



Promotion of Sustainable Rural Access in the Implementation of the 2030 Global Agenda on Sustainable Development

Final Report

Key Messages on Rural Transport and Sustainable Development Goals



Improved rural transport drives sustainable rural development and national growth



Better rural transport is key for food security and zero hunger



Poor rural transport condemns the poor to stay disconnected and poor



Additional money and commitment is needed to develop and maintain rural road networks and transport services



Better rural transport calls for local solutions to local challenges

Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT)

KMN2089A

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The views in this document are those of the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) and they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Research for Community Access Partnership (ReCAP) or Cardno Emerging Markets (UK) Ltd for whom the document was prepared

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Abstract

From November 2016 to May 2018, the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) has implemented a project commissioned by the UK Aid-funded Research for Community Access Partnership (ReCAP) to promote sustainable rural access as a viable component of the implementation strategies for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to ensure its inclusion in the high-level, multi-lateral discourse on sustainable transport and rural development.

This final report provides an overview of the results of the three workstreams under this project: 1) Advocacy and Outreach; 2) Global and Regional Dialogues; and 3) Operationalization of SDGs.

The development of a set of key messages was vital to provide a solid foundation guiding the overall directions of the outputs of the project. The consistency and linkages across these various outputs helped to significantly increase awareness and recognition among national governments, multilateral agencies, and other relevant stakeholders about the key role of rural transport and rural accessibility in contributing to achieving the SDGs.

The project has furthermore resulted in increased visibility of rural transport in important international processes on sustainable development and climate change, including the regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia, the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2017 and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process during COP 23.

Key words

Rural transport, sustainable development goals, rural access, rural development, advocacy, sustainable development

RESEARCH FOR COMMUNITY ACCESS PARTNERSHIP (ReCAP)

Safe and sustainable transport for rural communities

ReCAP is a research programme, funded by UK Aid, with the aim of promoting safe and sustainable transport for rural communities in Africa and Asia. ReCAP comprises the Africa Community Access Partnership (AfCAP) and the Asia Community Access Partnership (AsCAP). These partnerships support knowledge sharing between participating countries in order to enhance the uptake of low cost, proven solutions for rural access that maximise the use of local resources. The ReCAP programme is managed by Cardno Emerging Markets (UK) Ltd.

See www.research4cap.org

Acronyms, Units and Currencies

AfCAP	Africa Community Access Partnership
AfDB	Africa Development Bank
AsCAP	Asia Community Access Partnership
AU	African Union
COP	Conference of the Parties
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DSD	Department for Sustainable Development
ERA	Ethiopian Roads Authority
EST	Environmentally Sustainable Transport
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GMR	Global Mobility Report
GRP	Global Resilience Partnership
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFRTD	International Forum for Rural Transport and Development
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
IRF	International Road Federation
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-government Organization
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPMC	Paris Process on Mobility and Climate
RAWG	Rural Access Working Group of SuM4ALL
ReCAP	Research for Community Access Partnership
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLoCaT	Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport
SuM4ALL	Sustainable Mobility for All initiative
UKAID	United Kingdom Aid (Department for International Development, UK)
UN	United Nations
UNCRD	United Nations Centre for Regional Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
VNR	Voluntary National Review

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1 Executive summary

On 1 January 2016, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been adopted by world leaders in September 2015, officially came into force. Over the next 15 years, with these new SDGs that universally apply to all, countries will mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Rural Transport has a unique position in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Although there is no dedicated target on rural transport, there is a considerable linkage and contribution between rural transport and SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 13 (Climate Action). The International Advisory Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goals has developed an indicator framework for the SDGs. Rural access is included under Indicator 9.1.1.: “Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road”. The indicator builds on existing methodologies for measuring rural access and has been the topic of dedicated research by the World Bank and additional reviews sponsored by the UKAID funded Research for Community Access Partnership (ReCAP).

From November 2016 to May 2018, the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) has implemented a project commissioned by ReCAP to promote sustainable rural access as a viable component of the implementation strategies for achieving the SDGs and to ensure its inclusion in the high-level, multi-lateral discourse on sustainable transport and rural development.

This final report provides an overview of the results of the three workstreams under this project: 1) Advocacy and Outreach; 2) Global and Regional Dialogues; and 3) Operationalization of SDGs.

The project has successfully increased the profile of sustainable rural access as a viable component of the implementation strategies for achieving the SDGs in the high-level, multi-lateral discourse on sustainable transport and rural development. The development of a set of key messages was vital to provide a solid foundation guiding the overall directions of the outputs of the project. These key messages contributed to the thematic planning of both outreach activities (e.g. factsheet, banners, tweets, and blog posts) and policy discussions (e.g. the Pre-event on Rural Transport in Lao PDR and the High-Level Roundtable on Rural Transport and Agriculture at COP23).

