

## **United Nations Capacity-Building Workshop on Sustainable Transport**

23 – 24 June 2025

Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

### **CONCEPT NOTE**

#### **1. Introduction**

Globally, both the political appreciation of sustainable transport as well as our scientific understanding of transport's linkages, both synergies and trade-offs, with issues such as resilient infrastructure development, food security, access to decent work, economic growth, trade, global supply chains, promotion of health, energy efficiency and tackling of climate change have greatly improved in the last years. In 2023, the General Assembly resolution A/78/148 titled "Strengthening the links between all modes of transport to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals" called, among others, for closer UN cooperation, a UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026-2035), and a Third UN Global Sustainable Transport Conference, and the celebration of the next World Sustainable Transport Day on 26 November 2024.

Through the General Assembly resolution A/78/148, the Member States also requested the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs to develop an Implementation Plan for the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport, in collaboration with the UN Regional Commissions and in consultation with the Member States, the United Nations system and all other relevant stakeholders. The Implementation Plan for the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026-2035) is set to be a critical tool for steering global efforts towards sustainable, inclusive, and resilient transportation systems. The Implementation Plan will serve as a strategic framework to coordinate actions, mobilize resources, and monitor progress towards sustainable transport, ultimately aiming to strengthen global visibility for transport in the context of sustainable development.

#### **2. Rationale and focus areas**

The Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) of UN DESA, in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) is organizing this workshop to enhance the capacities of national and local governments in formulating and implementing policies for sustainable transport. The capacity-building workshop will provide an opportunity for peer learning on integrated policy-making and offer practical examples for leveraging resources for national sustainable transport initiatives. It will also empower developing country officials to actively engage in the development of the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport and to contribute to the activities of the Decade and provide feedback to DSDG for the ongoing drafting process to help ensure that the Implementation Plan is informed by the capacity needs of developing countries.

The need for capacity building on sustainable transport has recently been highlighted in the global policy conversations. On 17 April, 2024, as part of his Sustainability Week, the President of the General Assembly convened a High-level Meeting on Sustainable Transport at the UN Headquarters. The event emphasized innovative, sustainable solutions to better balance the economic, social, and environmental aspects of transport, and in addition several Member States made calls for further capacity building activities. Similar sentiments were conveyed at the informal Member State consultations on the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport, held on 1 October 2024 in New York.

The workshop will aim to ensure that participating government officials are better equipped with the necessary tools, knowledge, and partnerships to effectively address their transport challenges. Strengthening institutional capacities and enhancing technical expertise will be key to the success of sustainable transport systems, especially in contexts where resource limitations and logistical constraints are prominent. Discussions in this workshop will explore the types of constraints developing countries face and discuss innovative financing mechanisms, partnership opportunities, and capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening transport infrastructure and policy frameworks.

By situating the discussions within the broader vision of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport, the workshop seeks to contribute to strengthening the Implementation Plan of the Decade by providing insights on how to integrate the needs of developing countries into the plan. The conversations will complement global consultations on the plan and the regional consultations that have been held in November 2024 – March 2025 by all five UN Regional Commissions.

The capacity-building workshop aims at answering some of the following key questions:

- How can developing countries effectively utilize global sustainable transport policy guidance in their policy making? What successful practices and case studies can be scaled up or adapted to overcome transport challenges?
- What specific capacity gaps exist for developing countries, and how can these gaps be bridged through technical assistance, training, and knowledge-sharing?
- In what ways can digitalization be leveraged as a tool for sustainable transport and how can access to key technologies be ensured?
- What innovative partnerships and financing mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, can be mobilized to support sustainable transport infrastructure and solutions?

### **3. Objectives and guiding questions**

The objectives of the workshop include:

- To share experiences and lessons learned from across the world in advancing sustainable transport and in ensuring that transport contributes to the overall attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals;
- To familiarize national governments with the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport;
- To empower developing countries to actively contribute to the development of the Implementation Plan of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport and the implementation of the UN Decade.

### **4. Organization and participants**

The meeting will be organized by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Commissions, and hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in Geneva, Switzerland. Participation at the 2-day meeting will be by invitation only. Participants will include Member States representatives, experts from the United Nations system and academia, as well as other international, regional, and sub-regional organizations. This is a working-level workshop, with all participants encouraged to speak openly and informally.

### **5. Language and interpretation**

The conversations will be conducted in English.

### **6. Venue**

The meeting will take place at the  
Headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)  
Palais des Nations  
14 Avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva  
Switzerland