
Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing (PWG-TBC)

19th Session
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Public-Private Partnerships in the SPECA region

(Item 4.6 of the Agenda)

Note by UNESCAP

1. Given the massive financial requirements for developing and maintaining transport infrastructure and the limited budgetary resources and borrowing capacities of countries, it is unlikely that the public sector will be able to deliver all the infrastructure needed for development. Therefore many governments have been taking measures for further engaging the private sector. Involving the private sector is needed not only to provide innovation and efficiency gains in delivery and management of infrastructure and services, but also to provide new sources of finance.

2. Recognizing the potential of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as an alternative financing and delivery modality, ESCAP and ECE secretariats have been promoting the use of PPPs under their regular programmes of work. Under the project “Public-Private Alliance Programme for Capacity Building in Infrastructure Development and Provision of Basic Services”, ESCAP and ECE, together with the Economic Commission for Africa, developed and disseminated resource and training materials; conducted national and regional capacity building activities; established regional knowledge networks through regular regional meetings of PPP units and programmes; and provided advisory services and technical assistance. These resources are available in English from the ESCAP website (<http://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport/financing-and-private-sector-participation>). One of the outcomes of the project was also the creation of an International Centre of Excellence on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), which has been established at ECE. This Centre will, inter

alia, provide access to best practice models and case studies through Specialist Centres in various sectors, including transport. Further details on the work programme of the Centre are available from the ECE website (<http://www.unece.org/ceci/ppp.html>).

3. There is potential for expanding private sector involvement in infrastructure development in all SPECA countries, but a number of critical steps are required in countries before PPP projects can be implemented. In particular, appropriate institutional and legal frameworks need to be put in place and a sustainable capacity-building programme on PPPs is required for both the public and private sectors. In this regard, ESCAP will continue to support governments in building their capacity by providing updated online training solutions and by facilitating knowledge and experience sharing among the countries of the region. For instance, a regional meeting will be organized in 2015 to improve the understanding of senior policy makers and government officials about PPPs where representatives from the SPECA countries will be invited.

The Project Working Group may wish to

- Update the meeting on developments in PPPs in their countries (revised legalisation, institutional arrangements and so on), including specific transport projects procured through this mechanism;
- Encourage SPECA countries to pursue policy measures to create the appropriate institutional environment for the development of public-private partnerships;
- Encourage SPECA countries to strengthen the training programmes for government officials and other relevant stakeholders by taking advantage of training materials on PPPs prepared by UNECE and UNESCAP.