



Developing Countries Visited in Transportation Technology Support Project

An important part of TRB's project on Transportation Technology Support for Developing Countries is to make semiannual visits to countries that will receive the project publications. Visits are arranged with the assistance and cooperation of the Washington staff and field mission staff of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID). General objectives for each visit are to contact project correspondents, to inform local users about the project, and to solicit comments and suggestions on how the project and its products can be improved.

From June 24 to July 8, 1978, Project Engineer Lloyd Crowther made the project's first field visit to three African countries: Liberia, Ivory Coast, and Kenya.

In Monrovia, a roundtable conference was held with about 15 officials of the Liberian government and AID/Liberia officials. In Abidjan, Ivory Coast, contacts were made with engineers from the AID Regional Economic Development Services Office (REDSO) for West Africa and, in Nairobi, Mr. Crowther had individual discussions with Kenyan officials, with AID/Kenya officials, and with engineers from AID/REDSO for East Africa.

Several points were made remarkably consistently throughout this first field visit:

1. The conference format and the one-on-one format each have certain advantages, and it is expected that both formats will be used in future visits;
2. The concepts and methods of the project received universal approval;

3. The selection of the initial compendium and synthesis topics was considered to be excellent;
4. The major highway problems in Africa today include soils, drainage, and equipment maintenance and use;
5. Field visits will include many opportunities to observe technical problems and to provide engineering advice on these problems;
6. Project publications should be distributed in greater numbers than had been planned; and
7. The field visit was well received, and the discussions were substantive and useful.

After leaving Nairobi, Mr. Crowther visited the Transport and Road Research Laboratory (TRRL) in England. Staff of the TRRL Overseas Unit have direct interest in the project and were very cooperative.

Tentative plans for the future include a visit to certain Latin American countries in December 1978 and an initial visit to Asian countries in the spring of 1979.

Correspondent Network

William N. Carey, Jr., Executive Director of TRB, has sent letters of invitation to more than 200 prospective correspondents in about 65 developing countries. One correspondent in each of 12 countries has been invited to serve as a review correspondent and thereby respond to specific questions that will be transmitted with each project publication. The review correspondent is ex-

pected to turn over each publication and associated questions to the person who is most appropriate for evaluating the publication with respect to local needs.

All correspondents will have responsibility for ensuring that the publications are made available to people whose work is directly related to the contents of the respective publications. TRB will of course rely on the judgment of each correspondent on how best to provide local access to the project publications.

In addition to the publications, each correspondent will receive reprints of these articles in *Transportation Research News*, will be listed in the *TRB Directory*, and will receive a certificate of recognition for the valuable assistance that is being provided.

It is expected that there will be opportunities for personal discussions between project staff and many of the correspondents, not only in the course of staff field visits but also in the course of correspondents' business visits to Washington. For example, on July 19, 1978, the staff was visited by a prospective review correspondent, Mr. R. P. Sikka of the Ministry of Transport in New Delhi, India.

Steering Committee Holds Third Meeting

The third meeting of the project steering committee was held in Washington on July 27, 1978. Wilbur Morin of Lyon Associates, Inc., served as chairman pro tempore. Agenda for the meeting included progress reports and discussions of future plans for field visits, the correspondent network, compendium development, and synthesis development. Highlights of these reports and discussions are given below.

It was agreed that the project will be responsible for one session of the Second International Conference on Low-Volume Roads, to be held at Ames, Iowa, August 20-23, 1979. This conference session will be a forum on the project work; it is expected that developing countries will be represented by panelists.

The fourth meeting of the steering committee will be held at TRB's Fifty-eighth Annual Meeting in January 1979.

Synthesis Development

As was reported in an earlier article in this series, the steering committee has selected three topics for which synthesis publications will be prepared. These topics are maintenance operations for unpaved roads, labor-intensive intermediate technology for construction and maintenance, and staged construction. For each topic, a subcommittee of the steering committee has been appointed to provide direction and to perform review functions. Potential consultants have been identified to review and synthesize existing information on the respective topics.

The starting point for each synthesis is a meeting of the subcommittee, consultant, and staff to develop the scope, outline, timetable, and guidelines for preparation of the synthesis. During subsequent weeks, the consul-



Shimeles Asfaw, Senior Supervising Engineer for Planning, Ministry of Works, Kenya, discussion project with TRB's Lloyd Crowther.

tant will develop an initial draft for review and discussion at a second meeting. The consultant's work is complete when the final draft has been approved by the subcommittee. It is expected that initial meetings for all three syntheses will be held in early September 1978 and that the publications will be ready for distribution in the spring of 1979.

Compendium Development

The first two compendiums have now been published; details for their contents were given in issue no. 77 of *Transportation Research News*. A single photograph is used in wraparound style as background for the front and back covers of each compendium. Each cover photograph depicts a low-volume road in a developing country and is related to the compendium topic. The cover photograph for Compendium 1 appeared in the *News* article about the project in issue no. 76, and the picture accompanying this article is the cover photograph for Compendium 2.

The initial draft for Compendium 3, *Small Drainage Structures*, has been reviewed and is now in the publication stage. Material is being selected for the initial drafts of compendiums on low-cost water crossings and on roadside drainage maintenance.

Student Colloquium

Plans are under way to hold an initial colloquium of U.S. university students who have come from developing countries and are majoring in transportation subjects. Objectives for the colloquium are to inform all participants on the project activities and to collect firsthand views on how the project activities and products can be enhanced.

It is likely that the first colloquium will be held on Sunday afternoon of the week of TRB's Fifty-eighth Annual Meeting. Approximately 150 university representatives of TRB have been asked to assist in the identification of potential participants in the colloquium. Although the project budget does not provide for travel assistance, it is hoped that a number of the students will find means to attend the colloquium and other sessions of the Annual Meeting.