



## **Promoting resilience and sustainability of transport systems in Landlocked Developing Countries**

**11:30hrs – 12:45hrs, Wednesday 9 November 2022**

### **SDG Pavilion**

### **Concept note**

The COVID-19 pandemic showed the extreme vulnerability of landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) to disruptions to global supply chains. Measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 - such as closure of borders reduced connectivity of LLDCs to regional and global markets and further underscored importance of resilience of transport systems. The importance of sustainable transport in landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) was highlighted in the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) and in the political declaration of its High-level Midterm Review, adopted in December 2019, which called for the development of regionally integrated, sustainable, climate- and disaster-resilient transport infrastructure. And recently in the Awaza Summary Statement of the Ministerial Transport Conference of Landlocked Developing Countries, held in August 2022 in Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan.

Sustainable transport in LLDCs was also discussed as part of the two Global Sustainable Transport Conferences that took place in Ashgabat (Turkmenistan) in 2016, and then in Beijing (China) in a hybrid format in 2021. The outcome of the Second UN Global Sustainable Transport Conference called for addressing the needs of countries in special situations by expanding sustainable transport systems and infrastructure. It also called for accelerating efforts to decarbonize passenger and freight transport across all transport modes (road, rail, waterborne and aviation) while paying special attention to the needs of countries in special situations. Various barriers were identified in the transport sector that constrained quick action on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. These included means of implementation such as financing, technology transfer and capacity-building. Among the issues highlighted was also the need for more policy guidelines in the area of adaptation.

Climate change is a major threat to transport infrastructure and services in LLDCs, due to the increased risk of disasters, including flooding, storms, drought, cyclones, heatwaves, and other extreme climate events, but also due to the long-term impacts of temperature increase, sea-level rise, changing precipitation patterns, permafrost melting, or desertification. These can affect roads, rail infrastructure, ports and airports, as well as the demand for transportation. As the frequency of droughts has been increasing, climate change has also been resulting in more frequent extreme climate events such as heavy rains, storms, and cyclones leading to high economic, human and infrastructure losses and destruction. For instance, tropical cyclone Idai which hit Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe in March 2019 is estimated to have caused more than \$2 billion in recovery costs following its infrastructure and livelihood impacts in the three countries. The cyclone damaged the infrastructure corridors connecting the Mozambique port of Beira with Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It also disrupted regional trade and supplies of fuel, wheat and other goods.

Considering the importance for LLDCs to improve their connectedness and connectivity, and the fact that they still lag behind in transport infrastructure (in terms of quantity, quality, and funding), addressing climate change impacts in their transport infrastructure planning and management is essential. Improving adaptation and resilience of all modes of transport systems to the impacts of climate change is a top priority for all LLDCs. The development of climate-resilient and sustainable transport infrastructure will not only help LLDCs reduce the direct losses due to damage, delay and disruptions caused by climate change but it should also serve as a foundation for economic development and growth, for accessing markets and services, and for lifting families out of poverty.

Transport, which relies heavily on fossil fuels, and accounts for ¼ of all global carbon emissions<sup>1</sup>. Road transport accounts for more than ¾ of transport carbon emissions. Achieving climate objectives also calls for all stakeholders from different levels of government sectors to work together to design sustainable and green mobility strategies all aimed at achieving the transition to low carbon emissions. It requires to focus on policies and actions that support the shift to renewable energy, promote electrification of transport, increase vehicles efficiency, including ship and truck, and develop and promote clean and low-carbon fuels, promote further research in low-emission technologies, and to favor modal shift towards more rail and waterways.

The extra burden of being landlocked was worsened by COVID-19 that diverted global attention and funding to fight the pandemic, leaving little new funding for climate change. The impact of COVID-19 pushed more LLDCs into debt and debt distress.

**Objective:**

Taking into account that the COVID pandemic and other ongoing crises have increased LLDCs' vulnerabilities, this High-level event will discuss how to ensure that transport systems are sustainable, resilient and adapted to the impacts of climate change, while also supporting climate change mitigation. The session will further provide a platform for participants to identify needs, and share best practices, available tools, strategies and recommendations for developing sustainable transport and resilient infrastructure.

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<sup>1</sup> [Global Facility to Decarbonize Transport \(GFDT\) \(worldbank.org\)](https://www.worldbank.org/)

**Possible questions for discussion:**

- *What is your country/region/organization doing to make existing transport infrastructure adapted to the impacts of climate change and resilient to future pandemics? (Please focus on policies or best practices that could be replicated)*
- *What is your country/region/organization doing to promote low-carbon solutions in the transport sector? What solutions and tools are available for LLDCs to support climate change mitigation and sustainable transport in tackling climate change?*
- *What type of technical assistance is needed to build the capacity of LLDCs and transit countries to develop policies and strategies for sustainable transport and resilient infrastructure?*
- *How can LLDCs and transit countries benefit from better access to affordable climate finance to fund climate adaptation and mitigation measures and the development of resilient infrastructure? What are the main sources of, and conditions for such finance?*

**Expected Outcomes**

This High-level Event is expected to increase awareness of the important transport related challenges faced by LLDCs as a result of climate change; identify successful solutions and approaches that can be adopted, adapted or scaled up in LLDCs; to support the development and implementation of sustainable and climate resilient transport systems and including support for capacity building. The issues discussed will feed into the preparations of the Third United Nations Conference on LLDCs to be held in 2024.

**Participants**

All participants are welcome from government, civil society and general public from LLDCs and other Member States, officials of the United Nations, UN agencies, development partners, multi-lateral institutions, civil society, private sector, academia, and NGOs.

**Format**

The meeting will be held over 1¼ hours and will include high level Ministers and representatives from LLDCs, and relevant agencies who will present key issues and experiences. The presentations will focus on practical solutions and initiatives that can be scaled up to address climate change and transport in LLDCs.

**Language**

The event will be held in English.