

## Policy Advocacy to Enhance the Role of Rural Transport in the Sustainable Development Framework

Final Report



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International Forum for Rural Transport and  
Development

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## **Abstract**

This is the final report on the AFCAP-funded advocacy project to promote the role of transport in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework. The aim was to ensure that in the remaining negotiations window, there is increased awareness to use the momentum to strengthen the rural transport related targets within the SDGs framework using an Africa stakeholder's process.

A review of the Zero Draft of the SDGs Output Document was carried out. It presented an analysis of potential entry points through which transport related targets could be strengthened. The position paper and an accompanying letter of petition was widely publicised disseminated using multiple platforms and direct presentation in meetings.

The position paper was used for engagements with transport Ministers in Botswana, Uganda and Ethiopia. It was also presented to Ministers in Kenya, Malawi and Ghana. A direct meeting with the African Union (AU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) was held. The position paper was also sent to the president of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the custodians of the SDG process.

A key lesson learnt is that, just as was the case during the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the transport sector has not been fully engaged with the SDG process. There is a general lack of information about the value of such processes to the sector. Another lesson is the need for early involvement. Ideally, a 3-4 year processes of engagement would allow time for information sharing, broad-based buy-in, creation of coalitions, and necessary negotiations and follow-ups

The project has however served as a first step for the transport community in Africa to start conceptualizing and discussing transport within the post 2015 development agenda

## **Key words**

Millennium Development Goals; Sustainable Development Goals; African Transport Minister's Conference; Transport and Sustainable Development; rural transport; advocacy.

### **AFRICA COMMUNITY ACCESS PARTNERSHIP (AFCAP)**

#### **Providing solutions for safe and sustainable rural access across Africa**

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**See [www.afcap.org](http://www.afcap.org)**

## **Acronyms**

AFCAP	Africa Community Access Partnership
ASCAP	Asia Community Access Partnership
AU	African Union
IFRTD	International Forum for Rural Transport and Development
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OWG	Open Working Group (of the United Nations)
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UKAid	United Kingdom Aid (Department for International Development, UK)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

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## **1 Executive summary**

Recognizing the important role that transport plays in securing policy objectives in many development sectors, and also aware that the SDG framework will be an important leverage for financial and technical resources mobilization around the final Goals and Targets that will be adopted, IFRTD and its various partners received the support of the African Community Access Partnership (AFCAP) to create awareness and lobby the African transport community to support efforts towards strengthening the position of rural transport in the SDG formulation.

This is a report of the work that was done between October 2014 and January 2015. The IFRTD-led effort had the following focus:

- To develop a strong African position on Transport and SDG's, focusing on increasing the profile of transport within the Target and Indicators matrices.
- To publicize and reinforce and reinvigorate the position taken by African Transport Ministers at the Third Session of the Africa Union [AU] Conference of African Ministers of Transport held on 7-11 April 2014 in Malabo where the need to "ensure the inclusion of transport sector targets and indicators crucial for the achievement of the SDGs" was a key resolution.
- To ensure that in the remaining negotiations window, prior to the final adoption of the SDGs, there is awareness creation of the process and Africa-led lobbying in support of strengthened transport related targets

A review of the Zero Draft of the Sustainable Development Goals Output Document was carried out, and an analysis of potential entry points in the proposed targets was prepared through a position paper. The position paper and an accompanying letter of petition was widely publicised disseminated using multiple platforms and direct presentation in meetings

The position paper was used for engagements with transport Ministers in Botswana, Uganda and Ethiopia. It was also presented to Ministers in Kenya, Malawi and Ghana. A direct meeting with the African Union (AU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) was held. The position paper was also sent to the president of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) who is now the custodian of the SDG process.

## 2 Background

IFRTD and other stakeholders have been concerned that - like was the case with the Millennium Development Framework (MDGs) - transport, *one of the key enablers of achieving policy outcomes* in such areas as poverty reduction, maternal health, agricultural development and access to education and employment, is missing in the current draft of the Sustainable Development Framework (SDG) which comes to an effect at the expiry of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the end of 2015.

Transport has only a fleeting mention under the Goal 11 on Cities and Human Settlements. For many developing countries particularly in Africa, spatial patterns of poverty, inequality, food insecurity, maternal health and child mortality highly correlate with lack of transport and remoteness.

