As part of the eleventh Steering Committee Meeting of the SSATP-Urban Mobility Component, a special session was organized to present and debate the Urban Transport Strategy Paper (UTSP) drafted by the World Bank in consultation with its partners. The meeting took place on April 20, 2001 (morning session) at the Accra International Conference Center. The executive summary of the UTSP was forwarded to the delegates, two weeks before the Accra Meeting.

Delegates from the following countries attended the meeting: Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinée, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zimbabwe.

The executive summary of the SSATP-UM Meeting which took place on April 18-19, 2001 is attached to this note. It is indeed considered that most of the issues raised during the SC Meeting on urban transport in Sub-Saharan Africa and the agenda of the SSATP-Urban Mobility Component are relevant to the overall debates organized by the World Bank for the last months and hence, reflect the characteristics and main concerns on urban mobility in SSA.

The debates were moderated by Mr. Jean-Pierre Ellong Mbassi, Regional Coordinator of the Municipal Development Program (MDP). The meeting started with a presentation made by P. Bultynck (World Bank, coordinator of the SSATP-UM) on the key elements of the UTSP, followed by a short presentation of the Urban Mobility Improvement Project in Dakar, Senegal and a presentation by Mr.Kwakye, Director of the Planning Department of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Ghana on the Ghana draft Urban Transport Strategy Paper. Both the Dakar and the Accra presentations were designed to show their coherence with issues raised in the UTSP.

Overall, there was an appreciation of the participants on such a consultation and a strong wish to better integrate examples and practices from sub-Saharan Africa into the UTSP (‘the voice of sub-Saharan Africa should be better taken into consideration in such a document’).

In view of such an unanimous request from the participants, the executive summary of the Accra Steering Committee Meeting, together with some key papers presented at the meeting, are to be considered as part of the consultation process and more broadly, as part of an Urban Transport Strategy in line with and focusing on the issues and concerns on Sub-Saharan Africa. The executive summary of the SC Meeting was indeed presented, debated and agreed by all the participants.
The main conclusions of the discussions are summarized hereafter:

**Urban Transport Financing**: although the subject was considered as not sufficiently covered in the UTSP, the subject was view by the participants as essential, especially in relation of the scarcity of –national as well as local- resources and the persistent crisis in the provision of urban transport infrastructures and services (growing gap between demand and supply of infrastructures and services in SSA). It was debated on two-fold point of view: (a) operation of transport services and vehicles; (b) investments on urban roads and facilities.

*Financing urban transport services*: the problems faced by the private sector was largely debated during the first day of the SC Meeting, as focal point of the meeting: lack of access to traditional banking system, high interest rates, important collateral conditions by the banking system are some of the constraints faced by the operators to finance/renew their fleets. It was again agreed that moving from the present situation of minibuses to medium and standard buses would benefit all the parties and alleviate traffic congestion and air pollution. The credit scheme for microenterprises which will be put in place in Dakar, Senegal, was regarded as a worth considering experience (even considered by some delegates as indispensable solution) to find alternative financing schemes for the private operators, without using the traditional subsidies for the operation, as with the public (owned) transport companies.

*Financing urban roads and infrastructures*: some SSA countries have set up Road Funds. It was suggested by some participants to allocate a portion of those funds to the rehabilitation and construction of roads in urban areas. In addition, the idea of establishing an Urban Transport Fund was view as an innovative and participative method for funding the growing needs of the urban transport sector. Such a Fund, to be effective, requires many conditions: autonomy of management (from the State) transparency, clear rules of accountability and measurable criteria for contribution were considered as key elements.

**Non Motorized Transport**: the relevancy of promoting the use of bicycles by the World Bank UTSP was largely debated. Many delegates expressed the view that such a promotion does not take into account the negative image of bicycles in SSA and the –marginal-part of the bicycle in the modal split. As confirmed by a regional study, the use of bicycle is associated with poverty, rural image and a “social regression” by the urban population in most SSA countries. In addition to the cultural background associated with the use of bicycles, topographical and meteorological factors are additional constraints limiting the effective use of bicycles. Hence, with some exceptions (such as some cities in Tanzania and Kenya), the use of bicycle was not considered by the participants as solving the needs for mobility in SSA.

