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Achieving Poverty Eradication through Improved, Inclusive and Equitable Transport Systems

(Presentation for EST Plenary Session 2 the Provisional Programme)

Final Draft

This presentation has been prepared by Dr. Madan B. Regmi, UN ESCAP for the Tenth Regional EST Forum in Asia. The views expressed herein are those of the author only and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

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Achieving Poverty Eradication through Improved, Inclusive and Equitable Transport Systems

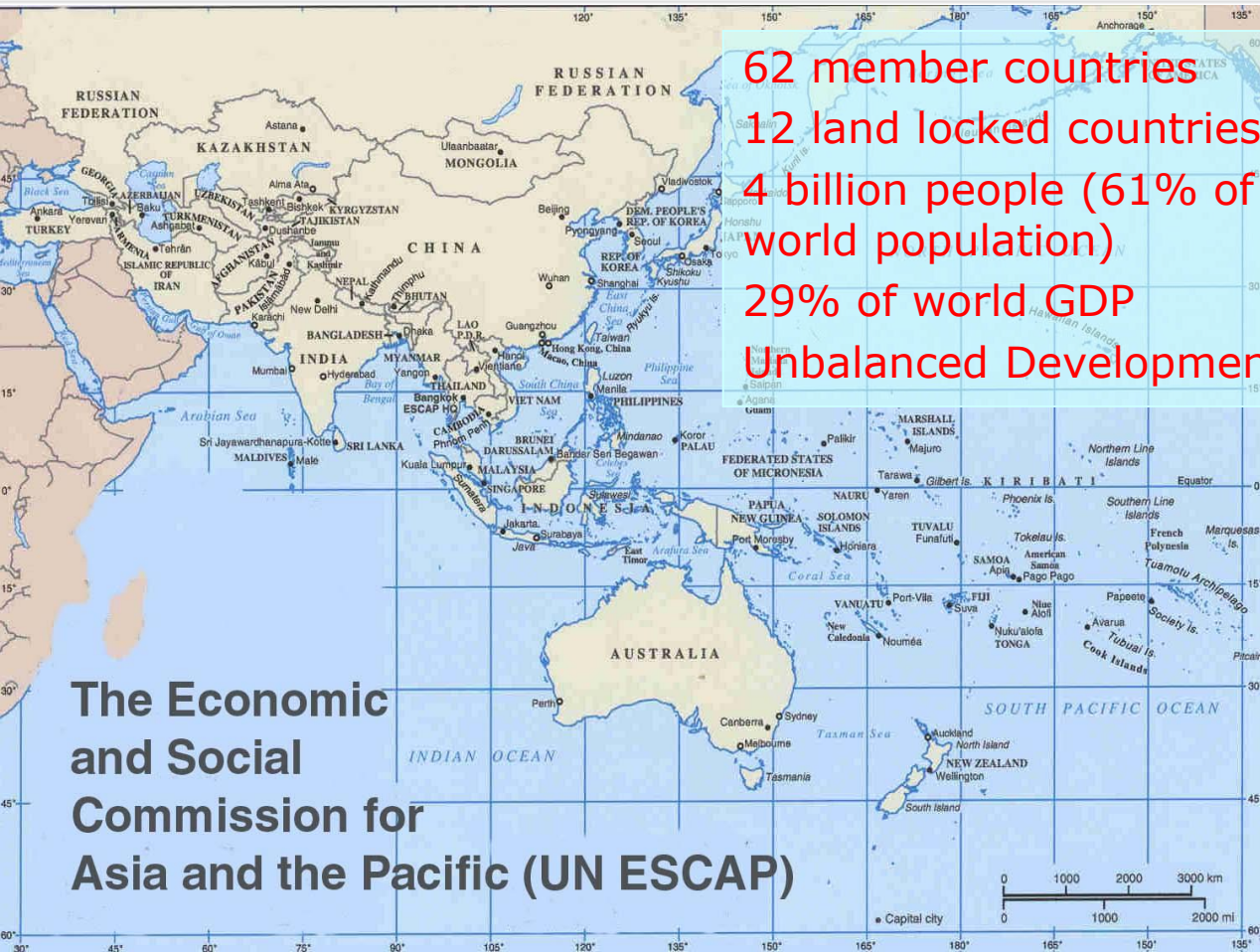


Madan B. Regmi, DEng
Transport Division
UNESCAP, Bangkok



Asia Pacific Overview

Global: 70% of the 1.4 billion people living in extreme poverty



The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP)

