

Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning



The Oxford dictionary defines access as *"the opportunity to reach, use or visit."*

In the rural and peri-urban social and economic development context, the concept of accessibility can be applied to access to *basic needs* like drinking water, energy, employment and *basic services* like education, health care and markets.

In the rural areas of many developing countries, travel and transport consume a large portion of the household budget in terms of money, energy and time. Due to the generally poor condition of the road network, entire areas can become isolated for long periods of the year. This makes it difficult for rural households to access their basic needs. In this situation, paid employment opportunities are virtually non-existent. The result is often that rural people are forced to migrate to the urban centers. This further compounds social problems.



Providing the population with access to a range of goods and services and local employment creates the platform for economic and social development. This can reverse the cycle of poverty and outward migration.

IRAP is a fully decentralised participatory development planning process that assists local authorities and communities to identify what their restrictions to access are. IRAP also identifies prioritized investments in a way that maximizes the impact to those most in need. This

may involve the improvement of the road network or the improvement of the distribution and location of services.

The basic principles of IRAP are particularly suitable for rural Sri Lanka for the following reasons;

- The main lines of the IRAP process fall in line with the government's policies to decentralise and revive community based productivity
- IRAP optimises local authority and community involvement and responsibility.
- IRAP encourages the use of local resources such as labour, materials and local knowledge.
- IRAP is a flexible and 'best practice' planning tool that is easily tailored to collect data and plan interventions for a wide range of accessibility requirements. This is indicated by the diagram below.

Philippines	Laos	Cambodia	India	Nepal	Indonesia	Sri Lanka
Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water
Health	Health	Health	Health	Health	Health	Health
Education	Education	Education	Education	Education	Education	Education
Electricity					Electricity	
Markets	Markets	Markets	Markets	Markets	Markets	Markets
Livelihoods					Livelihoods	
Roads	Roads	Roads	Roads	Roads	Roads	Roads
Transport Services						

IRAP identifies access needs at two spatial levels:

Within the settlement area: Destinations usually within walking distance for the majority of the households, like potable water supplies, fuel wood sources, agricultural land and cultural and social facilities like primary schools and communal buildings.

Outside the settlement area: Destinations usually requiring the use of a wide range of public and private transport modes, like the market, secondary education facilities, health care facilities and administrative centers.



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For every sector studied, the IRAP procedure first assesses the existing assets. Information on travel time, travel cost and frequency is then gathered. Villages are then ranked according to their level of ease, or difficulty, in gaining access to Basic Minimum Needs (BMN) and services. This serves to identify areas most in need of development. Through consultation with the stakeholders a prioritized investment framework is then developed. By comparing the sector plans, an integrated accessibility plan is then created. Using this multi-sector approach, investments that conflict or are complementary can be taken into account.

IRAP IN SRI LANKA

The IRAP process develops around a series of participatory workshops. The workshops are conducted at both Gramma Nilhadari (GN) and Pradeshiya Sabha levels. The outcomes of these workshops are processed and the results are analyzed. Then stakeholders verify the analysis in follow up workshops. The stakeholders taking part in the planning process are: local authority sector representatives at the, District, PS and GN levels, religious leaders, women committee representatives, elderly people & senior citizens, Rural Development Committees, local leaders, and representatives of the departments of roads health education, Water supply, Irrigation & agriculture, and (I)NGO representatives. The following steps are taken to carry out the IRAP cycle.

a) Asset Assessment and Data Collection

A situation analysis is made of the PS. It identifies access problems and target areas. This process starts with an assessment of the condition and the location of the rural road network Transport Infrastructure Inventory (TII), other public infrastructure assets, Rural Infrastructure Asset Inventory (RIAI) and the location of all villages, GN centers and natural resources. After the inventory is completed, village level information is collected on access, using secondary sources and data supplied by key informants at village cluster workshops. Most of the information is collected making use of manual maps and Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers. This serves as a basis to update the GIS maps.

b) Accessibility Assessment, Indicator Building and Mapping

The data is processed and analyzed for each village and accessibility indicators are calculated at the village and the GN levels. The difficulty of access to specific goods and services is quantified, in terms of travel time, travel cost and frequency. Based on these indicators, villages and GNs are ranked according to their levels of access to basic minimum needs and services. Manual maps and GIS maps are produced to show the spatial distribution of the accessibility ranking. Poor accessibility rankings can then be used to highlight areas most in need of development. The collected information is compiled into a document referred to as the Pradeshiya Sabha Divisional Accessibility Profile (DAP).

c) Identification and Prioritization

The accessibility indicators for all the villages are compared during a PS workshop using manual thematic maps. The stakeholders identify and prioritize areas and locations, like transport routes, schools, health centers for possible interventions. A target village or GN area with the poorest accessibility in a particular sector gets the highest priority for access interventions in that sector.



A GN level cluster workshop



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d) Investment Planning of Appropriate Interventions

The stakeholders at the PS and GN levels define the sector objectives for access interventions. These interventions attempt to meet the BMN standards that the Government of Sri Lanka uses to monitor poverty. Using the BMN thresholds and other planning criteria, like buffer zones and service areas, the sector priorities are compared with each other and integrated into an investment framework (*see overleaf for an extract of Lahugala PS Division Integrated Investment Map*). Maintenance of existing assets is considered first before identifying rehabilitation and new construction.

e) Costing and Design of Appropriate Interventions

A preliminary costing exercise is then carried out to estimate the costs of the prioritized infrastructure based on the pre-feasibility reports for roads and standard unit rates gathered from state institutions and UNOPS for similar works.

f) Submission of the Accessibility Action Plan

During a final planning workshop the stakeholders study the investment framework and the cost estimation and agree upon the final version of the PS investment plan. It is then presented to the District Committee where all the stakeholders including relevant department heads, INGOs are invited to participate for ratification. Then the Accessibility Action Plan (AAP) is prepared

g) Facilitation of Funding and Implementation for Rural Roads

UNOPS will carry out detail engineering surveys, designs for the selected roads & decide on the technology choice for surface treatments to suit the terrain taking into consideration the technical & economic feasibility & environmental conditions.



