SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT HOW-TO NOTES

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

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Conducting Social Assessments in Urban Transport Projects

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Introduction

The social issues involved in urban transport projects are often complex and city specific. Accordingly, successfully executing a project calls for an understanding of technical, social and cultural issues. The overall objective of a social assessment in connection with an urban transport project is to forecast the impact the completed project will have and identify the potential risks it poses to commuters, particularly the poor and other vulnerable residents of a city. An assessment should also propose ways a project might be designed differently to maximize benefits and mitigate risks.

Conducting a social assessment is the responsibility of the client. Nevertheless, there is often a need for the World Bank task team to offer guidance on how best to conduct one. The aim of this "How-To Note" is to provide practical advice to social specialists assigned to an urban transport project in designing a useful assessment. It is by no means definitive. Instead, it is meant to guide specialists in structuring and leading conversations on social issues related to urban transport investments with technical teams, clients and other stakeholders. Ideally, it will also provide transport specialists and clients a better understanding of the social dimensions of an urban transport project and result in the best design.

Urban transport projects often require land acquisition and trigger World Bank OP 4.12 on Involuntary Resettlement. Land acquisition and resettlement have significant social impacts, but because detailed guidance on the implementation of OP 4.12 is available, this note will not touch on either of these issues. It focuses on the social assessment to be conducted under OP 4.01 and covers issues other than involuntary resettlement.

Main Characteristics of Urban Transport Projects

The components of an urban transport project vary from one to the other depending on scale and setting. Project financing might be directed toward a single purpose such as infrastructure, traffic management, traffic safety, improvements to public transport, or policy reform, or it might be directed to several and, perhaps, all of these purposes. To design an effective and sustainable urban transport project, its social dimensions must be taken into consideration at an early stage.

An urban transport project entails far more than the construction of roads or other physical infrastructure. It involves an understanding of the need for mobility on the part of different groups of people and encompasses traffic management, land use planning and other aspects of urban planning. Ideally, the design of an urban transportation system should ensure that all users, including women, the poor and the disabled, have easy access to safe and affordable transportation. The design needs to reflect an understanding of several aspects of urban transportation on a day-to-day basis: travel patterns and destinations, the range of existing transport options and quality of services, constraints and problems, the needs and preferences of travelers, costs, and the ability and willingness of travelers to pay.

Levels of Analysis

A social assessment relating to an urban transport project should focus on issues at three interrelated levels: urban planning, the transport sector, and the project.

Urban Planning: Urban transport systems are an important element in urban planning. Before these systems can be designed, the urban plan should be studied to ensure that it was developed with adequate attention given to its social dimensions. The study should focus on:

- The overall land use plan for zoning, settlement and communities
- Population growth forecasts
- The level and quality of existing transport services, including access to them by the poor, marginalized groups, and the residents of informal settlements
- The arrangement of travel routes, housing, and workplaces as envisaged in the urban plan and its conformity with the land use plan
- The placement of roads, car parks, pedestrian walkways, bicycle routes, public transport routes and terminals in relation to the land use plan
- Public participation and consultation in the urban planning process

Sector Level: An urban transport system is intricately linked with urban form and spatial structure. Considering that every city has different socioeconomic, geographical and topographical characteristics, the **spatial imprint** of transportation varies accordingly. When designing an urban transport project, it is important to understand the social dimensions taken into account in the overall ***transport development plan*** of the city, such as:

- The form and the spatial structure of the city
- Modes of transportation, the spatial arrangement of infrastructure, and the transport needs of users reflected in the urban transport development plan
- Expected population growth, the means of transport and accessibility to transport for different groups of people, particularly the poor and more vulnerable members of society, such as women, the elderly, and the disabled

Project Level: At the project level, a social assessment is an integral part of a feasibility study. It is an approach and a tool to incorporate analysis and constituent input into the design and implementation of investment projects. It is useful in examining the social dimensions of the project, assessing the potential social impacts and risks, and proposing measures to ensure the project design minimizes harmful effects and maximizes benefits. To design a better urban transport project, a social assessment should include an analysis of relevant social data and information, such as

- Demographic information of transport service users
- The needs of different groups and the obstacles they may face when attempting to use transport services
- Relevant transport data, such as travel patterns; distances between places of residence and workplaces, schools, social services, and markets; and commuting times,
- Transport options and services available to users (including informal systems), as well as availability and utilization of public transport
- Accessibility to transport services for different groups, particularly poor and vulnerable