40% of the region or 700 million people do not have all-weather road access.

South Asia & South East Asia: 75% of people living in extreme poverty

80-90% of the poor live in rural areas in the region's major countries

MARGINALIZATION
 Rural people have little political voice



ESCAP Transport Division



Policy, Infrastructure, Facilitation

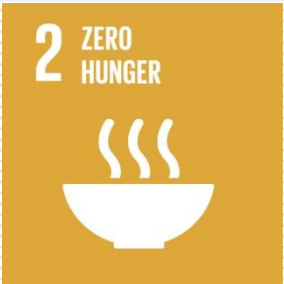


Rural Transport Policies and SDG's

DIRECT



INDIRECT



EMPHASIS



Rural Transport Modes and Benefits

- ❑ Rural Access- More than Road
- ❑ Other forms of rural connectivity
 - ❑ Water transport
 - ❑ Trails and tracks
 - ❑ Suspension bridges
- ❑ NMT and Intermediate Mode of transport
- ❑ Intermodal transfer facilities/hubs in sub urban areas



Well documented benefits

- ❑ Economic opportunities
- ❑ Poverty reduction
- ❑ Access to market, health, & education
- ❑ Employment generation
- ❑ Community empowerment



Accessibility

Accessibility is more than the provision of a road link

Accessibility is determined by the question whether people can get to key service at reasonable **COST**, in reasonable **TIME** and with reasonable **COST**.

Barriers to Access:

- Time required for travel
- Financial cost of the journey
- Season/ Weather-dependency of transport mode
- Availability of public transport
- Feeling of comfort and security
- Knowledge about transport
- User's trust in transport

Opportunities:

- Employment status of the Individual
- Disposable income
- Private vehicle
- Different travel routes with different units of travel and varying travel times



Inclusive Rural Access Policies

1 NO POVERTY



Access to a wider transportation network is supposed to...

- reduce geographic isolation
- offset agglomeration and economic growth
- ... in a way that**
- reduces market failures and information failures
- enables access to markets
- enables access to social institutions

PRO
POOR

PRO
WOMEN

Rural Access Policies need to address WOMEN'S:

- traditional roles (social barriers to accessibility)
- multiple responsibilities (house, children, family, income earning, water collection)
- lower disposable incomes
- special needs in terms of health care
- aspirations to engage in skill development, education and income earning

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Rural Access and Economic Opportunity

Agricultural Incomes

Depending on the agricultural potential of the region

- Lower transport costs
- Beyond subsistence farming
- Access to agricultural markets
- Potential for contract farming

- Higher agricultural incomes (high-value crops)
- Better food security
- Lower food prices
- Employment for people from adhering regions

NON-agricultural Incomes

Crucial poverty interrupter

- More efficient procurement of resources → production, sales, services outside of farming
- Diversification of livelihood portfolios

- Employment in agriculture for previously unemployed
- **STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY**



Rural Access and Education

Enabling education is one of the most effective measures in alleviating poverty through the accumulation of **human assets**, in the form of skills, knowledge and opportunities for future incomes.

