

After careful consideration, the project chose the promotion of donkeys – a donkey costs less than a bicycle – and the introduction of a locally manufacturable wheelbarrow.

### **Section D**

At the end of Phase II, it was clear that the selected approaches to Makete's transport problems had had different degrees of success. Phase III, from March 1991 to March 1993, focused on the refinement and institutionalisation of these activities.

The road improvements and accompanying maintenance system had helped make the district centre accessible throughout the year. Essential goods from outside the district had become more readily available at the market, and prices did not fluctuate as much as they had done before.

Paths and secondary roads were improved only at the request of communities who were willing to participate in construction and maintenance. However, the improved paths impressed the inhabitants, and requests for assistance greatly increased soon after only a few improvements had been completed.

The efforts to improve the efficiency of the existing transport services were not very successful because most of the motorised vehicles in the district broke down and there were no resources to repair them. Even the introduction of low-cost means of transport was difficult because of the general poverty of the district. The locally manufactured wheelbarrows were still too expensive for all but a few of the households. Modifications to the original design by local carpenters cut production time and costs. Other local carpenters have been trained in the new design so that they can respond to requests. Nevertheless, a locally produced wooden wheelbarrow which costs around 5000 Tanzanian shillings (less than US\$20) in Makete, and is about one quarter the cost of a metal wheelbarrow, is still too expensive for most people.

Donkeys, which were imported to the district, have become more common and contribute, in particular, to the transportation of crops and goods to market. Those who have bought donkeys are mainly from richer households but, with an increased supply through local breeding, donkeys should become more affordable. Meanwhile, local initiatives are promoting the renting out of the existing donkeys.

It should be noted, however, that a donkey, which at 20,000 Tanzanian shillings costs less than a bicycle, is still an investment equal to an average household's income over half a year. This clearly illustrates the need for supplementary measures if one wants to assist the rural poor.

### **Section E**

It would have been easy to criticise the MIRTP for using in the early phases a 'top-down' approach, in which decisions were made by experts and officials before being handed down to communities, but it was necessary to start the process from the level of the governmental authorities of the district. It would have been difficult to respond to the requests of villagers and other rural inhabitants without the support and understanding of district authorities.

### **Section F**

Today, nobody in the district argues about the importance of improved paths and inexpensive means of transport. But this is the result of dedicated work over a long period, particularly from the officers in charge of community development. They played an essential role in raising awareness and interest among the rural communities.

The concept of integrated rural transport is now well established in Tanzania, where a major program of rural transport is just about to start. The experiences from Makete will help in this initiative, and Makete District will act as a reference for future work.