- Institutional arrangements for traffic management, maintenance of infrastructure and project implementation
- Willingness and ability to pay for improved transport services
- Other social dimensions related to urban transport, such as poverty, gender, disability, and road safety
- Public transportation grid coverage and availability of transportation for low-income commuters from outlying areas to cities

Key Social Issues in the Sector

Poverty: In designing an urban transport project, its potential impact on poverty cannot be overlooked. An assessment should therefore take into consideration the following:

- Transport needs of the urban poor
- Distances the urban poor travel and the time spent in transit
- Percentage of disposable incomes spent on transportation
- Proportion of urban poor among non-motorized road users
- Traffic hazards that the urban poor face
- Employment opportunities that the construction, operation and maintenance of a transport project will generate for the urban poor
- The potential a modified project design might have to offer the urban poor an affordable means of transport that is safe and efficient in terms of time

Access: Access to urban transport services should be considered a key social issue. Attention should be given to

- Mobility needs (e.g., business, work, school, shopping, social events) of different groups of people, particularly the poor and women
- Intermediate and/or informal means of transport used by different groups of people
- Adequacy of existing transport infrastructure that responds to the needs of different groups of people in different locations, such as public transport, sidewalks, foot paths and bicycle lanes

Box 1. Paving Roads in Low-income Areas in Brazilian Cities

Unpaved roads in low-income areas in Brazilian cities, many of which used to be impassable in wet weather, were serious impediments to the access of buses and emergency vehicles. In São Paulo alone there were 800 kilometers of bus routes were unpaved in the early 1980s. To remedy this problem, an extensive program of paving in low-income areas was included in the First Brazil Urban Transport Project.

There was a tendency among engineering firms however to produce overly elaborate designs for drainage and basic pavement structures. As a consequence, cost overruns and delays in completing projects resulted. To address these problems, the Empresa Metropolitana de Transportes Urbanos in São Paulo undertook a comprehensive study of low-cost paving that resulted in a manual on low-cost paving techniques and an economic feasibility study. In parallel, the national body Empresa Brasileira dos Transportes Urbanos (EBTU) commissioned a study of low-cost paving regionally. The study concluded that the benefits of an extensive bus route paving program would be substantial and established guidelines for the selection of roads to be included in a paving program.

The Third Brazil Urban Transport Project included a $63 million component – the (Programa de Pavimentacao de Baixo Custo em Areas de Baixa Renda (PROPAV) program – to pave 500 kilometers of bus routes in low-income areas between 1981 and 1984.

Source: The World Bank (2002). *Cities on the Move: A World Bank Urban Transport Strategy Review*

Gender: Men and women have different transport needs, and the design of a transport system will affect them in different ways. The gender issues that need to be considered in urban transport projects include:

- Different preferences for methods of transport
- Different purposes for traveling and different destinations
- Differences in time spent traveling
- Risk of gender-based violence and sexual harassment on public transportation facilities
- Different needs for transportation facilities and infrastructure, such as bus stops, street lights and sidewalks
- Potential ways to amend the project design to meet the particular needs of women

Box 2. Transportation Hurdles for Women in Yemen

Studies in Yemen revealed that women face higher costs and bigger hurdles to getting around than men. The studies concluded that the transportation systems do not adequately serve the needs of the country's women. Reliable public transport schedules, sidewalks and street lighting, increased numbers of bus stops and pedestrian crossings could make it possible for them to move around more freely and safely.

Women tend to use public transportation more frequently than men, but transportation routes and schedules are limited. Women also spend between 15 and 20 percent more than men on transportation in Yemen's cities on account of cultural and societal constraints and the duties they perform. Issues related to safety and hygiene concern them, too, especially when they travel with children.

Available transportation is more costly for women than men. Social pressure "greatly constrains" women's mobility. Transportation costs women 50 percent more than men because they must ride in covered vehicles—and many cannot afford to pay. The result is that women tend to walk.

In Yemen's capital city, Sana'a, infrastructure has lowered the cost of access to education, services, jobs and economic opportunities for women in established areas of the city. But safer, more secure urban transportation could enhance these opportunities further.

What is important in Yemen is access to education—whether it is education for young women, or continuing education for women who may already have a job. It is impossible for women to get an education if there is no secure means of transport, because their families will simply not allow them to attend. Urban transport therefore prevents women from improving their lot in life.

Source: The World Bank, *Women Face Transportation Hurdles*, 2012. Available at http://go.worldbank.org/X7QMCOH0H0

The Elderly and Disabled: The issue of accessibility for the elderly and disabled is an important one in

any urban transport project. In designing a project, it is advisable to review the following:

- Accessibility and convenience of existing transport services
- Constraints that transportation might pose for the elderly and disabled to take active roles in society
- Constraints that might prevent the disabled from working
- Consultations with the elderly and disabled as the design is formulated
- Inclusion of barrier-free transport facilities in the project design, taking into account the needs of the elderly and disabled (See Box 3 for examples from Latin American cities.)