Through the EST pre-event and the COP23 high level roundtable, the project has also resulted in increased visibility of rural transport in important international processes on sustainable development and climate change, including the regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia and the COP process.

However, the project has encountered great obstacles and challenges in organizing a regional dialogue in Africa due to the lack of availability of a regional, high-level conference related to rural development or sustainable development to organize the regional dialogue as a side event.

SLoCaT has created a strong liaison with the University of Birmingham for the development of content-oriented advocacy outputs, including a series of blog posts and feature videos to further promote the key messages, which effectively compliment with the overall outreach activities and have strengthened the advocacy effort.

2 Introduction

On 1 January 2016, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been adopted by world leaders in September 2015, officially came into force. Over the next 15 years, with these new SDGs that universally apply to all, countries will mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Rural Transport has a unique position in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Although there is no dedicated target on rural transport, there is a considerable linkage and contribution between rural transport and SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 13 (Climate Action). The International Advisory Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goals has developed an indicator framework for the SDGs. Rural access is included under Indicator 9.1.1.: “Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road”. The indicator builds on existing methodologies for measuring rural access and has been the topic of dedicated research by the World Bank and additional reviews sponsored by the UKAID funded Research for Community Access Partnership (ReCAP).

From November 2016 to May 2018, the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) has implemented a project commissioned by ReCAP to promote sustainable rural access as a viable component of the implementation strategies for achieving the SDGs and to ensure its inclusion in the high-level, multi-lateral discourse on sustainable transport and rural development. The project aimed to produce the following results:

- Increased awareness and recognition among national governments and multilateral agencies about the key role of rural transport and rural accessibility in contributing to achieving the SDGs;
- Rural access consistently featuring as an agenda topic at multilateral events and high level development debates, including the increased visibility of rural transport and accessibility in the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development;
- Inclusion of rural transport and accessibility as indicators to monitor and evaluate the SDG implementation process;
- Increased recognition amongst key players of the important role that UKAID, and ReCAP in particular, can play in the development of sustainable rural access.

This final report provides an overview of the outcomes in relation to the above objectives and the results of the three workstreams under this project: 1) Advocacy and Outreach; 2) Global and Regional Dialogues; and 3) Operationalization of SDGs.

3 Overview of Results: Workstream 1 (Advocacy and Outreach)

3.1 Deliverable 1a: Development of Key Messages on Rural Transport

A comprehensive consultation process was launched in February 2017 to determine the key themes and topics to be prioritized in the SLoCaT Partnership’s advocacy activities on rural transport. Based on the feedback gathered from more than 130 stakeholders, five key messages were formulated to explain how rural transport plays a key role in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by world governments to define development policy up to 2030:

1. **Improved rural transport drives sustainable rural development and national growth:** Good rural road infrastructure and services promote connectivity and social cohesion, drive commercial activities as well as accessibility to social and economic facilities necessary to counteract poverty, isolation and social exclusion.
2. **Better rural transport is key for food security and zero hunger:** Improving rural access can lead to lower costs for farm inputs and lower transport costs for marketed outputs, thus increasing agricultural production to enhance food security.
3. **Poor rural transport condemns the poor to stay disconnected and poor:** Access to markets and employment opportunities through better rural transport infrastructure and services is an essential pre-condition to generating rural income and thus reduce poverty.
4. **Additional money and commitment is needed to develop and maintain rural road networks and services:** Existing funding sources need to be expanded and new funding sources need to be developed, piloted and implemented not only for building but also for managing and maintaining the asset.
5. **Better rural transport calls for local solutions for local challenges:** Rural access challenges require local resource-based solutions that are compatible with the local road environment conditions.

The consultation process has successfully engaged a wide range of relevant stakeholders in the rural transport community and has encouraged them to participate in the project's advocacy and outreach activities for these key messages. More than 70% of survey respondents have indicated to learn more about the key messages.¹

3.2 Deliverable 1b: Rural transport-related materials for distribution at key events and conferences

3.2.1 Roll-up Banners

SLoCaT has produced five roll-up banners on the key messages, which were displayed at the Pre-event on Rural Transport in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) on 13 March 2017 (Figure 1). The banners were well received by the high-level participants of the event, including the Transport Minister from Lao PDR. ReCAP utilized the banners at other workshops being held in Africa and Asia in 2017 and 2018.

¹ For more information of the consultation process, please refer to: Partnership for Sustainable Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *Promotion of Sustainable Rural Access in the implementation of the 2030 Global Agenda on Sustainable Development, Key Messages Consultation Analysis*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2pj0an7> [Accessed 31 May 2018].



Figure 1. Roll-up banners on the five key messages

A new logo was created to illustrate the contribution of rural transport to the SDGs. The logo was used for other supporting promotional materials of the key messages.



Figure 2. Logo on rural transport's contribution to the SDGs

3.2.2 Factsheet



A factsheet² was released (available in English and in French) on the key messages on rural transport and SDGs. The factsheet gives an overview of the rationale behind each of the five key messages along with five to six research facts and examples to show how successful scaled-up implementation of rural transport will contribute to realizing the SDGs.

