

Project: Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs (Project Ref. No. PDF-SDG-2018-07)

Project Evaluation

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
DFIs	Development Finance Institutions
EA	Expected accomplishments
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
LLDCs	Landlocked Developing Countries
MEAL	Monitoring Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
RRM	Regional Review Meetings
RTCs	Regional Training Centres
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TAT	Technical Assistance Team
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UN ECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UN ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UN ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial and Development Organization
UN-OHRLLS	United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
UNPDF	United Nations Peace and Development Fund
VPoA	Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024
WTO	World Trade Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation was commissioned around mid-December 2021, by the the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, an office of the United Nations Secretariat which deals with the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States.

This project being evaluated was implemented by the UN-OHRLLS, in collaboration with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe UNESCAP and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC). Financial contribution came from the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund (UNPDF). The project aimed at strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) to design and implement policies and provide solutions that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The project also aimed at strengthening the national capacity of LLDCs and transit countries to design policies to build hard and soft infrastructure and develop bankable infrastructure projects that can enable improved connectivity to global markets. The project was implemented as part of the Comprehensive Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) in 2019.

The objectives of this evaluation are three-fold; (a) To assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the capacity building activities undertaken by UN-OHRLLS through its completed funded project “Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative”; (b) To generate information on the impact of the completed project and results achieved to ensure accountability¹; (c) To provide practical recommendations on improving the relevance, impact and sustainability of similar work and interventions in the context of the Vienna Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda, and other UN priorities.

The approach and methodology covered analysis of the design, strategy, implementation arrangements for delivery of the project, evaluation criteria: *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability*. The evaluator conducted interviews, virtually with wide range of stakeholders and relevant collaborating partners including UN ECE, UN ECA, UN ESCAP, UN ECLAC and African Development Bank, and others. This was in keeping with the now globally accepted COVID-19 protocols.

Summary of Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Through the transport connectivity project for LLDCs and transit countries, UN-OHRLLS has been successful in strategically using its convening power in building partnerships and mobilizing a range of global stakeholders to lay building blocks for improving transport infrastructure and connectivity in beneficiary Member States.

Whilst a promising head start had begun through the project intervention of training and capacity building, there is room for developing more substantive and sustainable relationships with Member States and regional training centres in LLDCs and transit countries to deliver more substantive results which are relevant for the SDGs.

Within the framework of a limited funding base, the project successfully initiated support in the form of technical assistance for transport infrastructure and connectivity for LLDCs and transit countries,

¹ The evaluator notes that this is a very ambitious objective in view of the short-term nature of the project and limited funding.

through a multi-stakeholder approach. However, the support was limited because of unforeseen developments such as COVID-19.

In order to implement more substantive capacity building and training interventions, there was need for more innovative solutions, combining virtual meetings with face-to-face contact, where this was feasible. This is in view of the limitations of virtual communication.

There remained major gaps in the financing mechanisms for transport infrastructure and connectivity, with the existing approaches remaining somewhat fragmented and lacking momentum in building or generating the required outcomes. Many governments, policy makers and senior practitioners in transport infrastructure in LLDCs and transit countries lacked adequate knowledge of procedures and expertise in accessing the global financial market, including opportunities available with multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors and development banks.

There are definite limits to which a short duration project with a limited funding base can achieve. The combination of COVID-19 and financing constraints made the implementation of plans to make substantive follow up activities to the LLDCs Member States involved a formidable challenge.

From the foregoing, a number of recommendations have been made.

- 1) The project generated good feedback from government officials, namely policy makers and practitioners who participated in capacity building and training components. From the evaluation, there is evidence that the project beneficiaries engaged through this action generated keen interest for continued technical assistance in developing bankable projects and designing policies to promote transport connectivity. UN OHRLLS should build on the momentum to develop a follow-up capacity building support project aimed at further assisting policymakers in LLDCs and transit countries to develop bankable projects with a view to securing a more diversified and substantive funding base.
- 2) Whilst the efforts made by the project management team are acknowledged, in future, there is need for a greater emphasis and planning to ensure that the capacity building and training undertaken are organized, tailored, more strongly to deal with emerging region-specific issues and priorities. Improved consideration of different action responses between different regions (for example, between Africa and Euro-Asia) to enable increased value added of the capacity building and training intervention is recommended.
- 3) Financing and resource mobilization: Improvement in broadening and deepening the partnerships and relationships with multi-lateral and bilateral organizations, development banks and private sector; with a view to accelerating the implementation of prioritized action through traditional partners as well as non-traditional stakeholders.
- 4) UN-OHRLLS is urged to develop more substantive and sustainable relationships with Member States in LLDCs and Regional Training Centres (RTCs) in LLDCs and transit countries, with a view to scaling up efforts at joint planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning on projects. A renewed thrust on the Delivery as One approach is also foreseen, where feasible.

- 5) The UN-OHRLLS ought to engage in building stronger partnerships, using the established high-level forum and decentralized structures, as appropriate, with the need for stronger follow-on engagements by UN-OHRLLS and partners in LLDCs and transit countries, building on existing linkages; through to the consolidation phase, with improved understanding of the different stakeholder needs and priorities in the regions and LLDCs.
- 6) There is room for more strategic engagement of the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in the different regions, combining with use of Regional Training Centres, where they are in place. A more strategic engagement of the UNRCO's Office and relevant RTCs, offer opportunities for contributing to the sustainability of prioritised components of transport infrastructure and connectivity interventions in LLDCs.
- 7) The opportunity for developing and implementing innovative technical assistance models for transport infrastructure and connectivity for LLDCs and transit countries are varied. For improved sustainability, one option is to consider engaging regional commissions collaborating with development partners more strategically. This is in view of the decentralized manner of the UN, with the scope to get other UN agencies to do more than what they did in the just completed project in partnering on transport infrastructure and connectivity.
- 8) As it pertains to the methodology of undertaking capacity building and training for LLDCs, there are opportunities for exploring more options, beyond convening of virtual meetings, to include face-to face contact, where this is feasible. This is because of the widely acknowledged limitations posed by virtual communication, which constrains the degree of engagement of beneficiaries as well as the sustainability of benefits of crisis response measures. In this regard it will be important if resources that have been saved due to COVID-19 induced virtual training could be availed to undertake a follow-up in-person training to further build on the virtual training that was undertaken during the completed project. This additional training will be at no additional cost beyond the resources that are available but will yield greater impact.
- 9) The UN-OHRLLS also needs to take advantage of opportunities to scale up efforts at dissemination of best practices in developing transport infrastructure and improving connectivity amongst LLDCs and transit countries, beyond the existing strategies, the regional review meetings and training workshops of policy makers and practitioners.
- 10) UN-OHRLLS ought to ensure capacity is built to have relevant training materials/modules on improving transport infrastructure and connectivity in all official languages to enable dissemination to a wider audience.