Box 3. Barrier-free Facilities in Latin American Urban Transport Projects

Cities in Latin America, such as Bogota, Buenos Aires and several cities in Brazil, have made great strides in designing urban transport projects in response to the assessment of needs of their disabled and elderly citizens:

- Bogota Urban Transport Project: Trolley and "Transmilenio" bus systems are completely accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Buenos Aires: Low-floor buses.
- Curitiba's Bus System in Brazil: Raised platforms at all express bus stops; bridges between platforms and buses; ramps, handrails and elevators in all stations.

Source: Social Protection, Social Development & Urban Development Departments (2008). *Design for All: Implications for Bank Operations.* Washington D.C.: The World Bank

Safety: Road accidents are a grave problem in cities experiencing rapid growth, where roads are congested, infrastructure inadequate or poorly maintained, whenever traffic regulations are ignored or not enforced, or because drivers, riders or pedestrians might behave irresponsibly. A social assessment should take into consideration the following issues:

- The incidence of road accidents and the demographics of victims, e.g., the poor, women, children, pedestrians, or the disabled
- The causes of road accidents, such as irresponsible behavior among drivers and pedestrians, inadequate transport services, poor infrastructure and poor traffic management
- The impact of road accidents on different groups of people, particularly the poor
- Potential measures to improve transport safety in the project design

Box 4. Saving Lives in Brasilia As a planned new city, Brasília has an extensive road network, which in 1995 sustained an average traffic speed of 40 kilometers an hour (km/h), twice the national urban average, but which also experienced 11 deaths per 1,000 vehicles. On the recommendations of a joint working group of the secretariats of public safety and transport, in July 1995 the governor established by decree a traffic safety program, entitled "Peace within Traffic."

The aims of the program included:
- Control of excess speeding
- Control of driving under the influence of alcohol
- Tighter enforcement of traffic rules
- Improved medical assistance to accident victims
- Improved road infrastructure safety features
- Vehicle safety inspection and control
- Pedestrian, cyclist, and public transport priority.

Several secretariats were involved in implementing this high-level activity, which was accompanied by an energetic press campaign and a concerted effort to involve civil society. Between 1995 and 1997 the number of deaths per 1,000 vehicles fell from 11 to 6.6. The program has maintained its focus ever since, and its benefits are still felt.

Source: The World Bank (2002). *Cities on the Move: A World Bank Urban Transport Strategy Review*

Public Consultation and Participation: Designing an effective and sustainable urban transport project requires consultations with and participation of different stakeholders and user groups. The consultation process helps to:

- Clarify access and mobility needs of user groups
- Understand the views of different user groups' constraints and priorities for transport services
- Identify solutions to obstacles to access, and other problems for project design and implementation (See box 5 for how consultation and participation help improve project design.)

Box 5. China Liaoning Urban Transport Project: How public consultation and participation contribute to improvement of project design

The US $525 million Liaoning Urban Transport project in China aimed to enhance i) the performance and quality of existing transport infrastructure, ii) the efficiency and effectiveness of urban public transport and road maintenance, and iii) the responsiveness of the transport system to the needs of the population without access to private motorized vehicles in medium-sized cities in the Liaoning province.

The project used a broad-based participatory approach to assess the needs of different user groups; efforts were made to include different vulnerable groups, including women, the elderly and people with disabilities.

Extensive participatory assessments of transport needs were carried out (during preparation and implementation) and assessment findings were used to raise awareness of public officials. Focusing on the needs of project impacted persons, the focus of investment shifted from large investments, such as ring road and major arterials, to solutions benefitting pedestrians and cyclists, such as local road network improvement and safety enhancement.

In addition, gender-sensitive separate male and female focus groups were held to understand? latent needs of women residents. Women, more than men, listed safety and personal security as primary concerns. especially for poorly lit streets, poorly designed underpasses and long waits for buses. In response, the project included upgrading and construction of transport services with street lighting and a review of bus routes as a possible precursor for restructuring.

Source: Social Development Department (2010). *Social Development & Infrastructure: Making Transport Work for Women and Men – Tools for Task Teams.* Washington D.C.: The World Bank.

