

ROADS FOR PEOPLE PROJECT ZAMBIA

TITLE: EXPLORING PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVES
TO CAR DEPENDENCY – LUSAKA CITY

FINAL REPORT

ZAMBIA CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION (ZACA)
SUITE 91, 2ND FLOOR – AFKOM HOUSE BUILDING
CORNER OF OBOTE / ZAMBIA WAY AVENUE
P. O. BOX 21641
KITWE, ZAMBIA

TELEPHONE: +260 2 224193
FAX: +260 2 224193
MOBILE: +260 97 800018 / 095 910691 / 095 910692
E-MAIL: zaca@zamnet.zm

AUGUST 2007

0.1 BACKGROUND

In January 2007, ZACA received a grant of \$3,800 from Health Bridge to implement a project on "Exploring Practical alternatives to Car dependency" to be conducted in the City of Lusaka, Zambia. This grant support was based on the project proposal that ZACA had submitted to Health Bridge with a view to achieving the following **general objectives**: -

- (1) To introduce and generate public support for the **Roads for People** concept (increase use of walking, cycling and public transit).

The project had the following **specific objectives**: -

- (1) To create public awareness about Road for People concept.
- (2) To lobby policy makers to accept the Road for People concept.
- (3) To influence the design of the Lusaka Master Development Plan so as to lessen dependency on the motorized transport (create space for walk-ways for pedestrians, cycle paths and leisure parks).
- (4) To share information with other consumer organization in the region about the Roads for People concept.

0.2 ACTIVITIES

2.1 Audience Survey

Implementation of the project started towards the third week of February with audience survey. 687 respondents were interviewed in Lusaka.

The focus of the survey was to get the impression of the residents of Lusaka regarding;

- (i) Whether they consider the traffic situation in Lusaka to be a nuisance or burden on their every day lives,
- (ii) Whether they would support action to de-congest the cities of Lusaka,
- (iii) Whether they would take active part in lobbying/ Advocacy efforts to change the status quo,
- (iv) Whether they would support the concept of Roads for People.
- (v) Get their opinions/suggestions of what policy measures to undertake in order to reduce dependency on cars for transport..

The data was collected by six students from college of Applied Arts in Lusaka; The Evelyn Hone College, Mr. Phakeni Makowane our I.T Specialist analyzed the data.

The results were predicable. Although the overwhelming majority of respondents (98.7%) found the congested streets of Lusaka to be a nuisance or burden on their lives and also responded that they would support action to change (98.2%). They nevertheless responded that the answer to the problem did not lie in the RFP concept but rather that the government should build more roads. The respondents (64.9%) also felt that alternatives to cars i.e. walking, cycling and rickshaws would lower their standard of living yet other respondents (76.2%) did not have sufficient faith in their government to construct modern infrastructure for mass-transit e.g. railway.

Five meetings were held with:

- (i) The Mayor of Lusaka
- (ii) The Lusaka Province Minister
- (iii) The Five (5) members of Parliament for Lusaka Urban Constituencies
- (iv) Committee on Local Governance, Housing and Chiefs' affairs
- (v) Committee on the development of Lusaka Master Plan

(a) MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FOR LUSAKA URBAN CONSTITUENCIES

The members of Parliament while recognizing the problems of traffic congestion in Lusaka dismissed the concept of RFP as foreign and western. They insisted the government should build more roads in Lusaka in order to ease the traffic congestion they however recommended that government should build more side-walks and create open spaces for recreation.

(b) MEETING WITH MAYOR OF LUSAKA

Her worship, the Mayor of Lusaka was very eager to learn the RFP concept. She was shown the slides of the CD that Debra sent to ZACA. She admitted that she was under intense political pressure from the residents of the City and the Local politicians to build more roads as the congestion in the city was becoming unbearable. She contended that the RFP concept was sustainable, cheaper and quite attractive but the people's perspective was that the answer to the traffic congestion lied in building more roads yet the council did not have sufficient financial resources to undertake major roads construction works. She was personally happy with the concept of RFP but feared that her political opponents would oppose it and bring the whole concept into ridicule. She advised ZACA to lead the campaign and sensitize the residents about the concept of RFP.

