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Committee on Transport and Logistics
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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme plan
in the field of transport and logistics, of technical cooperation
activities, and of recommendations made by the Committee
at its twenty-first session**

Summary

Since the twenty-first session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics, which was held virtually on 24 November 2020 and 8 December 2020, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has implemented a set of activities under its programme plan in the field of transport and logistics, pursuant to recommendations made to it by the Committee at that session. These activities focused on enhancing the role of transport and logistics in development and regional integration among Arab countries, and included technical materials, advisory services, and various technical cooperation activities at the request of member States.

The present document includes a brief presentation of those activities and key related outputs. The Committee on Transport and Logistics is invited to review the contents of the document and comment thereon.

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Introduction

1. The 2021 ESCWA programme plan in the field of transport and logistics included topics that complement its efforts to develop the Integrated Transport System in the Arab States (ITSAS). This system was known as ITSAM, before changing its name after expanding its scope to include all Arab countries. It aims to support the facilitation of transport and trade between Arab countries to enhance regional integration. Member States are following up on the implementation of the components of the ITSAS, pursuant to ESCWA resolution 279 (XXIV) of 11 May 2006, on the follow-up to implementation of components of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq.

2. The activities related to transport and logistics fall under subprogramme 3 on shared economic prosperity of the ESCWA programme plan for 2021. The present document sets out the activities undertaken by ESCWA over the period December 2020 – October 2021, or since the twenty-first session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics, which was held virtually on 24 November 2020 and 8 December 2020. It also includes a summary of the measures taken by member States and the ESCWA secretariat to implement the recommendations made by the Committee at that session, and the technical cooperation activities implemented by the secretariat following requests by member States during the same period.

I. Activities under the ESCWA 2021 programme plan in the field of transport and logistics

A. Follow-up on the implementation of ITSAS components

3. On 17 June 2021, the ESCWA secretariat addressed a letter to member States requesting reports on developments in their transport and logistics sector, in particular on progress made in implementing ITSAS components, and on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the transport sector. It received responses from Jordan, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. A summary of the responses is provided in section III of the present document, on implementation by ESCWA member States of recommendations made by the Committee on Transport and Logistics at its twenty-first session.

B. Working papers, studies and documents

1. Sustainable inland transport in Jordan: national connectivity report

4. The ESCWA secretariat prepared the national connectivity report to measure transport connectivity in Jordan, using an initial set of indicators that were previously developed under a project funded by the United Nations Development Account on sustainable transport connectivity and the implementation of the transport-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in selected landlocked and transit/bridging countries.

5. ESCWA and its partners designed these indicators to provide a comprehensive measure of transport connectivity in developing and transit/bridging countries, with a sufficient level of detail to show the performance of those countries at the strategic and operational levels. These indicators also allow the countries concerned to report on their progress towards achieving the SDGs, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Vienna Programme of Action.

6. The report provides recommendations for improving the national connectivity of Jordan with neighbouring countries in the field of road, rail and sea transport.

2. Paper on the COVID-19 pandemic and the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative: the case of Arab countries

7. The paper presents the developments witnessed by the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative as a result of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic; the economic, political and operational consequences of the

pandemic on the progress of transport infrastructure projects; and the new opportunities it provided, especially with regard to the so-called Health Silk Road project, which aims to help countries combat the pandemic and its effects. The paper has been submitted to the Committee under item 6 of the provisional agenda for the current session.

*3. Working paper on the challenges of energy consumption
in the transport sector in the Arab region*

8. The paper, which will be issued soon, discusses energy consumption trends in the transport sector in the Arab region and the world, and ways to rationalize the consumption of unclean energy and enhance the role of clean energy in this sector, highlighting key methods and solutions for achieving global environmental goals.

*4. Collective application of the electronic version of the TIR Customs Transit System
through the land transport corridor linking the eastern Mediterranean with
Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Lebanon–United Arab Emirates)*

9. The paper, which will be issued soon, was prepared under the project entitled “Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics”, in which ESCWA is participating and implementing with funding from the United Nations Development Account. The project aims to develop and publish solutions that allow the completion of border transactions for transport without the need for any physical contact between drivers and border crossing staff.