Recognizing the important role that transport plays in securing policy objectives in many development sectors, and also aware that the SDG framework will be an important leverage for financial and technical resources mobilization around the final Goals and Targets that will be adopted, IFRTD and its various partners received the support of the African Community Access Partnerships (AFCAP) to create awareness and lobby the African transport community to support efforts towards strengthening the position of rural transport in the SDG formulation.

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- To ensure that in the remaining negotiations window, prior to the final adoption of the SDGs, there is awareness creation of the process and Africa-led lobbying in support of strengthened transport related targets

A report on the planned outputs and achievements is presented in the sections that follow. In general, there has been progress, better in some of the targeted countries than in others. As would be expected, with the SDG negotiations entering a political phase, the process is complex, fluid and unclear. To be able to follow the process requires dedicated time and close proximity to key actors.

The country level engagements in Botswana, Uganda and Ethiopia have been very useful, and the Transport Ministers and other key players in these countries can still be key allies in further advancing the course of transport in the SDG process. The engagement with AU was also useful and with more sustained effort, it is possible, using various contacts so far made, to reach the United Nations General Assembly presidency, and highest levels of decision making within the AU.

A sobering lesson was the realisation that even as the SDG process draws near to a close, there is very little awareness of the process and the issues; not only among transport sector stakeholders, but also among the policy makers that we have engaged with.

### **3 Progress statement**

A previous report dated 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2014 detailed the activities undertaken in the month of October and early November 2014. A quick recap is as follows:

- A review of the draft Zero of the Sustainable Development Goals paper of the UN Working Group was reviewed, and based on it, IFRTD developed a position paper on the role of Transport and SDGs.
- A generic petition letter that can be adapted on a case by case basis to specific Transport Ministers and other key stakeholders such as the president of the UN General Assembly was also developed (attached in Annex B).
- The petition papers were passed to the offices of transport ministers in the following countries and other key stakeholders:
  - Kenya;
  - Malawi;
  - Uganda;
  - Ghana.
  - Ethiopia
  - Botswana
  - President of the United Nations General Assembly
  - Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Kenya
  - President of Uganda
- Using the position paper as a discussion document, direct meetings and engagements were held as follows:
  - The African Union (AU) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
  - The State Minister for Transport in Ethiopia
  - Ethiopia Roads Authority
  - Transport Minister Botswana
  - Transport Minister Uganda
  - Transport Sector Working Group Uganda
- Both the IFRTD position paper and the covering petition letter were widely disseminated. The dissemination was done through multi-media platforms and an IFRTD mailing list. Examples of the twitter handles that were created to advance the position paper and create awareness of the role of transport in the SDG process::
  - Business Daily Africa: @BD\_Africa
  - Washington Post: @washingtonpost
  - World Economic Forum: @wef
  - The New York Times: @nytimes
  - The Economist: @TheEconomist
  - TAR: @theafricareport
  - The World Bank: @WorldBank
  - AJE News: @AJENews
  - President of the UN General Assembly: @UN\_PGA
  - Africa Progress Panel: @africaprogress
  - Council on Foreign Relations: @CFR\_org



- All Africa: @allafrica
- Africa for Results: @AfriK4R
- African Development Bank Group: @AfDB\_Group
- Executive Secretary, UN ECA: ECA\_Lopes
- Africa Review: @africareview
- UN: @UN
- Association of Freelance Journalists: @AFJournalists

### **3.1 Engagement with UNECA and the AU**

The two continental bodies are considered pivotal in rallying the voices of the political leadership in transport and at the highest levels of Government. Consequently, considerable efforts were put in ensuring successful engagements with the AU and the UNECA.

IFRTD organised a meeting in Addis Ababa on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2014 that was attended by the following people

- Mr. David Kajange, Head of Transport and Tourism Division, Department of Infrastructure & Energy. African Union
- Dr. Maurice Niaty-Mouamba, Consultant Infrastructure and Transport. African Union
- Mr. Robert Tama Lisinge, Economic Affairs Officer, Industrialisation and Infrastructure Section, Regional Integration and Trade Division. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

Nite Tanzarn represented IFRTD.

IFRTD presented the African position paper on integrating the role of transport in the sustainable development goals framework. The African Union and the UN Economic Commission for Africa indicated that they appreciate the significance of transport to the achievement of development in a wide range of policy areas. Further, that the AU's Department of Economic Affairs is charged with, amongst other things, SDGs. The ECA added that whereas there may be no UN body dedicated to transport, transport was high on the Commission's agenda.

