

Draft Final Summary Report: Retreat on Sustainable Transport and Post-2015 Development Framework

June 10-11 2013, Venue: Greentree Foundation Estate, New York

Format: Four sessions with speakers & commenters, followed by Q&A and discussion

Session 1 (June 10th): Setting the Stage

Rationale: The Friends of Sustainable Transport (FoST) at the UN, organized since the beginning of the year three sessions, each with a focus on different components of Sustainable Transport. The organizing Missions (Netherlands, Thailand and Kenya) UN-DESA and the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) saw a clear interest in the subject of sustainable transport from several delegations to the UN and felt the need for a more in-depth meeting to identify the place of sustainable transport in the post-2015 development framework: -as a goal on its own, or,- as a cross-cutting theme weaving through multiple SDGs.

Nikhil Seth, UN-DESA, introduced the topic to frame the discussion by sharing the organizers' drive and expectations for the retreat and called the attention of the participants for the different reports (High Level Panel (HLP) report and the Sustainable development solutions network report in the context of sustainable development. He pointed out that all emphasize the enabling role of transport in the development process. The Sustainable Transport agenda brings the economic, social and poverty components of transport to the forefront. Sustainable Transport can help to bring about inclusive growth as called for in the post-2015 development agenda. A joint forum, within the UN, to discuss sustainable transport in a structured manner is missing. The time may have come to start discussing its establishment and functioning.

Background paper on Sustainable Transport and Post 2015 by Cornie Huizenga

The problem of sustainable transport is one of limited access to transport services in both rural and urban areas and one of lack of sustainability. On the former, many of the urban residents, especially in Africa mainly walk notwithstanding the extensive road construction that has taken place. Rural development is still being held back by poor road infrastructure and the absence of reliable, affordable transport services to take agricultural produce to the market. Air pollution, road crashes and congestion in many cases are responsible for economic losses equivalent to 6-10% of GDP.

With the rapid motorization taking place across the globe, the key is to provide more inclusive access to transport that is more sustainable and offers the opportunity for a more low carbon growth path for the transport sector. The Avoid + Shift + Improve (ASI) approach: Avoid unnecessary motorized transport + shift to the most effective means of transport or communication + improve the environmental footprint of transport is the best way forward to realize sustainable, low carbon transport.

There was a strong consensus among participants that the discussion on sustainable transport needs to focus on access and poverty rather than on environmental or climate change considerations. The proposed Sustainable Development Goal: "Universal Access to Safe, Clean and Affordable Transport for All", together with the three proposed targets on access, road safety and environmental performance of transport offers a good way forward to combine these different key elements of sustainable transport. In communicating the topic of sustainable transport importance should be given to the enabling role of transport.

Session 2 (June 11th): Emerging Contours of Post- 2015 Development Framework

One of the questions raised was what the best strategy would be in order to get sustainable transport included in an integrated and comprehensive post-2015 goal framework and what the focus should be. There was agreement that special attention is needed for the role of Sustainable Transport in cities as well as in the rural areas and also the necessary and crucial link between regional and urban areas. A focus on poverty reduction and the global south as well as the nexus energy-transport and cities-transport seems viable.

The topic and notion of “access” is a key ingredient to grab people’s attention for sustainable transport: access to jobs, health and education are clear targets to positively highlight the inclusion of sustainable transport, this can be supported by a focus on the environmental aspect.

ASI is a good concept and proof that we know what we need to do to increase access to goods and services and enable more sustainable transport options. In defining sustainable transport as part of the Sustainable Development Goals it is important to focus on indicators and targets, acknowledge institutional and governance challenges and to differentiate between region-specific challenges. Indicators on Avoid, Shift and Improve will vary by country according to current motorization rates. The ASI approach is not intended to deny developing countries the possibility to develop transport infrastructure and services. The ASI can help such countries to do so in a more sustainable manner. Supportive, well researched and analyzed data and a clear narrative are crucial to effectively communicate about the role transport can play in improving access and quality of life. This is more relevant in communication than the ASI message.

In the next 10 years, the globe will see an unprecedented growth in private cars and much of the growth will be in developing countries; which so far lack proper road safety measures. Road safety might become the 5th leading cause of death, if not addressed properly.

Participants discussed whether to deal with transport as a separate topic in the post-2015 goal framework or whether to link and integrate it with other topics. Both were considered to have advantages. Most important is to ensure that sustainable transport is included, rather than where and how.

Keynote Speech Amina J. Mohammed (Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning)

Ms. Mohammed stressed that a paradigm shift is needed as the world’s environment has changed significantly compared to the timeframe in which the Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s) were created in 2000. The new post-2015 agenda needs five transformative shifts: (a) universalism; (b) putting sustainable development at the core; (c) inclusive economic growth; (d) governance building; and (e) global partnerships. Ms. Mohammed stressed that the High Level Panel report sets the stage for a people-centered development process as well as ambitious goals, which are three-dimensional (environment, economic and social). Sustainable transport touches on all of these three dimensions. Ms. Mohammed stressed the need to engage the private sector more in the implementation of the new development agenda. She also emphasized the gender aspect of sustainable development and sustainable transport.