10. The paper discusses the advantages and requirements of the collective application of the electronic TIR Customs Transit System (eTIR) via the land transport corridor linking the eastern Mediterranean with Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Lebanon–United Arab Emirates). A summary of the paper will be submitted to the Committee in a workshop held by the Committee under item 7 of the provisional agenda for the current session.

*5. Technology and Innovation for the Development of Land Transport
in Arab Countries*

11. The report highlights the role of digital technology in improving the road transport sector, by setting out the available technologies and future trends that would develop this sector. The report also reveals the status of the most frequently used enabling technologies and technological applications in the Arab region, and provides recommendations and policy frameworks to enable and facilitate the integration of new technologies into road transport in Arab countries.

6. Concept note on the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory

12. The concept note addresses the establishment of the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory (AIRSO), which provides a platform for harmonizing and coordinating traffic safety policies in member States, based on evidence extracted from reliable and updated data to assess the status of road safety. The note was sent to the focal point ministries of ESCWA member States to indicate whether they wished to join AIRSO, to appoint national coordinators for traffic safety policies and data, and to clarify whether they wished to host the AIRSO technical secretariat and whether they were financially and technically prepared to do so. The Committee will discuss the establishment of AIRSO under item 10 of the provisional agenda for the current session.

*7. Technical note on the work areas covered by the GIS electronic platform
for transport networks and facilities in Arab countries*

13. The note was prepared at the request of the Department of Transport and Tourism of the League of Arab States, under a project implemented by the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, to create a unified database for transport in Arab countries. The note reviews the project for establishing this platform to follow up and develop ITSAS components, to enable the necessary analysis and surveys to be carried

out for transport planning by member States and the secretariat of the League of Arab States, and to secure the necessary funding to develop ITSAS functions and interactions with various economic and social aspects.

8. *Revision of the second version of the draft model road law of Pakistan*

14. The second version of the draft model road law of Pakistan, prepared in collaboration between the World Health Organization and Johns Hopkins University, was reviewed and evaluated. ESCWA intends to take advantage of its role in reviewing the project to transfer expertise in this field to Arab countries that wish to reform their national road and safety legislation, within the package of activities to be implemented under the second United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030.

9. *Draft chapter on urban transport in a report on the status of Lebanese cities*

15. Under the existing cooperation framework between ESCWA and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) in preparing a report on the status of Lebanese cities, ESCWA has prepared a draft chapter on the status of urban transport in Lebanese cities. The draft highlights three interconnected components of urban transport, namely, public transport, road safety, and facilitating transport requirements. The report highlights the need to formulate a comprehensive regulatory framework to take into account public transport issues and solutions when preparing organizational plans for Lebanese cities, and the need for investments in sustainable public transport infrastructure by the State and local authorities that can be managed jointly by the public and private sectors.

10. *Paper on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on sea freight prices in the UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 2021*

16. Under the existing cooperation framework between ESCWA and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), a paper was drafted on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on shipping prices from China to the Arab region, which rose by 176 per cent from Shanghai to Arab Gulf ports, and at an average rate of 400 per cent from Shanghai to Mediterranean ports, between October 2020 and June 2021. The paper, to be released as part of the UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 2021, reviews a number of national and regional initiatives that partially mitigate the impact of this rise in shipping prices.

11. *Inter-agency report on the second Global Sustainable Transport Conference*

17. ESCWA participated in drafting the final version of the inter-agency report on the second Global Sustainable Transport Conference, to be held in Beijing and online from 14 to 16 October 2021.

12. *Action plan for the second United Nations Decade for Road Safety 2021-2030*

18. ESCWA participated in drafting the final version of the action plan for the second United Nations Decade for Road Safety 2021-2030, which will be officially launched on 28 October 2021. The Committee will review the details of ESCWA work on road safety under item 10 of the provisional agenda for the current session.

II. Technical cooperation activities

1. *Final workshop to review the master plan of Beirut Port after the explosion of 4 August 2020 (Beirut, 4 January 2021)*

19. In the framework of technical cooperation with the Port Authority of Beirut after the explosion on 4 of August 2020, ESCWA organized a final workshop to review the master plan for Beirut Port, held on 4 January 2021 at the Port Authority's headquarters, at which it presented the final version of the ESCWA study on the topic and discussed its results. The guidelines set out in the ESCWA study were adopted to amend the master plan when reconstructing the Port.