As regards the process of getting transport into the SDG framework, it was agreed that the remaining windows are largely political in nature. Unfortunately, the next AU Ministerial conference will be held after the SDGs are supposed to be adopted by the UN General Assembly. It was pointed out the AU Chairperson is a champion of promoting improved accessibility and advocates for the removal of transport-related constraints to economic growth and development. It was recommended that IFRTD finds a mechanism for engaging with the AU chairperson as the remaining window is political.

### **3.2 Engagement with Ethiopia's Transport Sector**

A meeting was held with the Minister of State for Transport, H.E. Tekletsadik Reba. The Minister was taken through the position paper and briefed on the meeting with UNECA and AU. He committed the Ministry to petition the AUC chair as well as the ECA Secretary General to lobby UNGA to enhance the profile of transport in the SDGs. He also promised to encourage the Prime Minister to do the same. The Minister indicated that in partnership with IRF, he [as a chair of the African Transport Ministers as regards the road safety theme] is organizing a meeting: Road Safety Challenge for Africa: "Challenges of Accomplishing Targets of Road Safety in Accordance with Decade of Action Plan" in March 2015. The meeting, to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia will involve

all the 53 African Transport Ministers as well as participants drawn from outside Africa. The Minister committed to that SDGs and Transport is an item on the agenda of the meeting.

We also held a meeting with the Deputy Director of the Ethiopian Road Authority [ERA], Eng. Bekele Negussie. He promised to support IFRTD in its engagement with the Minister of Transport as well as the Prime Minister.

### **3.3 Contact with the President of the UN General Assembly**

A letter petitioning the UNGA President was sent through his personal assistant in Uganda. However, direct contact is yet to be made. IFRTD will continue to pursue this engagement with the UNGA President.

### **3.4 Engagement With Botswana's Transport Sector**

A meeting was held with the Hon. Tshepolo A. Mabeo, the Minister of Transport and Communications in Botswana as well as Goitsewang Morekisi, the Permanent Secretary. Highlights of the transport and SDGs position paper were presented and the Minister promised to raise the issue of non-inclusion of transport in the SDGs with the President of Botswana and through him the AU. The Permanent Secretary promised to proactively engage with the national SDG mechanism.

### **3.5 Presentation at the International Conference on Transportation in Africa**

IFRTD participated in the 2014 International Conference on Transportation in Africa held in Gaborone, Botswana December 15-17, 2014 where we presented a paper on "**Integrating the Role of Transport in the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs] Framework**". The conference session was attended by more than 80 participants. Whereas most participants were aware of the MDGs, only few knew of the SDG process and the inadequate treatment of transport therein. The participants generally agreed to raise the issue with their respective Ministries of Transport.

A copy of the paper presented at the meeting has been submitted to AFCAP/ASCAP.

### **3.6 Engagement with Uganda's Transport Sector**

**Engagement with the Presidency:** A petition letter was sent to the President of Uganda in relation to:

- Promoting the case of a stronger transport position in the SDGs through the UNGA president.
- Requesting the AUC Chair and UNECA Secretary General to lobby UNGA to strengthen the position of transport within the SDGs.

**Engagement with the Transport Ministry:** Petition letter was sent to the Minister of Works and Transport. Briefing meetings were also held with the Commissioner, Transport Services as well as a DFID Advisor to the Ministry.

**Engagement with Works and Transport Sector Working Group:** A presentation of SDGs and Transport was made to the Works and Transport Sector Working Group [SWG] in Kampala on January 14, 2015.

The meeting was chaired by the Permanent Secretary [PS], Ministry of Works and Transport. The participants included members of the top management team [Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners] of the Ministry, development partners supporting the sector as well as civil society organisations mobilising around issues of transport.

The participants were supportive of the position paper and concurred that not having a transport goal was a glaring omission. They questioned why, considering its significance to development, transport had almost been excluded from the SDGs. They further argued that the country's development priorities cannot be achieved without rural access and yet the only mention of transport in the SDGs pertains to promoting urban mobility

The meeting unanimously agreed that transport should be "pushed" as an SDG and committed to the following:

- a. Engage the Head of State as well as the UNGA President.
- b. Ensure that the issue is on the agenda of the next transport ministers' meeting.
- c. With support from IFRTD, raise the political profile of transport.

