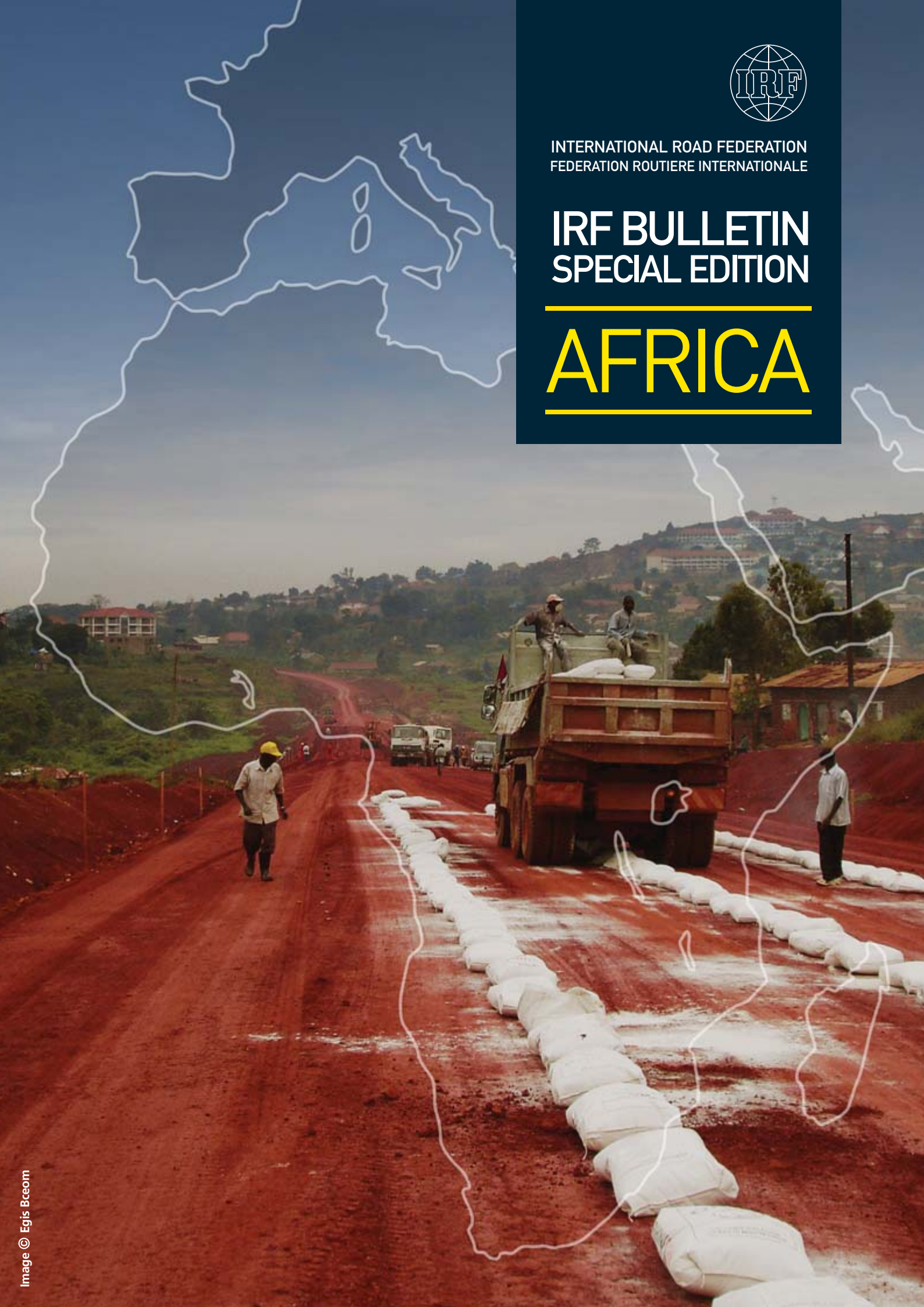




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**AFRICA**





# African Regional Highway Initiatives

Regional cooperation is a clear priority for the development of Africa's roads. And two examples from opposite ends of the continent suggest that, if large scale pan-African development schemes grabbed yesterday's headlines, the headlines of tomorrow are likely to stress partnerships between nations, for informed decision-making that will benefit all stakeholders.