2. *Workshop on road safety in Bahrain*
(Online, 28 March 2021)

20. ESCWA participated in an online workshop on road safety organized by the United Nations country team in Bahrain, and held on 28 March 2021 on the occasion of the visit of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety to Bahrain. The ESCWA intervention shed light on progress in road safety in Bahrain, the main problems in this area, and the technical support capacity that ESCWA could provide, in collaboration with the United Nations country team in Bahrain.

3. *Workshop and dialogue on the national policy for sustainable transport in Jordan*
(Online, 31 March – 1 April 2021)

21. Under the sustainable transport connectivity project, ESCWA, in collaboration with the Jordanian Ministry of Transport, organized a policy dialogue workshop on the national sustainable transport policy in Jordan, held on 31 March and 1 April 2021, with the participation of relevant governmental and private professional bodies. At the workshop, the national connectivity report prepared by ESCWA experts was presented, its recommendations were discussed, and the comments of the participating parties were noted.

4. *Workshop by ESCWA and the World Health Organization on interagency and experts collaboration to improve the production and dissemination of SDG indicators from official national sources (Goal 3.6.1)*
(Beirut and online, 21 April 2021)

22. ESCWA participated in a workshop with the World Health Organization on interagency and experts collaboration to improve the production and dissemination of SDG indicators from official national sources, held on 21 April 2021. The workshop focused on challenges related to securing road safety data for SDG target 3.6 on halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020. Reference is made to General Assembly resolution 74/299 of 31 August 2020, which extended the target's deadline to 2030.

5. *Regional workshop on road safety in Arab countries*
(Beirut and online, 18 May 2021)

23. As part of the activities of the sixth United Nations Global Road Safety Week, held from 17 to 23 May 2021, ESCWA organized a regional workshop on road safety in Arab countries on 18 May 2021, as a follow-up activity to the twenty-first session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics. The workshop was attended by representatives of ministries of transport and of the interior and of national authorities for road safety in Arab countries, in addition to the World Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, non-profit organizations and academic bodies. At the workshop, the ESCWA project for the establishment of the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory was presented, alongside the draft action plan for the second United Nations Decade for Road Safety 2021-2030, ESCWA projects funded by the United Nations Road Safety Fund to improve road safety in Jordan and Tunisia, and the experience of Morocco in establishing a specialized agency for road safety management. Participants also discussed lessons learned from global experiences to reduce speed limits in some city areas to 30 km/h instead of 50 km/h.

6. *Event to mark the entry into force of annex 11 to the TIR Convention*
(Geneva and online, 25 May 2021)

24. ESCWA participated in an event organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, in collaboration with the International Road Transport Union and held on 25 May 2021, to mark the entry into force of annex 11 to the TIR Convention on the implementation of eTIR, under which borders are crossed by TIR trucks without paperwork and without human contact between drivers and customs officials. ESCWA has highlighted that the success of eTIR is linked to its application by all countries located on a single land transit corridor.

7. *Technical cooperation with the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport on a project of establishing an e-portal for trade*
(Alexandria, Egypt, and online June 26, 2021)

25. ESCWA participated in a workshop held by the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport on 27 June 2021 on a project to establish an e-portal to facilitate trade between Arab countries, which the Academy is implementing as commissioned by the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport. The ESCWA paper reviewed the stages of the project to establish a GIS system for transport networks and facilities in Arab countries, and the role that this system could play in supporting e-services provided by the trade facilitation portal.

8. *National workshop on the World Convention on the Transport of Dangerous Goods*
(Beirut and online, 13 and 14 July 2021)

26. ESCWA participated in preparations for a national workshop on the World Convention on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. The workshop was organized by the EuroMed Transport Support Project and the Lebanese Ministry of Public Works and Transport, and was held in Beirut and remotely on 13 and 14 July 2021. ESCWA reviewed the status of accession to the Convention in the Arab region, and how to reference it in bilateral transport agreements between Arab countries and in memorandums of understanding relating to multilateral cooperation in the field of road transport.

9. *Technical cooperation with Bahrain to review the new draft road law and its executive regulations*

27. In response to a request for technical cooperation from the Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning of Bahrain, ESCWA provided technical support for the draft road law and its executive regulations in Bahrain, by reviewing the study reports submitted by the advisory body entrusted by the Ministry to prepare a draft law and discussing the results of the review with the team assigned to follow up the project in the Ministry's Roads Department.

