

**REPORT ON RECONNAISSANCE STUDY
OF HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT
BETWEEN
KISANGANI AND BANGUI**

MARCH 1972

OVERSEAS TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENCY

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1. Introduction

The Plan of Trans-African Highway was taken up by United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and has been materialized as a project by the ECA ministerial council in February 1971 and further by the ECA Working Committee in June 1971.

Among others, during the above-mentioned meeting of June 1971, Executive Secretary Mr. R. K. A. Gardiner has requested the donor countries for assistance in preliminary study of this project, along with individual share in such assistance.

ECA Secretariat has requested Japan to make a preliminary study of sections in Republic of the Congo in order to keep pace with other donor countries who being the ex-suzerain countries have secured the foot-hold in African continent.

The Government of Japan has considered this sharing request and decided to make a study in sections of Republic of the Congo by despatching the study mission.

Regarding the sections of Kisangani-Bangui, two routes (northern route and southern route) have been proposed for comparative evaluation which requires rather comprehensive investigation. Informations concerning the above-mentioned route section being hardly available in Japan, and in advance of despatching a preliminary study mission, it has been deemed essential to despatch a reconnaissance mission in order to determine scope of study, itinerary, equipment list, local counter-parts and also collection of locally available information.

Members of the reconnaissance mission:

Head	Mr. Tsuneaki TERAUCHI	Engineer of Tokyo Metropolitan Public Corporation
Member	Mr. Takeshi MITSUOKA	Engineer of Ministry of Construction
"	Mr. Morihiko KAWARAZAKI	Commissioner of Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Note: Republic of the Congo has been re-named as Republic of Zaire, with effect from 27th October 1971.

Itinerary of Reconnaissance Mission:

Date	Place of Stay	Mode of Travel	Places visited
1971 Aug. 20		Air	
21	Athens	"	
22 (Sun)	Addis Ababa		Visited Embassy of Japan
23	"		Visited the ECA Secretariat
24	"		Visited the ECA
25	Nairobi	Air	
26	Kinshasa	"	
27	"		Visited Embassy of Japan Visited Ministry of Public Works, Govt. of Republic of the Congo
28	"		Re-visited Embassy of Japan Visited Institute of Geography, Govt. of Republic of the Congo
29 (Sun)	Kisangani	Air	
30	"		Visited Governor of Oriental Province
31	Banalia		Field Survey; details tabulated in the following pages
Sep. 1	Buta		
2	Bondo		"
3	"		"
4	Bumba		"
5 (Sun)	Lisala		"
6	"		"
7	Gemena		Visited Governor of the Province
8	Zongo		
9	Bangui		Paid courtesy call to Minister of Public Works, Govt. of Central African Republic.
10	Bambari		Field Survey; details tabulated in the following pages
11	Bangassou		"
12 (Sun)	Bangui		
13	"		Re-visited Minister of Public Works, Govt. of Central African Republic

Date	Place of Stay	Mode of Travel	Places visited
1971 Sep. 14	Kinshasa	Air	
15	"		Visited Embassy of Japan Visited Institute of Geography
16	"		Visited Embassy of Japan, the UNDP, Ministry of Public Works, Institute of Geography, and Secretariat of the President
17	"		Visited Embassy of Japan, the SEGTRACO, Ministry of Public Works, and the IRDB.
18	Brussels	Air	
19 (Sun)	"		
20	"		Visited the Congo Museum.
21	Paris	Air	Visited Ministry of Overseas Develop- ment Cooperation

Time Table of Field Survey:

Journey:	Month/ Date:	Departure/ arrival	Time taken (hour/min.)	Distance covered km	Speed km/hr
Kisangani- Banalia	Aug. 31	16:30-22:15	5.45	143	25
Banalia-Buta	Sep. 1	15:30-23:35	7.55	206	26
Buta-Dulia	2	8:40-11:10	2.30	81	32
Dulia-Bondo	"	11:10-15:00	3.50	137	36
	Sub-total		6.20	218	34
Bondo-Monga River	3	7:40-11:05	3.25	116	34
Monga River- Bondo	"	11:15-14:30	3.15	116	35
	Sub-total		6.50	232	34
Bondo-Dulia	4	(7:25) 8:15-12:27	4.12	140	33
Dulia-Aketi	"	12:27-14:17	1.40	54	32
Aketi-Bumba	"	15:45-20:45	5.00	202	40
	Sub-total		13.20	396	30
Bumba-Lisala	5	12:40-20:25	4.15	163	38
Lisala-Akula	7	7:45-13:00	5.15	206	40
Akula-Gema	"	13:00-16:30	3.30	124	35
	Sub-total		8.45	330	38
			(ferry 1.15)		
Gemena-Junction	8	12:00-17:15	4.00	181	45
Junction-Zongo	"	17:15-01:45	3.00	91	30
			(accident 5.30)		
	Sub-total		13.45	272	20
Total journey in Republic of Congo:			70.25	1,960	28
Bangui-Bambari	Sep. 10	8:30-16:30	8.00	393	49
Bambari- Bangassou	11	8:50-17:30	8.40	363	40
Bangassou- Bangui	12	8:00-22:00	14.00	756	54
Total journey in Central Africa:			30.40	1,512	49
Grand Total			101.05	3,472	35

2. Outline of Reconnaissance Survey

A most part of the projected road route in Congo are situated in the tropical rain forest, while areas north from Gemena, and north from Bondo as well as most areas in Central Africa are located in the savanna district. However, the actual situation is such that the section of Kisangani - Buta is located in the thick forest and a majority part of the southern route from Dulta along the Congo river is situated in thorny forest with scattered thick forests. Whereas the northern route upto Bondo is scattered with rather thick forests.

Data of the rainfall in these areas having been not available during the current trip, there was the Metological Observatory in the vicinity of Gemena. In the tropical district, the hourly rainfall is so heavy that during its field survey trip, in section of Aketi-Bumba, the Mission encountered a downpower with hardly any visibility and with an estimated amount of more than 100 m/m/h. Accordingly the drainage to counteract such heavy rainfall will have to be fully envisaged while designing the road foundations.

The soil of these areas is mostly latelite which is very sound for road construction. However, the soil of some areas is clay and sand, while the vicinity of Aketi along the southern route is located in mud low land.

Engineering standards currently used in Congo are almost the same as those in Belgium. Kisangani and its vicinity are obtaining domestic cement from mills in Kinshasa and Katanga.

Central Africa are importing cement from France. The Ministry of Public Works in Bangui possess the laboratory which in turn have collaborated with the Technical Institute of French Government, Ministry of Public Works, and with testing facility of cement, asphalt and soil boring. Officials in Bangui stated to the Mission that they are importing cement from Brazaville, with adequate strength for concrete structure. Crushed rocks with acceptable quality are readily available in the vicinity of Bangui.

As regards the road maintenance in Congo, the overall upkeep is not satisfactory with some sections being in extremely poor condition, with exception of section of Aketi-Bumba where the access roads are satisfactorily maintained for the purpose of railway construction and also roads in the plantations around Binga. Among others, due to the abandoned upkeep of wooden floor boards of bridges, ferry boats and related facilities, the overall traffic is now greatly impeded which will have to be suitably planned and designed for making possible the year-round maintenance.

Whereas the road maintenance in Central Africa is efficiently done by regional offices of Ministry of Public Works and as such in the satisfactory condition by suspending the traffic to heavy truck when it rains.

Overall upkeep of International Highway in satisfactory condition will involve the necessity of fully empowered international supervisory organization; if the road maintenance is neglected due to some reasons, this will immediately cause destruction of road surfaces and disruption of international traffic.

