

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**  
Committee on Transport**Seventh session**

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Item 2 of the provisional agenda\*

**Review of the implementation of the Regional Action  
Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in  
Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026)****Review of the implementation of the Regional Action  
Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in  
Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026)****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

At the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport, held in Bangkok and online from 14 to 17 December 2021, participants adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026). The Regional Action Programme features seven thematic areas: (a) regional land transport connectivity and logistics; (b) maritime and interregional transport connectivity; (c) digitalization of transport; (d) low carbon mobility and logistics; (e) urban transport; (f) road safety; and (g) inclusive transport and mobility. The Regional Action Programme has three overarching objectives: (a) efficient and resilient transport and logistics networks and mobility for economic growth; (b) environmentally sustainable transport systems and services; and (c) safe and inclusive transport and mobility.

At its seventy-eighth session, held from 23 to 27 May 2022, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific adopted resolution 78/3 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, in which it endorsed the Ministerial Declaration and the Regional Action Programme and requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration.

The Ministerial Declaration contains a request to the Executive Secretary to assess periodically the progress made on the Regional Action Programme, at national and subregional levels, analyse results within the Commission's Committee on Transport and work out relevant policies and recommendations on promoting and accelerating the implementation process.

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\* ESCAP/CTR/2022/L.1.

The present document contains highlights of activities implemented in seven thematic areas and achievements under the three overarching objectives of the Regional Action Programme. It should be read in conjunction with information document ESCAP/CTR/2022/INF/1, which contains a full summary of the ongoing and planned activities under the Regional Action Programme.

The Committee may wish to provide feedback on the status of the implementation of the Regional Action Programme and provide guidance on its future implementation.

## I. Introduction

1. The Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026) was adopted at the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport, held in Bangkok and online in December 2021. The Regional Action Programme draws concrete links to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, either directly or indirectly, including Goal 1 (No poverty), Goal 2 (Zero hunger), Goal 3 (Good health and well-being), Goal 5 (Gender equality), Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities), Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), Goal 13 (Climate action), and Goal 15 (Life on land). It emphasizes that transport is not just an enabler of the Goals but, in many ways, a prerequisite for success. The Regional Action Programme is specifically geared towards advancing three overarching objectives: (a) efficient and resilient transport and logistics networks and mobility for economic growth; (b) environmentally sustainable transport systems and services; and (c) safe and inclusive transport and mobility.

2. The Regional Action Programme guides the work of the secretariat along seven thematic areas, namely: (a) regional land transport connectivity and logistics; (b) maritime and interregional transport connectivity; (c) digitalization of transport; (d) low carbon mobility and logistics; (e) urban transport; (f) road safety; and (g) inclusive transport and mobility.

3. At its seventy-eighth session, held from 23 to 27 May 2022, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) adopted resolution 78/3 on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, in which it endorsed the Ministerial Declaration and the Regional Action Programme and requested the Executive Secretary to accord priority to the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration.

4. The Ministerial Declaration contains a request to the Executive Secretary to assess periodically the progress made on the Regional Action Programme, at national and subregional levels, analyse results within the Commission's Committee on Transport and work out relevant policies and recommendations on promoting and accelerating the implementation process.

5. Since the adoption of the Regional Action Programme, the secretariat has worked on its implementation in close collaboration with members and associate members of ESCAP, as well as development partners, to steer a path towards the realization of sustainable transport development in Asia and the Pacific and the achievement of the transport-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

6. Section II of the present document contains updates on the progress made and planned activities in implementing the Regional Action Programme in 2022. Activities conducted during this period were funded through a variety of sources, including voluntary resources received from the Governments of China, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, as well as the United Nations Road Safety Fund. The present document should be read in conjunction with information document ESCAP/CTR/2022/INF/1, which contains a comprehensive list of activities implemented during the above-mentioned period.