Key Steps

A well designed social assessment should i) identify specific measures that should be taken to produce the best project design possible, ii) eliminate or at least mitigate risks and any detrimental impact the project might have, and iii) ensure that the project design and the activities it involves are consistent with the broader development objectives for the city. Three key steps in producing a social assessment are described below.

Social Screening

STEP 1

Social screening entails an initial identification of the key issues (at urban planning, transport sector, and the project levels) that need further study. An understanding of the project development objective is the starting point for effective social screening. The screening is often carried out by means of field visits and consultations with sample groups of different stakeholders. The screening helps the project team to understand the following:

- The primary stakeholders in the proposed project
- Socioeconomic profiles of transport service users
- Availability of urban planning, transport sector plan, and land use plan
- Social dimensions considered in the urban planning and transport plans
- Transport means, levels of services and constraints for different groups of people, particularly the poor, women, elderly, and the disabled
- Institutional arrangements for traffic management and maintenance
- Willingness and ability to pay for improved transport services
- The potential social impacts and risks of the proposed project
- Possible additional social dimensions to the project

Some key questions on specific social issues to be asked as part of the social screening are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Guiding Questions on Social Issues

Issues	Guiding Questions for Social Screening
Poverty & Access	• What are the travel requirements and mobility needs of low-income residents and communities on the periphery, in particular, the urban poor and vulnerable groups? What are the main concerns of different groups (established residents, recent migrants, and squatters)? What transport needs are unmet? Consider access to employment opportunities and social services. • What are the different means of transport used by different income groups? Consider informal methods of transportation, walking distances, non-motorized travel. • How much time is spent on commutes by different income groups? • What percentage of their incomes do different income groups spend on transportation? • What are the social impacts of the proposed project on households, especially those in low-income, peripheral communities, or in the corridor of impact? For example, increased transport services can lead to a rise in land value or migration from other parts of the city that can displace poor families. Will the project increase vulnerability or jeopardize the safety of any population groups?
Gender	• Do the transport sector and project have strategies or policies that address gender issues? • What are the major travel and transport patterns and needs of women? What transport demands are unsatisfied? Consider whether women travel during off-peak hours, travel to multiple locations consecutively, travel to adjacent locations in the periphery rather than between periphery and center. • What are the major economic activities of women and how effectively do current transport systems respond to these needs? • What are the available resources for travel and who controls their use in the household? • What are the cultural, social, economic, and other factors that prevent women from using transport? • How much time do women spend travelling (including time spent walking and waiting? • What constraints does transportation pose in terms of women's economic and domestic roles? • What measures have been taken to involve women in the project design and implementation? What are the chief areas of concern for different groups of women? • If the project is expected to generate jobs or incomes, are there barriers that might prevent women from joining the labor force? • Are there low rates of school enrollment and completion, particularly among girls? Can transport help to address this problem? • Are sexual harassment and gender-based violence widespread problems during travel (by foot, public transport, etc.)? Consider long waits, poorly lighted areas and overcrowded buses and train cars. • Is transport infrastructure designed with women's physical and routine needs in mind? Consider height of rails, women carrying shopping bags

	and children, etc. • Is there a high rate of pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle accidents?
Elderly & Disabled	• What are the major travel and transport patterns and needs of the elderly and the disabled? What transport demands are unsatisfied? What are the concrete effects of these shortcomings on the lives of the elderly and disabled? Consider exclusion, vulnerability to health problems, unsafe living or working conditions, and the loss of livelihoods. • In which ways is the existing transport system universally accessible and convenient? Consider, for example, the quality of road construction and incline, the existence, visibility and quality of pedestrian infrastructure; clear demarcation of routes and terminals; rest options at stops and terminals, accessibility of platforms, and other safety measures. • Will the project have any negative impact on the elderly or the disabled? Consider potential actions that by themselves might not pose impediments, but when combined with other elements of a project might have adverse effects.
Safety	• Is there a high rate of pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle accidents? What design features increase the risk of such accidents? What behaviors on the part of pedestrians and drivers increase the risk of such accidents?
Participation and consultation	• Who are the motorized road users? • Who are the non-motorized users, such as pedestrians and cyclists? • What are the transportation needs and constraints of different groups of people, such as women, the elderly and disabled? • What is the appropriate mechanism that would enable transport users to participate in project planning and implementation?
Other relevant social issues	• Who are the institutional actors in urban transport? What are the roles of the government, the private and informal sectors and community groups? Are these roles and responsibilities defined and understood by all actors? • What coordination exists between these institutional actors? What are the incentives and disincentives for cooperation? Are there sets of mutual and/or competing interests between and among institutional stakeholders? • How can cooperation be strengthened among institutions to better meet the needs of low income and vulnerable groups? • What regulations exist that have an impact on access to transport and affordability? • What are the potential impacts on different stakeholders? • What is the capacity of institutions and communities to work together constructively in identifying needs, prioritizing investments, choosing a design, monitoring services, and maintaining and managing transport infrastructure?