Table of Contents

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	ii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iii
1. BACKGROUND CONTEXT	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1.1 Evaluation Scope and Objectives	2
1.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	3
1.2.1 Analysis of the design, strategy, implementation arrangements for delivery of the project	3
1.2.2 Review of UN-OHRLLS Project Logical Framework	5
1.2.3 Data Collection Tools	5
1.2.4 Theory of Change and Logical Framework	6
2. FINDINGS.....	7
2.1 ASSESSMENT BY EVALUATION CRITERIA	7
2.1.1 RELEVANCE	7
2.1.2 EFFECTIVENESS	11
2.1.3 EFFICIENCY	16
2.1.4 SUSTAINABILITY	21
2.1.5 IMPACT	24
3. LESSONS LEARNT	27
4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	29
4.1 Conclusions	29
4.2 Recommendations	30
ANNEXES	32
Annex 1: Terms of Reference (TOR) – UN-OHRLLS	32
Annex 2. Outline of the Evaluation Report	41
Annex 3: Data Collection Instruments: Evaluation Questions/Checklist.....	43
Annex 4: List of Individuals Interviewed and or Contacted	53
Annex 5: Selected References	70
Annex 6: Project Results Map or Results Framework/Logical Framework Reviewed	72
Annex 7: Summary Tables, Graphs, Figures Of Findings.....	74

1. BACKGROUND CONTEXT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This project sought to strengthen the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies and provide solutions that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Enhanced inter-regional and intra-regional transport connectivity is essential for increased trade, economic growth, poverty alleviation, integration into regional and global value chains and overall structural transformation of economies. This is particularly important for the 32 landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) that lack direct access to the sea, have long distances to ports, are isolated from major transportation and services networks and depend to a large extent on transit routes across their neighbouring country territories for transportation of their exports and imports. Furthermore, transit transport infrastructure in LLDCs and many of their neighbours is typically inadequate to support their greater integration into regional and global trading networks. LLDCs also face trade facilitation challenges in transit including cumbersome customs and border crossing procedures, and other costly services and operations. As a result, the LLDCs face high transport and overall trade costs that erode their competitive edge as well as their trade volumes. This has resulted in a negative impact on their overall sustainable development. The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (VPoA) stresses the need to improve connectivity of LLDCs.

This project aimed to strengthen the national capacity of LLDCs and transit countries to design policies to build hard and soft infrastructure and develop bankable infrastructure projects that can enable improved connectivity to global markets. The project was implemented as part of the Comprehensive Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action in 2019. Project activities spanned from November 2018 to October 2021. The project generated concrete outcomes in the interests of LLDCs through analytical work, analysis of the current situation; fostering sharing of experience; undertaking capacity building; and promoting multi-stakeholder partnership building to promote transport infrastructure connectivity and development of resilient transport infrastructure. The work was accomplished through the following result areas:-

Result Area 1. Increased knowledge and capacity of policymakers in LLDCs on the needed policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks for improving transport connectivity of LLDCs including both hard and soft infrastructure issues.

Result Area 2: Enhanced knowledge and capacity of government officials, and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries on developing bankable projects for improving connectivity.

To achieve the expected outcomes, a number of activities were prioritized in the work plans, as per project design. Firstly, background studies and reports were prepared for the 3 regions (Africa, Euro-Asia and Latin America) with a view to contributing to improving transport connectivity for LLDCs in the regions. Follow up activities leading to the implementation of specific actions and measures were also foreseen. Secondly, regional review meetings were also convened as part of the Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action to assess the progress made in improving connectivity of the LLDCs to global markets, sharing of lessons learned and best practices, leading to the formulation of practical recommendations to accelerate implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and improved transport connectivity of LLDCs. The level of the success achieved, opportunities opened up and the constraints encountered at this level have been part of the evaluation of this project, amongst other issues to be analyzed. Thirdly, training workshops of policy-makers from Ministries of Transport of LLDCs and transit countries were convened on how to promote transport infrastructure connectivity. The training workshops were held in 2 parts: PART 1 entitled “Strengthening Capacity in Developing Bankable Transport Infrastructure Projects for Enhanced Connectivity” and PART 2 entitled “Strengthening

Capacity to Design and Implement Policies and Identify Solutions that Promote Transport Connectivity for the Achievement of the SDGs”. . The workshops have also been cited in the project documents as an important contribution to the achievement of project outputs and ultimately the expected outcome. Furthermore, working closely with partners, international technical assistance teams (TAT) mounted to support Member States to develop capacity to prepare bankable projects to improve transport connectivity are cited in the project implementation reports as an important contribution to the achievement of expected outcomes under this project. In this regard, the technical assistance was also designed to contribute towards building capacity to develop a bankable road projects in at least two LLDCs, namely, Botswana and Mongolia. This was with a view to making headway in improving transport connectivity in the regions prioritized, beyond the boundaries of the specific countries engaged.

1.1.1 Evaluation Scope and Objectives

The scope and objectives of the evaluation are summed up as follows:-

Evaluation scope

The evaluation was commissioned, commencing from 13 December, 2021 to 27 January, 2022. The evaluation sought to seek direct and indirect engagement with key stakeholders and beneficiaries through a number of means, for example virtual meetings and mailed questionnaires. A list of contact persons was compiled, which includes the following: UN-OHRLLS programme officers and senior management, UNPDF, regional commissions from Asia and Africa, UN agencies involved in the project in one way or another, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, African Union, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and Northern Corridor, amongst others. Member States from LLDCs and transit countries Africa and Asia, (Latin America was excluded due to the language barrier) were also engaged, in particular, through the administration of specifically targeted questionnaires. This has been the case because virtual interviews have not been feasible, in particular, in the case of policy makers and practitioners from LLDCs and transit countries, because of the sheer numbers of people involved as well as internet connectivity challenges.

Evaluation objectives

- i. To assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the capacity building activities undertaken by UN-OHRLLS through its completed funded project “Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs”;
- ii. To generate information on the impact of the completed project and results achieved to ensure accountability, and;
- iii. To provide practical recommendations on how to improve the relevance, impact and sustainability of similar work and interventions in the context of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), the 2030 Agenda, and other UN priorities.

Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation assessed the overall performance of the transport connectivity project against the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The evaluation also aims to examine the extent to which cross-cutting or over-arching issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, South-South cooperation, and the Delivering-as-One approach have

been mainstreamed in the project's initiatives during implementation. The extent to which these cross-cutting are pivotal or not in the design, implementation and overall engagement mechanism of stakeholders was examined.

1.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The design of the methodology and approach to the evaluation drew on the requirements outlined in sections A, B and Annex 1 of the Terms of Reference (ToRs). The evidence-base for the evaluation drew on the Theory of Change (Conceptual framework) and was based on a mixed methods approach using quantitative and qualitative data. The methodology was designed to assess the assumptions that underpin the project, changes arising from the interventions (Result Areas), and how they addressed broader objectives and issues of "designing and implementing policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs". Two complementary levels of analysis/assessment were identified to collect evidence on the performance of the UN-OHRLLS project against the overarching strategic objectives and outcomes.

1.2.1 Analysis of the design, strategy, implementation arrangements for delivery of the project

This covered the evaluation criteria: *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability* of interventions (logframe), project management, the extent to which the project generated desirable and concrete changes, results obtained, challenges, and the extent to which changes have been identified and measured. The focus was on capacity development of key stakeholders and institutions identified in the TORs. The assessment also included evidence on how stakeholders had engaged amongst themselves at project implementation. It combined evidence from interviews, field visits, progress reports and evaluation reports.

Analysis of the relevance and effectiveness of the technical assistance provided by the OHRLLS Technical Assistance Team (TAT) as well as the impact/value addition of the support provided, and results obtained. There was need to focus on the quality and impact of technical assistance as well as sustainability issues from institutional capacity strengthening. The assessments enabled the evaluator to identify lessons learnt; institutionalization of results obtained and to draw conclusions and propose concrete recommendations for improving institutional capacities in future for the UN-OHRLLS and within the framework of Agenda 2030. Five standard United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) criteria were assessed as directed by the ToRs and in this Inception Report:

Relevance (Problems and needs): The extent to which the project addressed the needs, priorities, challenges and objectives of stakeholders, and whether this was consistent with stakeholder priorities, policies and needs, including but not limited to institutional needs and other capacity building priorities.