The factsheet was disseminated at various important meetings on sustainable development and climate change, including the side events at the High Level Political Forum 2017 in New York, United States (transport event by FIA Foundation³ and the event on rural-urban connectivity⁴ organized by ReCAP, the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD) and other partners); the 2nd International Road Federation (IRF) Africa Regional Congress in Windhoek, Namibia, convening around 150 delegates, the High Level Roundtable on rural transport and SDG2 at

² Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *The Contribution of Rural Transport to the Sustainable Development Goals*. [Factsheet]. London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2slrMMu> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

³ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *The role of safe & sustainable mobility in eradicating poverty and improving health*. [Online] Available at: <http://slocat.net/event/1856> [Accessed 27 July 2017].

⁴ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *Rural-Urban Connectivity in Integrated Regional Development: Implications towards Livelihood Security and Poverty Alleviation*. [Online] Available at: <http://slocat.net/event/1857> [Accessed 27 May 2017].

the 23rd Conference of the Parties (COP23) in Bonn, Germany, and the ReCAP Inter-regional Implementation Meeting held in Uganda, November 2017.

3.3 Deliverable 1c: Summary of Social media and other online postings

Building upon the five key messages on rural transport and SDGs, SLoCaT has further promoted them through various means of communication on social media, including Twitter, news articles and blogs on ReCAP and SLoCaT websites, discussion articles on LinkedIn Groups, and submissions to e-newsletters. The results of social media outreach are summarized in Table 1:

Table 1. Summary of results of social media outreach

Media Channel	Summary of Results
Twitter	<p>From November 2016 to February 2018, SLoCaT has made more than 400 tweets on rural transport and these tweets have been retweeted or liked more than 500 times. More than 40% of the tweets made reference and used case studies from ReCAP member countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the South Asia region.</p> <p>Special Twitter Campaigns on the Key Messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first special Twitter campaign was launched from 13 to 16 March 2017 to promote the key messages in conjunction with the pre-event on rural transport and the 10th EST Forum in Lao PDR. A set of 13 standard tweets was prepared on the key messages, the pre-event, and the Vientiane Declaration on Rural Transport. • Promotion of rural transport was a key part of a special Twitter campaign from 30 June to 19 July for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2017. The campaign promoted the importance of rural transport in realizing the SDGs being reviewed at HLPF 2017 (SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 5, and SDG 9). • Another special social media campaign was carried out during COP23 to promote the High-Level Roundtable on Rural Transformation: Climate Resilient and Low Emission Food Systems, which took place on November 14, 2017. Tweets were made to specifically highlight the role of rural transport in achieving SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and enhancing food security, using several case examples from Kenya, Tanzania, Vietnam, and low-income countries in the world. The special campaign was complemented by a blog post on food security launched by ReCAP on 7 November, and the SLoCaT daily reports on COP23. <p>Although the content provided by the tweets are often not elaborated in depth compared to other outputs under this contract, Twitter is an important channel to spark interest on rural transport through the presentation of quick facts and figures. It also serves as an important channel to promote other informative outputs under this contract (e.g. factsheet, DSD position paper, and blog series on the key messages).</p>
SLoCaT Website and LinkedIn Discussion Groups	<p>Five news articles on rural transport were produced under this joint project, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey on Rural Transport and Sustainable Development Goals⁵

⁵ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *Survey on Rural Transport and Sustainable*

Media Channel	Summary of Results
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Five Key Messages Underlining the Critical Role of Rural Transport to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals⁶ 3. Vientiane Declaration on Sustainable Rural Transport towards Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at 10th EST Forum⁷ 4. ReCAP and SLoCaT Release Factsheet and Supporting Paper on the Critical Role of Rural Transport to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals⁸ 5. High-Level Stakeholders from Agriculture and Transport Sectors Discussed Actions for Rural Transformation and Food Security at COP23⁹ <p>These articles were posted on the SLoCaT and ReCAP website as well as more than 15 different LinkedIn discussion groups on topics related to rural transport, rural development, road infrastructure, sustainable development, and climate change.</p> <p>Blog posts on key messages on rural transport and SDGs</p> <p>Five Student Assistants from the University of Birmingham, under the supervision of Dr. Michael Burrow from the School of Civil Engineering, produced five blog posts on each of the key messages on the contribution of rural access and SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key Message 1: <i>Improved Rural Transport Drives Sustainable Rural Development and National Growth</i>, by Mr. Son Quang Pham - Key Message 2: <i>Better Rural Transport is Key to Food Security and Zero Hunger</i>, by Mr. Manu Sasidharan - Key Message 3: <i>Poor Rural Transport Condemns the Poor to Stay Disconnected and Poor</i>, by Mr. Robert Kakiiza - Key Message 4: <i>Additional money and commitment are needed to develop and maintain rural road networks and transport services</i>, by Mr. Peter S. Kome - Key Message 5: <i>Better rural transport calls for local solutions for local challenges</i>, Ms. Pratidnya Bhuite <p>As of May 2018, two blog posts (key message 2 and 5) have been released</p>

