



Forum

News

International Forum for Rural Transport and Development

An Independent IFRTD

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The New Road Ahead

1st April 2009 has become a key date in the history of the IFRTD network. After 17 years under the wing of the UK-based NGO, Practical Action, the IFRTD Secretariat took its first steps down a new road, as an independent non-profit organisation. In this issue of Forum News we will reflect upon what independence means to the network and, importantly, what it means to you as a member of IFRTD.

Why an Independent IFRTD

IFRTD enjoyed a long and positive relationship with its NGO host Practical Action. However, in the process of developing the 2007–2011 IFRTD strategy, it became clear that independence would enable the streamlining of IFRTD's administrative processes and also open up many new potential income streams to the network. Priority 4.1 of the IFRTD Strategy was therefore written: *IFRTD to become an independent legal entity.*

First Steps

The implementation of the move to independence began at the 2007 IFRTD Executive Committee Meeting (ECM) in Berne, Switzerland. A task force comprising regional IFRTD representatives from the Executive Committee (EC), the Executive Secretary and the Chairman were commissioned to draft a new governance structure for an independent IFRTD. The new structure was presented to the ECM in Stockholm, Sweden in November 2008 and approved.

New Governance Structure

The key feature of the new governance structure for an independent IFRTD is that the IFRTD Secretariat, now a legal entity, is governed by an independent Board of Directors. This Board has full legal and financial responsibility for activities carried out by the



Paul Stankey

The relevance of IFRTD's work remains clear: Women headloading along a rural road in Tanzania, no transport services in sight.

IFRTD Secretariat. The Board effectly replaces the previous host Practical Action in terms of its line management of the Secretariat.

Under the new governance structure we do not lose the current EC that comprises regional representatives of the IFRTD network, institutional IFRTD members (now called Institutional Partners) and co-opted members. The EC will in fact continue its steering and advisory role providing vital strategic direction to the IFRTD network, the IFRTD Secretariat and the Board of Directors.

In March 2009, the IFRTD Secretariat was registered in England and Wales as a non-profit making company seeking charitable status and, on 1st April 2009, IFRTD officially became independent from Practical Action.

What does independence mean for you?

As a member of IFRTD you will not initially see much change to the network around you. Although our governance structure has changed, our vision, mission and operation as a network remains the same. However, as a member we hope you will soon start to see positive changes in the efficiency and capacity of the Secretariat to support your endeavours to further the vision and mission of IFRTD.

The Forum continues to be coordinated by a decentralised Secretariat working from locations in Latin America, Asia, Africa and the UK. In the London office a small team comprising the Executive

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Three Key Governance Pillars for an Independent IFRTD:

- **Executive Committee (EC)** – representing you the members (individuals, networks and institutions) and the donor community. The EC is the steering and advisory body for the IFRTD Board and Secretariat but carries no legal status or responsibility.
- **Board of Directors** – Initially selected by the EC. Governs the IFRTD Secretariat and oversees delivery of the IFRTD Strategy. Please see page 3 for more information about the Board of Directors.
- **IFRTD Secretariat** – Implements the action plan decided by the Board of Directors. Reports to the IFRTD Board.

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Secretary, Editor and Communications Coordinator and Network and Events Coordinator oversee the administrative and fundraising functions of the IFRTD Secretariat as well as coordinating international advocacy, research, networking and communications activities.

The Network and Events Coordinator is a new role that will give us greater capacity to understand and service your needs as IFRTD members.

Regional IFRTD Coordinators will continue to provide support to IFRTD members, to affiliated networks such as the National Forum Groups, and to Communities of Practice such as Gatnet and the Mobility and Health Research group. Under independence, a priority is placed upon building our regional capacity to support and empower you, our members.

Further reading:

Please visit www.ifrtd.org for the minutes of all IFRTD governance meetings.

