

Railways in Southern Africa – Converting our colonial heritage into corridors for development

- **Introduction**
- **The Eastern Cape - A showcase for rural Africa**
- **The way forward**



Introduction

- **Africa's transport costs twice as high as its international competitors**
- **Railways in Southern Africa**
 - **Poor service delivery**
 - **Weak financial performance**
 - **Outdated equipment with low serviceability**
 - **Derailments due to deferred track maintenance**
 - **Vandalism & theft**
 - **Fierce competition from road transport**
- **Road transport in Southern Africa**
- **Re-evaluate the potential of rail**

The Eastern Cape – A showcase for rural Africa

Why focus on the Eastern Cape?

- Typical of many rural regions in Southern Africa
- Two thirds of population live in rural areas
- Economy dependant on agriculture, forestry and tourism
- Challenge: To move from subsistence to commercial farming
- Limited access to markets due to inadequate transport infrastructure



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Transportation, a key element in rural development

- **Adequate transport infrastructure a prerequisite for agricultural development**
- **Economic and social development in South Africa impeded by collapsing road network in rural areas**
- **Re-vitalisation of rural rail lines could be the answer**

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Road infrastructure

- Only 13% of rural roads are paved
 - Poorly maintained gravel roads:
 - impact negatively on travel time
 - Increases the risk of damage to goods in transit
 - Road maintenance schedules not keeping pace with the growth in commercial vehicle traffic
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- A photograph showing a red cart pulled by two donkeys on a dirt road. Two people are seated in the cart. The background features a dry, hilly landscape under a clear blue sky.

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Rail infrastructure

- **Original rail network: 3359 route km**
- **Four branch lines closed, others no longer in use**
- **Spoornet not interested in serving rural customers**
- **Not complying with Government's socio-economic objectives**
- **Kei Rail project**

22/03/2005

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Economic growth restraints

- Limited employment opportunities in the mainstream economy
- Most small and emerging businesses in rural areas have limited access to logistical hubs and transport corridors
- Emerging farmers confronted with long haul distances and low import & export volumes
- Total lack of logistical infrastructure & services

13/03/2004

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Reviving rural rail services

- Reinststate rail services to provide local entrepreneurs with access to markets
- Manage railway lines as stand-alone business units and operate as commercial entities
- No hidden subsidies
- Develop rail depots as inter-modal hubs
- Use SMME's in the transport industry to provide a feeder service to rail terminals

03/11/2004


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Reviving rural rail services (cont...)

- Encourage community participation**
- Recruit local labour**
- Use mixed trains to provide access to schools, clinics, etc.**
- Local/Provincial Government to subsidise passenger services**
- Rail tourism**



The way forward

- **Recognise the ability of railways to stimulate economic growth along transport corridors**
 - **Ensure sufficient investment in rail infrastructure**
 - **Use rail transport as an instrument for economic and social development**
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- A steam locomotive pulling a freight train through a valley with mountains in the background. The train is moving from left to right across the frame. The landscape is lush with green trees and grass, and the mountains in the background are rugged and brownish-grey. The sky is a clear, pale blue.