

IN BRIEF...

Support to Rural Roads

Sweden has supported various road projects in Kenya since the early 1980s. During the last few years Swedish support has focused on the districts of Nyeri and Kirinyaga. Under the current agreement between Kenya and Sweden, the programme in these districts will be finalised and then extended to new areas.

The overall objective of the Swedish development cooperation is to contribute to improve the living condition of the poor. Sweden is supporting the Kenyan road sector and the programme “Roads 2000 Programme” which has the aim of improving all classified roads up to a certain standard with methods using adapted technology and manpower. The overriding objective of this programme is rural development through the improvement of transport facilities, institutional development and employment creation. Since 1997 support has been concentrated to two districts, Nyeri and Kirinyaga.

Some significant achievements

The first phase of the Swedish support to the roads in these districts ended in June 2001 and was audited by Ernst & Young. Although the audit report points out a number of weaknesses in the programme, it also verifies some significant results. The quality of the roads sampled was generally found to be satisfactory. The roadworks have, for example, improved or maintained accessibility to markets by reducing transport costs and travel time, thus

making life easier for the people living in the area. The programme has also provided income through direct employment. Local contractors and suppliers have benefited by supplying various goods and services to the programme. These achievements were made possible by an improvement in the Kenyan Government's financial systems, which had caused the initial slow progress in the Programme. Sida supported the reforms in the financial systems.

Next step

A new agreement has been signed and the second phase will continue until December 2003. It has a budget of SEK 30 million (approximately 213,8 million Kenyan shillings).

The additional work in Nyeri and Kirinyaga will focus on the rehabilitation of rural roads in two divisions that were not included previously in the programme: Kieni (Nyeri) and Mwea (Kirinyaga). During the last few years, new settlers have come to the area and therefore the population has increased a great deal. Sida also intends to study the conditions for road support in the Nyanza Region, which is

located in the vicinity of Lake Victoria. Since Sida is already involved in other projects in this part of the country, this could provide some positive synergy effects.

Sweden will also provide a Technical Advisor who will ensure that important issues such as poverty alleviation, democratisation and human rights, gender aspects, concern for the environment and economic development are taken into consideration in the preparation process of the proposal for future support in the roads sector.

An efficient method

The Kenyan-Swedish programme of cooperation in the road sector started in the early 1980s when Sida was involved in the nation-wide Minor Roads Programme, together with other donors. This programme and its predecessor, the Rural Access Roads Programme (RARP), were successful where efficient production of roadworks was concerned. They became a key reference for many subsequent labour-based projects. One result of the programme was that many minor roads were in much better condition than the classified roads. Some of the methods for road maintenance that were developed at this time are still in use in the Swedish-Kenyan programme.

The total length of the classified road network in Kenya is some 63 000 km. Most roads have been neglected for a long time and are therefore in poor condition due to a lack of main-

tenance. As a result of pressure from the World Bank and other donors, Kenya has launched a road sector reform. The roots of the reform process are to be found in the Road Maintenance Initiative (RMI). The RMI is one of the initiatives under Sub-Sahara Africa Transport Programme, which was set up by the World Bank and the United Commission for Africa.

The process advanced considerably when the Kenya Roads Board was established in July 2000. The reformed structure will facilitate the effective utilisation of the funds available for road maintenance and development.

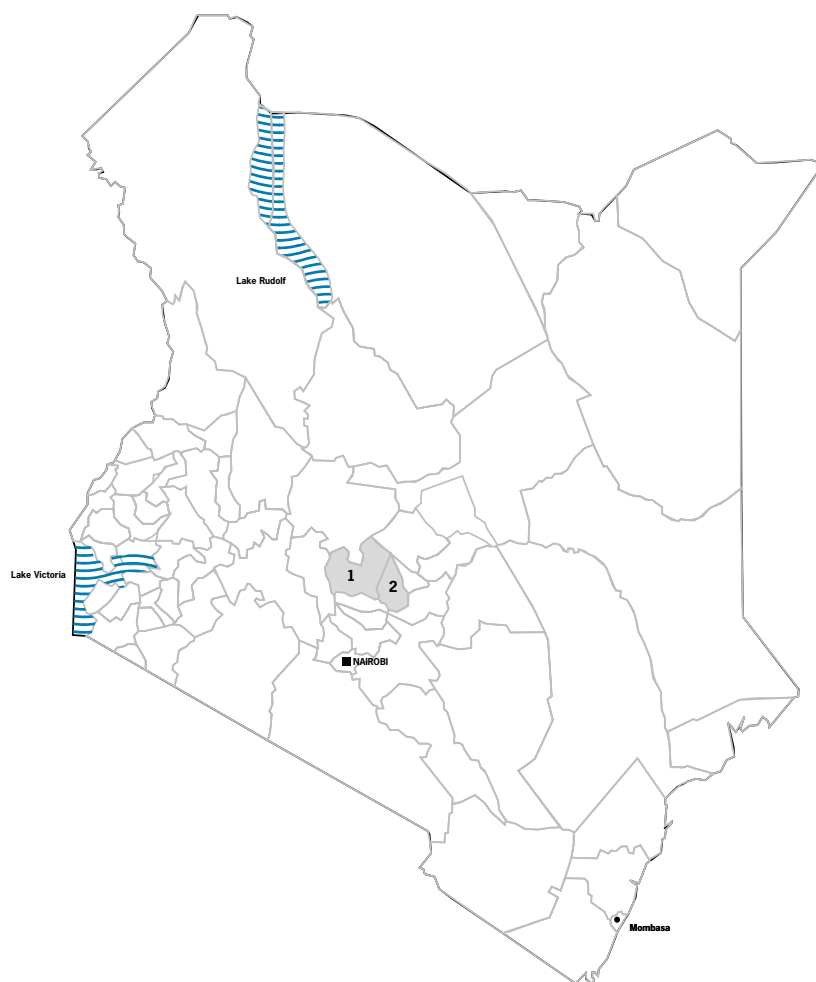
Sources

Preliminary Appraisal of the Ongoing Development in the Field of Rural Road Maintenance in Kenya and Possible Justifications for Continued Swedish Support 2001-2004. Roads 2000 Programme, Close-out Report, Financial and Technical Audit. Sida's Decision

MAP OF KENYA

Districts receiving road support from Sida:

1. Nyeri
2. Kirinyaga



BASIC FACT

Agreement period

1 July 2001–31 december 2003

Total budget:

30 million SEK
313.8 million KES

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