



TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

OIC/COMCEC/39-23/D0



COMCEC

CCO BRIEF
ON
TRANSPORT and
COMMUNICATIONS
COOPERATION

COMCEC COORDINATION OFFICE

November 2023

BRIEF ON TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COOPERATION

I. Introduction

The transportation industry is growing more rapidly than ever before. Aligned with the soaring mobility demand of people associated with the increasing per capita income and technological advancements, the evolution of the transport sector and thereby the progress that existed both in transport infrastructure and services in the last decades is unprecedented. Together with new and emerging trends in this field, such as transport management systems, innovative transport providers, and self-driving technology, the transportation industry has gone through a massive transformation. Without a well-planned, well-functional, and effective transport infrastructure, the smooth transformation of this vital sector could not be possible.

Within this framework, transport infrastructure is essential for nations' economic and social development. The quality of transport infrastructure is deemed a key dimension of international competitiveness.¹ According to the 'Infrastructure to 2030' report, global transport and infrastructure investment needs would exceed USD 11 trillion over the 2009-2030 period. Additionally, according to the G20's Global Infrastructure Hub report, which predicts global infrastructure investment needs, the cost of providing infrastructure to support global economic growth and close infrastructure gaps is forecasted to reach 97 Trillion US Dollars by 2040. The report also emphasizes that every year 3.7 Trillion US Dollars will need to be invested in transport infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing global population. This is not just a major challenge for developing countries that need to create new infrastructure, but also for developed ones with aging transportation systems that need to be maintained or replaced.

Furthermore, concerning surface transport, global road and rail passenger travel is predicted to increase approximately from 120% to 230% by 2050. The more striking point of this estimation is the fact that the above-mentioned growth is expected to exist, especially in non-OECD countries ranging from 240% to 450%. Moreover, global road and rail freight transport is projected to increase between 230% and 420% in the same period.²

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.

1 OECD, 2012

2 International Transport Forum (ITF)

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 depends heavily on its transport infrastructure and transportation systems. Transport infrastructure plays a role as a capital input into production and wealth generation. In this respect, taking necessary measures for preserving a well-functioning transportation system as well as allocating adequate funds for new transport infrastructure investments is vital for countries to be prepared for tomorrow.

Despite its positive impact on economic growth and social well-being, rapid growth of transportation infrastructure and services may result in significant environmental impacts. As the demand for transport infrastructure continues to rise, it is essential to consider the environmental impacts associated with its development and operations. 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.

How can the transport infrastructure be transformed into a more sustainable, environment friendly and ultimately improving level of services without compromising its current positive impacts is the major concern of today's transport policies. The formulation and implementation of transportation and environmental policies in a harmonious and coordinated manner may be an effective response to address this concern. Such a joint policy approach would bring out a significant remedy to minimize the negative effects of the transportation infrastructure on the environment.

In addition to a harmonious and coordinated policy approach, 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 describing technical and procedural processes in a systematic way is of vital 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 38th COMCEC Session, the

COMCEC TCWG elaborated on the environmental impacts of transport infrastructures in its 20th and 21st Meetings.

**A. Measuring the Environmental Impacts of Transport Infrastructures in OIC Member Countries
(20th and 21st Meetings of the Transport and Communications Working Group)**

While the 20th Meeting of COMCEC TCWG was held virtually on May 3rd, 2023, the 21st Meetings of COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group were held on October 12-13, 2023 in Ankara, both 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 with the same theme has been prepared for above-mentioned consecutive COMCEC TCWG meetings. The preliminary findings of the guidebook were submitted to the 20th TCWG meeting and the final version of the guide was submitted to the 21st TCWG meeting.

The Guidebook puts forward a conceptual framework, provides global best practices for the assessments of environmental impacts of transport infrastructures, identifies the key success factors and challenges in the OIC Member Countries, and comes up with concrete policy recommendations to address these challenges. The Guidebook also reveals the subjects matter for effective assessment of environmental impacts of transport infrastructure and describes technical and procedural processes for conducting better environmental impact evaluation. In addition to the desk-based case studies examining the United States, the United Kingdom and Singapore, the Guidebook includes a detailed analysis based on in-depth research in the selected Member Countries namely; Malaysia and Jordan.

According to the Guidebook, the transportation sector accounts for a substantial portion of global Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. The expansion of transportation networks, including roads, harbors, and airports, often leads to deforestation, habitat destruction, and increased GHG emissions associated with the construction process.

The Guidebook shows that important regulatory laws and measures are being implemented worldwide to address the environmental impacts of transport infrastructure and services. For example, in line with the European Green Deal, European countries have set a target to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector by 90% by 2050. Achieving this target will require substantial investments in low-emission transportation modes, such as electric vehicles, public transport, cycling, walking, alternative fuels, carpooling, and ridesharing.

In addition, the Guidebook highlights that despite its vital role in shaping modern society, the development of transport infrastructure often comes at a cost to the environment. Acknowledging this reality, it is imperative to effectively manage the environmental impacts of transportation investments and operations. This approach is guided by key principles: anticipation, mitigation, the application of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), stakeholder engagement, employment of accurate methodologies, and understanding of natural systems and interactions. These principles form the base of responsible environmental management in transportation.

With respect to the OIC member countries, the Guidebook finds out that, based on the survey conducted, only half of the respondents (50.82%) stated that they monetized the environmental impacts in their project evaluations.

Besides, given the fact that the methods used for evaluating environmental implications are critical, the Guidebook outlines that the application of frameworks such as strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment, environmental and social management framework, environmental management plan, and sustainable urban mobility plans is equally critical for transportation infrastructures. Within this framework, regarding the methodologies used to measure the environmental impacts of transportation infrastructures in the OIC Countries, the Guidebook concludes that almost half of the respondents (49,21%) make use of these exemplary and similar methodologies in their countries.

In light of the main findings of the guide and the deliberations during the meetings, the 21st Meeting of the COMCEC TCWG has come up with the following policy recommendations:

- Developing/Improving a comprehensive system and institutional structure through a sound legal and regulatory framework as well as guidelines for better measurement and assessment of environmental implications of transport infrastructure.
- Improving costs-benefit analyses through among others incorporating environmental costs and benefits during planning phase of transport infrastructure.
- Improving the quality of transport infrastructure projects' data and statistics for measuring the environmental impacts
- Making use of ex-post analysis through statistical comparisons and qualitative assessments for mitigating environmental impacts of transport infrastructure.
- Enhancing institutional and human capacity through improved regulatory policies and special trainings with a view to improving the quality of measurement and assessment of transport infrastructure projects
- Promoting more environmentally friendly transport modes and technologies with a view to reducing their negative effects on environment.

All the documents including the Guidebook and presentations made during the WG Meetings are available on the COMCEC website. (www.comcec.org)

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, 3 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”, has been implemented by the Gambia with Morocco, as the beneficiary country. The project aimed 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”, has been implemented by SESRIC with 16 beneficiary countries. The project aimed 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”, has been implemented by Benin with Burkina Faso as the beneficiary country. The project aimed to improve the performance of road freight transport services in Benin by emphasizing the renewal of transport vehicles.

C. 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.