## **II. Progress made in the implementation of the Regional Action Programme**

### **A. Regional land transport connectivity and logistics**

7. The present thematic area encompasses both infrastructure and operational transport connectivity along the regional land transport network and selected aspects of rural connectivity. The implementation of these activities contributes directly to all three overarching objectives of the Regional Action Programme.

8. During the reporting period, several updates to the Asian Highway network and Trans-Asian Railway network were made and entered into force:

(a) At its seventh meeting, held in Bangkok and online on 20 and 21 May 2021, the Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network adopted amendments to annex I to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network proposed by the Governments of Myanmar, Tajikistan and Türkiye to update their respective railway lines, and these amendments entered into force on 29 April 2022;<sup>1</sup>

(b) At its ninth meeting, held in Bangkok and online on 16 and 17 June 2021, the Working Group on the Asian Highway adopted amendments to annex I to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network proposed by the Government of Cambodia to update Asian Highway route AH21 and by the Government of Pakistan to update Asian Highway route AH52, and these amendments entered into force on 29 April 2022;<sup>2</sup>

(c) In 2022, the secretariat prepared consolidated versions of the Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway Network, the Trans-Asian Railway Network and Dry Ports, incorporating amendments adopted by the respective Working Groups in 2021, and consolidated versions were made available on the ESCAP website.

9. The secretariat continued to prepare knowledge products and policy tools and to hold expert group meetings on best practices and regional approaches to enhance the operational connectivity, including during disruptive events, along the regional land transport network. This includes the following:

(a) The secretariat prepared a report on strengthening capacity for operationalizing sustainable transport connectivity along the China-Central

<sup>1</sup> See <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CN/2022/CN.47.2022-Eng.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CN/2022/CN.48.2022-Eng.pdf>.

Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor,<sup>3</sup> complemented by a technical guide on the agreements on international road and railway transport along the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor;<sup>4</sup>

(b) The secretariat revised the Model Subregional Agreement on Transport Facilitation,<sup>5</sup> which is intended to serve as a common framework for subregional arrangements for facilitation of cross-border and transit transport. In the updated version, an additional description of force majeure clauses in section V (C) was introduced and a more detailed proposed model annex on force majeure was included to help to improve institutional arrangements in cross-border and transit transport operations for responding to crises, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic;

(c) The secretariat prepared an analytical report on key legal implications of the COVID-19 crisis for commercial contracts in the ESCAP region and beyond, identifying critical issues, including applicability of force majeure clauses, and providing several practical recommendations on contractual policy;

(d) The secretariat held a side event on transforming Asia-Pacific trade and transport agreements and other initiatives to future proof supply chain connectivity in Asia and the Pacific during the seventy-eighth session of the Commission. The secretariat is preparing to hold a high-level policy discussion and dedicated side event on seamless and sustainable connectivity during the Third Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific on 28–30 September 2022;

(e) The secretariat is setting up an interactive platform on the Asia-Pacific transport network to present the current extent of the network and some of its operational features that can create visualizations of a wide set of long-term transport-related data. The first version of the Asia-Pacific transport network is available for review by countries to test the interface and verify the current situation of their segments of the Asian highways, trans-Asian railways, dry ports and maritime networks.

10. To help to increase the capacity of relevant stakeholders to support the development of land and multimodal transport corridors and multimodal transport operations, the following actions were taken:

(a) The secretariat developed and finalized the guidelines for harmonization of national laws on multimodal transport in Asia and the Pacific under the capacity-development project on enhancing integration and sustainability of transport networks in Asia and the Pacific through the development of legal frameworks for multimodal transport operations. In addition, two expert meetings on legal frameworks for multimodal transport operations in Asia and the Pacific were held in March and June 2022 to discuss, refine and finalize the above-mentioned guidelines;

(b) The secretariat held a training seminar on dry ports for States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in March 2022, and a webinar was jointly organized by ASEAN, ESCAP and the

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<sup>3</sup> ESCAP, *Strengthening Capacity for Operationalizing Sustainable Transport Connectivity along the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor to Achieve the 2030 Agenda* (Bangkok, 2022).