The assessment focused on the extent to which the design was relevant to the achievement of the overall objectives and the coherence of the OHRLLS project intervention logic (including logframe). Under this criteria, the evaluator also considered whether gender equality, environmental sustainability, South-South cooperation were mainstreamed during the design and implementation phases; whether the relevant SDGs and their inter-linkages identified; the principle of Leave No-One Behind and the rights-based approach methodology were followed in the identification/formulation documents and the extent to which they were reflected in the implementation of the Action, its governance and monitoring.

- There was an assessment of the extent to which the design of the project was sufficiently flexible, adaptable and responsive to opportunities/challenges arising from the political, social, economic and institutional contexts of OHRLLS Member States. Ownership remains a key indicator for assessing project relevance. The evaluation therefore examined the extent of stakeholder participation and engagement in design and implementation of activities.

Effectiveness (Achievement of purpose): – the focus was on the extent to which activities led to expected results and, consequently contributed to the project purpose and specific objective as anticipated in the logframe. Assessments covered progress and achievements at output/outcome level of the logframe, and targets under the four Result areas. An examination was done of the main factors influencing results as well as challenges and constraints in the non-achievement of expected results. Issues such as contribution to policies and resource mobilization were assessed as well as the quality and effectiveness of training and capacity building activities.

Efficiency (Sound management and value for money): Assessments covered activities under each result area transformed the available resources into the intended results and outputs, in terms of quality, timeliness and value for money. The level of inputs, outputs and timeliness in the implementation of activities were examined.

Impact (Achievement of wider effects): This focused on the extent to which project activities contributed directly or indirectly towards the overall objectives of the result areas. The evaluation also considered direct or potential impact on end users, where appropriate. This criterion also included an assessment of possible unintended (positive or negative) impacts and looks specifically at crosscutting issues as guided by the ToRs.

Sustainability (Continuation of achieved results): This examined whether the positive outcomes of the project and the flow of benefits achieved would likely continue in the medium to long term and the extent to which lessons learned had been integrated/mainstreamed or institutionalized by Member States. Sustainability assessed at the level of outputs, outcomes and emerging impact. The evaluation assessed the extent to which the results obtained from interventions are continuing or likely to continue beyond the closure of the project. Where appropriate, the assessment also included the extent to which changes induced by the project were institutionalized to ensure sustainability.

Desk Review

The evaluation applied to the following mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods:

A desk review of all relevant documents, as stated:

- Documents related to the project activities including but not limited to:
- Substantive regional review background reports, reports of the regional review meetings, global report on transport connectivity, the 3 sets of training modules, reports of the training workshops, report on the China-Mongolia Russia corridor, etc.;
- Documents related to the management of the completed project, including but not limited to:
 - Full-Fledged Project Documents (*Prodocs*), results budgeting and workplans;
 - Progress reports submitted by implementing entities and reviews/memos/letter with guidance by the Management Unit of the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund;
 - Final project report;

- Financial performance;
- Outreach material and communication for dissemination; and
- Publications and reports funded by the project

Interviews and stakeholder consultations

The evaluator conducted interviews, virtually with wide range of stakeholders and relevant implementing partners including UN ECE, UN ECA, UN ESCAP, UN ECLAC and African Development Bank, and others. Representatives of Member States were contacted through pre-prepared questionnaires, which managed to secure a modest response from project beneficiaries. This was in keeping with the now globally accepted COVID-19 protocols.

As appropriate, the evaluator reviewed existing surveys undertaken on the beneficiaries of the project work involving participants from LLDCs and transit countries who attended the specific regional review meetings and the training workshops.

1.2.2 Review of UN-OHRLS Project Logical Framework

Based on the review of documents and discussions with the stakeholders, the review of the project logical framework (LF) involved the following process²;

- Reviewing current logical framework in the project documents, including the description of the action;
- Updating and aligning the logical framework information to the baseline data, confirming the programme intervention logic and theory of change, confirming the scope of activities and alignment to planned results, filling in gaps in baseline values, as necessary, setting realistic indicator targets and milestones, aligning indicators to relevant strategic documents (RISDP, SISR and others);
- Checking the appropriateness of indicators, identifying alternative or new indicators; strengths and weaknesses of information sources for selected indicators, and;
- Integrating cross-cutting issues and identify sources of baseline/target indicator data and means of verification;

The OHRLS project management team facilitated the evaluator in the following areas:

- Contacts and communication between the evaluator and the stakeholders at global and regional levels, as required in the ToRs;
- Ensured that the evaluator had timely access to all key information, published and unpublished documents and key sources of data related to the assignment; and,
- Facilitated provision of timely feedback on the draft evaluation deliverables through to the presentation of the final report.

1.2.3 Data Collection Tools

The identification and collection of relevant data to demonstrate the actual results of the project interventions against indicators was a key stage in the evaluation process. Pre-prepared questionnaires and checklist were prepared for use to guide structured and non-structured discussions with all key stakeholders, from UN-OHRLS programme staff and senior management, personnel from other UN agencies, other international cooperating partners and Member States. The questionnaires were sent out in advance before the discussions. All Member States representatives

² Refer to Annexes 1A and 1B.

from LLDCs and transit countries were contacted. (Refer to the Annex for persons and designation of persons contacted during the evaluation).

1.2.4 Theory of Change and Logical Framework

In principle, the theory of change (ToC) identifies the specific goals of the project under review and ties those goals to particular interventions. It mapped out the initiative through stages employing what is referred to as “backwards mapping”³ from the long-term goal by working out the preconditions or requirements necessary to achieve that goal. The ToC can be assessed to be a useful analytical tool within the context of the UN-OHRLS transport connectivity and infrastructure development framework. Indicatively, the existing ToC has been postulated in the relevant aspects of the transport connectivity programme design and action. The ToC helped to map out the assumptions, which inform planned interventions and, thus, it can be regarded as an essential tool in designing and appreciating the complex network of factors that influence transport connectivity outcomes. In terms of process, the ToC was amiable to the programming of new transport connectivity interventions, adopts a participatory process whereby stakeholders in the planning process can articulate their long-term goals, roles and responsibilities. In this case, specific conditions can be modeled under ToC as desired outcomes, arranged graphically in a causal framework. Using relevant stakeholders/groups, the ToC describes the types of interventions within the context of the transport connectivity project that would bring about the outcomes depicted in the “outcomes framework map.”⁴ As a project development tool, the ToC ties project specific objectives to particular interventions, in the manner the logical framework approach (LFA) and results-based management (RBM) function, with the outcome linkages being more elaborately defined in the ToC than in the LFA and the RBM. To some extent, the development of the transport connectivity project did employ the ToC as a tool at the expected outcome level. However, it is also noteworthy that the transport connectivity project was not designed, resource-wise for a substantial level of engagement required for the ToC, but did provide pointers in terms of guidance from the perspective of the ToC. Many aspects related or linked to the ToC have been explored and explained in the findings of this evaluation.