#### **4 Summary of Emerging Outcomes Lessons Learnt**

The project set out to achieve the following objectives:

- To develop a strong African position on Transport and SDG's, focusing on increasing the profile of transport within the Target and Indicators matrices.
- To publicize and reinforce and reinvigorate the position taken by African Transport Ministers at the Third Session of the Africa Union [AU] Conference of African Ministers of Transport held on 7-11 April 2014 in Malabo where the need to "ensure the inclusion of transport sector targets and indicators crucial for the achievement of the SDGs" was a key resolution.
- To ensure that in the remaining negotiations window, prior to the final adoption of the SDGs, there is awareness creation of the process and Africa-led lobbying in support of strengthened transport related targets.

These objectives have been achieved, despite the time frame for this project having been very short. Policy engagements take a long period of time and the results are not straightforward as they involve many actors and a complex range of technical and political processes. Ideally, these kinds of engagements should have had 2-3 year processes so that there is enough time for follow-ups, while allowing stakeholders time to consult and build consensus.

Another key lesson learnt from implementation of this project is that the transport community is still not fully engaged with development issues outside transport in general, and the MDGs, in particular. As such, the community was largely a passive participant in the elaboration of the SDGs framework. The project has however served as a first step for the transport community in Africa to start conceptualizing and discussing transport within the post 2015 development agenda.

## Annex A: Detailed Progress Report

Activities	Progress to date [October 2014-Feb-2015]	Results of engagement and next steps (where applicable)
1. Review of the current draft SDG Position Paper	Two outputs were produced: (i) A position paper on SDG and transport (ii) A letter of petition urging action by key stakeholders	There was wide circulation of the documents in Africa through a mailing list and social media platforms. There was also specific targeting of transport ministers and permanent secretaries in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana and Botswana
2. Engagement with African Union [AU]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visited Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, between November 09-12, 2014</li> <li>- Had discussions with the AU as well as the UN Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA]</li> </ul>	<p>AU/UNECA supportive of the need for enhancing the profile of transport in the SDG process and framework</p> <p>UNECA Secretary General to lobby UNGA to enhance the profile of transport in the SDGs.</p>
3. Ministerial Level Engagements in 6 Focal Countries: Kenya, Malawi, Ghana, Uganda, Botswana and Ethiopia	<p>Position paper and petition letters were personally delivered to the Ministers of Transport in Ethiopia (Nov 11+, Ghana, Kenya (October 10) Uganda (Oct14), Malawi (Oct 15<sup>th</sup>), Botswana [Dec 16]). In Malawi, Kenya and Ghana, there was less enthusiasm for the issue within high policy making. The priorities in these countries is to fast track ongoing infrastructure projects</p> <p><b>Direct meetings with Ministers</b> Held with the Minister for Transport in Uganda (February 05, 2015) Botswana (16<sup>th</sup> December 2014) and Minister of State for Transport in Ethiopia(11<sup>th</sup> November)</p>	<p>There was significant appreciation of the issues raised in the position paper, and where direct meetings were held with the respective Ministers in Ethiopia, Botswana, and Uganda, it was clear that there was interest in advancing the issue through the African Union.</p> <p>(Would it be possible to convene a one day workshop with AU and ECA in Addis Ababa)</p>
	<p><u>Botswana:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Met with and briefed Minister of Transport and Communications Botswana</li> <li>- Met Permanent Secretary, Botswana Ministry of Transport and Communications</li> </ul>	<p>Minister promised to raise the issue of non-inclusion of transport in the SDGs with the President of Botswana and through him the AU.</p> <p>The Permanent Secretary promised to proactively engage with the national SDG mechanism</p>
	<p><u>Ethiopia:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Had discussions with the Ethiopian</li> </ul>	<p>The Ethiopian Minister of transport committed the</p>

