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

18th Session
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Almaty, Kazakhstan

Public-Private Partnerships in the SPECA region

(Item 4.8 of the Agenda)

Note by UNECE/UNESCAP

1. Given the massive financial requirements for developing and maintaining transport infrastructure and the limited budgetary resources and borrowing capacities of countries, many countries have been taking measures to promote Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as an alternative financing and delivery modality..
2. Recognising the potential for PPPs to contribute to infrastructure development and services delivery, 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/ttdw/ppp/trainingmaterials.html>). One of the outcomes of the project was also the creation of an International Centre of Excellence on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), which has recently 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. On 11-13 November 2012, ESCAP organised a High-level Expert Group Meeting on Infrastructure PPPs for Sustainable Development (EGM) in Tehran. The EGM provided an opportunity for representatives of public sector agencies involved in PPPs for infrastructure development to share information on their activities and exchange new ideas to address the development challenges in implementing PPP programmes in the region. Of the SPECA countries, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan participated. The EGM preceded the Third Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on PPPs for Infrastructure Development and a Business Forum, which were organised by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran with support from ESCAP.

4. 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. ESCAP plans to organise national workshops and other activities to encourage capacity-building activities for officials from line ministries such as the ministries of railways and road development.

The Project Working Group may wish to

- Update the meeting on developments in PPPs in their countries, including specific projects;
- 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.