<sup>4</sup> ESCAP, “Database of agreements on international road transport and international railway transport in China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor”, technical guide (Bangkok, 2022).

<sup>5</sup> ESCAP, “Model subregional Agreement on Transport Facilitation”, updated 2022 (Bangkok, 2022).

ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the European Union (ARISE Plus) on streamlining customs formalities for international railway transport among ASEAN member States in February 2022;

(c) The secretariat partnered with the International Union of Railways to prepare a training course on accelerating rail digital transformation in the region, and the secretariat plans to hold three capacity-building workshops on rail digitalization during the year 2022;

(d) The secretariat published a working paper on mainstreaming inland waterways into national logistics network: national experience of Bangladesh, covering relevant aspects of logistics, including all the modes involved in the sector, to identify the potentials and limitations of inland navigation compared to other modes of transport and how it can complement them.<sup>6</sup>

11. To ensure the provision of regular advisory services and capacity-building programmes on facilitating the access of landlocked developing countries to the regional supply chains, the following actions were taken:

(a) The secretariat published a study entitled “Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan: Transport Connectivity, Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Euro-Asian Linkages”<sup>7</sup> and the “ITF North and Central Asia Transport Outlook”, prepared in cooperation with the International Transport Forum in 2022;<sup>8</sup>

(b) The secretariat continued its support to the working group on sustainable transport, transit and connectivity under the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, including planning the next meeting of the working group, to be held in Tashkent on 26 and 27 October 2022.

12. To offer new knowledge products and policy tools promoting greater consideration of the local development impact of regional transport networks and corridors, the secretariat prepared a technical modelling tool to assist member States to plan better transport routes and corridors, and achieve smoother coordination and management. The modelling tool can be further developed into training materials to increase the capacity of countries for optimal planning of transport corridors, maximizing their local benefits.

13. Finally, to contribute to increased capacity and the social inclusiveness of the logistics sector, the secretariat published a training manual on operational aspects of multimodal transport<sup>9</sup> and a working paper entitled “Mind the Gender Gap in Workforce, Including Transport and Logistics: The perspective from Sri Lanka and beyond”.<sup>10</sup> The secretariat also delivered a trainers’ workshop in Manila on 7 July 2022 and a regional policy dialogue on transforming the logistics sector in New Delhi on 15 July 2022.

<sup>6</sup> ESCAP, “Mainstreaming inland waterways into national logistics network: national experience of Bangladesh” (Bangkok, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> ESCAP, *Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan: Transport Connectivity, Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Euro-Asian Linkages* (Bangkok, 2022).

<sup>8</sup> International Transport Forum (ITF), *ITF North and Central Asia Transport Outlook* (Paris, 2022).

<sup>9</sup> ESCAP, *Operational Aspects of Multimodal Transport* (Bangkok, 2022).

<sup>10</sup> ESCAP, *Mind the Gender Gap in Workforce, including Transport and Logistics: The Perspective from Sri Lanka and Beyond* (Bangkok, 2022).

14. The activities listed above contribute to specific indicators of achievement through expanding and further improving upon overall regional land transport connectivity and supply chain efficiency; enhancing the sustainability and resilience of land transport systems and supply chains to external shocks, crises and disruptions; and improving connectivity and access to markets for countries in special situations (least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States) for equitable development, thus leaving no one behind. Future activities will continue to be guided by the indicators of achievement.

## **B. Maritime and interregional transport connectivity**

15. The present thematic area is focused on key mechanisms for connecting the region to global supply chains through maritime and land corridors, regional and multi-stakeholder cooperation, relevant data analysis and normative and technical assistance tools. The implementation of its activities contributes directly to all the overarching objectives of the Regional Action Programme.

16. To achieve the necessary progress under the present thematic area, the secretariat will provide for systematic and regular exchanges of best practices and experiences on issues and priorities for sustainable maritime connectivity in Asia and the Pacific and hold an interregional multi-stakeholder forum for sustainable transport connectivity between Europe and Asia.

