



**TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS**

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**COMCEC**

**CCO BRIEF**  
**ON**  
**TRANSPORT and**  
**COMMUNICATIONS**  
**COOPERATION**

**COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE**

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## **BRIEF ON TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATION**

### **I. Introduction**

The transportation industry is growing rapidly due to the increasing per capita income and mobility needs of households, trade globalization, deregulation, and privatization of the transportation infrastructure and services, as well as technological progress.

Transport infrastructure is crucial for both the economic and social development of nations and quality infrastructure is a key pillar of international competitiveness.<sup>1</sup> According to the 'Infrastructure to 2030' report, global transport and infrastructure investment needs would exceed USD 11 trillion over the 2009-2030 period. In order to effectively plan and implement transport infrastructure, countries need to have sound national policy frameworks and ensure the necessary funding.

Furthermore, with regard to surface transport, worldwide road and rail passenger travel is expected to grow approximately from 120% to 230% by 2050, while this growth is expected to range from 240% to 450% for non-OECD economies. Moreover, global road and rail freight transport is projected to increase between 230% and 420% in the same period.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, the Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) industry is also growing and it continues to be a key industry of growth, innovation, and economic and social development. The share of the ICT sector in GDP is around 6 % in the OECD member countries and relatively less in developing countries. With the rapid diffusion of digital technologies into developing countries, this number could rise in the future. Besides, the indirect contributions of the ICT investment to economic growth, through improvements in total factor productivity, could be large as well.

Within this framework, transport and communications infrastructure is a critical component of the economic and social development of countries. The economic and productivity growth of a given region is tied closely to its transport infrastructure and transport systems, which enable higher productivity through lower logistics costs, inventory savings, and access to larger supply and labor markets.

Besides, the COVID-19 pandemic has had unusual implications on the transportation systems and services of the countries. The responses to COVID-19, from implementing social distancing to lockdown policies for affected areas, have huge implications for the mobility and connectivity of people and goods, the continuity of transport services, and therefore the entire sector including economic activity of cities, regions, freight logistics, as well as related industries, markets and supply chains.

Measures to contain the outbreak have resulted in a dramatic reduction in transport activity. However, after the acceleration and dissemination of vaccination, especially as of the second

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1 OECD, 2012

2 International Transport Forum (ITF)

half of 2021, the openings brought a positive effect quickly. In fact, the countries have effective and durable transport infrastructure system have been more advantageous than the other countries in getting out of the pandemic more easily.

The existence of a functional transportation system is truly a prerequisite for economic growth as well as for all segments of society to enjoy the benefits of national economic development. Both direct and indirect impacts of transport infrastructure can be transformative in terms of economic and social development of countries. Alongside its direct impact, the indirect impact of infrastructure arises through a variety of channels, including the enabling of productive private investment, the creation of new supply chains, or the reshaping of economic geography.

It is an undeniable fact that along with its high contribution to economic growth and social welfare of countries, the rapid growth of the transportation sector may results in significant environmental impacts. Excessive consumption of energy resources, wastes polluting the environment, noise, traffic congestion and traffic accidents are some of the negative environmental and social effects of the transportation sector. This paradoxical relationship necessitates the formulation and implementation of transportation and environmental policies in a harmonious and coordinated manner. Such a joint policy approach would constitute a significant leverage to minimize the negative effects of the transportation infrastructure on the environment.

Within this framework, measuring the environmental impacts of transportation infrastructures with an accurate method and model will play an essential role in establishing evidence-based policies to combat adverse environmental impacts. Effective measurement will also be beneficial in terms of shifting transportation investments to the least polluting and most efficient areas, and designing sustainable transportation infrastructure. In this context, having an applicable guide which instructs how to best measure the environmental effects of transportation infrastructures and so describes both technical-analysis and procedural processes step by step is of crucial importance.

Considering the importance of the issue, the COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group (TCWG) has devoted its 20th and 21st Meetings to "Measuring the Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructures in OIC Member Countries". Enhancing the cooperation among the member countries on this theme through sharing experiences and the best practices would directly contribute to the realization of related output areas of the COMCEC Strategy.

## **II. Transport and Communications Cooperation under the COMCEC**

Improving the functioning, effectiveness, and sustainability of transport and communications in the Member States is the main objective of the COMCEC Strategy in the field of transport and communications. Within this framework, since the 38<sup>th</sup> COMCEC Session, the COMCEC TCWG elaborated on the environmental impacts of transport infrastructures in its 20th Meeting.