Development Goals. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.slocat.net/news/1809> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

⁶ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *Five Key Messages Underlining the Critical Role of Rural Transport to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.slocat.net/news/1816> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

⁷ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *Vientiane Declaration on Sustainable Rural Transport towards Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at 10th EST Forum*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.slocat.net/news/1818> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

⁸ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *ReCAP and SLoCaT Release Factsheet and Supporting Paper on the Critical Role of Rural Transport to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.slocat.net/news/1864> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

⁹ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *High-Level Stakeholders from Agriculture and Transport Sectors Discussed Actions for Rural Transformation and Food Security at COP23*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.slocat.net/news/1908> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

Media Channel	Summary of Results
	<p>via ReCAP special mailing campaigns and further distributed through the SLoCaT website and 15 different LinkedIn discussion groups. These blog posts were also translated into French.</p> <p>The remaining three blog posts (key message 1, 3, and 4) have been submitted to ReCAP for final approval. The blogs are planned to be distributed via ReCAP special mailing campaigns and through the SLoCaT website and LinkedIn discussion groups from May to July 2018.</p>
E-Newsletters Submission	<p>SLoCaT submitted a total of three articles to the ReCAP Newsletter during the reporting period:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UN Emphasizes Importance of Rural Transport as Key Driver to Fulfil 2030 Agenda Promise to “Leave No One Behind”¹⁰ 2. Policy-makers Adopt Vientiane Declaration on Sustainable Rural Transport at UNCRD 10th EST Regional Forum in Asia¹¹ 3. Measuring Universal Rural Access in the Sustainable Mobility for All global tracking framework¹² <p>Submission to other E-newsletters:</p> <p>SLoCaT also submitted an introduction of the joint project with ReCAP to the WCTRS News Briefing, which was released in January 2017.¹³</p> <p>The observations on the COP23 High-Level Roundtable on Rural Transformation: Climate Resilient and Low Emission Food System were featured in PPMC’s COP23 Daily Report on November 14, 2018¹⁴ and the Final Report on COP23¹⁵ which were distributed to more than 3000+ subscribers to the PPMC’s special mailing list.</p>

3.1 Other outreach activities

Op-ed submission to the Guardian

¹⁰ Research for Community Access Partnership. (2017). *UN Emphasizes Importance of Rural Transport as Key Driver to Fulfil 2030 Agenda Promise to “Leave No One Behind”*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://bit.ly/2pjThSx> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

¹¹ Research for Community Access Partnership. (2017). *Policy-makers Adopt Vientiane Declaration on Sustainable Rural Transport at UNCRD 10th EST Regional Forum in Asia*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://bit.ly/2nwBwmG> [Accessed 31 May 2018]

¹² Research for Community Access Partnership. (2017). *Measuring Universal Rural Access in the Sustainable Mobility for All global tracking framework*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.research4cap.org/Recap-news/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=80> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

¹³ The news briefing is available for WCTRS members only.

¹⁴ Paris Process on Mobility and Climate. (2017). *Sustainable transport as an engine for sustainable cities. Daily report November 14, 2017 (Day 8)*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.ppmc-transport.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/COP23-Daily-Report-Nov-14.pdf> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

¹⁵ Paris Process on Mobility and Climate. (2018). *Transport at COP23 Bonn: Transport Building Momentum to Raise Ambition and Define Implementation Pathways*. [online] London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <http://www.ppmc-transport.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/COP23-Final-Report-from-a-Transport-Perspective.pdf> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

A short outline and an accompanying one-pager for an op-ed has been submitted to the Guardian on March 29. The submission argues that media attention is often drawn to the humanitarian aid, disaster relief, education and health initiatives that are - justifiably - being implemented in pursuit of the SDGs. Recent research and dialogue have highlighted the vital contribution that better access for communities living in rural areas in developing countries will make in achieving the Goals. The article looks at how this under-exposed rural transport sector can drive this process and how better, more intelligent use of local resources can contribute to the effectiveness of the initiatives. As at 30 April 2018, no response has been received from the Guardian as to a decision to publish.

Short opinion pieces on the key messages

SLoCaT has also developed three short opinion pieces on the key messages with reference to the Vientiane Declaration as an example of regional commitment to scale up actions on rural transport to achieve the SDGs.

The short opinion pieces have been submitted to the following local news outlets on April 30, 2018:

1. The Himalayan Times
2. Nepali Times
3. The Bangladesh Today
4. United News of Bangladesh
5. Bangladesh Sangbad Sangastha (BSS)
6. Myanmar Times
7. The Global New Light of Myanmar
8. Mizzima

As at 30 April 2018, no response has been received from the news outlets as to a decision to publish.