17. During the reporting period, bearing in mind the prevailing travel restrictions, policy discussions on interregional land transport and on maritime connectivity were held as part of the Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Connecting to Global Supply Chains through Interregional Land Corridors and Maritime Routes (22 and 23 June 2022). Efficient, more resilient and environmentally sustainable connectivity initiatives and best practices were highlighted during both thematic segments of the Forum. The final conclusions of the Forum will be submitted to the seventh session of the Committee on Transport (23–25 November 2022), and the conclusions include several topics for follow-up, such as the proposal to elaborate a regional approach to green shipping corridors and facilitate the implementation of initiatives on the development of land and multimodal transport corridors in Asia and the Pacific, including the exploration of new interregional transport routes and corridors.

18. To further strengthen regional cooperation, highlight key partnerships and convey the current regional priorities in the maritime sector, the secretariat is planning to hold a thematic solution forum on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable maritime transport and a green recovery during the Global South-South Development Expo on 12–14 September 2022.

19. The secretariat published several knowledge products and policy tools offering best practices on sustainable, resilient and green port operational practices and maritime transport in Asia and the Pacific, including a status report on sustainable and resilient ports and maritime connectivity in the Pacific,<sup>11</sup> a report on facilitating sustainable and resilient port development in

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<sup>11</sup> ESCAP, *Status Report on Sustainable and Resilient Ports and Maritime Connectivity in the Pacific Region* (Bangkok, 2022).

the Pacific<sup>12</sup> and a report on supporting a shift to greater sustainability in selected ports of Asia.<sup>13</sup>

20. The secretariat is implementing several new projects and providing advisory services and capacity-building programmes on facilitating the access of small island developing States to global and regional supply chains. This work is expected to have the following results:

(a) Improved decision-making on national strategies for sustainable and resilient maritime connectivity and port development in the Pacific;

(b) Enhanced quality of national policies on sustainable maritime and port connectivity in States members of ASEAN and States members of ESCAP in the Pacific subregion, and related cross-border and transboundary cooperation, contributing to greater resilience of the Asia-Pacific position in global supply chains as a response to COVID-19.

21. Finally, the secretariat mobilized funds and strengthened partnerships with relevant global and regional actors to begin working on knowledge products and policy recommendations on enhancing the safety of port and maritime operations, and to develop recommendations on the storage of dangerous goods in port areas, as mandated in the Regional Action Programme.

22. The listed activities contributed to the key indicators of achievement for the present thematic area of the Regional Action Programme by doing the following: supporting a shift to sustainable and resilient port development; contributing to sustainable shipping and port operations practices, including reducing emissions and pollutants from shipping and port operations and developing green port infrastructure; and addressing connectivity challenges faced by small island developing States.

### C. Digitalization of transport

23. The present thematic area is focused on the digital transformation of transport in Asia and the Pacific. The activities planned and implemented aim to utilize digital technologies to improve the efficiency, resilience and social and environmental sustainability of transport, increase the awareness of digital technologies and the use of big data to improve traffic and other urban transport issues, interconnect maritime and port systems, and shift towards regional transport networks with smart transport systems. Regional and multi-stakeholder cooperation, relevant data analysis and technical assistance will be major tools to support relevant activities.

24. The secretariat successfully completed a variety of activities and initiated new projects to support the present thematic area. Following a series of country and stakeholder consultations, an expert group meeting targeted at North and Central Asia, and East and North-East Asia was held in 2021, and a second expert group meeting will be held in the fourth quarter of 2022. The aim of the meetings is to exchange knowledge on policy analysis and action plans for the regional road map for smart transport systems in Asia and the Pacific.

<sup>12</sup> ESCAP, *Facilitating Sustainable and Resilient Port Development in the Pacific* (Bangkok, 2022).

<sup>13</sup> ESCAP, *Supporting a Shift to Greater Sustainability in Selected Ports of Asia* (Bangkok, 2022).