10. *Technical support to the Sudan in establishing the single window system*

28. ESCWA provided technical support to the Sudan to assist in establishing the single window system. This support included conducting an exploratory mission in September 2021 to hold a series of meetings with stakeholders and learn about the current status of trade procedures in the Sudan. The technical support will result in a strategy and road map for the establishment of the single window system.

11. *Participation in various activities and conferences to exchange knowledge and raise awareness*

29. Since the twenty-first session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics, ESCWA has participated in many conferences and meetings to exchange knowledge and raise awareness on the importance of transport sector issues for sustainable development in the Arab region. It has also undertaken many additional activities in the field of technical cooperation, including the following:

(a) ESCWA participated in the monthly meetings of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group chaired by the World Bank on the recovery and reconstruction of the Beirut Port after the 4 August 2020 explosion;

(b) ESCWA participated in the bi-monthly meetings of the inter-agency working group responsible for preparing the draft action plan for the second United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030;

(c) ESCWA participated in the meeting of the Road Safety Committee, organized remotely by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on 26 February 2021;

(d) ESCWA participated in a symposium on road safety organized remotely by the World Health Organization on 16 March 2021;

(e) ESCWA participated in the fifth International Public-Private Partnerships Forum of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on the theme “Building back better”, held remotely from 22 to 26 April 2021;

(f) ESCWA participated in the eighth session of the steering committee of the United Nations Road Safety Fund, held remotely on 29 April 2021;

(g) ESCWA, in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, organized a meeting on the establishment of a global transport observatory on 11 May 2021;

(h) ESCWA participated remotely in the sixty-sixth session of the Executive Council of Arab Transport Ministers held on 25 and 26 May 2021;

(i) ESCWA participated in the high-level meeting of the FIA High Level Panel for Road Safety Advisory and Expert Groups, held remotely on 14 June 2021;

(j) ESCWA participated in the joint meeting of the expert group on the status of Lebanese cities, which was organized remotely in collaboration between ESCWA and UN-Habitat on 26 August 2021.

III. Implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on Transport and Logistics at its twenty-first session

30. At the conclusion of its twenty-first session, the Committee on Transport and Logistics made recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat and to member States. The present section provides an overview of what has been implemented regarding those recommendations.

A. Recommendations to member States

Recommendation (a)

Continue following up on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to transport and logistics at the national level, and request assistance from ESCWA in this area, as needed.

Action taken

No detailed requests were received from member States on the implementation of this recommendation, but ESCWA efforts to build a geographic information system, improve road safety and integrate climate change issues into strategic transport planning are relevant to the recommendation.

Recommendation (b)

Ensure that national coordinators continue populating the geographic information system (GIS) platform for transport networks and facilities in Arab countries, appoint national coordinators to populate the GIS project, and hold training sessions for countries that have yet to appoint national coordinators.

Action taken

Iraq, Jordan Kuwait, Morocco, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic reported updating the names of national coordinators in the GIS project for transport networks and facilities in the Arab countries.

Recommendation (c)

Provide and publish all data related to procedures and restrictions on the movement of passengers and goods in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, and on changes to those procedures and restrictions, and make them accessible to transport stakeholders and the general public.

Action taken

Oman, the State of Palestine, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen reported measures and restrictions on the movement of passengers and goods in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendation (d)

Benefit from the guidelines prepared by the task forces under the Secretariat General of the League of Arab States to deal with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the air, sea and land transport sectors.

Action taken

No details were received from member States on the implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation (e)

Benefit from the new call by the [United Nations Road Safety Fund](#), issued on 30 October 2020, to submit project proposals to improve road safety in low- and middle-income countries during the period 2020-2022, in coordination with ESCWA and in accordance with national priorities.

Action taken

Four national project proposals were received from member States, as follows:

- A project proposal entitled “Building sustainable partnerships to raise awareness on road safety in Lebanon” from the Lebanese National Road Safety Council.
- A project proposal entitled “Improving road collision data” from the National Road Safety Observatory of Tunisia.
- A project proposal entitled “Awareness of road safety in unsafe schools in Palestine” from the Ministry of Transport of the State of Palestine.
- A project proposal entitled “Supporting the development of the five-year action plan 2022-2026 for the implementation of the national road safety strategy in Morocco” from the National Road Safety Agency of Morocco.