Transport Barriers

- No access to road network
- Long walking distances
- No public transport

Economic Barriers

- Long absence of children
- High opportunity costs
- Work at home
- Travel costs

School-related Barriers

- Quality of teaching
- Appropriateness
- Sparse school network
- Long travel times despite road access

Social Barriers

- Safety concerns
- Parents do not perceive the value of schooling
- **PARTICULARLY FOR GIRLS** (housework and marriage are priorities)

Rural access can reduce ONE major barrier to rural education



Rural Access and Health

Physical Isolation
=
One of the most crucial determinants of the **MORTALITY** rate in developing economies

High opportunity costs, transport costs and low quality services prevent consumption of

- Preventive health services
- Maternal health services
- Medication
- Fast emergency care

Mixed results of impact of road access

Where **ROAD ACCESS** cannot counteract the detrimental effects of **DISTANCE, POOR PEOPLE, WOMEN AND CHILDREN** are the most disadvantaged and least likely to consume health services, even if the services are free of charge



Policy Recommendations I

Targeted Infrastructure Investments

- Identify areas with high agricultural potential
- Focus on last-mile problem (Footpaths, feeder roads, ...)
- Provide basic infrastructure is most pro-poor type of transport investment
- Invest in quality where weather conditions are severe
- Emphasize maintenance

CONTEXT-APPROPRIATE

Rural Transport Services

- Complementary to infrastructure
- Invest in public transport is essential in poverty alleviation!
- Train, support, subsidize locally-operating private entrepreneurs
- Do not over regulate
- Provide safety instructions, helmets to villagers

AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SAFE

Enhance Women's Mobility

- Enable public transport in line with women's daily routines (later departures, early returns)
- Address social, religious and cultural constraints
- Enable socially conform use of public transport
- Reduce social barriers through education
- Specific fleet with appropriate seating

SOCIALLY APPROPRIATE



Policy Recommendations II

Enhance Access to Labor Markets

- Facilitate access to agricultural markets
- Facilitate access to labor markets and off-farm work
- Establish coordinated, reliable public and private transport services that enable short-term regional migration and commuting

PRO- WORKERS



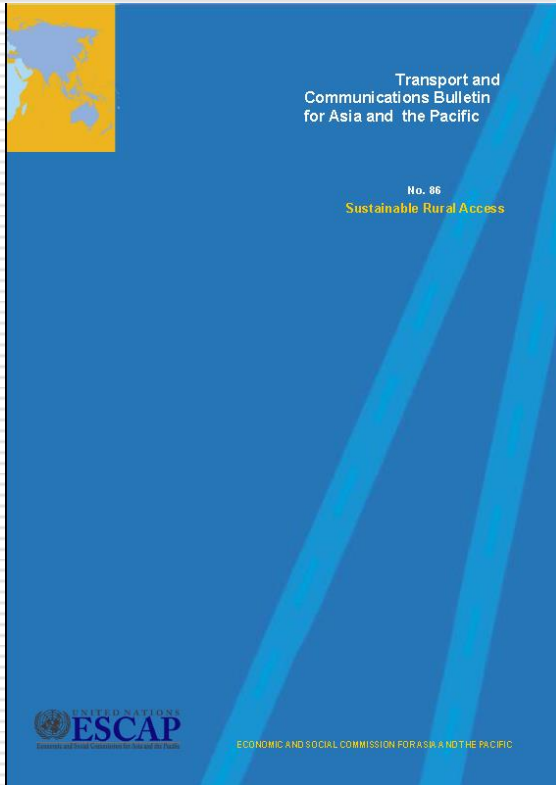
Enhance Access to Social Institutions

- Focus on actual travel time and not connectivity alone
- Collaborate with social institutions to establish a quality network of service provision and transport
- Increase investments in schools and hospital in extremely remote areas
- Invest in connectivity where institutions are in low/ medium distance from villages

OVERCOME DISTANCE



Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific



Bulletin 86: “Sustainable Rural Access”

Call for submissions

Bulletin 87: Transport and the SDGs

Please submit an abstract for your paper to the Transport Division, ESCAP

Email: escap-ttd@un.org

THANK YOU

regmi.unescap@un.org