Videos on Rural Transport and SDGs

Two videos on the critical role of rural transport in achieving the SDGs were developed with the support from the University of Birmingham (under the supervision of Dr. Michael Burrow).

The first video explores the critical role of rural transport in achieving the SDGs through the lens of the five key messages on rural transport under this project (see section 3.1). Supportive statements were given by a number of female and male experts on rural transport, economics, social science, and public policy, including Ms. Shilpa Aggarwal, Mr. Kingstone Gongera, Mr. John Hine, Mr. Rob Petts, Mr. Juan Quintero, and Ms. Firdasmi Usman. The final version of the video has been submitted to ReCAP on April 23, 2018. As of May 1, 2018, the video is awaiting final approval by DFID.

Once final approval is received, the first video will be announced through a news article posted on the ReCAP and SLoCaT websites, Twitter, and LinkedIn discussion groups.

The second infographic video explores the challenges and issues faced by women due to lack of access to all-season roads and transport services and highlights some of the solutions to improve access and how women benefit. Statistics, graphs, and other visuals are presented to demonstrate that women take on the larger share of the transport burden compared to men and that improved rural access is crucial to enhance their access to education opportunities, health services, and economic opportunities.

The University of Birmingham contracted an external video production company to produce the second infographic video. Development of the video has required more time than anticipated in the original implementation plan by the University. A first draft of the video has been shared with ReCAP on April 27, 2018. The revised schedule as at 30 April 2018 to develop the second video is as follows:

- **May 7** - University shares revised draft video for final comments; ReCAP review revised video internally
- **May 10** - Last day for ReCAP PMU and SLoCaT to share comments
- **May 15** - Final video submitted by University to ReCAP for final approval

4 Overview of Results: Work stream 2 (Global and Regional dialogues)

4.1 Deliverable 2a: Organize three rural transport-related meetings or side-events at key international events

4.1.1 EST Forum Pre-event on the Contribution of Rural Transport to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

A pre-event to the 10th EST Forum in Asia, entitled “Contribution of Rural Transport to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”¹⁶ was co-organized by the Lao PDR Ministry of Public Works and Transport, ReCAP, UNCRD, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific (UNESCAP) and facilitated by SLoCaT on 13 March 2017 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The pre-event was organized with the following objectives:

- Exploring the role of rural transport in the realization of the SDGs under the 2030 Agenda;
- Raising awareness on national and multilateral levels in Asia about the role of rural transport research in achieving key development goals in general and the ReCAP program, its research priorities and (preliminary) results and outcomes in specific;
- Stimulating cross-region learning between Africa and Asia.

More than 100 participants from 30 different countries attend the pre-event, representing ministries from nine different sectors including transport, environment, rural development, energy, infrastructure, and other sectors related to rural transport. A number of development agencies, regional organizations, transport organizations, multilateral development banks (MDBs), research organizations and universities were also represented at the pre-event.

The event was successful in establishing a dedicated focus on rural transport in Asia to complement a predominantly urban (and freight) transport focus in previous EST Forums. The overall assessment of this deliverable is that organizing the pre-event prior to a ministerial-level regional forum was very effective in bringing higher-level government officials together with non-state actors. The pre-event was also successful in attaining its overall objective to raise awareness of policy-makers on the national and multilateral levels in Asia on the contribution of rural transport to the SDGs.

With a number of research projects contributing as background materials for eight presentations in the program, the pre-event anchored a strong emphasis on the crucial role of ReCAP – and research in general—in helping countries to implement sustainable rural transport infrastructure and services. A number of presentations also took lessons learned from Africa (e.g. capacity building to improve asset management, risk management and climate resilience) to stimulate cross-region learning among participants from the EST region.

¹⁶ Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport. (2017). *The Contribution of Rural Transport to the Sustainable Development Goals*. [Factsheet]. London: ReCAP for DFID. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2slrMMu> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

The program of pre-event speakers struck a good balance between government officials from the host country and AsCAP countries, the MDBs, regional organizations, non-government organizations (NGOs), and the research field. The interactive methodology adopted by the facilitator was effective in stimulating interactions between speakers, panellists, and the audience through input cards and Q&A sessions. In general, informal feedback received from the participants was positive, with specific appreciation of the interaction-oriented format of the pre-event.

4.1.2 High-level roundtable on rural transport and food security at COP23

ReCAP and SLoCaT contributed to the organisation of a High-Level Roundtable on “Rural Transformation: Climate Resilient and Low Emission Food Systems”, held on 14 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany during COP23.

The roundtable was one of the four High Level Roundtables on SDG2: Climate Action for Zero Hunger organized on November 14, 2017. It was co-organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Global Resilience Partnership (GRP), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), SLoCaT, the UKAID-funded ReCAP, and the World Bank.

