



Sustainable Urban Mobility for All

Effective urban transport systems are like the blood vessels of cities: they connect people to jobs, education, health, recreation and to other citizens. As such, they are a fundamental pillar for prospering, climate-friendly and liveable cities. Therefore, SECO supports cities in its partner countries to develop and improve their urban mobility systems with a focus on public and non-motorized transport.

Rationale

Transport is responsible for more than one third of cities' greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and is the fastest growing emissions source. In developing countries, a growing number of cities are facing heavy traffic congestion, which undermines economic productivity and living quality. At a household level, daily transport can claim a large part of a family's budget both in terms of money and time. This limits the access of many, and particularly the poorer households, to employment opportunities and social services. The often observed rapid spatial extension of cities comes along with high transport infrastructure requirements, associated increased energy consumption and service provision costs. This constitutes a heavy burden for municipal finances and makes the operation of public transport exorbitant.

Improving urban mobility is a key factor to unleash the potential of cities. To overcome externalities and become attractive places for people and businesses, municipalities need to be equipped with appropriate planning processes and management tools to operate an effective transport infrastructure. Critical aspects to make mobility function as a whole are namely: aligning urban transport with the wider urban development plans; investing in public and green transport infrastructure; and coordinating the modes of transport - including walking and cycling - from a passenger-centred perspective.

Approach and Principles

SECO supports municipalities and other sub-national public entities in developing an economically viable, affordable, inclusive and climate-friendly urban mobility. To this end, SECO strengthens municipal capacities to plan multi-modal urban transport systems that are integrated in urban planning, to finance strategic urban infrastructure investments and to operate the transport services efficiently. As a complement, SECO supports national authorities to set a conducive framework for sustainable mobility solutions.

SECO's support to urban mobility is part of its wider support to sustainable urban development (SECO Urban Public Factsheet.pdf). In addressing urban mobility, SECO support aligns with the following principles:

- SECO's urban mobility projects address the interlinked gaps in policies, planning, financing and operations and seek a systemic impact.
- While closely linked to economic infrastructure investments, strengthening local capacities constitute the fundamental part of SECO's urban mobility projects.

Country/region

12

SECO contribution since 2013

CHF62 million

Geographic reach

Global, partner countries

- SECO focuses on intermediary / secondary cities, due to their critical role in regional economic development. Within this scope, SECO considers functional urban areas that may go beyond a municipal administrative boundary.

Topics

Within this approach, SECO has prioritized five areas of intervention:

1. Data and analytics

Many authorities lack reliable data and strategic analysis of the prevailing modes of transport in their cities and users' preferences. SECO supports them to improve the quality of their diagnostics, in order to formulate accurate long-term objectives and to make evidence-based decisions on transport investments. This can include origin-destination surveys, modal split studies, data on gender patterns of mobility, as well as informal transport mapping or gap analyses on infrastructure, operation and management.

2. Urban policy and regulatory advice

SECO supports national and subnational decision-makers to develop multi-modal urban mobility policies, plans and regulations that align with urban development plans. Within this scope, a focus is set on prioritizing and incentivizing public transport as well as active modes (walking and cycling), on the integration of these different transport modes and on fostering physical and financial access to transport for all. SECO also strengthens sustainable funding streams by establishing national financial mechanisms for urban transport investments or by structuring regulations that enable to mobilize funds from the private sector.

3. Project preparation and catalytic investments

Urban transport systems require significant investments in infrastructure and maintenance. SECO thus supports cities to develop a pipeline of prioritized urban mobility investments. To ensure project quality and increase the bankability of these investments, SECO funds complementary preparatory studies addressing namely financial, environmental, and social aspects of an urban transport project. Priority is given to investments with a transformative potential such as green public transport corridors and multi-modal transport hubs. SECO can act as a catalyst for innovation and local adaptation by providing small funding to demonstration projects, for example to enhance the quality of access in and around public transport stops or the integration of public transport systems in planning processes for public spaces and neighbourhood development.

4. Coordination and operation

In many developing cities, the existing transport systems largely rely on informal and semi-formal service providers. These services are hardly regulated and of low quality standards. To foster sustainable urban mobility systems, SECO facilitates multi-stakeholder engagements and supports the integration of informal transport systems into the formal networks. Assistance includes the optimization of existing public transport routes and networks. For a greater efficiency of urban transport services, SECO also strengthens the establishment of sound service agreements between the municipal administration and operators and promotes interoperability through improved tariff and ticketing arrangements.

5. Skills and organizational development

Effective planning, financing and operation of urban mobility systems requires capable organizations with skilled staff. SECO therefore supports institutional strengthening of transport departments and companies in municipal administrations as well as transport authorities. Additionally, SECO may support business planning and organizational development of formal and semi-formal service providers to ease their integration into formal transport networks. Furthermore, SECO fosters skills development of staff through peer learning, on-the-job trainings or curriculum development for further or higher education and training.

In addition, SECO strives to mainstream the following crosscutting topics in its projects and supports its partners to institutionalize these approaches:

Climate change: integrate specific mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions as well as adaptation measures to make transport systems more resilient to the impact of climate change.

Gender and inclusiveness: plan and build transport projects in a participatory way so that they are accessible, affordable and safe for all, including women and disadvantaged groups.

Digitalisation: Support cities to profit from digital and smart technologies for efficient and interconnected urban travel from the first to the last mile.

Further information and contact details

Website: <https://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/secocoop/en/home/themes/markets-and-opportunities/urban-development.html>

Email: info.wein.cooperation@seco.admin.ch

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Figure 8 : Concept multimodal des déplacements