25. The policy guidelines on the technical principles with cases and policy recommendations for smart mobility in South-East Asia have been completed and are now publicly accessible to enhance the knowledge, awareness and capacity of policymakers for smart mobility. A follow-up project on promoting the utilization of transport big data from smart transport systems in the Asia-Pacific region for the achievement of sustainable transport is being implemented based on policy recommendations derived from the policy guidelines. This new project aims to increase the awareness, knowledge and capacity of transport planners and policymakers to assess and formulate policies and strategies by using transport big data from smart transport systems.

26. With the aim of increasing the capacity of the integration and application of digital technologies in urban public transport systems, the secretariat initiated a new project. One of the elements of the project is to develop a methodological guideline on integrating digital technologies into public transport systems. The secretariat is preparing to hold an expert group meeting, and the secretariat will offer training and advisory services to selected cities.

27. To increase the common understanding and awareness of member countries, the secretariat published a report on facilitating the deployment of highly and fully automated vehicles in road traffic along the Asian Highway network, containing recommendations on facilitation of the introduction of these technologies through harmonized approaches and regional cooperation.<sup>14</sup>

28. The Subregional Office for North and Central Asia and the Transport Division of ESCAP began the joint implementation of a project on new technologies and digital transformation for more resilient and competitive railway operations, targeting countries in North and Central Asia. Under the project, the secretariat developed an inventory of policies, gaps and good practices on the digitalization of railways and multimodal transport in North and Central Asia as the first step towards the development of recommendations for the digital transformation of transport in target countries.

29. Similarly, the Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia, together with the Trade, Investment and Innovation Division and the Transport Division of ESCAP began to implement a project on promoting cross-border electronic information exchange for efficient railway transport and transit in East and North-East Asia to encourage electronic information exchange between railways for efficient completion of cross-border formalities.

30. The activities under the thematic area on digitalization of transport contribute to all three overarching objectives of the Regional Action Programme. The achievements in the present thematic area include increasing the capacity of member States through meetings and workshops, developing the regional road map for smart transport systems, providing awareness-raising activities through training and advisory services, exchanging best practices and publishing knowledge products and study reports.

#### **D. Low carbon mobility and logistics**

31. The present thematic area is focused on promoting low carbon mobility, clean energy technologies and logistics. The activities planned and implemented in 2022 aim to enhance the capacity of stakeholders in initiating

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<sup>14</sup> ESCAP, *Facilitating the Deployment of Highly and Fully Automated Vehicles in Road Traffic along the Asian Highway Network* (Bangkok, 2022).



policies to reduce carbon emissions from transport operations, accelerate the transition to low carbon transport and electric mobility, enhance the energy efficiency of freight transport and develop regional and multi-stakeholder cooperation mechanisms to support countries in meeting national, regional and global environmental commitments.

32. As part of an ongoing project in several countries, the secretariat extended its support to initiate policies to accelerate the transition to electric mobility in public transport. Four national capacity-building workshops on electric mobility were held in Georgia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and Thailand in 2022. Case studies on electric mobility and a set of regional guidelines on electric mobility in public transport are being developed. The participants in the regional meeting on a just transition to low carbon mobility in Asia and the Pacific,<sup>15</sup> held in Bangkok on 10 and 11 August 2022, supported the concept of an Asia-Pacific initiative on electric mobility focusing on public transport.

33. A concept of a regional cooperation mechanism on low carbon transport has been developed with the aim of enhancing consultation among member States; deepening regional collaboration through the sharing of experiences, information and best practice knowledge; identifying common interests and policy priorities in meeting global decarbonization commitments; and strengthening linkages to the nationally determined contributions. The participants in the regional meeting on a just transition to low carbon mobility supported the concept of the proposed mechanism. Subregional consultations with member States to refine the mechanism will be held in the second half of 2022. The note by the secretariat on environmentally sustainable transport systems and services (ESCAP/CTR/2022/4) contains further details on the regional cooperation mechanism on low carbon transport.