(c) MEETING WITH MINISTER OF LUSAKA

The Honorable Minister for Lusaka Province was very receptive and stated that the RFP concept was not new. He said that he was familiar with the concept because he attended University in Sweden, which he claimed to have adopted policies of roads for people. He stated that the visit of ZACA was timely because the government of Zambia with the technical assistance of JICA of Japan was in the process of developing the master plan for the city of Lusaka. He said that ZACA would be called to one of the meetings of the committee developing the master plan so that the Association can in-put in the mater plan.

(d) COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE, HOUSING AND CHIEFS' AFFAIRS

On Tuesday 15th May 2007, ZACA appeared before the Committee on the local Governance, Housing and Chiefs' Affairs. This is a standing committee of the Parliament of Zambia. The concept of Roads for people was presented to the committee and some slides were shown to members to the committee. The members were apprehensive about the issue of increasing parking charges for central business district. The were also concerned that the issue of transit transport required long-term planning and huge capital investment which may alarm the cabinet. However there was consensus that the traffic congestion in Lusaka needed a multi-faceted approach as building of roads alone was not a viable solution given the limit in resources and city space. The Parliamentarians advised ZACA to engage in more dialogue with other stakeholders such as transporters, the Roads Development Agency and the commuters.

SUBMISSION TO THE LUSAKA MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

ZACA met with the members of the committee that are working on the **master plan** for the development of the city of Lusaka. The Chairman of the committee informed the representatives of ZACA that the development of the plan was still at an early stage and that input from stakeholders was welcome and appreciated. The Chairman assured ZACA that its submission would be considered among others.

PUBLIC AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

Three (3) live call-in programmes have been held in the month of June on Radio Choice a community radio station in Lusaka. The panelists on the program included ZACA and Local Authority officials. Many callers to the programme complained bitterly about the traffic congestion in Lusaka but many (28 of 31 callers) spoke very strongly in favour of construction of new roads. Only three callers (2 females, 1 male) supported the Roads for People concept.

LESSONS LEARNED

The major lessons learned during the implementation of this project are that

- 1) There is almost consensus in the Country that the solution to traffic congestions lay in constructions of more roads.
- 2) That this belief is widely held by both members of the public and policy makers.
- 3) That the Road for People concept is an entirely new dimension in the prospect to solve traffic congestion and it therefore requires persistent sustainable efforts to implant the values and potential benefits of this concept in the minds of the people.
- 4) That some practical, small scale, demonstration project may be desirable in future to illustrate the potential benefits.

GOAL

City of Lusaka without traffic congestion re-planned in a manner that take into account inclusiveness of pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorized road users.

OBJECTIVE

Popularize the concept of Roads for People and drive a policy shift leading to new thinking, new planning and more inclusive use of public space.

IMPACT

This was an advocacy and lobbying project carried just over five months whose impact may not be sufficiently visible presently but the initial contact with policy makers and the debate from radio programmes have triggered new dimension of thinking regarding problems related to traffic congestion and city planning in general.

PROBLEMS

It's a novel idea without immediate clear benefits to some sections of society (People desire the comfort and luxury of driving cars"). It's an idea which is also stoutly opposed by private passenger transporters (owners of taxis and mini buses) who fear for their businesses.

SOLUTION TO ENCOUNTERED PROBLEMS

Many of the problems encountered (bus owners resistance, the resistance by motor vehicle importers, opposition political parties who want roads nothing else, policy makers who fear for their popularity etc) can be overcome by designing workshops tailored to suit particular groups and also by discussions on live-radio programmes to which callers can participate.

CONCLUSION

Based on valuable lessons learnt from this phase of the project, ZACA desires and therefore proposes to continue with this work to the second phase of the project by intensifying information awareness to the members of the public and selected key stakeholders who have the capacity to make change. It is ZACAs' view that intensive lobbying of policy makers such as Local Councilors, Members of the Lusaka Master Plan Development Committee and Media Institutions can bring about policy change in city planning to make roads more inclusive of pedestrians and cyclists.