



The Integrated Resources Corridor Partnership (IRCIP)

Supporting economic corridors to realise their full development potential whilst protecting the integrity of ecosystems and environmental and social welfare





As with other developments, the need is to ensure today's economic successes do not become tomorrow's environmental and social problems. This will be achieved by protecting the integrity of ecosystems and respecting the welfare of communities from the earliest stages of corridor planning and throughout their development.

Economic corridors need a Sustainability Vision that aims to maximise positive economic and development outcomes while minimising negative environmental and social impacts.

If developed and planned according to sound policies, plans and programmes, economic corridors could be drivers of sustainable growth and poverty reduction. They could help improve and diversify livelihoods and trade, catalyse new investments and build strong regional integration. They could also integrate resilience to the risks associated with climate change. Further, effective planning and development can reduce the risk of conflicts and increase the opportunities for food and energy security. *If not, the converse will be true.*

Concerns exist that to-date economic corridors have not always been planned wisely for everyone's benefit and within environmental constraints. They fail to consider the accumulative impacts of numerous component projects or the synergies that may exist between them—good or bad. They fail to engender a sense of resource stewardship and responsibility to be shared amongst all actors within corridor boundaries.

Caught on a tide of political enthusiasm, corridors are being planned across the African continent. Yet, the long term risks to environmental quality and social welfare of some corridors, and the infrastructure within them, have not been adequately assessed. These considerations are routinely relegated to the project stage when only

mitigation of negative impacts is feasible. Ultimately, this may reduce the positive economic benefits of corridors.

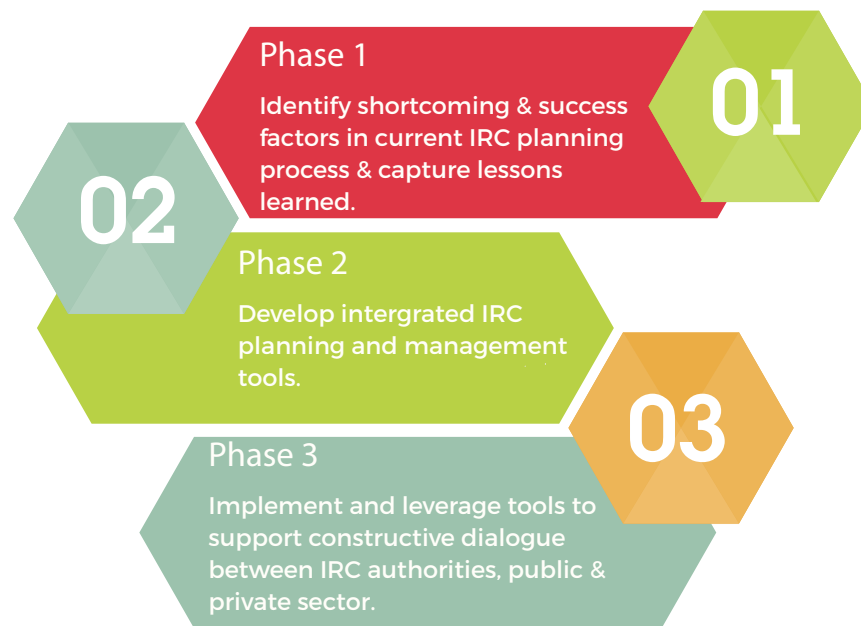
For this to change, environmental factors need to be an integral part of the strategic planning of corridors. Engineered infrastructure must not damage the integrity of life supporting ecological infrastructure.

THE CHINA CONNECTION

One of the most significant series of corridor developments is the 'One Belt – One Road/21st Century Maritime Silk Road' led by China. These will link Asia with Europe and Africa and escalate globalised trade and investment.

Following two conferences in Tianjin and Beijing in 2015 and a workshop at the 2015 Forum for China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), the IRCI Partnership has been encouraged to include a South-South platform to share knowledge and experience in good practice planning and development of African and Asian corridors.





The IRCIP provides a platform for greater coordination and cooperation between the various corridor actors and their initiatives. A resource is being developed to help corridor planners and decision makers address the complex challenges that they face. Readily accessible information, case studies, expertise and a collection of recommended tools will be made available. Importantly, these will be based on practical experiences gained from work in existing corridors.

OUTPUTS

Practical tools that assist governments to undertake strategic, integrated and inclusive planning and management of resource corridors and that support constructive dialogue between the public and private sectors in the planning process.

OUTCOMES

Avoidance and mitigation of harmful development pressures and the maximisation of development opportunities that arise from extractives and IRC development.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The Integrated Resources Corridor Initiative Partnership (IRCIP) is a platform for organisations to share their experiences, expertise and commitment to improve corridor development and planning. A shared desire exists to ensure that, whilst not a new phenomenon, the escalating political interest in economic corridors must achieve sustainable outcomes by being planned from the onset within the bounds of environmental limitations.

The IRCIP Scoping study (2015) recognised that there is no shortage of valuable work being undertaken within corridors. However, it reaffirmed the failing that much of this work is being undertaken as niche studies, often too complicated to have any influence and impact, and sometimes self-serving and organised in disciplinary and organisational silos, resulting in duplication of effort, lost opportunities for synergies and, sometimes, unnecessary competition.

IRCIP believes that corridor planning and development will be greatly enhanced by inter-agency, inter-disciplinary,

and international collaboration and dialogue.

The membership of the Partnership comes with no conditions attached other than a shared commitment to working together to promote awareness of the need for more integrated planning and opportunities to improve awareness and capacity in corridor planning. The objective is to help corridor planners improve their strategies and make more effective use of available tools.

The Department for International Development (DFID) UK, WWF and the World Bank initiated the IRCI Partnership. Since then, other organisations have expressed interest: UNDP, UNEP, OECD, IUCN, ICMM, DFAT Australia, amongst others. At a regional level, organisations such as the African Development Bank, European Union, UNECA, CAITEC, CCCMC have also engaged.

Adam Smith International, London, provided programme management support during Phase One.

RISE TO THE CHALLENGE AND JOIN THE IRCIP.

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