Online IFRTD

Social networking sites are changing the way we communicate – tens of millions of people across the globe are now connected through sites such as Facebook and Twitter. For a network like IFRTD, these platforms provide a great space for us to share our knowledge and information with each other and also to reach out to new audiences. You can now interact with IFRTD on:

flickr **Flickr** – We host a growing photo gallery on flickr and also run a group called Roads are not Enough where you can share your latest images with the network.

www.flickr.com/photos/ifrtd



YouTube – We are gathering a selection of powerful and informative films from the field of rural transport. Please share your clips with us.

www.youtube.com/ifrtd



Twitter – A popular micro-blogging service. Regular updates from the IFRTD Secretariat in 140 characters or less. We have a lot to say so this one is quite a challenge for us. Why not follow us and see how we fare.

www.twitter.com/ifrtd



Facebook – Become a fan of IFRTD on facebook and share our regular updates with your friends and colleagues.

www.facebook.com

(search for International Forum for Rural Transport and Development)

Changing Faces at the IFRTD Secretariat

Farewell to Marinke van Riet

Marinke van Riet left IFRTD in March 2009 after four successful years as Executive Secretary. In this time she coordinated our pioneering Mobility and Health international networked research programme, renewed core funding for the network, and laid the foundations of a strong autonomous network ready for the challenge of independence.

Marinke has taken up a position as a Country Director with Marie Stopes International. So although we are sad to say goodbye, we know that she will continue to bear the torch for rural access and mobility. IFRTD now has a new advocate for mobility and health issues in the heart of the health sector.



Marinke signing a new funding agreement with Thomas Zeller of the Swiss Development Cooperation.

Welcoming Maria Arce Moreira



Maria meets IFRTD members from the West and Central Africa Network.

Maria Arce Moreira took up the post of IFRTD Executive Secretary in August 2009. Maria brings to the Forum a wealth of experience and expertise in networking and advocacy in the development sector. Most recently, Maria has been a Policy Advisor at Practical Action, and it was in this position she became familiar with IFRTD's work.

Maria's professional qualifications include an MSc on Urban Environmental Management from Wageningen University, and civil engineering studies with a focus on transport engineering from Bolivia. Although at one time Maria wanted to follow in the footsteps of her father and become a civil engineer, a passion for development issues took her in a different direction, which has now led her full circle to IFRTD, a development network working on transport issues! We asked Maria to introduce herself to you in her own words:

Dear IFRTD members,

This is a truly exciting time for IFRTD. Changing from being an informal network to an independent organisation brings on board a whole range of issues and responsibilities that we need to address in the most effective and efficient manner. In the short term, ensuring that our internal operational set up responds to our new status should allow us to function as a small but effective organisation.

In this context, it is important to take an honest look at ourselves and identify where we may need changes to increase our impact and outreach. While IFRTD has built up a good reputation and is respected for its good work, we cannot afford to be complacent and need to address our weaknesses and build up our strengths.

We all know that working effectively with and through networks are satisfactory experiences. A lot can be achieved through the power of the group and collaboration. However, impact can be hard to measure and networking could be limited to a comfortable few. IFRTD, as any other global network, must constantly assess its work, its impact, its added value and, vis à vis, the challenging and constantly evolving development agenda ensure we maintain our relevance and substantial contribution.

IFRTD members are our main asset and I am therefore determined to place considerable emphasis on understanding your needs and capacities to ensure our programmes and activities better respond to your interests.

At the same time, I am committed to building our capacities and awareness on emerging issues and I hope we can play a proactive role in influencing the development agenda at all levels of our operation.

The way ahead is thrilling, but I am conscious that it also brings many challenges and difficult questions. I, in close collaboration with the Secretariat team, will be willing to take each of these challenges on board, but we will need the active support of our members, the Board and the Executive Committee to achieve success.

Finally let me thank you for the warm welcome I have received from members and partners alike. The human warmth present in IFRTD can only motivate me to do my best, and to continue learning from your vast experience to represent and promote our issues in the most appropriate and powerful manner.

