

Comments by the Supply Chain and Delivery Division, UN World Food Programme, for the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport draft outline of Implementation Plan

1. It would be important to explicitly include a point on **losses** (transport needs to be secure to prevent cargo losses), which impact both waste and emissions (food purchased and transported multiple times, or emissions related to disposal of damaged and unfit food).
2. Important also to emphasise fleet management and the design of transport assets with a **circular economy approach** - ensuring end-of-life management, recycling of parts, repairs, upcycling, or proper disposal (including hazardous waste). Many sustainable measures can be cost-effective, and as impactful as electrifying transport, or even more so. These include transport demand management (also known as the 'AVOID' strategy in the AVOID-SHIFT-IMPROVE approach): most sustainable kilometre is the one not driven because it is not needed. This also involves reviewing fleet size and vehicle allocation and decommissioning old, inefficient vehicles where possible (e.g., is a 4x4 needed in a developed, urban environment?). Additional measures include eco-driving training (e.g., tire pressure, efficient driving), ride/truck sharing where applicable, regular maintenance, and simple repairs to extend vehicle lifespan. Also important are establishing maintenance standards and optimizing routes and logistics, as distribution networks are often not designed for efficiency, resulting in unnecessary transport and low load factors. Finally, consideration should be given to balancing speed, cost, and sustainability during emergencies.
3. Highlight more clearly the links between sustainable transport and other sustainability transitions, such as sustainable energy and the increasing demand for cold chains. Promoting sustainable energy, like off-grid solarisation, enables **electric vehicles** (EVs) to be charged with renewables instead of diesel generators. At the same time, it's beneficial to harmonize sustainable vehicle standards across countries. Manufacturers hesitate to invest in EVs that only align with local infrastructure, and policy incentives alone may be less effective if standards don't fit local needs.
4. Building and maintaining **infrastructure** is crucial, and thus a system needs to be thought of on maintenance, who will cover it, pay for it, etc. as well as proper policy. In the discussion on urban-rural linkages, first and last-mile transport is often the weakest link and it's where many sustainability challenges lie. Another important element is the link between increasing transport infrastructure and improving the environmental impact and efficiency. On session 3a, we can add that environmental impact can be reduced, and efficiency improved by increasing availability of public transport and establishing rail lines. This benefits both passengers and cargo by clearing roadways of congestion and moving cargo with less energy.
3. More could be dedicated to the significant **knowledge and research gap** when it comes to transportation. For example, when looking at food value chains, transportation is often not considered, and transporters are never spoken to. There's little to no recognition of **drivers and transporters as stakeholders or agents in development**. The downstream tail of smallholder supply chains has been largely neglected but needs attention as those working here are as important to creating sustainability as are the farmers themselves.



4. While challenges are implied, a session focused on **institutional, legal, and political barriers to sustainable transport** would make the workshop more actionable. In terms of policy, if possible, it could be beneficial to talk about role of transport unions, the various protectionist schemes, poor access to capital and other forms of entry barriers, and how they curb competition preventing potentially more efficient firms from entering the market. An important subject of discussion could also be on how to deal with the informal transport sector; how informal transport systems can be supported, regulated fairly, and integrated into broader sustainability frameworks.
5. Another issue that is often overlooked is that of **capacity gaps**. While there is a notable focus on digitalization and innovation (which can indeed provide great benefits, albeit likely less so in certain more complex contexts), the importance of certain basic skills is overlooked. Priority soft skills and business skills are often lacking in some of these logistics/transport companies in humanitarian settings. Skills such as literacy, calculation, some tech knowledge, but also planning (backhaul efficiency), forecasting, collaboration with suppliers/clients/partners, importance of vehicle maintenance, loading and sorting items etc.
6. Some existing tools for tracking vehicle performance/fuel consumption, etc., include:
 - [Fleet Forum's Clean Fleet Toolkit](#)
 - Fleet Forum's [Environmental Self-Assessment Tool \(ESAT\) for fleet and transport management](#).
 - Fleet Forum's upcoming data collection platform (not yet released)
 - The [Humanitarian Carbon Calculator](#) (includes tabs on vehicles and freight)