

Pre-event on Rural Transport: 10th EST Forum

13 March 2017, Vientiane

Rural transport policies in the Asia Pacific region



Madan B. Regmi, DEng
Transport Division
UNESCAP, Bangkok



Asia Pacific Overview



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

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



ESCAP Transport Division



Policy, Infrastructure, Facilitation



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



Rural Transport Policies and SDG's

DIRECT



INDIRECT



EMPHASIS



Rural Transport Policies



- ❑ Many countries in the region have focused rural transport strategies on:
 - ❖ Expanding the existing rural road network
 - ❖ Connecting more rural and isolated communities
 - ❖ Reducing travel time to nearest road head

Viet Nam: Expansion of the rural road network from 132,000 Km in 2014 to 175,000 Km to 2021.

Islamic Republic of Iran: Expansion of the rural road network from 132,000 Km in 2014 to 175,000 Km to 2021.

India: Rural Road has reached 3.3 mil km, 100% of villages with populations more than 1000 to have access to all-weather roads by 2017

- PMGSY- connecting village with 500 population and 250 in hilly areas

Nepal: Policies to connect all district HQ, max 2 hr. walks to road head in hilly and mountainous area, rural roads has reached 51,00 km (village and district roads), build your own village

China: connecting communities with 10,000 population, 3.7 mill Km (2010)



Selected Good Policies and Practices

- **India:** PMGSY- connecting communities, use of local materials
- **China:** vast expansion of network
- **Nepal:** expansion of rural network, labour based construction, performance based maintenance
- **Viet Nam:** community mobilization for maintenance
- **Thailand:** Good Rural Road Maint. Mgt. system
- **Bangladesh:** LGED-Road Asset management System
- **Lao PDR:** RMS-Provincial Road Maint. System

Measure of Accessibility: RAI- proportion of rural inhabitants who live within 2 km of all-season road



Still ...issues and challenges remains

- ❑ Low priority: the further from towns and urban areas- lower the importance
- ❑ Remote communities -challenging terrain- hills & mountains
- ❑ Lack of coherence between national and rural transport policy
- ❑ Economically viable? Funding for roads & maintenance
- ❑ Not well engineered and designed, quality of works
- ❑ Limited use of use of emerging technologies, guidelines, policy frameworks
- ❑ Limited capacities to plan and manage rural transport
- ❑ Over use of heavy equipment- even they decide the road route



Ministerial Conference on Transport, Dec 2016

□ Participation

- 325 representatives from 41 countries;
- 33 countries represented by ministerial level;
- 28 international organizations and institutions

□ Adopted

- The Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in the Asia-Pacific
- Regional Action Programme on Sustainable Transport Connectivity (2017-2021)
 - **Regional transport infrastructure connectivity**
 - **Regional transport operational connectivity**
 - **Strengthening of transport connectivity between Asia and Europe**
 - **Transport connectivity for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS**
 - **Rural connectivity to wider networks**
 - **Sustainable urban transport**
 - **Improving road safety**



ESCAP Activities on Rural Transport

- ❑ **Study on improving rural transport connectivity**
 - ❑ **Its impact on poverty alleviation, health, education and employment generation,**
 - ❑ **Financing options for rural connectivity**
- ❑ **Regional strategy/policy framework to improve rural transport**
- ❑ **Review of regional development on rural transport**
- ❑ **Support and capacity building to countries**



Ways forward

- ❑ Capacity enhancement to implement rural plan and polices
- ❑ Institutional coordination
- ❑ Quality vs quantity
- ❑ Stress on proper engineering and maintenance
- ❑ Enhance safety of services
- ❑ Governance, management and monitoring-policy framework, guidelines, best practices
- ❑ Innovative financing
- ❑ Community ownerships & participation
- ❑ Commitment of stakeholders



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

