On the Impact of Transportation Infrastructure Investments on Core Periphery Relations along Key Transport Corridors in East Africa

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Most governments have clear-cut and ambitious mission statements and policy planning targets to reduce core periphery disparities, yet the real influence of these policies is often unclear and sometimes in doubt. This is particularly important when considering the key role transportation plays in influencing core periphery relations in any region. The role of transportation to shape spatial patterns and promote equitable and widespread development, especially in marginal zones, requires careful analysis and planning.

There are few analyses and studies that have been conducted in the East African region to identify the contribution of transport infrastructure investments to regional development and a reduction of core periphery disparities. Studies available are unclear, descriptive, inconclusive and isolated only reflecting the some of the sub processes intended to promote regional development including; infrastructure development concerns (Semakula Kiwanuka, 2008), network upgrading (Piet Buy, 2006), road development (RAFU, 2004) poverty eradication (Kappel et.al, 2005), rural labour market participation (Mduma and Wobst, 2005), trade openness and trade costs (Mbabazi, et.al., 2008), trade policy and transport costs (Rudaheranwa, 2005) and decentralization (MOLG, 1997). As East Africa moves to closer integration, transport systems should therefore be optimized to make informed decisions and benefits as an indication of spatial and regional development responsibility. The project is applying descriptive techniques integrated with analytical methodologies to: 1) determine the spatial development patterns in the East African region; 2) identify the characteristics of the road transport along the two transport corridors in the East African region; 3) identify the transport bottlenecks that would determine the core-periphery relationships along the two transport corridors in the East African region; and 4) quantify the sensitivity of the core periphery relationships to transportation investments.