Around 40 representatives from government authorities, development agencies, civil society, the academia, private sector and farmers joined the roundtable. The roundtable has provided a platform for cross-sector learning and exchanges to identify the key policy and investment needs to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 2 on Zero Hunger and the implementation of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in two areas:

- The development of climate-resilient and low-emission food systems that foster food security and nutrition and leaves no-one behind;
- The acceleration of climate-smart transport systems and infrastructure to foster market linkages and connect value chain actors in the agriculture sectors.

The Special Advisor to UN Secretary General on Climate Change moderated the 90-minute roundtable. The discussion focused on four themes with each being introduced by a lead speaker and further illustrated by three to four participants in the roundtable:

- Theme 1: Why and how do we involve communities in decisions and plans to deliver rural transformation?
- Theme 2: What are the priority policy changes needed for rural transformation in the context of implementing NDCs and achieving SDG2 on zero hunger?
- Theme 3: What changes are needed in rural transport and rural-urban links to ensure food security and climate resilient-low-emission food systems? (introduced by the AfCAP Vice Chair)
- Theme 4: What new investments are needed to deliver climate resilient and low emission food systems?

The roundtable concluded that to realize the opportunities of achieving more resilient and low emission food systems, the agriculture, food and transport communities should come together to take action. This means promoting better urban-rural linkages, and seeing roads as asset drivers of prosperity for farmers and their communities. It means taking action to help reduce food loss and waste by improving rural access and the development of low-emission value chains. This includes the development and use of low emission preservation and refrigeration storage systems. Together, successful and sustainable agriculture and infrastructure development can generate income

opportunities throughout the food system, underpin sustainable and inclusive rural transformation, and reduce emissions.

4.1.3 Regional Dialogue on the Contribution of Rural Transport in Achieving the SDGs in Africa

The third regional dialogue under this project was originally planned to be held in late January 2018 with the aim to explore the role of rural transport in Africa in the realization of the SDGs under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Similar to the Pre-event to the EST Forum in Lao PDR, the regional dialogue in Africa aimed to facilitate stronger commitment of government authorities, development agencies, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders to promote inclusive, affordable, accessible and sustainable rural transport infrastructure and services in the Africa region.

A draft concept note was developed to highlight the importance of rural access to achieve the SDGs in the Africa region and it aims to explore the subject through the lens of the five key messages on rural transport and SDGs developed under this project. The concept note reinforces the regional dialogue's objective to result in the adoption of a joint statement to demonstrate the collective commitment of the government authorities, development agencies, civil society, the academia, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders to promote inclusive, affordable, accessible and sustainable rural transport infrastructure and services in the Africa region.

During the project period, SLoCaT has approached a number of stakeholder contacts from the Africa region to explore their interest in organizing or participating in the regional dialogue, including the, International Forum for Rural Transport and Development (IFRTD), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), African Development Bank (AfDB), World Bank, Ethiopian Roads Authority (ERA), UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and African Union.

IFRTD, IsDB, and World Bank have expressed interest in participating in the regional dialogue. Nonetheless, SLoCaT has encountered difficulties in identifying a strong regional partner in the Africa region (such as the AU and the UNECA) to co-organize and coordinate the dialogue. There were also challenges to identify a high-level, international conference related to (rural) transport in Africa with the appropriate time and location.

In November 2017, following discussions between the ReCAP PMU with DFID and the World Bank, it was decided that the Africa dialogue should steer more towards learning and applying the experience of the Regional EST Forum for Asia to the Africa region. ReCAP developed a project to document the key agents, factors, and organizations that facilitated the EST process in Lao and the Vientiane Declaration and the transferability of lessons learnt to the Africa region.

After further discussions with DFID and ReCAP, it was clear that the objective of the dialogue is ambitious and it was unlikely that there will be enough time to organize a high quality event of such a scale and level of seniority by the early months of 2018. ReCAP therefore decided that the regional dialogue in Africa would be delivered outside the scope of this contract.

4.2 Deliverable 2b: Presentations and research materials prepared and delivered for key international events

SLoCaT developed a powerpoint presentation outlining the themes and rationale of the key messages. The presentation was made by the SLoCaT Secretary General at the Pre-event on the

Contribution of Rural Transport to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Lao PDR on 13 March 2017.

SLoCaT, under the framework of this project, has contributed to a HLPF 2017 side event on rural-urban connectivity on 18 July 2017 organized by UNCRD, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), ReCAP, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The side event contributed to the theme of the 2017 HLPF by focusing on policies and tools that are found effective in promoting eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity. SLoCaT's Sustainable Transport Research Director presented the Vientiane Declaration and the key findings related to rural-transport¹⁷ from SLoCaT's analysis of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) submitted to the HLPF this year.