*Maria Arce Moreira
Executive Secretary*



At the Helm

At the helm of the newly independent IFRTD is its founding Board of Directors. Representative of the geographical and disciplinary breadth of the IFRTD network, the founding Board, serving initially for two years, comprises:

- **Danang Parikesit**, Chairperson of the IFRTD Board. Has been a member of the IFRTD network for over ten years and has served as the Chair of IFRTD's Executive Committee since 2006. He is a Professor of Transportation Planning and Engineering in a development context and has carried out extensive research in this area, as well as advising a wide range of development agencies. Danang is currently employed by Universitas Gadjah Mada in Indonesia, where he is the Chairman of the Institute for Research and Community Service, Chairman of the Board of Researchers at the Centre for Transportation and Logistics Studies and a postgraduate Lecturer.
- **Nite Tanzarn** is a development management specialist with extensive experience advising a wide variety of organisations on the socio-economic aspects of the transport sector and rural development. Nite is also a Gender and Transport expert and is currently an Associate of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness/women and Gender Studies at Makerere University in Uganda. Nite was a founding member of GATNET, the gender and transport network, and is passionate about highlighting the facilitative role that transport can play in Africa's development.
- **Roberto Aguerrebere-Salido** is the Director General of the Mexican Transport Institute (IMT), a governmental applied research institute devoted to intermodal transportation. With a background in civil engineering and transport planning, Roberto has been involved in projects to address the access needs of low-income communities for over 20 years. In 1991, at the invitation of the International Labour Office, Roberto was involved in the strategic planning and design of IFRTD and, since working at IMT, he has worked closely with IFRTD Latin America to mobilise resources in support of their activities and assist with the co-ordination of research teams.
- **Roma Thomas**, Treasurer of the IFRTD Board, is a Communications, Public Relations and Marketing specialist with



IFRTD's founding Board (l-r Roberto Aguerrebere-Salido, Nite Tanzarn, Danang Parikesit, Roma Thomas, Gnderman Sirpé).

extensive experience in both the public and private sectors. As well as having worked as a communications consultant for Transport for London in the field of diversity and inclusion since 2005, and running her own consultancy company, Roma has been a member of the Project Team of the Women's Transportation Seminar London since its inception in 2005. Roma is an active supporter of IFRTD and has organised activities to promote the network to transport professionals in the UK. Roma has also successfully raised funds that are now being used for pilot projects associated with IFRTD's Mobility and Health networked research programme.

- **Gnderman Sirpé** is a transport economics specialist who has been an active member of the IFRTD network for over ten years. He was a founder of one of the first IFRTD National Forum Groups in West Africa. Sirpé is a lecturer in Transport Economics at the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso and has a wealth of experience both teaching and working with governmental, non-governmental and private sector organisations in this field.

Celebrating with the Women in Transport Seminar

In February the Women in Transport Seminar London hosted an evening of learning, networking and celebration to mark the new phase in IFRTD's development.

As Keynote speaker, IFRTD board member Nite Tanzarn shared her experiences and the latest trends in transport policy and practice in Uganda. The WTS then had the opportunity to talk to the IFRTD board and a number of UK-based IFRTD members.

Explore:

Women in Transport Seminar London www.wtslondon.org
Event Photo Gallery www.flickr.com/photos/ifrtd



IFRTD Chairman Danang Parikesit with WTS member Jenni Borg.

News and Events

2009 DFID White Paper

In early 2009, the UK's Department for International Development hosted a public consultation on the 2009 White Paper 'Building our Common Future'. IFRTD's submission to this process is now available online.

In this submission we highlighted the urgency of prioritising rural transport in order to address the ongoing mobility and access needs of the 1.05 billion women, men and children living in rural areas of developing countries.

We highlighted the critical role of rural transport in achieving socio-economic development and economic growth, through sustainable agricultural development and basic service provision.

We also underlined the need for improved governance in the transport sector and the contribution that rural transport can make in combating climate change.

Further reading:

IFRTD submission:

www.ifrtd.org/new/issues/DFIDwhitepaper2009_IFRTDsubmission.pdf

DFID 2009 White Paper:

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/whitepaper/building-our-common-future.pdf>

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News and Events

In Memory

Restu Novitarini Djarwoningrum

We know that many of you will have had the great pleasure of meeting Vita through the years. She was an enthusiastic IFRTD member, the Secretary of the Indonesia NFG (IFGRTD) and, of course, a very loyal assistant to our Chairman, Danang Parikesit. We were fortunate that the combination of these roles enabled Vita to both participate in and organise many IFRTD events, not only in Asia, but across our global network. In particular, she played an active role in our international and regional governance meetings, organised a successful networked research workshop on Mobility and Health, and was a dynamic force in our mission to promote issues relating to rural waterways and livelihoods.