34. To accelerate the improvement of freight efficiency in Asia and the Pacific, as outlined in the Regional Action Programme, a new project on enhancing energy efficiency of the freight transport sector in Asia and the Pacific was launched in 2022. Project outputs will provide policy insights on modal shift, the improvement of vehicle efficiency and the use of advanced energy-efficient technology and sustainable alternative fuels in transport.

35. In cooperation with the International Transport Forum, the secretariat published transport outlook reports for South and South-West, South-East, and North and Central Asia, analysing their future passenger and freight transport demand and emissions scenarios up to 2050 and decarbonization opportunities.<sup>16</sup>

36. The secretariat launched a capacity-building project on supporting the policies on green and resilient transport infrastructure along the Asian Highway network, with the aim of increasing policymakers' capacity to design, upgrade and construct green and resilient road infrastructure along the network.

37. The activities under the thematic area on low carbon mobility and logistics contribute to the overarching objectives of the Regional Action

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<sup>15</sup> See [www.unescap.org/events/2022/regional-meeting-just-transition-low-carbon-mobility-asia-and-pacific](http://www.unescap.org/events/2022/regional-meeting-just-transition-low-carbon-mobility-asia-and-pacific).

<sup>16</sup> International Transport Forum (ITF), *ITF South and Southwest Asia Transport Outlook*; *ITF Southeast Asia Transport Outlook*; and *ITF North and Central Asia Transport Outlook* (Paris, 2022).

Programme to advance efficient and resilient transport and logistics networks and mobility for economic growth and environmentally sustainable transport systems and services. The achievements under these two overarching objectives include capacity-building support extended to countries to accelerate the transition to electric mobility in public transport, the Asia-Pacific initiative on electric mobility, case studies and regional guidelines on electric mobility in public transport and the regional cooperation mechanism on low carbon transport. Additional activities under the thematic area will continue to be developed and aligned with the overarching objectives.

## **E. Urban transport**

38. The present thematic area on urban public transport aims to enhance the capacity of stakeholders to plan and develop sustainable, inclusive, accessible, safe and resilient public transport systems. The focus of activities planned and implemented is on the integration of urban and transport planning, use of digital technology, planning of mass transit and promotion of active mobility and energy efficiency. The approach and modality adopted include multi-stakeholder cooperation in conducting pilot studies, collecting and analysing data, developing regional approaches and guidelines, and extending capacity-building support to countries and cities.

39. The secretariat is extending capacity-building support to member States and cities in planning integrated, sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban public transport systems. Some of the member States and cities included in the pilot project on enhancing the integration of public transport systems by using digital technologies are Chattogram (Bangladesh), Lautoka (Fiji), Almaty (Kazakhstan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan) and Bukhara (Uzbekistan). In addition, capacity-building support is provided to improve the resilience and inclusiveness of public transport systems in Shah Alam (Malaysia), Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia) and Kathmandu (Nepal). The secretariat is supporting Baku (Azerbaijan), Vientiane (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Darhan (Mongolia) and Pokhara (Nepal) to enhance social inclusion and innovations in public transport systems.

40. The pilot project used the sustainable urban transport index tool to analyse the existing state of urban public transport systems in most of the above-mentioned cities, and the results will be used to draft and refine policies to enhance overall sustainability, inclusiveness, accessibility and resilience of urban public transport systems. City assessment reports will include an analysis of the 10 indicators of the sustainable urban transport index, the gender and social dimensions of mobility and the use of renewable energy in public transport.

41. The projects and activities are in the initial stages of implementation, and the secretariat will develop methodological guidelines to improve integration and sustainability, and regional guidelines to enhance social inclusion and barrier-free access to public transport systems. The preparation of the city mobility assessments and study reports is progressing, and the secretariat will hold national capacity-building workshops. In some cases, regional meetings will be held to share experiences among countries and cities, and advisory services are being provided to cities and countries on request.