3. Economical Repercussion of Trans-African Highway

Trans-African Highway, when completed, will reduce the cost of transport in intra-African continent, shorten the transporting time and stabilize the international trade. These reactions will bring about better profitability, increase of production development of plantations and other production activities, followed by regional development along the Highway.

This highway project will also develop the inter-trade route among the adjoining African countries, expand the regional market and accelerate the exchange economy inside of African continent. Furthermore, the construction of the Highway will increase the demand of local goods and commodities, and provide employment of local people with eventual development of regional economy.

All of these reactions, when multiplied, will transform the industry, land ownership and type of labour which in turn permits the African countries transition from the existing subsistence economy to the exchange economy for further development.

Finally, this project will build up the transport amenity, and reveal the possibilities for economic advance with consequence of stable national life, while creating increase of mass communications coupled with widening intellectual horizons and also higher level of political stability through penetration of civil administration.

4. Comparative Study of the Two Road Routes

The Mission could not identify any decisive factor which determines superiority of either of the two road routes in terms of economic effects.

When compared with agrarian districts east from Kisangani, the western region is not satisfactorily developed; industries are newly shooting up due to stabilization of the Mobutu regime since 1964, in different fields to those having prevailed before the

Independence, with Lisala and Gemend becoming the center of new development.

In Binga, large plantations of palm oil and rubber with workshops are presently operating. In Lisala, the plan of rice field is being progressed with technical assistance from Taiwan.

Whereas Bondo along the northern route had been once the center of commerce and industry; there now remain remain ruins of dilapidated workshops.

In Congo, the southern route onward from Dulia has now become the major road. Whereas in Central Africa, No. 2 route -- Bangui - Bambari- Bangassou -- and No. 1 route which extending from the Cameroon border to section of Bossembele - Bangui are forming the traversing trunk road by connecting with. This trunk road is also important in industrial aspect by virtue of regional cultivations, live-stock breeding as well as the discovery of uranium around Bria located further up from Bambari.

As regards the consrruction cost of the two road routes, the mission estimate that the southern route is marginally more expensive; because the roads requiring rehabilitation amount to 1,074 km along the southern route, or about 100 km longer than those of the northern route which amount to 970 km. Also because the southern route involve mud low land of about 10 km. Nevertheless, the field survey having revealed the southern route to be rather easier in engineering aspect, the mission observe that the construction cost of the two routes is not of much difference.

The choice between the two routes will need to be done after making the overall study of individual economic effects and construction cost, while factors affecting such evaluation are road mileage of the Highway traversing these two countries and the political importance of these road system. Consequently, such choice will become the international topic between Republic of the Congo and Central Africa, followed by conferences of these two countries and coordination by the UN organizations such as ECA.

5. Conclusion

Immediately after the completion of current survey, on 29th September 1971, conference was convened in Adis Ababa with a majority of donor countries attending under the aegis of ECA Secretariat.

When the mission visited ECA Secretariat in initiating the survey trip, it was stated by Executive Secretary, Mr. Gardiner that the purpose of the September con-

ference would be collection by ECA of investigation data from individual countries, choice of participating countries in feasibility study, promotion of investigation by individual countries, and consequently, success of the Bangui conference scheduled in March 1972.

However, the September conference arrived at the conclusion contradicting such statement that the U.K. proposed its own investigation of the entire road route. According to information that the U.K. are now implementing such investigation, Japan have deferred the scheduled despatch of Study Mission.

Trans-African Highway project is deemed probably as the largest project in development of Africa because of economic unity throughout East and West Africa, and also trade benefits to landlocked countries. It is therefore of considerable importance in terms of overseas technical assistance for Japan to participate in promotion of this project by cooperating in investigation and planning.

Thanks are expressed to Messrs. W. Tiahun and O. Gliye of the ECA, and officials of Ministry of Public Works, Government of Republic of the Congo - particularly Mr. J. C. Mwenze, and Minister and officials of Public Works, Government of Central Africa.

