



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
7 December 2018

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Eighty-first session

Geneva, 19-22 February 2019

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

Strategic questions of a horizontal policy nature:

**Policy dialogue and technical assistance
to countries with economies in transition
and developing economies**

Technical Assistance and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Technical Assistance (TA) activities supported the efforts of member States to connect national transport policies with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and gave information on the available statistical tools to measure and monitor implementation. This paper presents capacity building activities on the transport-related Goals in countries with economies in transition and developing economies.

The Inland Transport Committee **is invited** to:

- **take note** of activities in the field of technical assistance to the member States in achieving transport-related Sustainable Development Goals; and
- **provide guidance** on the main directions for future technical assistance and policy dialogue by the Sustainable Transport Division.

I. Background

1. On 1 January 2016, the world officially began implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹—the transformative plan of action based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals — to address the most important global challenges over the next 15 years.

2. Countries officially adopted this historic new agenda, knowing that transport drives development by enabling trade and economic growth and allowing people to access jobs, services, education and the interactions that help create full and fulfilled lives. At the same time, sustainable transport development has to fight climate change by advancing the people-centred goals at the heart of the 2030 Agenda while protecting and preserving the planet and its resources for generations to come.

3. Sustainable transport is very important to achieving most, if not all, of the proposed Sustainable Development Goals. Although sustainable transport is not represented by a standalone goal, it is mainstreamed across several goals and targets, especially those related to health/road safety (Goal 3), building resilient infrastructure (Goal 9), building safe and accessible transport system in cities and human settlements (Goal 11) and sustainable use of energy (Goal 7).

4. It is of utmost importance to monitor goal and target achievement, report on it and constantly update national strategies and activities for better life of generations to come. A robust follow-up and review mechanism for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requiring a solid framework of indicators and statistical data to monitor progress, inform policy and ensure accountability of all stakeholders.²

5. In the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Sustainable Transport Division supports the goal monitoring and reporting mechanisms:

- By participating in the discussions on the statistical indicators used to track progress on the Goals.
- By collecting data that directly feed into the Goal indicators, notably for targets 3.6.1 and 9.1.2.
- By providing internationally-agreed methodologies for these data to be collected.
- By offering technical assistance to strengthen capacities on monitoring and reporting on Goal achievements.

II. Technical assistance on Sustainable Development Goals

6. TA activities are defined in accordance with the Sustainable Transport Division's programme of work and in conformity with the mandates given by ECE member States, either from the Inland Transport Committee or through requests directly expressed by a member State.

7. With transport playing a critical role in the 2030 Development Agenda, with targets and indicators spread across multiple goals, it is crucial that specific capacity-building activities are carried out to improve the understanding and knowledge of transport-related Sustainable Development Goals and to support the consistent measurement, monitoring of

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

² <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/>

the goals, targets and indicators related to transport, with follow-up and reporting activities. In particular, the following indicators are considered of most relevance:

- 3.6.1: to halve the number of road fatalities by 2020
- 9.1.2: measuring passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport, and
- 11.2.1: the proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

8. In July 2017, the Working Party on Transport Statistics held a workshop on data sources for rail statistics entitled “Promoting Data Quality in Rail Statistics: Sharing Country Practices”. The workshop was the first in a series of ECE workshops on transport statistics. As a useful step towards improving information sharing between different rail data providers and users, it should be viewed as part of the ongoing conversation that ECE will continue to foster on this topic.

9. With the aim of improving the understanding and knowledge of transport-related Sustainable Development Goals in beneficiary countries and facilitating the participation of member States in ECE data collection through the Web Common Questionnaire (WebCoQ), the Division organized three capacity-building workshops in the autumn of 2017 to share information on the transport Sustainable Development Goals, support the development of goal monitoring and reporting mechanism, strengthen national transport statistics capacity and improve upon data quality.

- Podgorica, 11-12 October 2017, for countries of South East Europe and Moldova.
- Astana, 2-3 November 2017, principally for the Special Programme for Economies in Central Asia (SPECA) countries.
- Ljubljana, 16-17 November 2017, in partnership with the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region.

10. “How to achieve Transport- and Trade-related SDGs” in Podgorica (11-12 October 2017), was attended by more than 45 representatives from Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The workshop was organized jointly by the Sustainable Transport and Trade Divisions of ECE, and covered transport- and trade-related Sustainable Development Goals. It represents a good example of ECE cross-divisional cooperation.