1.2.5 The Logical Framework

The logical framework for the transport connectivity project was a vital tool in providing the summary of the intervention logic and linkages with the theory of change as these are captured in the project document and description of the Action. The logical framework gave a satisfactory summary of the project intervention logic, with clear and specific objectives. The overall objectives as spelt out in the project conceptual framework and project document (PD) are an accurate description of the Action. The indicators stated in the logframe have been defined well, but could have been more focused, more specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based (SMART) as presented in the review of the logical framework in the Annex A1. Baseline studies were undertaken as part of the project, feeding into the regional review meetings (RRMs) and the preparation of the global report focusing on transport infrastructure and connectivity. In principle, data from relevant baseline studies were the basis for target setting for the UN-OHRLS transport connectivity project. The targets were defined in the logframe, but more could be done to redefine them in a manner to that enabled them to be more aligned to relevant baseline studies, be more measurable as this pertains to the achievement of the

³ A key component of the ToC planning experience is the process of “backwards mapping,” beginning with the identification of the long-term outcome and working back toward the earliest changes that need to occur. This is a departure from some of the more conventional planning approaches since it starts with asking “What preconditions must exist for the long-term outcome to be reached?” rather than beginning with “What activities should be undertaken to advance programme goals?”

⁴ The transport connectivity project monitoring and evaluation framework, envisaged to be developed will elaborate on the outcome framework.

specific objectives. In most projects, baseline data is often used for benchmarking targets for performance tracking of the achievement of outputs and ultimately the outcomes. In the case of the UN-OHRLLS transport project, the short-duration horizon and the challenges emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic militated against a deeper focus on evidence-based tracking of the achievement of results, as guided by the logical framework and the theory of change.

2. FINDINGS

This section analyzes the findings of the evaluation, by evaluation criteria, namely, relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Impact. Lessons learnt and tentative recommendations have also been discussed.

2.1 ASSESSMENT BY EVALUATION CRITERIA

2.1.1 RELEVANCE

LLDCs face formidable development challenges. Their geographical constraints limit their access to international markets and intensify their vulnerability to climate change. Due to these issues, the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) has estimated that, on average, the development levels of LLDCs are a great deal below their non-landlocked peers in developing their road transport infrastructure. (Refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Paved road and railway density of land locked developing countries

Region	Paved road density (km per 1000 KM Square)	Rail Density per KM Square
East and Southern Africa	34.7	5.7
West and Central Africa	3.5	2.3
All LLDCs	19.1	3.6
Transit developing countries	191.4	8.6
Global	151.0	9.5

Source: UN-OHRLLS, 2018

As can be seen from Table 1, landlocked developing countries lagged far behind in terms of development of paved roads and railway infrastructure from their counterparts in the global and transit developing countries. The transport connectivity project is highly relevant for addressing the needs and priorities of beneficiary LLDCs especially in terms of capacity building and improving the state of the infrastructure in those countries.

Of the five main infrastructure system sectors, the three sectors with the greatest impact on improving the regional integration and trade competitiveness of LLDCs are transport, digital communications and energy. Actions to advance the sustainable development of LLDCs include: Developing transit corridors by improving the quality of existing road and rail networks and by increasing the efficiency of intermodal facilities (for the transfer, handling, storage, inspection and customs clearance of goods);

There are 32 landlocked developing countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America, with a combined population of roughly 440 million people. These countries face significant development challenges due to their lack of territorial access to the sea and resulting isolation from international markets.

The geographical constraints of LLDCs hinder their ability to advance economic development, environmental sustainability, and human and social progress. Some LLDCs are among the least developed countries in the world, and only five LLDCs are included in the group of countries with a high human development index rating. In general, LLDCs are characterized by higher levels of vulnerability. For example, they are more exposed to volatile food prices and resource dependency which can result in increased food insecurity.

Climate change induced natural disasters also contribute to the deterioration of many infrastructure types, including roads, rail, hydropower plants, schools and other public buildings. These negative effects result in increased costs on maintenance, transit and trade, and consequently affect the competitiveness of LLDCs in the global market.

Key issues that impede LLDCs' competitiveness in international trade include the following:

- Additional border crossings and border procedures;
- Longer distances and inadequate transport infrastructure;
- Climate change related shocks and disasters; and
- Reliance on transit countries' political stability.

Due to these issues, LLDCs spend double the amount on import and export costs per container compared to transit countries, and require nearly twice the amount of time for both imports and exports.

In order to address both the challenges and opportunities for sustainable development, the VPoA provides recommended actions for LLDCs to expand and develop transit systems and transport development; enhance their competitiveness; expand trade; achieve structural transformation; increase regional cooperation; and work towards inclusive economic growth and sustainable development. The six priorities of action defined by the VPoA to assist governments, institutions and development organizations to direct their efforts towards effective development initiatives are stated, with the priorities as follows:

Priority 1: Fundamental transit policy issues;

Priority 2: Infrastructure development and maintenance;

a. Transport infrastructure; b. Energy and information and communications technology infrastructure;

Priority 3: International trade and trade facilitation; a. International trade; b. Trade facilitation;

Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation;

Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;

Priority 6: Means of implementation.

The VPoA, to which the UN-OHRLLS transport connectivity project has a high level of relevance, reinforces the commitment of national governments and development partners to address the unique challenges of LLDCs. Transport infrastructure and connectivity issues are amongst some of the major infrastructure challenges facing LLDCs identified by UN-OHRLLS in the project being evaluated. The UN-OHRLLS transport connectivity project was designed to respond to the above challenges and opportunities for improving transport infrastructure in LLDCs and within specific regions where landlocked developing countries are located across the globe. The uniqueness of LLDCs' transport connectivity constraints is that they are multi-dimensional, hence require multi-stakeholder approaches.

The transport connectivity project is compatible with VPoA and SDGs 2030 agenda and other UN policies and frameworks. The VPoA is of strategic importance to the LLDCs in terms of its practical focus to tackle LLDCs development issues, of which the development of transport infrastructure is a major concern, in view of the scale of developmental challenges associated with transport connectivity in the beneficiary countries. Recent studies in different regions have assessed the state of transport connectivity in LLDCs (Refer to details in the global study and Mid-term Review of the Vienna Programme of Action). Having efficient connectivity is necessary to enable LLDCs to face effectively the challenges arising from their geographic location and to exploit alternatively the remoteness and isolation from world markets. The VPoA was designed to open new opportunities for successful engagement in the prioritized areas for LLDCs, amongst other interventions, and facilitate the coordination of actions by landlocked developing countries and their collaborators and stakeholders, improve access to international trade and enable improved industrial competitiveness, based on their comparative advantages, while providing the basis for a more coherent approach to global support.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN-OHRLLS Transport Connectivity

Trade, backed up by sound infrastructure development, including transport connectivity, is an important means to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

There is recognition that the LLDCs, including Asian and African countries and others, deserve special attention provision of trade-related capacity-building including for the promotion of regional economic integration and interconnectivity; and

SDG 9 and SDG 11 particularly emphasize the role of transport connectivity.

However, trade related costs for LLDCs are too high with the need to improve transport connectivity being crucial.