42. The study reports on urban transport in Kathmandu and Ulaanbaatar will include an analysis of the current state of urban public transport systems and a review of policies, practices and existing improvement plans and proposals. Comprehensive urban public transport and mass transit plans will be developed.

43. The activities under the thematic area of urban transport contribute to all three overarching objectives of the Regional Action Programme. The activities contribute directly to the following indicators of achievement for the thematic area: an increase in the number of cities and countries using the sustainable urban transport index tool; the development of methodological guidelines and regional guidelines on social inclusion and city mobility assessment reports; the planning of regional meetings for awareness raising and national capacity-building workshops; and the preparation of a publication on urban transport (knowledge product) and the Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific on the theme of environmental sustainability of transport systems.

## **F. Road safety**

44. The present thematic area is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal target 3.6, on reducing the number of fatalities and injuries from road traffic crashes, and target 11.2, on providing access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all by 2030. In addition, the thematic area on road safety supports General Assembly resolution 74/299 on improving global road safety, in which the Assembly proclaimed the period 2021–2030 as the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety and set the ambitious target of reducing road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50 per cent from 2021 to 2030. All members and associate members were encouraged to intensify national efforts and regional collaboration with a view to meet the road safety related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as described in Commission resolution 74/3.

45. Several initiatives have contributed to the implementation of the Regional Action Programme under the thematic area of road safety. At the regional level, the Transport Division of ESCAP conducted a study to review the Global Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety in the context of the Asia-Pacific region and prepared a draft regional plan in consultation with member States. At the regional capacity-building workshop on the development of a regional plan of action for the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety<sup>17</sup> that took place in March 2022, member States provided feedback on the draft regional plan, and it was subsequently revised. The revised draft was presented at a regional meeting on the regional plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety, held in Bangkok and online on 9 and 10 August 2022. The participants in the meeting recommended that the regional plan of action for Asia and the Pacific for the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030 be presented for endorsement to the Committee on Transport at its seventh session. The plan of action may serve as a guiding document to support the implementation of the objectives to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50 per cent from 2021 to 2030 and the continued action through 2030 to achieve all the road safety-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, including target 3.6.

46. The Expert Group Meeting on Improving Road Safety was held in Bangkok and online on 9 and 10 August 2022. At the meeting, the secretariat presented the findings of its studies on road safety risk factors, including speeding, use of motorcycle helmets and seat belts, and distraction caused by mobile phone use while driving, with the aim of facilitating discussion among government officials from ESCAP member countries and representatives of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, research

<sup>17</sup> See [www.unescap.org/events/2022/virtual-regional-capacity-building-workshop-development-regional-plan-action-second](http://www.unescap.org/events/2022/virtual-regional-capacity-building-workshop-development-regional-plan-action-second).

institutions and academia in tackling the risk factors and improving road safety in the region.

47. Effective monitoring and evaluation of progress is contingent upon accurate data systems to measure and monitor road traffic deaths, injuries and crashes. To address data discrepancies in the Asia-Pacific region, the secretariat continued to work with its development partners, including the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the International Transport Forum and the International Automobile Federation, towards the strengthening of the Asia-Pacific Road Safety Observatory. The aim of the Asia-Pacific Road Safety Observatory is to become the regional forum on road safety data, policies and practices across the region. With 23 members as of June 2022, the Asia-Pacific Road Safety Observatory has already become a platform for decision makers to learn more about the importance of accurate and harmonized crash data and to foster the development of a synergistic environment to empower countries to collect useful and timely information to address the ongoing road safety crisis.

48. Under the United Nations Road Safety Fund, the secretariat is implementing a project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic towards improving the driver licensing system in the country. The project supported the Department of Transport within the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in conducting six preparatory studies in 2022. In addition, the secretariat implemented a project in the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2022 to strengthen the capacity of the national road safety commission as the lead national road safety agency.