**A. Measuring the Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructures in OIC Member Countries**  
**(20th Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group)**

The 20th Meeting of COMCEC TCWG was held virtually on May 3rd, 2023, with the theme of “Measuring the Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructures in OIC Member Countries”. In order to deepen the discussions and contribute to the debates during the meetings, a Guidebook search report with the same theme has been prepared for two consecutive COMCEC TCWG meetings (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>). While the preliminary findings of the report were submitted to the 18<sup>th</sup> TCWG meeting, the final version of the report was submitted to the 19<sup>th</sup> TCWG meeting.

In order to deepen the discussions and contribute to the debates during the meetings, a Guidebook with the same theme is being prepared for two consecutive COMCEC TCWG meetings (20th and 21st). While the preliminary findings of the Guidebook was submitted to the 20th TCWG meeting, the final version of the Guide will be submitted to the 21st TCWG meeting. The study will examine best practices, innovative approaches and successful initiatives in measuring the environmental impacts of transport infrastructures in OIC member countries or outside, and produce a handbook that can guide countries in this regard.

The study is also expected to draw attention to the current and future impacts of different transport infrastructure models on the environment, as well as trigger a serious debate on the identified issues and how to better address them. In addition to its strong theoretical background and analysis, it is expected that the study will provide a versatile and applicable guide to the Member States to be used to reveal the environmental impacts of their current or planned transport infrastructures.

The 21st Meeting of COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group will be held in October 2022 with the same theme of 20th Meeting.

**B. The COMCEC Project Funding Mechanism**

COMCEC Project Funding (CPF) is the other important instrument of the Strategy. Projects financed under the CPF need to serve cooperation among member counties and must be designed in accordance with the objectives and the expected outcomes defined by the Strategy in the transport and communication section. Projects also play important roles in realization of the policy recommendations formulated by the member countries during the TCWG meetings.

Under the 9th Call for Project Proposals, 2 projects were selected to be financed by the CCO in 2022.

The first project, titled as “Improving Human and Institutional Capacity for the Development of Key Performance Indicators in the Transport Sector of the OIC Countries”, was implemented by the Gambia with two beneficiary countries, namely Senegal and Nigeria. The project aimed at training transport sector officials on developing Key Performance Indicators.

The second project, titled “Improving the Regulatory Framework for PPPs in Transport Sector in the OIC Member Countries”, was implemented by SESRIC with 29 beneficiary countries. The projects targeted to provide capacity building training to the staff of dedicated national PPP authorities in order to increase the human and institutional capacities to leverage PPPs as an alternative public services delivery and financing tool in the transport sector.

Furthermore, under the 10th Call for Project Proposals, 4 projects have been selected to be financed by the CCO in 2023.

The first project, titled “Increasing Human and Institutional Capacities for the Establishment of a Road Safety Lead Agency”, will be implemented by the Gambia with Morocco, as the beneficiary country. The project aims to devise a roadmap for the formulation of a legal framework toward the establishment of a Road Safety Lead Agency in The Gambia.

The second project, titled “Increasing the Utilization of Innovative Financing Tools to Maintain Transport Infrastructure and the Services of Transportation Service Providers (TSPs) in the OIC Member Countries”, will be implemented by SESRIC with 20 beneficiary countries. The project aims to create a platform to increase the institutional and human capacities of the staff of the Ministries of Transport and other relevant transport authorities of the OIC Member Countries and to facilitate access to various financial tools for TSPs in order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the provision of transportation.

The third project, titled “Implementation of a Mechanism for Renewing the Fleet of Road Transport Vehicles in Benin”, will be implemented by Benin with Burkina Faso as the beneficiary country. The project aims to improve the performance of road freight transport services in Benin by emphasizing the renewal of transport vehicles.

The fourth project titled “Detailed Feasibility Study for Passenger Transport at specific portions of Hejaz Railway Alignment” will be implemented by Jordan with the partnership of Türkiye. The project is related to the feasibility study for introducing a new mode of transport, which is the railway transportation mode. This will enhance the existing transportation system in the focused area, i.e., Amman-Zarqa cities with an extension to the Amman main airport.

### **B.1. COMCEC COVID Response**

The COMCEC COVID Response (CCR) is mainly about alleviating the negative impacts of the pandemic on member country economies. The program is based on financing certain types of projects, which would focus on needs assessment, sharing expertise, providing direct grants to final beneficiaries.

Within the framework of the 2nd Call for Project Proposals of the COMCEC COVID Response, the Gambia implemented a sharing expertise project called “Alleviating the Negative Impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Air Transportation Sub-Sector of the Gambia and OIC Countries.” The main objective project was to learn from the experiences of the partner country, Türkiye, in order to achieve the results of making the air transport sub-sector of the Gambia more resilient to the pandemic, over the short, medium and long-terms.