Furthermore, in view of the challenges cited, key elements of The Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries on Trade and Transport held in Astana, Kazakhstan on 16 and 17 May 2018 is summed up in the Declaration referred to:

(a) reaffirmed the overarching goal of the Vienna Programme of Action of addressing the special development needs and challenges of landlocked developing countries arising from their landlockedness, remoteness and geographical constraints; adopted the Ministerial Declaration: Improving Transport Connectivity for the LLDCs;

(b) emphasized the facilitating role that transport connectivity plays in driving regional integration, inclusive and sustainable economic development of LLDCs and recognizing the transformative potential of transport for structural economic change in the LLDCs;

(c) The Declaration also noted that the magnitude of the resources required to invest in infrastructure development and maintenance requires the forging of international, regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation on infrastructure projects, the effective deployment of international development assistance and multilateral financing of infrastructure projects and strengthening of the role of the private sector;

(d) Policy level and technical support to translate plans into concrete project pipelines, as well as support for individual implementable projects and upgrading of human resources and skills to meet the transport and infrastructure development needs of LLDCs, and;

(e) Urged multilateral and regional development banks to support LLDCs and transit countries in developing bankable implementable infrastructure and transport projects that are financially viable, environmentally friendly (climate resilient infrastructure) and accepted by the local communities.

Measures stated in the Declaration constitute the focus of the UN-OHRLLS transport connectivity project and are also highly relevant to the priorities of the VPoA and the SDGs. The different modules developed and training workshops planned and implemented as part of the project strategy are part of the capacity building and training efforts (Module 1 – 6) focusing on meeting skills and capacity gaps in LLDCs.

The project management and reporting structures have been developed well in the project conceptual framework. There has been a mechanism for the UN-OHRLLS project management team to provide regular progress reports to structures established in the planning and implementation modalities, throughout the life of the project. This enabled adequate performance tracking and accountability of the Action. There is evidence that the project team reported regularly to the project donors, steering committee and senior management through the established structures, enabling improved understanding on the challenges and opportunities identified. This has been done through quarterly reports. Such an arrangement has been vital to enable personnel coordinating the Action to make critical decisions with adequate policy and project level relationships and linkages forged, where necessary.

With respect to the level of stakeholder or beneficiary engagement or involvement in project design and implementation, it can be stated that the project was well informed by baseline studies undertaken by UN-OHRLLS and by other UN agencies with interest in transport infrastructure in LLDCs. What is clear is that OHRLLS did consult key stakeholders within the UN and related partners and the beneficiary LLDCs and transit countries. At the design stage, the project concept note was shared with selected stakeholders in the UN, with comments supplied to those who were handling the preparation of the project document. Based on the interviews of the key stakeholders, their comments were taken into account in the development of the final project document. Stakeholder consultations were also done with beneficiary countries, to a satisfactory extent, enabling the design of the project, to meet the basic requirements for such projects. What has been missing in the project design relates to the technical back-stopping which was required to ensure proper costing and budgeting of the feasibility studies, in view of the huge costs involved, in relation to the overall budget of the project. There was therefore need for a stronger level of mobilization of technical expertise in the development of infrastructure projects (transport connectivity) to ensure reality grounded budgeting of certain key components of the project.

2.1.2 EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness evaluation criteria is at the core of the Transport Connectivity Project. Within this criteria, a number of key lessons are drawn and these are critical in informing future programming by UN-OHRLLS and other stakeholders working in the same area.

The project had two result areas and four components as stated:-

- 1) Regional studies – shared widely on challenges facing LLDCs, feeding into the regional reviews;
- 2) Regional review meetings feeding into the midterm Review of the VPoA which identified key areas for capacity building;
- 3) Training of policy makers from LLDCs and transit countries;
- 4) Technical assistance to LLDCs to develop bankable projects for developing and implementing transport infrastructure projects (covering two countries, Botswana and Mongolia); all the training done virtually, including all the consultations.

Result Area 1: Increased knowledge and capacity of policymakers in LLDCs on the needed policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks for improving transport connectivity of the LLDCs including both the hard and soft infrastructure issues.

Baseline studies

Under the project, UN-OHRLLS has commissioned and undertaken numerous studies which have been widely shared to inform best practices and share experiences in the development of transport infrastructure projects. Examples of these studies include those that draw on situation analysis in specific LLDCs and regions. In collaboration with other UN agencies, OHRLLS, has undertaken a number of background studies leading to the production of the following reports, amongst others;

- (a) Improving Transport Connectivity, International Trade and Trade Facilitation for LLDCs;
- (b) Review of Progress Made in Structural Economic Transformation in Euro-Asian LLDCs; and,
- (c) Improving Transport Connectivity, International Trade and Trade Facilitation for LLDCs in African Region.

Other key publications cover the Status of Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in the Africa Region; background report for the Africa regional review meeting on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024; Midterm Review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 in Latin America and the Caribbean; and the Global Report on Improving Transport Connectivity for LLDCs and Building Resilient Transport Infrastructure to Support Accelerated Progress Towards the SDGs.

The significance of these baseline studies is that there are a credible contribution to the monitoring and evaluation of developments in LLDCs relating to the state of transport infrastructure, economic and trade related conditions. The reports, together with those of other international and regional stakeholders can collectively become a basis for both current and future action through joint efforts to deal with the challenges and or constraints cited in this and other related evaluations and or assessments on transport infrastructure and connectivity in LLDCs.

Regional Review Meetings (RRMs)

Preparation of a global report on improving transport connectivity for LLDCs and building of resilient transport infrastructure to support accelerated progress of the SDGs.

- Evidence shows that the global report was prepared in a timely manner, updated, well targeted and shared with stakeholders in LLDCs and support structures in the international community, including stakeholders in Member States.

In the case of Euro-Asia, 89 participants were recorded for the regional review meeting, at least 30 percent more than had been planned. Out of these participants, 43 were from LLDCs and transit countries, with 16 coming from Thailand, the host country. The participants were drawn from policymakers from ministries of transport, trade, finance, planning or foreign affairs.

The Africa regional review meeting recorded 68 participants. Out of these participants 29 were drawn from LLDCs and transit countries. All the regional review meetings and stakeholder meetings were subjected to evaluation by the participants; which in each case recorded a positive outcome. Overall, the participants indicated that the information, knowledge gained and what was provided during the meetings would be of use in the work they do, including in the development of new, innovative policies supporting implementation of the VPoA. Evidence on the feedback received from RRM workshops has been analyzed, pointing to the support of the view that positive outcomes were realized, to a fair extent. In the case of Latin America, substantial progress was made in capacity building and training in that region, and this has been documented in the UN-OHRLLS project progress reports, (2019 – 2021).

One significant contribution by OHRLLS is in the convening of regional review meetings which were to feed into the monitoring of the implementation of the VPoA and global report. The regional review meetings, were convened before the COVID-19 outbreak and contributed to the following:-

- Updated evidence-based analysis of the transport infrastructure situation in LLDCs, together with attendant challenges and emerging opportunities
- Identification of gaps that need to be filled from existing efforts, from the policy and strategy development and programme implementation perspectives;
- Where these can be identified in the different regions (for example, Africa, Asia and Latin America) share experiences of success stories, which might have potential for replication.
- Provided important inputs into the preparation of the outcome document of the Midterm Review of the VPoA.

The evaluation that was conducted post the regional review meetings revealed that 88 percent of the total participants that responded to the evaluation questionnaire in all the 3 regions - Euro-Asia, Africa and Latin America indicated that information, expertise and know-how provided during the training and capacity building meetings were set to be of use in their future work and that the beneficiaries had increased capacity to develop policies and strategies aimed at improving interregional and intraregional transport connectivity. As stated in the impact evaluation criterion, the implication of this positive feedback from the beneficiaries needed to be further scrutinized with more evidence-based analysis of data from the transformational processes occurring within the beneficiary LLDCs and transit countries. Such an analysis needed more time to generate data from the LLDCs and transit countries beyond the limited time and methodology used in this evaluation; to some extent also exposing the limitations of processes undertaken virtually. Indeed, if the evaluation was given more time, this could have been addressed to a large extent, with more effort at triangulating the available

data, engaging more stakeholders and beneficiaries on how the training and capacity building had impacted at the practical level.

