transport usage (how many country boats are there?),
 - the incidence of poverty among rural water transport users etc.

Who are they?

- Decision makers in national governments' economic planning agencies, social development ministries (eg health, education) and poverty reduction agencies.
- Decision-makers in the social development and poverty-related sections of multilateral and bilateral agencies.
- Researchers in universities and think-tank organisations.
- Practitioners working with International and local NGOs.
- Officials in local government.
- Community based organisations.

How will you get your message to them?

By raising the profile of the issues through

- Using local and international workshop and conference opportunities to influence the professionals that work with this target group.
- Writing to social development and poverty oriented journals and publications.
- Using national and international media to highlight the issues.
- Networking with national and international NGOs.
- Providing practical information and support to key local governments.
- Providing practical information and support to community based organisations.

Who will be your allies in influencing them?

- Civil society and activists representing communities living by major water bodies and keen to bring concrete benefits to them (e.g. increased employment opportunities, access to markets, increased school attendance etc.)
- Peers among them in the organisations in which they work, who understand rural water transport issues.
- Technical people working in the rural water transport sector.
- The national and local media, who will need to be first influenced to take a positive attitude to rural water transport.

Group 4: Professionals Who Understand Rural Water Transport Issues But Do Not Know What to Do About It

What are their interests? What do they know?

This group will most likely be working with communities or poor people involved in rural water transport and will have a good understanding of their livelihood issues. They will be interested in ways of increasing the visibility of these groups, and providing solutions to their problems.

Below: RWT makes a vital contribution to local employment opportunities. Madagascar



They will want to be influencing local and national decision-makers in the transport sector (and inland water transport sector if it exists) as well as decision-makers in economic and social development, to take into account the priorities of rural water transport users. Because of the limited information in the public domain on rural water transport, they are unlikely to have access to knowledge on options for improved technologies or be able to benefit from information and advocacy strategies adopted by similar groups elsewhere.

What is the change you want from them?

- To be able to effectively articulate the problems of rural water transport users and advocate for their solution.
- To initiate practical interventions that will benefit rural water transport users.

Why would they make these changes? (or what is in it for them?)

- Because this is what they do.

What information do they need?

- Information of technological and strategic options, especially those that have positive outcomes and impacts in other situations.
- Information on who are key decision-makers in the local, national and international agencies that impact on rural water transport.
- Information on opportunities for raising the profile of rural water transport (eg events, publications etc.)
- Information that will strengthen their advocacy e.g.
 - on the contribution of rural water transport to the local and national economy (eg the amount of goods transported by waterways, the extent of employment in the sector etc),
 - the extent of rural water transport usage (how many country boats are there?) in their locality and nationally



Above:
Communities in Cambodia adapt to the seasonal flows of waterways.

- the incidence of poverty among rural water transport users (locally and nationally).

How will you get your messages to them?

- By providing practical information and support to their work.
- Through face to face conversations and discussions.

Who are they?

- Civil society organisations and activists working with poor communities living by water bodies.
- People based in the decentralised local government organisations, or inland water authorities who recognise the problem but do not know what to do about it.
- Researchers who have explored this issue.
- **People like YOU, the reader!**

Who will be your allies in influencing them?

- Others working in similar situations or with similar orientation.
- Rural water transport technology “experts” and enthusiasts.

Networking and Information Resources:

This Folder has briefly introduced some key issues relating to rural water transport and poverty alleviation and given guidance on how to advocate for improvements to RWT policy and practice in your country. To support your arguments and make your case you will need accurate and persuasive facts and figures, possibly more than is available to you from your existing information sources.

The Waterways and Livelihoods Programme has developed a web site www.ruralwaterways.org to provide you with the information and networking tools that will support and inform your transport and development initiatives and help you to influence policy making and practice at local, national and international level.

The web site accompanies this Folder in CD-Rom format and includes information organised under the following categories:

- Case Studies
- Photo Library
- RWT Overview
- RWT Publications
- Advocacy overview
- News (only on www.ruralwaterways.org)

Networking tools include links to relevant organisations and individuals and access to an email discussion forum through which you can share information and views, and ask and answer questions.

The Waterways and Livelihoods Programme was initiated as a reaction to the dearth of reliable information and statistics available on rural water transport.

www.ruralwaterways.org has been established to begin to fill that gap. The web site relies upon your participation to help it to develop and remain current and informative so please do share your experiences and publications with us via the site or to:

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Collaborating partners

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Waterways and Livelihoods is a research project of the IFRTD, funded by DFID's Knowledge and Research Programme. It aims to raise the profile of RWT in the transport sector and among development planners, increasing its visibility, contributing to new knowledge about the impact of rural water transport upon poor people's mobility and access needs, and highlighting its potential benefits for the environment.

The project adopted a networked research methodology working with a team of researchers across Asia, Latin America and Africa. The team, including development practitioners, government transport ministries, and academics in universities, were well placed to investigate the institutional and policy contexts in which people use water transport. They identified locations in vulnerable areas where there is a significant incidence of poverty and where rural water transport is a principal or sole means of transport. The case studies did not aim to be representative of each country context, but to illustrate a wide range of rural water transport environments; delta environments in Bangladesh, and Vietnam, canals in Kerala (India) and Madagascar, rivers in Cambodia, Indonesia and Peru, lakes in Uganda, lagoons in Nicaragua and Cote d'Ivoire and inter-island waterways in Indonesia.

The research culminated in a three day researcher workshop to synthesise findings in preparation for an international Seminar. The International Seminar held in Pontianak, West Borneo in April 2003 attracted other interested stakeholders including; government planning officials, donor agency representatives, transport professionals and rural development planners. Participants evolved strategies for improving rural water transport in countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This resource for the promotion of improved RWT Policy and Practice is one of the outputs of this Seminar.



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