STEP 2

Designing the Scope and Content of Social Assessments

The scope and content of a social assessment will vary from one project to another depending on the socioeconomic characteristics of the city and the development objective and scale of the project. In order to obtain information that will be useful in designing a project, social scoping needs to clarify the following:

- ***Timeframe of the social assessment:*** The social assessment can apply to the project design phase alone, or to the complete project from design through implementation and evaluation. A decision in this regard should be made at an early stage. Projected population growth should be reflected in the timeframe selected.
- ***Key social dimensions:*** Based on the assessment, social scoping should identify key issues that need to be addressed further and on which dimensions. Following are other issues to be considered in an assessment:

  - ***Poverty impacts***, such as i) the potential for maximizing access for the poor and vulnerable groups, including women; ii) income-generating opportunities for the poor, in unskilled construction or maintenance work, materials contracting or service provision; and iii) the willingness and ability of the poor to pay for new or improved transport services in the form of tolls, station fees, passenger fares, or freight charges.
  - ***Social impacts and risks*** for various groups of people. These might include a potential loss of income for certain transport operators; an increased risk of the spread of infectious diseases or an expanded trade in illicit drugs; the risks associated with an influx of temporary laborers; the acquisition of land either permanently or temporarily and its effects on incomes, housing, facilities, services or resources for those displaced.
  - ***Social and cultural factors*** that might prevent stakeholders from using or enjoying the benefits of the proposed project (see Box 3 for assessing impacts of proposed transport system changes on different transport users).
  - ***Measures and recommendations for project design***, such as components to complement the project, including overpasses, underpasses, access roads, sidewalks, street lights, or transport safety programs.

- ***Methodologies of social assessment:*** A variety of tools and methodologies can be used in conducting a social assessment, and the cost entailed will depend on which are used. Selecting the right tools and methodologies should take into consideration cost, the time required to complete the assessment and the use data collection techniques that are appropriate and efficient
- ***Contents of the social assessment report:*** The report can provide background information on the project, describe the methodologies used to conduct the social assessment, identify the key social issues with a bearing on the project, and recommend potential amendments based on the assessment that could result in an improved design.

Box 6. Kyrgyzstan Urban Transport Project: Social Impacts of Removing Transport Subsidies

Transport subsidies have often been used as measures to increase access of needier population groups to transport services. The social assessment for the Kyrgyz urban transport project assessed the social impacts of the possible removal of exemptions and subsidies, and found that low income pensioners would be disproportionately affected by the removal of such subsides. One of the main findings was that maintaining a certain level of subsidies for the elderly would not impose a heavy fiscal burden on the transport system. Based on these findings, it recommended that the government a) maintain subsidies at a reduced level for the elderly and pensioners in order to safeguard their mobility; and b) eliminate the subsidies to students, but institute a needs-based student pass system issued by schools.

Source: Social Assessment – The Kyrgyz Republic Urban Transport Project

The output of step 2 will be one of the terms of reference for a social assessment.

Incorporating Social Dimensions into Project Design and Implementation

STEP 3

An action plan needs to be prepared based on the findings and recommendations of the social assessment to ensure that issues identified are adequately addressed in the project design and implementation. The social action plan can have two parts: a) actions relating to the project design, and b) actions relating to project implementation. It is important to a government give its full endorse to the plan and commit itself to implementing it.

Actions for project design: Some social issues can be addressed by means of amendments to the project design. In such cases, the plan needs to include mention of the following:

- The key social issues
- The main findings of the assessment with regard to specific issues
- The recommended measures to address each of these issues
- Changes to be made in the project design based on the recommendations of the assessment
- Follow-up actions required that cannot be addressed at the design stage

Actions for project implementation: Not all social issues can be addressed through changes made to a project's design. To address social issues adequately during project implementation, an action plan should identify the following:

- The key social issues
- The chief findings of the assessment
- The activities to be carried out during implementation to address key issues
- The institutional arrangements necessary to address these issues
- A schedule for implementing proposed activities with responsibilities for conducting them assigned to the appropriate parties
- Budget
- Monitoring indicators for activities, preferably incorporated into a results framework for the project

Matrix of social actions: It is good practice to include with any assessment a matrix summarizing key issues, findings and recommendations and outlining the actions to be taken.

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