Training of policy makers and practitioners from Member States

Result Area 2. *Enhanced knowledge and capacity of policymaker in LLDCs on the needed policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks for improving transport connectivity of the LLDCs including both the hard and soft infrastructure issues.*

The planned project activity was to undertake a training session of policy-makers from Ministries of Transport of LLDCs and practitioners along the “Belt and Road” on how to promote transport infrastructure connectivity and development of resilient transport infrastructure. The training would be organized in collaboration with relevant partners and the Ministry of Transport of China and would leverage the successful experiences and best practices of China to promote South-South cooperation on experience sharing and technology transfer. The project would also support participation of 3 staff and 3 experts from partner organizations, namely, from the UN and others outside the UN system. This effort would also involve development of an online knowledge platform where the LLDCs can share experiences forging a synergy with the “Belt and Road Initiative”.

On a positive note, based on the feedback received from policy makers from Member States (Africa and Asia), the training sessions were quite effective, despite the constraints posed by the use of virtual communication. The partnership strategy employed of using resource persons, including those from other UN agencies, The World Bank, the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank and others built on the complementarity of others, with OHRLLS taking advantage of its convening power. The convening of the training by regions also ensured coverage of each regional perspective, with all regional commissions taking an active part in the action.

Two sessions were held for the Africa and Latin America region, and another for Europe and Asia. The training and capacity building went on well, with 50 percent of the LLDC policymakers and practitioners involved in the training indicating readiness to implement best practices on enhancing transport connectivity learned through the capacity building. For the Latin America region, of the 16 government representatives from LLDCs and transit countries who attended, 12 of them completed an evaluation questionnaire. Of those who responded, 83 percent of them indicated that the information, expertise and know-how provided during the meeting would be of use in their future work; 75 percent of the respondents indicated that they had increased capacity to develop policies and strategies aimed at improving intraregional transport connectivity. What this means is that there was substantial benefits from the training and capacity building facilitated through the project with potential positive spill-over effects at the level of policy development and implementation in the LLDCs engaged. Training and capacity building efforts, however, required further follow up, prioritizing country specific needs identified and fed back to project management and resource persons to tailor develop training materials and relevant examples, illustrations, where necessary – prioritizing training to local level.

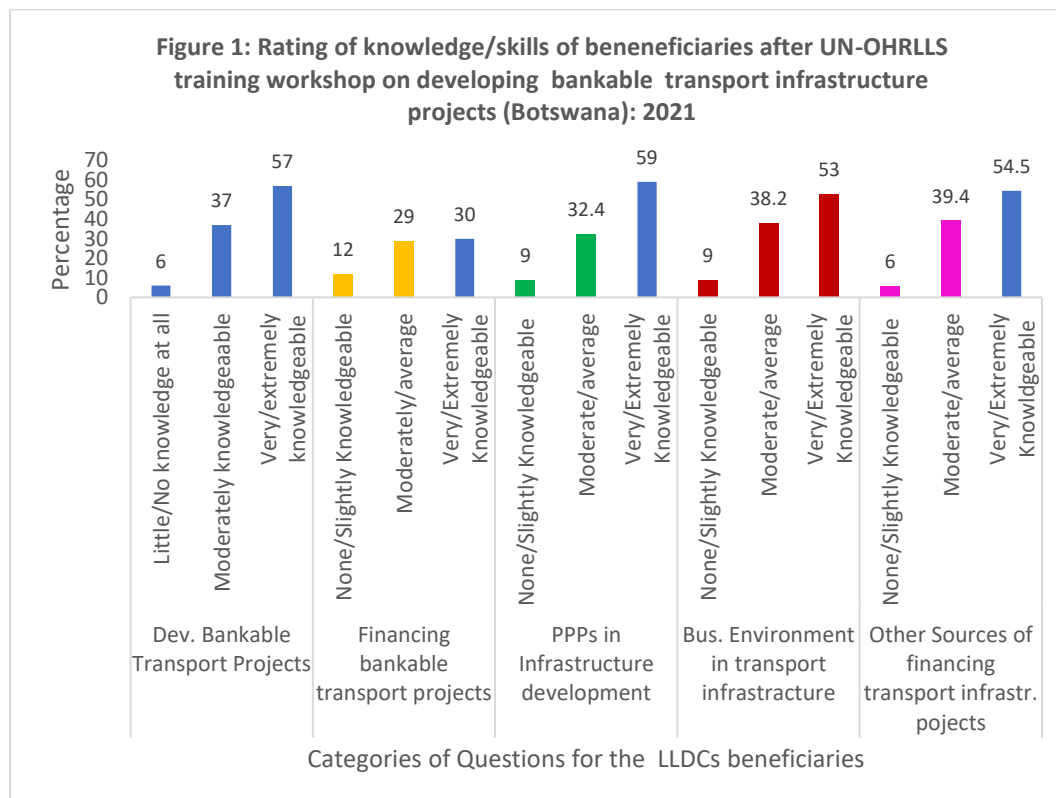
Asian vs African case – the differences between the two regions in terms of how they received and participated in the capacity building/training workshops are noted⁵ – Despite the success achieved, stakeholders are of the view that a different type of training needed to be organized, tailored, a great

⁵ There is an observation from key stakeholders and those who were close to the implementation of the training sessions is that the African trainees (policy and practitioners) tended to be a great deal more enthusiastic and more participative in the training workshops than their Euro-Asian counterparts. This may reflect the differences in the two regions, which probably needed to be captured more fully in the next level of engagement of LLDCs and transit countries, including even it might mean more resources going to Africa, given her stage of transport infrastructure in relation to the Euro-Asia region. (Latin American data is not available for comparison/contrasting).

deal more to certain region-specific priorities; despite the understanding that the modules were adjusted to reflect regional differences, with specific examples used from each region, as necessary. In future, there may be need to consider different action responses between Asia and Africa to enable increased value added of the capacity building and training efforts.

Evaluations conducted with beneficiaries after the training of policy makers covering in all three regions (Africa, Euro-Asia and Latin America) indicated that more than 80 percent of the participants found the training and capacity building was valuable in enhancing their knowledge and capacity to handle transport infrastructure and connectivity projects in their regions. However, further engagement with the beneficiaries and the key stakeholders involved in the project indicated that more hands-on technical support at Member States (MS) level would enable the implementation of a more effective partnership strategy that assures delivery of desirable results. The UN-OHRLLS had plans to work closely with Botswana and Mongolia, amongst other LLDCs and transit countries with a view to strengthening the technical capacity and skills of MS to design and implement transport infrastructure and connectivity projects. For both Botswana, during the plans which had been concretized were negatively impacted by a number of factors which are discussed in this evaluation report. For example, plans to hire consultants to assist Botswana and Mongolia with technical assistance to develop bankable projects were affected by financial constraints and the COVID-19 pandemic. The effectiveness of the engagement and implementation mechanism planned for the project was also affected, negatively, resulting in the inability to achieve the planned outputs.

The assessment of some of the UN-OHRLLS facilitated training workshop, held virtually on *Strengthening Capacity to Develop Bankable Transport Infrastructure Projects for Enhanced Transport Connectivity, Botswana: 6 – 8 April 2021*, Refer to Figure 1.