Therefore, it was agreed to consider the use and protection of bicycle only as part of an intermodal policy, promoting all modes of transport, including the railways mode. Many delegates felt that there shouldn’t be a “blind” promotion of bicycles in SSA: bicycles should not be taken into account to promote urban mobility in SSA. Only where the existence of bicycle is real, a NMT strategy might make sense. Most of the trips made in SSA urban areas are indeed made by pedestrians and public transport (microenterprises). An effective NMT policy has to rest on the safe movement of pedestrians and be based on the specificities of each country and city.
Urban Planning and land use: the need for better coherence between urban transport, urban planning and land use was highlighted as a factor of failure in most urban transport policy in SSA. Land use should be preceding transport and not the contrary, as it is the case in many African cities. Since most of the urban poor live in suburban areas, urban planning is a key element of a poverty alleviation strategy in the urban transport sector. Meanwhile, such a policy requires to provide attention and funding to human resources, technical expertise to properly address the issue of urban planning at the municipal level. Urban planning should also better recognize the role of walking as part of the Urban Transport system. Finally, the present ‘laisser-faire’ in urban planning partially explains the costs of transport for urban dwellers and commuters.

Institutional and policy framework: there was a consensus to consider the institutional framework as key for any sustainable urban transport policy in SSA. The institutional reform in place since 1997 in Dakar, Senegal, with the set up and operation of the CETUD was recognized as a valuable example to be promoted in SSA and better integrated within the UTSP.

Environmental impact of transport in SSA cities: the growing negative environmental degradation and the urban air pollution generated by urban transport in SSA was highlighted by many participants. There was a perception that a Public Transport Policy should be promoted in SSA to contribute to the alleviation of traffic congestion and related air pollution. Such a policy would also make sense in view of the increase in the importation of second-hand, polluting cars. Collection of data, dissemination and update of information on urban air pollution was perceived by participants as necessary. It was suggested that rather than the traditional data on road accidents, figures on air pollution and mobility rates should also be included at the national and regional level in order to improve the knowledge on mobility issues and enable sound decisions on priorities for investments.

Decentralization and the role of municipalities: in the framework of decentralization, cities should be more and more involved in the urban transport sector decision-making process: urban transport should be one of the main responsibilities of cities as part of the provision of basic urban services. Capacity strengthening and fiscal decentralization are considered as vital to achieve such an objective. The issue of human resource was regularly quoted by the participants as one of the key conditions in the sound design and implementation of any urban transport policy in SSA.
Miscellaneous:

?? Urban Transport should be considered as movement of persons and goods. It is suggested to have, in the UTSP, a better articulation between both. In addition, freight transport has more and more impact on traffic congestion and pollution in city centers. In developing countries, and in SSA, transport of hazardous materials should also be taken into account due to their potential risks for the population;

?? Many participants expressed the view that there is no hierarchy between the priorities developed in the UTSP. On such an argument, representatives from the World Bank explained that this UTSP is an open and flexible document: the complexity and magnitude of the problems prevailing in the urban transport sector and the increasing externalities generated requires to be cautious about imposing solutions.

?? The importance of linking an urban transport strategy and issues (such as road safety, air pollution to mention only a few) with other sectors such as health, environment, energy was highlighted;

?? The magnitude of problems in developing countries, and more specially those of Sub-Saharan Africa, is not enough recognized in the UTSP;

?? The importance of implementation capacity and hence the human resources and expertise strengthening was view as important for developing urban transport policy and provide a long term perspective for the city;

?? The size of cities affect the approach that should be taken to solve the urban transport problems: the UTSP doesn’t enough take into account such differences;

?? The urban growth in SSA was considered as justifying to finance not only the rehabilitation of urban roads but also the extension of the roads network (in terms of capacity as well as better design) to cope with the increase in transport demand;

?? Urban Transport was perceived as an important tool for awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS (in bus terminals and on vehicles). Such a suggestion was also referring to the fact that urban transport, as such, plays a role in the dissemination of the disease;

?? Since urban transport is sensitive in economic and social terms, political commitment was mentioned as an important factor for an urban transport strategy to be successful, together with a long term vision on the needs of the urban population. Urban Transport was suggested to be part of the political agenda for African decision-makers.

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Attachments:

?? Executive summary of the eleventh Steering Committee Meeting of the SSATP-UM

?? Agenda of the Steering Committee Meeting;

?? List of participants.