## Towards a Spatial Development Perspective for Southern Africa

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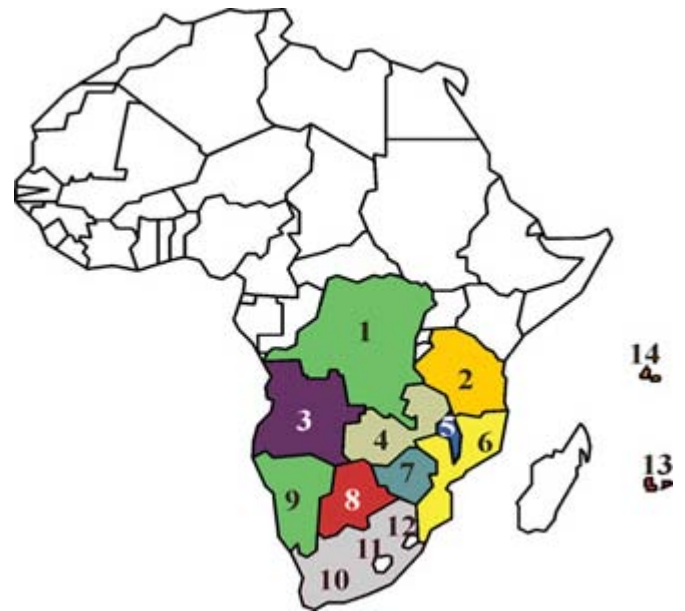
CSIR Built Environment, South Africa

To ensure equitable development in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, unravelling and understanding the role that physical space and spatial structures play in economic growth is of cardinal importance. In this regard, although ham-strung by the lack of readily packaged spatial economic growth and development data, a recent CSIR scoping study presents a first-cut spatial development perspective on southern Africa. The overwhelming evidence from the study points to the need for emphasising and coordinating spatial planning, including activities regarding human settlements and urbanisation for all 14 constituent member states of this regional economic bloc. Such planning activities would be located within and integrated with other SADC activities that seek to furnish prospective investors, policy makers and other stakeholders, with relevant spatial data for informed decision-making.

CSIR recommends that the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) urgently discusses the possibility of hosting the interim spatial planning office with the SADC secretariat and its development partners, with a view to eventually informing policy relating to the formal acceptance and establishment of a permanent platform.

The DBSA contracted the CSIR to undertake the research, which took the form of intensive desktop analyses, particularly with reference to Lesotho, South Africa, Zimbabwe as well as other SADC states where data were available, interviews with key role players and internal project workshops.

The study scanned levels of poverty and inequality, infrastructure provision, regional integration and development impact. Researchers investigated and subsequently enumerated key elements needed to ensure southern African responds creatively and sustainably to socio-economic development stimuli.



### Southern African Development Community

#### Key

- |                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Democratic Republic of Congo | 8. Botswana      |
| 2. Tanzania                     | 9. Namibia       |
| 3. Angola                       | 10. South Africa |
| 4. Zambia                       | 11. Lesotho      |
| 5. Malawi                       | 12. Swaziland    |
| 6. Mozambique                   | 13. Mauritius    |
| 7. Zimbabwe                     | 14. Seychelles   |

The study also confirmed what is intuitively already in the public domain, namely that development benefits and impacts are not uniform throughout the SADC region. Accessible and high-economic opportunity areas such as cities, rich agricultural areas, mining corridors, fisheries and the wildlife industry are better developed compared



to remote, resource-poor rural and peri-urban areas. Thus, starting with existing corridors, member states could cascade socio-economic development endeavours to adjacent areas to ensure direct benefits and spin-offs are shared. In this regard, the need for substantial infrastructure investment, for example in transport (roads, rail and ports) and information and communications technologies cannot be over-emphasised.

Rural development policies in SADC differ in tenor and intensity from one country to the next. Given the realisation that outside of South Africa, more than 70% of SADC comprises predominantly rural dwellers, a major finding of the study is that a strategy for encouraging rural development in all the SADC member countries is a prerequisite for socio-economic advancement.

In addition, given the synergies that exist between urban and rural areas, the CSIR recommends that the DBSA supports infrastructure development in existing urban and rural nodes with development potential, as these promote efficiency, for example, in labour and resource utilisation, spatial distribution and differentiation in the SADC space economy.

CSIR hopes to undertake a much more detailed, on-the-ground study of the region, to generate spatial data profiles and packages with a view to better informing decision-making and development.