Launching of the AAP's at each PS level will be organized to promote among the donor community and INGOs ; the sector investment priorities of the community basic minimum needs & facilities included in the integrated investment plans. The AAP's will be owned by the local authorities.

IRAP DOCUMENTS

The main documents being produced by the IRAP process in Sri Lanka are as follows:

- ◆ Pradeshya Sabha Divisional (PSD) base maps
- ◆ PSD asset wealth assessment & Situation Map
- ◆ PSD drinking water accessibility & priority map
- ◆ PSD school accessibility & priority map
- ◆ PSD market accessibility & priority map
- ◆ PSD health care accessibility & priority map
- ◆ PSD rural transport infrastructure accessibility map
- ◆ PSD Integrated investment plan map
- ◆ PSD Accessibility Profile (DAP)
- ◆ PSD Accessibility Action Plan (AAP)
- ◆ PSD Transport Infrastructure Inventory (TII)

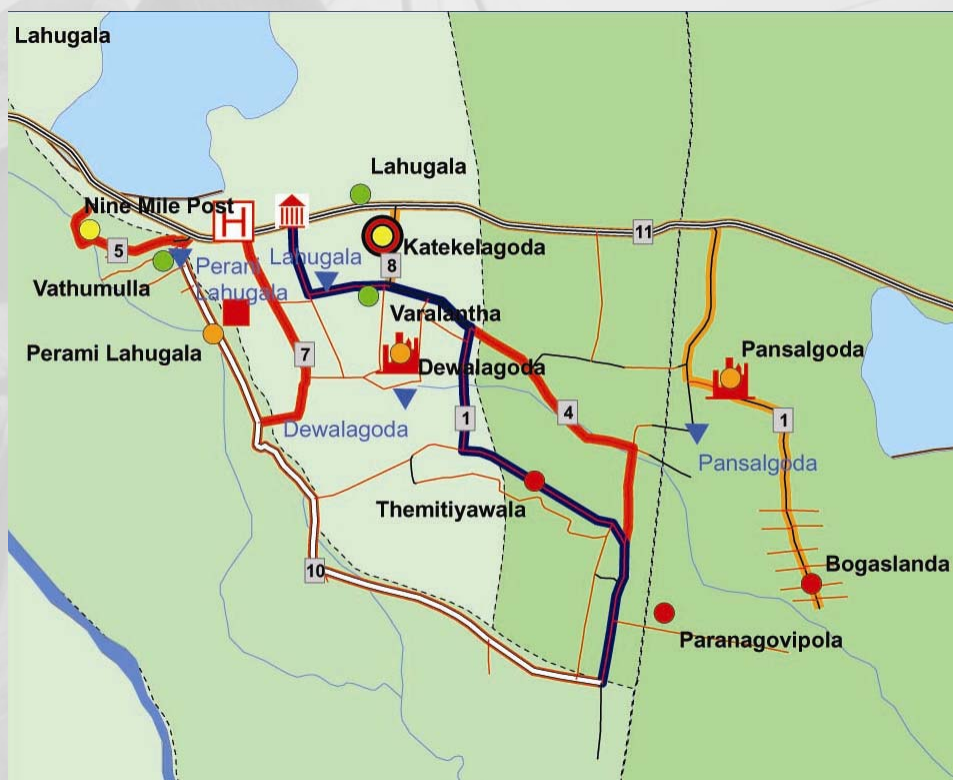


AAPs of Addalachenai & Lahugala



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EXTRACT FROM LAHUGALA AAP INTEGRATED INVESTMENT PLAN



Priority Investments for the sectors as proposed by the community and local government authorities.

Sector Investment	Priority	GN Name	Village	Proposed investment type
Drinking Water	1 st	Lahugala	Ketekalagoda	Pipe line System
		Kandahindagama	Kandahindagama	Pipe line System
		Hulanuge West	Hulanuge West	Pipe line System
	2 nd	Hulanuge	Kadurugasaya	Pipe line System
		Panama West	Panama West	Pipe line System
Primary Schools	1 st	Perani Lahugala	9 mile Post	Ring Well
		Panama North	Abesingapura	New construction
		Lahugala	Varalantha	Improvement
	2 nd	Hulanuge	Hulanuge	Improvement
		Pansalgoda	Paranagovipola	Improvement
Rural Hospital	1 st	Lahugala	Lahugala	Improvement
		Panama West	Panama West	Improvement
Village Market	1 st	Dewalagoda	Dewalagoda	New construction
		Panama South	Kurulan Pokuna	New construction
		Hulanuge	Kathurugasaya	New construction
		Pansalgoda	Pansalgoda	New construction

Road Investment	Priority	Road Class	Length (km)	Location
Road Maintenance	1 st	E	2.00	Bogaslanda Road
	2 nd	E	0.94	Panama Central Boundary Road
	3 rd	E	1.44	Watte Rauma Road
Road Rehabilitation	1 st	E	3.02	Varalantha Road
	2 nd	E	1.21	Abesingapura Fisheries Road
	3 rd	E	1.89	Kumana Village Road

PLAN OF ACTION

Addalachchenai, Uhana
Samanthure, Akkaraipattu, Damana
Dehiattakandiya, Thirukkivil, Ninthavur

20.02.2008
15.04.2008
30.06.2008

Padiyathalawa, Maha Oya, Karathivu
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15.08.2008
30.09.2008

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