11. “SPECA Workshop on Transport-related SDGs” in Astana (2-3 November 2017), was held back-to-back with the SPECA TWG-STTC. More than 45 representatives from the SPECA region, East and South-East Europe and international institutions (Asian Development Bank, International Transport Forum, Islamic Development Bank and the World Bank) discussed transport Sustainable Development Goals achievement and national monitoring mechanisms. The aim of the workshop was to strengthen transport-related goals knowledge in SPECA and East-European countries. As such, the workshop helped participants understand how the Goals affect their day-to-day business and how they can benefit from activities related to the Goals. A key aspect of the workshop was the exchange of information and experiences between participants concerning gathering information for and reporting on transport Sustainable Development Goals.

12. “How to develop resilient infrastructure (SDG 9)” in Ljubljana (16-17 November 2017), was attended by around 50 participants from Austria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine. This workshop focused on resilient infrastructure and Sustainable Development Goal 9.

13. The workshops allowed beneficiary countries to present ongoing activities for transport-related Sustainable Development Goals, and the secretariat delivered comprehensive guidance on how to collect relevant statistics in order to monitor and report on Goals achievement. Countries welcomed the initiative of ECE to support a better understanding of goal targets and indicators, building on the work already initiated in many countries to advance the monitoring of progress towards their achievement.

14. In 2018, the Sustainable Transport Division organized a series of capacity-building workshops to strengthen the capacities of beneficiary countries on transport connectivity and road safety. Both topics are strongly related to achievements of Sustainable Development Goals 3, 9 and 11. The workshops attendees presented the best practice in connecting road safety and transport infrastructure and operations development with national transport policies, and increased knowledge of transport Sustainable Development Goals achievement. Four capacity-building events were organized:

- “National Road Safety Policy development – trends and challenges capacity building workshop” in Tbilisi, 26-27 November 2018, for countries of Caucasus, Central Asia and East Europe on road safety.
- “SPECA Workshop on Connectivity and Inland Transport Competitiveness” in Astana, 26-27 November 2018, for the Special Programme for Economies in Central Asia (SPECA) and East Europe countries.
- “Capacity building workshop on Strengthening Regional Rail Transport Connectivity” Athens, 29 November 2018, for South-East Europe countries.
- “The Danube Region Transport Days”, Ljubljana, 4-5 December 2018, in partnership with the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region.

15. On 26 and 27 November 2018, ECE in cooperation with the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development organized a RSPR follow-up capacity-building workshop in Tbilisi. The aim of the workshop was to strengthen the knowledge of Central Asia, Caucasus and East-Europe countries on how to define national road safety policy and improve road safety situation. As such, the workshop supported better understanding of international and regional best practices on road safety management, collection and utilization of robust and reliable road safety statistics and tools (SafeFITS, and RSPR) and methodologies for setting up road safety strategic goals.

16. The aim of the SPECA Workshop on Connectivity and Inland Transport Competitiveness was to strengthen the knowledge of SPECA and East-Europe countries on how to improve regional transport connectivity and inland transport competitiveness. Workshop was held in Astana on 26-27 November 2018 with participation of six-member States, international organization and ECE. The workshop assisted participants to better understand international framework for transport connectivity, how to harmonize transport infrastructure development, build resilient infrastructure and the role of regional cooperation in achieving more efficient transport systems in Central Asia. Furthermore, the workshop strengthened national capacities to design a harmonized legal framework and implement an evidence-based transport policy framework for inland transport that fosters sustainable transport connectivity and the implementation of transport-related Sustainable Development Goals.

17. The “Strengthening Regional Rail Transport Connectivity workshop” was held in Athens (29 November 2017). More than 40 high-level representatives from the South-East and Central Europe and international organizations discussed how to improve regional rail connectivity, develop resilient infrastructure and make rail transport more efficient and attractive for cargo on Euro-Asian transport routes.

18. The Danube Region Transport days 2018 was held in Ljubljana (4-5 December 2018) and was attended by Albania, Austria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Montenegro, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and international transport organizations and experts (more than 100 participants). The conference brought together the transport community to exchange and share experiences, results and ideas on connectivity, transport infrastructure development, road safety and development of railway passenger's transport in the Danube macro-region. Moreover, the conference strengthened capacities of transport stakeholders in the region to jointly address the challenges associated with implementation of sustainable development agenda.

III. The way forward

19. Technical assistance activities in transport will remain focused on supporting member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and on accession and efficient implementation of United Nations transport-related legal instruments. Both topics are of utmost importance for the sustainable development of transport services and infrastructure in member States to create an efficient, safe, secure and environmentally friendly transport system.

20. In order to seek synergies, a number of technical assistance activities are planned and implemented in active cooperation with key international organizations and institutions. In addition, the Sustainable Transport Division seeks collaboration with private sector, academia and non-governmental organizations to maximize capacity-building outputs and bring additional expertise for member States.