Source: UN-OHRLLS Project Management, Post-Training Workshop Evaluation, Africa, 2021

Despite the constraints faced because of the changes induced by COVID-19, whereby all the capacity building and training workshops which were originally planned to be done physically, had to be done virtually, the feedback from the beneficiaries can be assessed to be very positive. Even with respect to the plans to facilitate prioritized Member States to develop bankable projects, despite the challenges faced, the project did manage to impart some knowledge and skills to the beneficiaries which would be useful as the basis of taking off in future follow up efforts. This is the case despite the situation of Euro-Asian feedback on as similar training held for that region appearing less glamorous than that of the African counterparts. The methodological approach for the different regions has been discussed in this evaluation as an important lesson learnt for the future engagement by UN-OHRLLS as follow up efforts, recommended in this evaluation are made.

Constraints and opportunities

- (i) Conduction of training of policy makers and practitioners was done virtually. Not all government officers had access to good broadband connectivity. Time zones between different countries made sequencing a problem, requiring that the training had to be compressed in short space of time than if meetings were done face-to face; sequencing everything in short space, implying that in some countries, participants had to work far into the night, which was difficult to enforce for professional adults.
- (ii) Online meetings also resulted in challenges of trainees paying full attention; not all beneficiaries could be on screen during virtual meeting; no adequate interactions, with resource persons and trainees, limited capacity to give feedback; minimal human interactions with lack of capacity for questions or interventions, where necessary.
- (iii) There was need of face-to-face engagement, which was not feasible under the stringent global COVID-19 restrictions – There were limits of virtual communication, with virtual communication fatigue faced by many participants. It is better to organize person to person capacity building than online training for a whole day – it can be very tiring, and very difficult to *break the ice* in online engagement. Online participation needs several breaks which may not be feasible over a few days. Participants have no time to ask questions in a meaningful manner.
- (iv) It has also become clear that assimilation in learning is better with face to face than virtually, engaging on an on-going basis causes loss of attention, reduced commitment to engage with resource persons
- (v) Face to face contact also offered more networking opportunities than virtual meetings – blended approaches needed. Opportunities can be missed if interventions do not go beyond workshops and trainings – with the need for follow of activities with stakeholders!

Identification and preparation of two LLDCs bankable projects – situation analysis

Two LLDCs who are part of the “Belt and Road Initiative” will be provided **technical capacity building support to prepare bankable projects to improve transport connectivity**. The UN-OHRLLS, in partnership with partners, will facilitate capacity development for the preparation of a bankable project in the selected 2 LLDCs. The development of the bankable projects in transport connectivity will make tangible contribution to the development of the “Belt and Road Initiative”. The selected LLDCs will include one from Africa and one from Asia region.

The project was able to deliver specialized training that the Government of Botswana requested on public private partnerships and identified the topics that they needed training on. A consultant was

recruited to prepare the training modules and conduct the training. The training was successfully held virtually on 11 and 12 October 2021 and 21 government officials from Botswana participated in the training. Thus, in addition to the training sessions that were held on improving transport connectivity and developing bankable projects, capacities of Botswana’s officials were further empowered on how to work with public private partnership in developing bankable projects.

For Mongolia, UN-OHRLLS worked closely with ESCAP and commissioned a joint study on Promoting transport connectivity along the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor and also organized a joint capacity building workshop on strengthening connectivity along the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor that was held in a virtual format on 21 October 2021. The report and workshop helped identify priority areas for development of the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor.

The project management had planned engaging technical experts as well as facilitate face to face meetings to strategize on the development of bankable projects for Botswana and Mongolia. The methodology of engagement changed with COVID-19, going virtual. The process was slowed down as the project team was unable to fast-track implementation of this sub-component virtually, for a process which needed face-to-face engagement. By the time the project was firming up arrangements, in particular, to provide additional concrete support for the Botswana government, which had focused on special arrangements involving public private partnerships (PPPs) for transport infrastructure in mega projects, the project was rapidly coming to an end. Budgetary and financial challenges faced by the project in commissioning feasibility studies were also an important factor.

Delivery as One (DaO): An opportunity for UN-OHRLLS and other UN stakeholders

UN-OHRLLS has been successful in engaging other partners, including UN agencies to a large extent, and has been able to mobilize all key stakeholder, for example, UNCTAD, ECE, ECA, ESCAP, some transport corridor development authorities and other regional organizations, Regional Banks and others in support of achievements of sustainable measures to improve transport connectivity in LLDCs and transit countries.

2.1.3 EFFICIENCY

Analysis of Achievements

According to the project documents and workplans, the analysis of the achievements relating to prioritized results areas and activities have been summarized according to the project workplan.

Result Area 1: Increased knowledge and capacity of policymakers in LLDCs on the needed policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks for improving transport connectivity of the LLDCs including both the hard and soft infrastructure issues.

A.1 Preparation of a global report on improving transport connectivity for LLDCs and building of resilient transport infrastructure to support accelerated progress of the SDGs.

A1:2: Undertake consultative regional review meetings

The achievements relating to the two key activities under result area 1 have been summed up in Table 2.

Result Area 2: Enhanced knowledge and capacity of government officials, and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries on how to develop bankable projects for improving connectivity.

A2.1: Undertake a training session of policy-makers from Ministries of Transport of LLDCs and practitioners along the “Belt and Road” on how to promote transport infrastructure connectivity and development of resilient transport infrastructure.

A2.2: Support to the development of bankable projects for LLDCs have been discussed in this section in the assessment by evaluation criteria.

Table 2: UN-OHRLLS Transport Connectivity Analysis of Achievements: Summary, 2018 – 2021			Remarks
Result Area 1: Increased knowledge and capacity of policymakers in LLDCs on the needed policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks for improving transport connectivity of the LLDCs including both the hard and soft infrastructure issues.			
Activities	Targets		
A.1 Prepare a global report on improving transport connectivity for LLDCs and building of resilient transport infrastructure to support accelerated progress of the SDGs.	Technical capacity of LLDC to develop policies and strategies for transport connectivity strengthened, with appropriate policy frameworks in place by 2022	The Global Report on improving transport connectivity for LLDCs and building resilient transport infrastructure to support accelerated progress of the SDGs; Vital tool to inform policy and strategy development processes for building resilient transport infrastructure for LLDCs.	The global report and supporting background reports are a high quality document which has been widely disseminated through the official UN-OHRLLS website and other platforms; It is also a valuable tool for the evidence-based tracking of progress on SDGs in transport infrastructure development, opportunities and challenges and for the achievement of the VPoA.
A1.2: Undertake consultative regional review meetings	Consultative regional review carried out in Euro-Asia, Africa and Latin America, drawing on baseline studies undertaken through the support of UN-OHRLLS	The RRM have been successfully undertaken covering the three regions (Euro Asia, Africa and Latin America), and have been a vital contribution to the Mid-term review of the VPoA and the review of progress in the SDGs. Material generated in the regions, with the participation of OHRLLS partners, was used in evidence-based analysis of critical issues being tracked for the VPoA and in the drafting of the final high level continue at the end of the review of the VPoA. The contributions from the RRM also acted as critical material packaged for UN-OHRLLS advocacy activities	The RRM have involved all of the UN-OHRLLS project partners, including regional commissions (ECA, ECE,ESCAP and ECLAC), Member States of LLDCs, first in ensuring the sufficient baseline data is collected, packaged and analysed to inform the review processes at regional level and also at the global level, drawing lessons learnt from different regions.