SLoCaT's Research Director intervened on the role of rural transport in improving rural development and food security at the High-Level Roundtable on "Rural Transformation: Climate Resilient and Low Emission Food Systems, which was held on 14 November, 2017 in Bonn, Germany during COP23. He emphasized that ensuring farmers' first mile access to distribution points and economic centres and the last mile access to villages, national roads, and shipping facilities are crucial to deliver produce to markets and food to the consumers. Currently rural transport has been featured in the SDG review process with 14% of the VNRs submitted in 2017 including references to improve rural access; whereas for the Nationally Demonstrated Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement process, measures for rural transport and access are largely invisible.

5 Overview of Results: Workstream 3 (Operationalization of Sustainable Development Goals)

5.1 Deliverable 3a: Submit input advocating for rural transport to be included in key documents and processes on sustainable development

The ReCAP PMU and SLoCaT jointly wrote a supporting paper to provide research evidence from a wide range of authoritative sources in support of the five key messages. The paper argues that the key messages can drive short-term advocacy for the need to allocate more financial and human resources to improving rural transport infrastructure and services, and can additionally form the basis of a long-term research agenda to build further evidence on ways to increase rural access and to create lasting institutional change through uptake and embedment of this evidence. The paper was successfully submitted to the UN Department for Sustainable Development (DSD) and posted on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform as a background position paper to the HLPF 2017.¹⁸

¹⁷ For more information on the rural transport references of the VNRs in 2017, please see section 5.1.4.

¹⁸ Cook, J., Huizenga, C., Petts, R., Sampson, L., Visser, C. and Yiu, A. (2017). *The Contribution of Rural Transport to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*. [online] New York: United Nations Department for Sustainable Development. Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=1113&menu=3170> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

A joint ReCAP-SLoCaT paper entitled “Rural transport research in Support of Sustainable Development Goals”, highlighting among other topics the key messages, was published in the *UNESCAP Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific*, No. 87, themed "Transport and Sustainable Development Goals."¹⁹ The paper argues that rural transport research plays an indispensable role in achieving more than half of the SDGs. Research plays a key role in advancing rural transport by providing evidence to inform the key decisions on strengthening cost effective rural access and transport service processes to be promoted and embedded in practice in Africa and Asia.

SLoCaT has furthermore, and outside the scope of this project, participated alongside ReCAP to provide inputs to the Rural Access Working Group under the Sustainable Mobility for All initiative (SuM4ALL). SuM4ALL is a multi-stakeholder initiative, established in 2016, to bring together a diverse and influential group of transport stakeholders, with a commitment to speak with one global voice and act collectively to implement the SDGs and transform the transport sector. A Global Mobility Report (GMR) was released in 2017 to assess the global performance of the transport sector and the progress made toward four main objectives: universal access, efficiency, safety and green mobility²⁰. Rural Access is included alongside with Urban Access under the Universal Access objective. The Rural Access Working Group (RAWG) has developed a narrative for the GMR that presents the definitions and trends on rural access and explains the benefits and impacts of improving rural access. The GMR also discusses the challenges in measuring rural access and gives examples of a number of indicators, including the Rural Access Index.

5.2 Deliverable 3b: Advocating for whole-life financing of rural transport infrastructure and service of the multilateral development banks (MDBs) and other institutions

The principle of whole-life financing of rural transport infrastructure and services has been incorporated in Key Message 4, “Additional money AND commitment is needed to build and maintain rural road networks and develop sustainable rural transport services”. The key message promotes that existing funding sources need to be expanded and new funding sources need to be developed, piloted and implemented not only for building but also for managing and maintaining the road assets in whole-life terms.

The topic was an important message highlighted in the DSD background position paper (section 5.1) and in the factsheet on rural transport (section 3.2).

6 Lessons Learned

The project has successfully increased the profile of sustainable rural access as a viable component of the implementation strategies for achieving the SDGs in the high-level, multi-lateral discourse on sustainable transport and rural development. The development of a set of key messages was vital to provide a solid foundation guiding the overall directions of the outputs of the project. These key

¹⁹ Cook, J., Huizenga, C., Petts, R., Sampson, L., Visser, C. and Yiu, A. (2017). Rural transport research in Support of Sustainable Development Goals. In: *UNESCAP Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific*: No.87. Bangkok: UNESCAP.

²⁰ Sustainable Mobility for All. (2017). *Global Mobility Report 2017: Tracking Sector Performance*. Washington DC: World Bank. Available at: <http://sum4all.org/publications/global-mobility-report-2017> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

messages contributed to the thematic planning of both outreach activities (e.g. factsheet, banners, tweets, and blog posts) and policy discussions (e.g. the Pre-event on Rural Transport in Lao PDR and the High-Level Roundtable on Rural Transport and Agriculture at COP23). The consistency and linkages across these various outputs helped to significantly increase awareness and recognition among national governments, multilateral agencies, and other relevant stakeholders about the key role of rural transport and rural accessibility in contributing to achieving the SDGs.