In addition, ESCWA prepared a fifth regional project proposal entitled “Enhancing evidence-based interventions to improve road safety in the Arab region through effective and reliable data collection, processing and analysis”, in Lebanon, Qatar (self-financed) and Tunisia. This pioneering project is considered the nucleus of a project to establish the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory.

ESCWA submitted to the Road Safety Fund the three project proposals that most fulfilled the terms and criteria of the call, namely the project from Lebanon, the project from the State of Palestine, and the ESCWA regional project. The latter qualified and was approved for funding, as it ranked second out of 29 project proposals that met the Fund's conditions. Project implementation is expected to begin in early October 2021 for a period of 22 months, with an estimated budget of \$280,875, in addition to the contribution of Qatar to self-finance its activities.

Recommendation (f)

Continue efforts to improve road safety, taking into account General Assembly resolution [74/299](#) on improving global road safety.

Action taken

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology of Oman has undertaken a number of key activities, including the following:

- Preparing and completing the draft of the Omani Roads Law. This law aims to develop a legal framework for the organization, design, construction, management and maintenance of asphalt and dirt roads between the various competent authorities supervising the road network, and concerned with legislating laws in Oman.
- Initiating the construction of fixed stations for weighing trucks on the main roads to monitor the movement of trucks, so as to mitigate damage to roads as a result of excessive loads, and to reduce the cost of road maintenance.
- Completing a guide that includes a study on the classification and numbering of the road network, including the numbering of major intersections and exits on highways.
- Completing the preparation of an engineer's guide to designing roads in 2020. This guide is an important reference that road design engineers can use to review the methodology of reviewing road design work in its various stages and detailing the design steps, and the considerations that must be taken into account in the various stages of designing roads.

Recommendation (g)

Benefit from the technical support provided by ESCWA to build national capacity in the field of sustainable road safety management, especially the [ESCWA manual on road safety management systems](#), to establish or activate national road safety management systems capable of developing policies to improve road safety, formulating strategies and action plans, and following up on their implementation.

Action taken

The National Road Safety Agency was established in Morocco to replace the National Committee for the Prevention of Road Accidents, and began its activities in 2020. It assumes the functions of a road safety authority capable of formulating policies, developing strategies and action plans, and following up on their implementation, so as to improve road safety in the country.

Recommendation (h)

Open up to technological applications used in land transport and include them in land transport development plans, transfer successful experiences in this field, build the capacity of human resources in ministries of transport and communications and agencies involved with land transport on the role of these applications, and consider innovative ways to finance the customization of applications.

Action taken

Oman established a transport platform to manage licenses and road violations, in line with the e-readiness plan of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, with the aim of facilitating the services provided to beneficiaries. The system will accelerate the issuance of licenses, improve the accuracy of work, create an integrated database, and achieve integration in procedures between all governorates and ministerial departments.

Recommendation (i)

Ensure collaboration between ministries of transport and communications and land transport authorities on the one hand, and agencies involved with communications and technology, on the other, to prepare regulatory frameworks, standards and technical specifications to benefit from technological applications in developing land transport management and services while maintaining data security.

Action taken

Please review what was mentioned in the paragraph related to recommendation (h), since the ESCWA secretariat did not receive any responses related to recommendation (i).

B. Recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat**Recommendation (a)**

Follow up on global developments affecting the transport and logistics sector, and study their effects on and repercussions for Arab countries.

Action taken

ESCWA continues to follow global developments and provide analyses of their effects on the Arab region. In this context, ESCWA has issued several papers on various topics, including energy consumption in the transport sector, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Belt and Road Initiative in Arab countries. ESCWA also contributed a paper on the effects of the pandemic on the rise in shipping prices between China and the Arab countries to the UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 2021.

Recommendation (b)

Continue efforts to forge partnerships with international and regional organizations working in the field of transport and logistics, and prepare joint programmes with them to serve Arab countries and build their capacity to develop and implement policies.

Action taken

ESCWA has strengthened its partnership with a number of regional and international organizations concerned with the transport sector, including the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, the Department of Transport and Tourism of the League of Arab States, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Road Safety Fund, the World Health Organization, the International Automobile Federation, the International Road Transport Union, the World Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank.