In the question and answer session, participants stressed that while transport had been missing within the MDG’s, this should not be the case for the SDGs. They questioned why road safety had not been

mentioned at all in the HLP report, while data prove that road crashes related death rates are now higher than e.g. death rates from malaria or TB. Ms. Mohammed acknowledged the seriousness of this problem and urged the participants to bring this issue, as well as other arguments underscoring the importance of sustainable transport, to the attention of wider group of decision makers on the post-2015 development agenda.

Session 3: Transport and the Post-2015 Goal Framework

General agreement existed about the need to sustain momentum for 'Sustainable Transport' created by Rio+20. This will become significantly more challenging if the topic is not covered within the post-2015 development framework. Therefore, it is urgent to have a strategy that creates awareness and sends out one message on the key role of sustainable transport in realizing the post-2015 development agenda suggested in Rio+20 and the HLP report. Ignoring the importance of sustainable transport will lead to less sustainable development world-wide, higher burden of logistics, safety issues, pollution costs, more GHGs, inequality and poverty. A behavioral change within countries is needed now.

A specific goal on sustainable transport "universal access to safe, clean and affordable transport," was presented for discussion with the following targets:

- 1) *Urban households are, on average, able to access jobs, goods and services within 30 minutes by quality public transport and/or walking and cycling infrastructure and rural households have access to paved or all-weather roads to take products to markets and reach essential services;*
- 2) *Traffic related deaths are cut in half by 2030 compared to 2005 with an ultimate vision of near zero fatalities;*
- 3) *Air pollution from passenger and freight transport is halved by 2030 compared to 2005, and GHG emissions from transport peak globally by 2020 with an ultimate vision of 40-60% reductions by 2050 compared to 2005 levels¹.*

The My World 'Global Opinion on Post-2015 Priorities' displays that transport is labeled as a relative low priority ('better roads and safety' ranked 10 out of 16 topics) but nevertheless still higher than sustainable energy. 11 out of the 16 topics mentioned in My World are enabled by sustainable transport. Based on this, the suggestion was also raised for the possibility of a multi-sector goal, "universal (improved) access to safe, clean and affordable energy, transport (and water) for all".

The ensuing discussion clarified that transport institutions should perform an analysis on the benefits and feasibility of pursuing one specific sustainable transport goal versus several (cross-cutting) targets under several goals. Participants questioned whether one specific goal would have chance of passing. There was general agreement that an advocacy for a dedicated SDG on sustainable transport is a powerful manner to raise awareness on sustainable transport. Some countries addressed their preference for a separate goal on transport.

To advance the discussion on the integration of sustainable transport in the post-2015 goal framework it will be key to have effective communication to the right people, organizations and institutions. There needs to be an active engagement with countries to overcome perception barriers and to explain that targets can and should be differentiated by countries. It is furthermore crucial that institutions work on a narrative, which is supported by data. One should analyze who should be approached in the advocacy

¹ Or as compatible with the UNFCCC agreements.

process (e.g. the ones who frame the SDG's or the ones who can influence those who frame them.) The Goal Framework does not need to cover all components of sustainable transport, but rather can consist of a strategy with a clear focus on a couple common targets. A roadmap for the upcoming 15 years should be created to understand on what needs to be accomplished for these common targets.

Session 4: Means of Implementation

Through the Voluntary Commitments on Sustainable Transport, including the \$ 175 billion MDB pledge for more sustainable transport an important contribution has been created towards the means of implementation of a possible sustainable transport goal and associated targets. MDBs and other organizations have jointly have been advocating and implementing the "Avoid-Shift-Improve" framework and we know that this works and is ready for scaling up.

However, large investments are needed to realize sustainable transport and to fill the existing finance requirements, estimated at \$300-400 billion per year for the next decade. The MDB catalytic finance contribution in 2012 was \$17,3 billion, less than 4% of what is required. The bulk of funding will have to come from countries themselves and from global (public-private) transformative partnerships.

Resource mobilization will be aided by a clear accountability framework for sustainable transport. The message of sustainable transport should be simplified to connect to the private sector and civil society and enable additional voluntary commitments.

Closing of the Retreat

Hungary, as one of the co-chairs of the Open Working Group on SDGS thanked the participants for their inputs and indicated that these would be very valuable in the continuation of the work of the OWG. He explained that transport will be discussed in the January meeting of the OWG but that there are also ample opportunities to introduce sustainable transport in other sessions of the OWG. This will be important to stress the integrated and cross-cutting role of sustainable transport.

The Netherlands PR in his closing words suggested that it might be good to focus first on getting a consensus on the targets for sustainable transport that should be integrated in the post-2015 goal framework. The development of a more detailed results framework on sustainable transport would be a logical next step in this process. The decision on whether these targets are best served by a dedicated transport SDG or whether transport could be combined with another topic, e.g. cities or energy, can come later.

The SLoCaT partnership in its closing remarks thanked the Dutch PR Herman Schapers for his initiative to develop the Friends of Sustainable Transport among the UN Missions, wished him well in the future after his retirement and expressed the hope that his successor would be equally committed to the topic of sustainable transport.

Participants concluded that a follow-up to the retreat would be desirable to further enhance the discussion.

Please visit the following events page for presentations and documents of the Retreat:

<http://slocat.net/event/929>

