



# Urban Pathways

## URBAN MOBILITY IN NATIONAL URBAN POLICIES

**A checklist for Promoting Sustainable Urban Mobility:  
Vertical Integration, Horizontal Coordination and National  
Urban Policies**



**Urban Pathways Secretariat**

[www.urban-pathways.org](http://www.urban-pathways.org)

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***The Urban Pathways project helps delivering*** on the Paris Agreement and the NDCs in the context of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. It has established a facility in close cooperation with other organisations and networks active in this area to support national and local governments to develop action plans and concrete implementation measures to boost low-carbon urban development. This builds on UN-Habitat's role as "a focal point on sustainable urbanisation and human settlements including in the implementation and follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda". The project develops national action plans and local implementation concepts in key emerging economies with a high mitigation potential. The local implementation concepts are being developed into bankable projects, focusing on the access to urban basic services to create a direct link between climate change mitigation and sustainable development goals.

***The project follows a structured approach to boost*** Low Carbon Plans for urban mobility, energy and waste management services that deliver on the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda. The project works on concrete steps towards a maximum impact with regards to the contribution of urban basic services (mobility, energy and waste management) in cities to global climate change mitigation efforts and sustainable and inclusive urban development. This project makes an active contribution to achieve global climate change targets to a 1.5°C stabilisation pathway by unlocking the global emission reduction potential of urban energy, transport and resource sectors. The project will contribute to a direct emission reduction in the pilot and outreach countries, which will trigger a longer term emission reduction with the aim to replicate this regionally and globally to make a substantial contribution to the overall emission reduction potential.

***This project implements integrated urban services*** solutions as proposed in the New Urban Agenda providing access to jobs and public services in urban areas, contributing to equality and social coherence and deliver on the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. This is the first dedicated implementation action oriented project, led by UN-Habitat to deliver on inclusive, low-carbon urban services. Securing sustainability and multiplier effect, the project aims to leverage domestic and international funding for the implementation projects that will follow from this initiative

## Project concept

## Project aims





# Urban Pathways



## Urban Pathways Replication Cities

# INTRODUCTION

Key Assumption: Sustainable Urban Mobility or access for all to opportunities is an outcome of national policies, adequate financing, implementation capacity, local regulation and implementation as well as good vertical integration and better inter-ministerial coordination at the national level, incl. between Ministries of Transport, Urban Development, Environment, Energy and Health.

Transportation and mobility are central to sustainable development, as they can enhance economic growth, reduce GHG emissions and air pollution - and improve accessibility to opportunities. The importance of efficient movement of people and goods, access to environmentally sound, safe, and affordable transportation as a means to improve social equity, health, safety, resilience of cities, or urban-rural linkages is paramount. However, urban transport systems are faced by a multitude of challenges.

Many cities particularly in the developing world have been largely unprepared for the consequences of the rapid population growth – leaving mobility needs in the hands of private vehicles or uncoordinated and unsafe paratransit operators.

Transport interventions have long been focusing on “cars” – while ignoring the needs of non-motorised transport users and those relying on public transportation. This is to the detriment of the people who have to depend on their feet as an affordable transport option – or on often unsafe and chaotic public transport. Globally, private motorization has been accelerating – resulting in impacts such as severe traffic congestion, air and noise pollution as well as accidents.

High-quality, city-wide public transport systems and integrated non-motorised transport networks are urgently needed – two features that illustrate indispensable elements in creating a city where people and community come first. Sustainable transport systems essentially connect people to amenities and daily life while reducing negative externalities from the transport sector– and should be promoted in all parts of the globe.

Urban mobility interventions have to extend beyond the technicalities of increasing speed and improving the efficiency of transport systems. Demand-oriented measures (e.g. promoting safe walking and cycling, and reducing the need to travel by compact city planning and mixed land uses) have to be introduced. Accessibility has to be placed at the core of urban mobility – and any assessment should address these concerns to pave way to a progressive National Urban Policy (NUP).

Considering that the NUP looks at a wider horizon, reference should be made to the inter-relation of transport with urban planning, local economy, energy, environment, public space, human development and health.

In general, NUPs should provide direction for investment decisions in transport, i.e. analyze the often negative impact of massive infrastructure projects and their cost implications (such as highways, or fly overs) and provide recommendations towards sustainable mobility.

The relationship of transport with connectivity, transit-oriented development, land value capturing and systems of cities should also be stressed here.

# An Action Framework For Urban Mobility In The New Urban Agenda

**N**ational Urban Policies provide a framework for governments and other stakeholders to “get cities right”. As they affect urban development directly, it will be of utmost importance to have an “integrated lens” when developing them in order to achieve good urbanization and sustainable mobility.

Thenational leadership during the development of NUPs is essential to enhance policy coordination across all levels of governments, civil society, and the private sector. NUPs are a key framework to deliver on the city-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and implement the New Urban Agenda.

The NUA refers to Urban Mobility as a key measure to achieve sustainable and equitable cities. Cities have committed to develop policies and measures to improve road safety and integrate it into transport infrastructure planning and design. Cities also want to further promote access to safe, efficient, affordable and sustainable infrastructure for public transport, as well as non-motorized options such as walking and cycling, prioritizing them over private motorized transportation.