49. The secretariat is conducting a study on strategies to tackle mobile phone use while driving as a risk factor for road crashes. The study considers measures for infrastructure, vehicles and driver behaviour to reduce distraction caused by mobile phone use while driving. Its output is an implementation framework for member States, which is expected to be published by the fourth quarter of 2022.

50. The activities under the thematic area of road safety contribute to the overarching objective of safe and inclusive transport and mobility through indicators of achievement pertaining to the endorsement of a regional plan of action for the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030, formulation and implementation of associated national policies and strategies, improvement of road crash data management systems, implementation of safe system interventions, and the promotion and development of relevant knowledge products.

## **G. Inclusive transport and mobility**

51. The present thematic area is focused on developing the knowledge base and enhancing the capacity of stakeholders for designing inclusive transport policies to improve accessibility while reducing poverty and inequality. The activities planned and implemented in 2022 address transport challenges faced by different social groups, including lower income households, older persons, women, persons with disabilities and transport users in rural areas. Knowledge products, such as a compilation of best practices, practical guidelines and policy briefs for use in countries and cities, are being developed. In addition, inclusive transport and mobility activities will highlight the use of technology and innovation in inclusive transport planning, collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data, provision of advisory services and capacity-building support to stakeholders and enhancing regional and multi-stakeholder cooperation.

52. As outlined in section E on urban transport, the secretariat is implementing a new project focusing on enhancing social inclusion and innovations in urban transport systems in Asia-Pacific cities. A user-friendly set of guidelines for universal accessibility, safety, social inclusion and innovation in urban transport systems will be developed, and case studies on best practices will be compiled. An expert group meeting and training workshops for pilot cities are planned. National workshops on urban public transport that are planned for Malaysia, Mongolia and Nepal in 2022 will also include a session on planning for social inclusion in public transport.

53. The regional meeting on a just transition to low carbon mobility, held on 10 and 11 August 2022, included a session on social inclusion and addressed the vulnerability of transport workers, especially in the context of climate change as countries transition to net zero carbon mobility. Some member States, in particular the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Nepal, are addressing universal accessibility and social inclusion in public transport planning.

54. Rural communities within Asia-Pacific countries in special situations have inadequate access to the Internet, digital products and services, transport connection and services, and public utilities, compared to rural communities in advanced Asia-Pacific countries. Inadequate accessibility of services hampered the abilities of rural communities to effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and other external shocks.

55. Against this background, a project on digital and transport connectivity for socioeconomic resilience of rural communities post-COVID-19 in Asia-Pacific countries, under the fourteenth tranche of the United Nations Development Account, is being jointly implemented by the ESCAP Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division and Transport Division. The objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of government officials in selected Asia-Pacific countries, namely Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Samoa, to develop innovative strategies for improving rural digital and transport connectivity for socioeconomic resilience. The study reports are expected to propose actionable strategies to strengthen rural infrastructure connectivity that will be considered at national and regional workshops to facilitate South-South cooperation and information-sharing.

56. The secretariat plans to develop more projects and implement activities to address social inclusion and accessibility of transport systems according to the needs of different social groups. The importance of addressing social inclusion in transport, for both users and workers, will also be advocated at planned transport events. Capacity-building workshops will be organized, and advisory services will be provided to cities and countries upon request.

57. Addressing social inclusion in transport is a relatively new area of work at ESCAP. The activities implemented under the thematic area of inclusive transport and mobility contribute to the overarching objective of the Regional Action Programme to advance safe and inclusive transport and mobility. Although the activities are in the initial stage of implementation, expected outputs correspond to indicators of achievement for the thematic area, such as the development of user-friendly guidelines, collection of best practices, policy briefs on addressing social inclusion in transport, planned expert group meetings and training workshops.

### **III. Issues for consideration by the Committee**

58. The Committee may wish to review the activities described in the present document and provide further guidance to the secretariat on future activities in support of the implementation of the Regional Action Programme. Representatives may also wish to inform the Committee of progress and relevant activities at the national, subregional and regional levels that contribute towards achieving sustainable transport development in the region.

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