For the IFRTD Secretariat team, Vita was, quite simply, part of the family. We have enjoyed working closely with her over many years and have found her hard work and enthusiasm difficult to match. In fact, Vita's work had become a benchmark for seamless organisation that we will all continue to aspire to. Above all, however, Vita was our friend, she was great company, funny and warm and she will be greatly missed.

Vita passed away in Jakarta on Tuesday 7th July 2009.

Brian Williams

With profound sadness, IFRTD joins the family, friends and professional colleagues of Brian Williams in mourning his death.

Brian passed away on Saturday 4th October.

At the time of his passing away, Brian was the Chief of the Energy and Transport Section of UN-HABITAT, based in Nairobi, Kenya.

During his tenure at UN Habitat, spanning a period of more than ten years, Brian closely interacted with IFRTD as the network's main point of contact with the UN system. A strong believer in networking, he was one of the earliest members of the IFRTD network in Kenya.

He also took part in some of the IFRTD regional meetings in Kenya, Rwanda and Zimbabwe.

His networking skills are reflected in his pioneering involvement with the Sustainable Transport Action Network [SUSTRAN] in Asia, a network model he endeavoured to replicate in Africa.

At a personal level, we will all remember Brian for his engaging personality, laconic sense of humour and ability for straight talk.

Recognition for TRADO

The Rural Transport and Development Group of Orinoquia, Colombia (TRADO), has recently been accepted and recognised by the Colombian Institute for the Development of Science (Colciencias) – a well respected national institution. With this recognition, TRADO is now eligible to receive funding for research, both from Colciencias and from other research funders.

This is a great testament to TRADO's achievements since the group formed many years ago during IFRTD's Rural Waterways research programme. It also demonstrates how support from a regional and global network can leverage greater impact by those working at the local level towards improved access and mobility for the rural poor.

For more information please contact:

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A Decade On: Sri Lanka's Community Bus Service

Ten years ago, in the Ratnapura district of Sri Lanka, three villages worked with the Lanka Forum for Rural Transport Development (LFRTD) and ITDG (now Practical Action) to introduce a community bus service. Today, villagers enjoy a newer bus and improved road conditions as they continue to benefit from cheaper and more reliable access to the local school, health centre and market.

Although the service, managed by members of the community, has remained economically viable over the years, it has also faced challenges. The results of a recent evaluation conducted by the Centre for Poverty Analysis are now available, consolidating the learning from the past decade and drawing useful conclusions for the potential replication of this pilot initiative.

The full evaluation is available online:

www.ifrtd.org/new/res/Cepa_Evaluation_Final_Report_2009.pdf

Colin Relf Young Voices Award 2009

Poor rural farmers are central to any solution to today's global food crisis and the long term problems of hunger and poverty.

Lennart Båge, President of IFAD, April 2008.

The second round of the Colin Relf Young Voices Award saw participants respond to this quote with examples of the role that rural

transport interventions can play in achieving sustainable agricultural development and poverty reduction.

We are delighted to announce the first place winner was Eric Fofiri from Cameroon, with runner-up prizes going to Thulani Muchiya from Zambia and Adama D Coulibaly from Mali. You can read all of their prize winning essays on the IFRTD website at:

www.ifrtd.org/new/res/colinrelfawardhomepage2ndwinners.php

We will be announcing the details of the next round of the Colin Relf Young Voices Award in early 2010.

About Us:

The IFRTD is a global network of individuals and organisations working towards improved access and mobility for the rural poor. It provides a framework for collaboration, information sharing, debate and advocacy that bridges traditional geographic and institutional boundaries.

Membership of the IFRTD is free. All members receive Forum News and any other publications that are made available to the network. In over 20 countries autonomous networks that subscribe to the vision of the international network have become affiliated to the IFRTD as National Forum Groups (NFGs). The IFRTD is facilitated by a small, decentralised Secretariat based in the UK, Cameroon, Kenya, Peru and Sri Lanka.

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