The project has furthermore resulted in increased visibility of rural transport in important international processes on sustainable development and climate change. Rural Transport has received unprecedented high-level of attention at the regional EST process through the pre-event to the 10th EST Forum in Asia, “Contribution of Rural Transport to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” which was held on 13 March 2017 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The pre-event successfully engaged more than 100 stakeholders from 30 different countries in dedicated discussions on how to scale up action in improving rural access and incorporating sustainable rural transport in countries’ strategic planning. Through the discussion, the Pre-event has also increased recognition amongst key players in Asia of the important role that UKAID and ReCAP, can play in the development of sustainable rural access. The impact of the pre-event was further reinforced by the Vientiane Declaration on Sustainable Rural Transport towards Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted as the outcome of the 10th EST Forum in March 2017.

The project has also successfully created entry points to raise awareness on rural transport in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process through the High-Level Roundtable on “Rural Transformation: Climate Resilient and Low Emission Food Systems, which was held on 14 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany during COP23. The roundtable attracted around 40 representatives from government authorities, development agencies, civil society, the academia and private sector and provided an interactive platform for cross-sector learning and exchanges on the nexus between rural transport, agriculture, and climate resilience. The roundtable was an important step towards increasing awareness in the climate community on the importance of rural transport, which has been a missing agenda in previous COP events.

In addition, the project created a strong liaison with the University of Birmingham for the development of content-oriented outputs to further promote the key messages. Under the guidance of the Student Supervisor, the Student Assistants have delivered high-quality blog posts to illustrate the critical role of rural transport in achieving the SDGs. These blog posts complemented the overall outreach activities and have strengthened the advocacy effort.

Nonetheless, the project has encountered great obstacles and challenges in organizing a regional dialogue in Africa. The EST process in Asia provided an enabling condition of including rural transport in the regional, multi-lateral development agenda. The Africa region lacks such a supportive basis. The lack of entry points to regional development organizations in Africa (e.g. AU and UNECA) and the lack of an appropriate high-level, international conference on (rural) transport to organize the regional dialogue as a side event are the major reasons that the dialogue did not materialize.

The project also encountered challenges in delivering certain outputs according to the implementation schedule, especially for the feature videos coordinated by the University of Birmingham. The production of the videos was delayed due to the under-capacity of the University’s production unit, beyond the control of the University of Birmingham partners. As a counter-measure, a strict schedule with constant follow-ups was put in place. This has however not prevented that the production team is still in the process of finalizing the second infographic video as of May 1.

7 Recommendations

The evaluation of the different SLoCaT workstreams (climate change, sustainable development, rural transport and social equity) was a key discussion topic during the SLoCaT Annual Meeting in Washington DC in January 2018. At the meeting, SLoCaT members were informed on the current challenges and obstacles as well as opportunities under various tracks, including rural transport. Most of the SLoCaT members gave the feedback that while the type of work SLoCaT did for rural transport was aligned with its experience, the theme of rural transport was not where SLoCaT or its member were strongest in.

The collective feedback and consultation that the SLoCaT Secretariat has received from the Board and the SLoCaT members is to further streamline its activities to focus on climate change and urban transport. Unfortunately, the implications for rural transport is that, along with sustainable development, it will need be phased out from SLoCaT's activities in the next fiscal year (June 2018 – June 2019).

We recommend the following list of high-level events that could be valuable channels to the ReCAP programme to continue raising the profile of rural transport:

- **High Level Political Forum 2018 (July 9 – 18, 2018, New York):** SDG 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) will be reviewed this year, which includes SDG indicator 12.3 on food waste (By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses).²¹
- **Rural Development Conference 2018 (July 19 – 21, 2018, Bangkok):** organized by Tomorrow People Organization to explore best practices and sustainable rural development strategies.²²
- **Global Climate Action Summit (September 12-14, 2018, San Francisco):** An important international conference in support of the implementation of the Paris Agreement and a possible channel to promote the importance of adaptation in rural transport.²³
- **Eleventh Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia (September 2018, Mongolia):** Possibility to follow up on the Vientiane Declaration on Rural Transport 2017.
- **2018 SARF/ IRF/ PIARC Regional Conference for Africa (October 9 – 11, 2018, Durban):** The theme of the conference is: Roads to Social and Economic Growth and it aims to develop a road financing policy for an efficient, safe and affordable road network.
- **COP24 (December 3 – 14, 2017, Katowice):** There are potential opportunities to continue the discussion on the nexus between agriculture, transport, and adaptation at this year's COP24.²⁴

²¹ Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, (2017). *High Level Political Forum 2018*. Available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

²² Tomorrow People Organization, (2018). *Rural Development Conference 2018*. Available at: <http://www.rdconference.org/> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

²³ United Nations, (2018). *Global Climate Action Summit*. Available at: <https://globalclimateactions summit.org/> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

²⁴ United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change, (2018). *COP24*. Available at: <http://cop24.gov.pl/> [Accessed 31 May 2018].