Recommendation (c)

Strengthen technical cooperation activities for member States to build their capacity to implement trade facilitation requirements and to enhance the role of transport and logistics in development, in line with available resources.

Action taken

ESCWA has implemented a number of technical cooperation activities, as mentioned in section II of the present document, in line with available capacity and requests from member States.

Recommendation (d)

Strengthen the capacity of Arab countries to follow up and monitor progress in implementing the SDGs related to transport and logistics, and provide them with the necessary support in line with available capacity.

Action taken

ESCWA organized a workshop on target 3.6.1 on halving the number of deaths and injuries from road crashes. ESCWA continues to support road safety improvement projects in member States through a variety of activities and events.

Recommendation (e)

Complete the implementation of the GIS electronic platform project to follow up and monitor developments related to the implementation of the components of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab States (ITSAS).

Action taken

ESCWA requested member States to update or confirm the appointment of national coordinators for the project, in preparation for organizing training courses and workshops to incorporate the data. ESCWA received replies from Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic. To complement efforts to follow up on filling and updating the platform's data, technical and logistical preparations were launched in September 2021 to organize a fifth remote workshop in October 2021.

Recommendation (f)

Continue providing technical support to member States to build capacity in the field of road safety and to benefit from the opportunities offered by the [United Nations Road Safety Fund](#) in that regard.

Action taken

ESCWA continues to provide technical and logistical support for the following two road safety projects that received financing from the Fund after the 2019 call for proposals:

- The project entitled “Reducing road deaths and injuries through increasing restraint use in Jordan”, which will last for 18 months, with a budget of \$267,550. This project aims to increase the use of seat belts and child restraints, review the regulatory framework for their use, and organize campaigns to raise awareness of the need to use them.
- The project entitled “Measures for improving motorcycle safety in Tunisia”, which will last for 24 months, with a budget of \$317,284. The project aims to alter the behaviour of motorcyclists to improve safety, while targeting the most vulnerable groups, namely young people and rural working women. The project will initially target three pilot areas as part of a phased approach that can be expanded to other areas.

Recommendation (g)

Work within the United Nations team concerned with preparing the action plan for the implementation of the new United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, so as to convey Arab countries' priorities in the field of road safety.

Action taken

ESCWA participated in the bi-monthly meetings of the inter-agency working group responsible for preparing the draft action plan for the second United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. The final draft of the plan, scheduled for release on 28 October 2021, has been completed.

Recommendation (h)

Secure support for the establishment of an Arab road safety observatory.

Action taken

The ESCWA secretariat has taken the following actions under this recommendation:

- Obtained initial funding of \$280,875 from the [United Nations Road Safety Fund](#) to implement a pilot project on “Promoting evidence-based interventions to improve road safety in the Arab region through effective and reliable data collection, processing and analysis”, whose activities feed into AIRSO.
- Cooperation between the ESCWA secretariat team and the team of the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety and the International Automobile Federation to prepare a concept note on AIRSO (see paragraph 12 of the present document regarding the concept note).
- The AIRSO project was presented at a regional workshop on road safety in Arab countries, which was held remotely on 18 May 2021.
- On 30 June 2021, the ESCWA secretariat sent the concept note and a road map for the establishment of AIRSO to ESCWA focal points in member States, requesting them to clarify their views on joining the project and the possibility of hosting AIRSO, and to name national coordinators for follow-up.
- The ESCWA secretariat received responses on the establishment of AIRSO from the following countries: Jordan, Morocco, Somalia, and the Syrian Arab Republic.
- The Committee will discuss the issue of establishing AIRSO under item 10 of the provisional agenda for the current session.

Recommendation (i)

Continue monitoring the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the transport and logistics sector in the Arab region, highlighting the possibilities of digital transformation in tackling the pandemic and developing the sector in the long term.

Action taken

ESCWA prepared a paper on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on shipping prices between China and the Arab region, as part of the UNCTAD Review of Maritime Transport 2021. ESCWA has also followed up on the implementation of a project entitled “Transport and trade connectivity in the age of pandemics”, funded by the United Nations Development Account and implemented in collaboration with UNCTAD and the other United Nations regional commissions.