Activities	Progress to date [October 2014-Feb-2015]	Results of engagement and next steps (where applicable)
	<p>Minister of State for Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Had discussions with the Ethiopian Road Authority [ERA]</li> </ul>	<p>Ministry to petition the AUC chair as well as the ECA Secretary General to lobby UNGA to enhance the profile of transport in the SDGs. He also promised to encourage the Prime Minister to do the same.</p>
	<p><u>Ghana:</u> The position paper and the petition paper were delivered to the Ministers of Transport office. Efforts to follow up with the Minister were unsuccessful</p>	
	<p><u>Kenya:</u> The petition letter and Position Paper was hand delivered to the Minister's office. Efforts to have personal meetings with the Minister or the Chief Secretary have not been successful. In general, Kenya has not been very keen on the SDG process in general despite having a Kenyan Ambassador as one of the co-chairs of the UN Open Working Group</p>	
	<p><u>Malawi:</u> Malawi, also like Kenya and Ghana was not responsive. The position paper and the petition were delivered to the Minister via an undersecretary who has been active in IFRTD work. However new Government came to power in the latter part of 2014 and with changes of key personnel, the momentum we had created with various actors in early 2014 dissipated.</p>	
	<p><u>Uganda:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Held meeting with Minister of Works and Transport</li> <li>- Made a presentation on the role of transport and SDGs to Uganda's Transport and Works Sector Working Group on January 14, 2015.</li> <li>- Held meeting with the Commissioner of Transport Services, Ministry of Works and Transport</li> <li>- Held meeting with the DFID Advisor to the Ministry of Transport in Uganda.</li> </ul>	<p>The Ministry committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage the Head of State as well as the UNGA President.</li> <li>- Ensure that the issue is on the agenda of the next transport ministers' meeting.</li> <li>- With support from IFRTD, raise the political profile of transport.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Direct contact with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Petition letter to the UNGA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To continue engaging</li> </ul>

Activities	Progress to date [October 2014-Feb-2015]	Results of engagement and next steps (where applicable)
the president of the UN General Assembly [UNGA]	President sent and received - No direct contact with the UNGA President has been established - Petition letter to the President of Uganda sent and received	with the UNGA President until he commits to ensuring that transport is an important pillar of the SDG framework.  - Tentative appointment with the President of Uganda
5. Attend and present at 2014 International Conference on Transportation in Africa held on December 15-17, 2014 in Gaborone, Botswana	Presented a paper on SDGs and Transport at the 2014 International Conference on Transportation in Africa	The participants generally agreed to raise the concern of the near invisibility of transport in the draft SDG framework with their respective Ministries of Transport.
Article in refereed Journal of Traffic and Transportation Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>This is in process</i></li> </ul>	
Monitoring, coordination and reporting	This report is part of this output. Further follow ups are being made and a final report with recommendations will be submitted before the end of March	

## Annex B: Generic Petition Letter

October 2014

Dear Madam/Sir,

### **RE: PROMOTING AN AFRICAN POSITION PAPER ON INTEGRATING THE ROLE OF TRANSPORT IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)**

As you know, the last 3 years have seen activities towards developing a new international development framework to succeed the MDG's in 2015. After many sessions of technical and stakeholders' negotiations, the UN Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) presented the Final Outcome Document containing 17 Goals to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2014 setting the stage for a round of hard negotiations to agree on a final proposal of the post-2015 development agenda to begin. That final document is expected to be adopted at a meeting of Heads of States and Government in September 2015 (as per resolution 68/6).

We are concerned that - like was the case with the MDG framework- *transport one of the key enablers of achieving policy outcomes* in such areas as poverty reduction, maternal health, agricultural development and access to education and employment, is missing and has only a fleeting mention under the Goal 11 on Cities and Human Settlements. For many developing countries, particularly in Africa spatial patterns of poverty, inequality, food insecurity, maternal health and child mortality highly correlate with lack of transport and remoteness.

<b>GOAL 11</b>	<b>TARGET 11.2</b>
<b>Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</b>	By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

Recognizing the important role that transport plays in securing policy objectives in many development sectors, and also aware that the SDG framework will be an important leverage for financial and technical resources mobilization around the final Goals and Targets that will be adopted, we want to seek your support in finding ways to reinforce and reinvigorate the position taken by African Transport Ministers at the Third Session of the Africa Union Conference of African Ministers of Transport held on 7-11 April 2014 in Malabo where the need to "ensure the inclusion of transport sector targets and indicators crucial for the achievement of the SDGs" was a key resolution.

Accompanying this letter is a paper proposing areas in the current SDG draft where Africa negotiators could lobby in respect of transport. It is important that in the remaining negotiations window, prior to the final adoption of the SDGs, there is robust, Africa-led lobbying in support of transport as key enabler to the achievement of various goals that have been proposed.

We urge you to use your good offices in ensuring that this letter and the accompanying position paper is given consideration in a way that would enable transport become an important pillar of the SDG framework.