Action is needed at national and local level that will drive forward implementation of NUA, as seen in the graph below:

## Action Framework for Urban Mobility in the New Urban Agenda – key insights for NUPs





# National Urban Policies and Sustainable Urban Mobility: A proposed Check List



## Urban Governance

- » What are the policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks governing the transport sector? What vision, plans, policies do exist?
- » Do institutional mechanisms for enhanced coordination in the planning and management of intermodal transport systems exist? What mechanisms and policies encourage the establishment of city level, empowered metropolitan transport authorities, especially for principal cities?
- » Are national standards available to guide the design and construction of city mobility infrastructure?
- » What national guidance is available for operational models of Public Transport, bike sharing schemes etc.
- » Does each city have an elected government that is empowered to manage land use and mobility policy within the full metropolitan area?
- » Are cities mandated to prepare urban mobility plans and update them on a periodic basis (e.g. every 3 years)?
- » How effective is the legal and regulatory framework governing the transport sector? For example: Is traffic management effective and enforced? Are development control mechanisms enforced that promote compact, walkable neighborhoods and transit-oriented development? Are incentives in place to reduce pollution levels through changes in traveling practices or incentives for electric mobility? Are incentives in place that reduce car dependency (e.g. high parking fees in CBD)?
- » What strategies are in place for stakeholder participation and ensuring transparency in mobility projects?
- » To what level does an integrated planning approach exist? Are there inter-sectorial governance mechanisms in place, e.g. coordinating transport in relation to land-use, environment, public health? Particularly: Are compact urban development strategies existent to reduce the need for travel? Are regulatory mechanisms in place to promote transit-oriented development (compact, mixed land use within walking distance of high quality rapid transit systems)? Are there incentives for renewable energy that could power electric mobility? Are road safety and air pollution high on the transport agenda?



## Spatial Sustainability

- » What policies and mechanisms at the national level promote integrated land-use and transport planning? Do zoning policies promote compact city development that can lead to walkable cities and reduced travel demand?
- » Do sustainable concepts exist that deal with urban freight (green logistics), e.g. time restrictions, speed limits, cargo load restrictions in inner city areas?
- » Do building control regulations encourage pedestrian permeability and building designs with active pedestrian frontage that contribute to a vibrant and secure public realm?
- » Is there an established mechanism for land adjustment to help improve street connectivity in redevelopment areas and on the urban fringe?
- » Are incentives in place that promote the reduction of car dependency (e.g. high parking fees in CBD, pedestrianization)? Are there strategies or incentives for an equitable allocation of road space - focusing on people, rather than vehicles?
- » Have minimum parking been replaced by parking maximums?
- » Is all on-street parking charged at fees determined by the level of parking demand?



## Social Sustainability

- » What policies and mechanisms at the national level promote integrated land-use and transport planning? Do zoning policies promote compact city development that can lead to walkable cities and reduced travel demand?
- » Do sustainable concepts exist that deal with urban freight (green logistics), e.g. time restrictions, speed limits, cargo load restrictions in inner city areas?
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## Financial and Economic Sustainability

- » How does national government fund mobility infrastructure and Public Transport Operations?
- » Are modal shares (i.e. high shares of pedestrians) considered when making decisions on transport investments? Are investments towards Sustainable Urban Transport (e.g. NMT, Mass Rapid Transit) sufficient?
- » Are national policies in place to encourage financing of Sustainable Mobility infrastructure in cities by appropriate taxing for parking (a private good); road charges; congestion tax; appropriate pricing of conventional fuels?
- » How does national government encourage sustainable business models for Public Transport Operations by encouraging Private Sector investment in transport operations (busses, bike sharing etc.)?
- » Public transport unlike parking is a “public good”; are policies in place to clearly subsidize Public Transport?
- » Are public transport operators structured informal operating companies? Is public transport compensated under a gross-cost model?
- » Do major corridors have dedicated lanes for public transport or bus rapid transit?
- » Is Sustainable Urban Mobility prioritized sufficiently for project financing with International Financial Institutions;
- » What innovative mechanisms exist that e.g. tap land as a resource or engage the private sector? Are land value capture policies in place?



## Environmental Sustainability

- » What national policies are in place to promote a transition to low-carbon mobility? How are they linked to the Nationally Determined Commitments of the Country?
- » Are incentives in place to reduce pollution levels through changes in traveling practices, better enforcement, stricter norms or improvements in technology?
- » Are standards and regulations in place regarding the importation of used vehicles that are highly polluting?
- » Are financial incentives and a policy and regulatory framework for an emission transition in the transport sector guaranteed? Does the government set up funds to assist with public transport operations and the procurement of cleaner (possibly electric) vehicles and charging infrastructure?



# RECOMMENDATION

Countries should consider the establishment of national urban mobility observatories as a part of their Urban development ministries - to continually review and update responses to the above questions based on which it should make policy recommendations to different line ministries and also develop capacity building programmes for cities.

Further information:

Further read on National Urban Policies:

<https://unhabitat.org/programme/national-urban-policy>

Guide for Mainstreaming Transport and Mobility in Lebanon's National Urban Policy 2021:

<https://unhabitat.org/guide-for-mainstreaming-transport-and-mobility-in-lebanons-national-urban-policy>

Mainstreaming Transport and Mobility into Jordan's National Urban Policy Thematic Guide:

<https://unhabitat.org/mainstreaming-transport-and-mobility-into-jordans-national-urban-policy-thematic-guide>

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More information about the  
Urban Pathways project can be found at:

**[WWW.URBAN-PATHWAYS.ORG](http://WWW.URBAN-PATHWAYS.ORG)**