

Policy Support to KwaZulu Natal Department of Transport



South Africa

March 2006 – Current

Client:

KwaZulu-Natal
Department of Transport

Driving workforce development and poverty reduction through a roads upgrading project, and distilling lessons for policy development

KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) is beset by socio-economic problems such as high unemployment and daunting rates of HIV/AIDS infection—the highest in South Africa. Poor as it is, KwaZulu-Natal plays a pivotal role in the nation's economy because its major ports and road corridors serve as the conduit for some 80 percent of freight moving in and out of the country.

In 2001, KZN's Department of Transport (DoT) launched the African Renaissance Roads Upgrade Programme (ARRUP), a building and maintenance initiative that engages poor rural communities in workforce development, poverty reduction, and the infrastructure improvements necessary to broader economic growth. Representing an investment of R4.6 billion over 10 years, DoT took a two-pronged approach under ARRUP: first, recruiting people especially women and youth from communities surrounding the seven major road corridors to bid as contractors on road preparation and construction tenders; second, encouraging emerging black-owned engineering firms to form joint ventures with established engineering companies. Certain amounts of work were reserved exclusively for these joint ventures.

ECIAfrica has been assisting the Strategic Planning Directorate of the KZN DoT with two key assignments. First, ECIAfrica has evaluated the ARRUP program and distilled its lessons, with a view to developing a set of policy guidelines.

Second, ECIAfrica is engaging in a process of further policy investigation and participatory consultation to help develop KZN's Provincial White Paper on Transport Policy. Under ARRUP, KZN DoT tested ways to promote the nationwide goals of preferential procurement, and promotion of emerging contractors and labour-based works, while also ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in infrastructure delivery. These themes will filter through to the new provincial policy document.

