Improving Transport Connectivity for the LLDCs

Gladys Mutangadura
Senior Programme Officer
UN-OHRLLS
Why is improved transport connectivity so important for the LLDCs?

• **Transport connectivity** - Means of enhancing effectiveness of transport networks to facilitate flow of goods, services, and people between countries in the regions and beyond

• **Hardware** (having the physical infrastructure in place)

• **Software** (policy & regulatory frameworks under which they operate)

• **Trade** is an important means to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

• However **Trade costs** for LLDCs are too high improving transport connectivity is crucial.

• **Vienna Programme of Action** – priority areas on - Development and maintenance of transport infrastructure; Fundamental Transit Policy Issues; Regional integration and Trade Facilitation
Road networks

- **Asian Highway network** - 143,000 km - About 10,147 km, representing 8% of the network, do not yet meet the minimum desirable standards.
- **Trans-African Highway** – total length 54,120 km distributed along nine corridors.
- Missing links and poor maintenance in some key segments.
- Percentage of paved roads is low in sub-Saharan Africa - 13% in 2015.
- **Latin America** - efforts are underway to improve the road network – Both Paraguay and Bolivia are working on road transport infrastructure development projects.
Progress

Enlarging route 2 and 7 in Paraguay connecting to Brazil (2016)

Construction and upgrading ECCAS
Road networks

- Subregional corridor development: TRACECA; Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL), CAREC corridors, Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS); ECO Corridors etc Northern Corridor Transit Agreement; Central Corridor; Maputo Corridor; Trans Kalahari etc

- **Key challenges**
  - Poor maintenance
  - Missing links
  - Huge infrastructure gap
  - Limited capacity to develop bankable projects
Rail networks

- The Trans-Asian Railway networks - >118,000 kilometres
- Progress has been made in closing some of the missing links.
- >12,400 km of missing links representing 10.5% of the network.

- The African railway network - 74,775 km has very low density mostly in North Africa and Southern Africa.
- >26,362 km of missing links in the rail network.
- 17 African countries are without railways, five are LLDCs.
- railway projects are underway under the PIDA programme.

- In Latin America, Bolivia and Paraguay signed MOU in 2017 for the rail project that will connect the two countries.
- Will interface with the bio-oceanic railway corridor connecting the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans via a 3,700km line starting from Brazil through Bolivia, and ending in Ilo, Peru.
Rail Commissioning

752.7km Ethiopia-Djibouti railway (2016)

Afghanistan-Turkmenistan Lajaward railway (2016)

China, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran
Key challenges – Rail networks

• Poor maintenance, aging track, obsolete equipment
• Missing links - total investment required in Asia estimated at $75.6 billion.
• Huge infrastructure gap
• Limited capacity to develop bankable projects
• Harmonizing different infrastructure standards, including railway gauges
Air transport

- Volume of passenger traffic transported by air from LLDCs rose from 11.2 million to 30 million between 2000 and 2015.
- Represents just 0.9% share of the world’s passenger volume.
- Volume of airfreight has also increased in some LLDCs.
- In 2015 Freight volume by air transport for LLDCs was 1.6 billion tonne kilometres in 2015 and accounts for just under 1% of global total.

**Challenges** –

- High scale of investment that is needed for infrastructure development, maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement of aged fleet, and upgrading of airports and terminals.
- Need for skilled manpower, new technologies and capacity building.
- Despite this - ongoing successful projects
Inland water transport

- Inland water transport offers competitive freight rates for low-value, high-bulk commodities
- Inland waterways particularly used in LLDCs in Latin America, South-East Asia and Central Africa.

Challenges:
- the reduction in water level at low periods;
- silting; and other physical/material constraints
- operational/management-related and regulatory issues.
- need improvement in infrastructure to improve navigability and soft infrastructure.
Sea ports

- Share of port throughput for the transit developing countries as measured by the number of containers that pass through the port increased by more than 37% from 2010 to 2015, world’s throughput was by 25%.
- Asian transit countries’ ports dominate for port throughput at 38% while Latin America and Africa grew by 1.3% and 1.5% respectively.

Challenges to port infrastructure
- natural disasters and the impact of climate change in particular coastal flooding.
- need for adaptation strategies to improve the resilience of port infrastructure and systems.
Current Status – dry ports

• Dry ports are very useful for facilitating customs clearance procedures, intermodal transfers, and for other diverse cargo handling, warehousing, and logistics services.

• Many LLDCs have or are making progress in establishing dry ports in all regions.

Challenges:

• high costs for establishing the facility, availability of land,

• lack of efficient logistics facilities and support systems,
The soft infrastructure issues

- Policy & regulatory frameworks are important for:
  - Standard of road facilities/ infrastructure
  - Traffic rules ad regulations, operating times
  - Weight and dimensions, axle loads
  - Licensing/permits
  - Drivers license, Immigration/visa
  - Customs procedures

- Need for effective implementation, regional, international agreements – transit transport, trade facilitation, harmonization
Way Forward

• Closing the existing infrastructure gap is critical – long term planning important
• Efforts/resources from all levels – national; regional; international, ODA, Multilateral, Private, PPPs
• Capacity building or skills development
• Corridor approach important
• Increased cooperation between LLDCs & transit countries necessary on hard and soft infrastructure.
• Data collection critical
• Recognition of transport has increased – global initiatives – Sustainable mobility for All; UN transport; SDGs related to transport 9, 11.
Thank You