		with a view to improving transport connectivity in LLDCs	
Result Area 2: Enhanced knowledge and capacity of government officials, and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries on how to develop bankable projects for improving connectivity.	<p>Modular based capacity building and training was undertaken for selected policy makers and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries, based on available capacities.</p> <p>Capacity building and training targeted at public private partnerships – engaging the private sector</p>	In Euro-Asia and Africa, participation by the beneficiaries was well beyond expectations, with more than 30 percent more participants than had been projected at the planning stage – the training had to be done virtually because of the outbreak of COVID-19. Feedback from the beneficiaries from the workshop evaluations was highly positive, demonstrating that there had been a significant value added to the policy makers and practitioners in terms how the contribution would support them in their day-to-day work activities; Capacity building and training was successfully done, one in each region targeting private sector engagement in the building of transport infrastructure in LLDCs (one in Africa, one for Euro-Asia)	The success recorded from the training workshops in the regions is corroborated in the engagement with stakeholders carried out during the project evaluation, in terms how the workshops were perceived by those involved. What has also been pointed out by different stakeholders is the need to scale up the intervention with follow ups at more practical levels, with case studies and projects designed and implemented. Efforts in this direction had begun for Botswana, in particular, which was set to be followed up by engaging more LLDCs. However, the follow ups by UN-OHRLLS was prematurely terminated for two reasons: (1) COVID-19 prevented more direct, face to face engagement which was central to developing bankable projects; (1) the financial resources budgeted to undertake feasibility studies were insufficient to meet the demands of technical experts/consultants
Activities	Targets		
A2.1: Undertake a training session of policy-makers from Ministries of Transport of LLDCs and practitioners along the “Belt and Road” on how to promote transport infrastructure connectivity and development of resilient transport infrastructure.	Capacity building and training workshops in all prioritised regions (x 3) conducted to improve transport infrastructure connectivity and the development of resilient transport infrastructure.	Virtual training workshops were conducted successfully in the three regions, with adequate levels feedback supplied, (evidence based), indicating the success of the workshops in terms of contributing to the knowledge base of the beneficiaries and improved understanding of mechanisms of promoting development of transport infrastructure.	Though substantial modular level capacity building and training was carried out successfully in all the regions prioritised by the project, indications have been that opportunities for further action have also been opened up. This is with a view to deepening cooperation at the level of Member States, with the possible mobilisation of stakeholders based in specific regions. This issue is elaborated upon in the section assessing the sustainability of the project, in the UN-OHRLLS report, lessons learnt and in the recommendations of this evaluation.

The global report, focusing on transport infrastructure and connectivity in LLDCs and the RRM were prepared and held in a timely manner and successfully fed into the Mid-term review of the VPoA, prepared and held in a timely manner. The RRM for Asia was held in February, 2019; for Africa, March, 2019, for Latin America, in June 2019; with all regional reviews done on time. The outcomes of the RRM were fed into the declaration of the VPoA Mid-term review; which have been summed up in this evaluation. Drawing from baseline studies in the regions, the RRM also fed into the preparation of the global report, synthesized, enabling the MTR to be relevant and up to date, demonstrating what was the situation analysis of transport infrastructure within the regions.

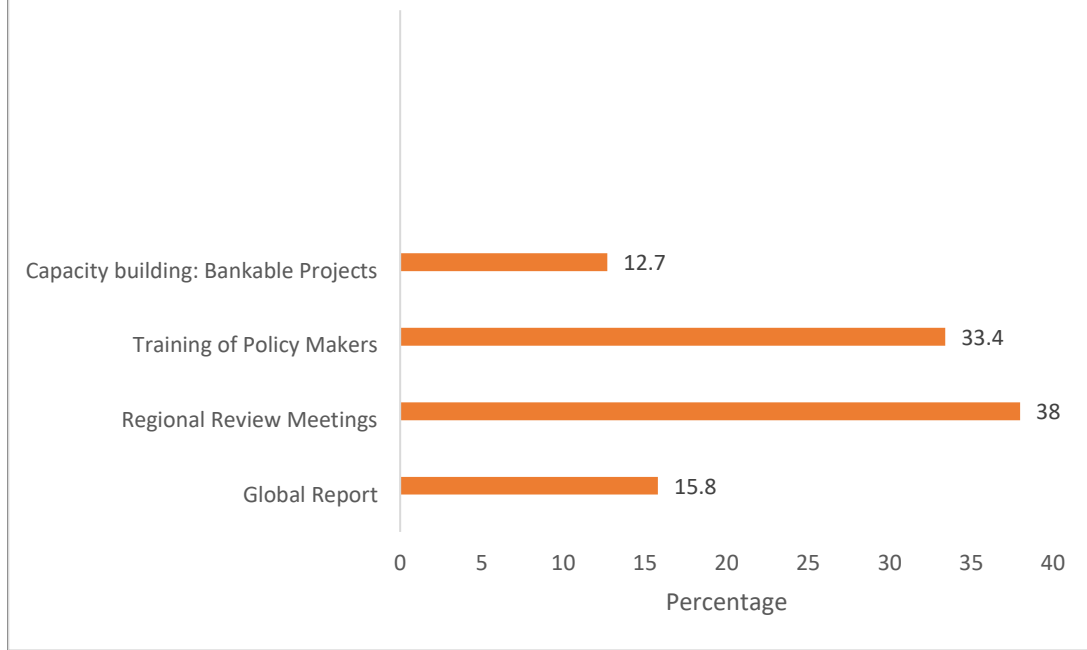
In 2020 project activities were rescheduled by the project management, following the granting of the no-cost extension, arising due to COVID-19 induced constraints. The prioritized activities were implemented in accordance with the revised plans. Relating to all the training workshops, the project planned to convene face-to-face training meetings with policy makers and practitioners, in April 2020; the meetings were re-scheduled and postponed to April, 2021, the following year due to COVID-19, with a no cost extension of 1 year, approved by the UNPDF, up to October, 2021. International travel plans were cancelled, with all plans for face-to-face meetings also shelved.

In terms of expenditure patterns for the project, as at 31 October, 2021, the closure of the project, 54 percent of the overall budget (US\$764,131.57) had been spent. The original budget planning in the project document had allocated 70 percent of the total amount towards regional review meetings and the training of policy makers and practitioners in prioritized areas. The expectation was that there would be substantial travelling of the selected beneficiaries from Member States to the identified venues for physical meetings. Furthermore, apart from meeting the technical assistance costs of an approved number of specific resource persons, including their travel and subsistence, the project would meet the cost of physical participation of 3 officials from each collaborating partner involved in all regions. The full cost of implementing this component was substantial, roughly 33 percent of the overall budget, from the original planning estimates. However, with the implementation of the project coinciding with the outbreak of COVID-19, during the first quarter of 2020, the methodology of undertaking the planned project activities changed, with all meetings going virtual. The convening of virtual meetings had both merits and demerits associated with it, with a huge cost saving, although not enough to offset the budget shortfall for the development of bankable projects. Overall, apart from the case of bankable projects, all the other allocations to project lines and expenditures were largely in line with the original plans – despite the project facing one year of no-cost extension.

The overall project budget as set out in the Funding Agreement between UN-OHRLLS and the UNPDF was adequate to cover some activities under one result area but not both result areas. There is no indication that challenges facing Result Area Two had any implication, positive or negative, in the performance of the outcome area.

The financial resources allocated for the OHRLLS transport connectivity project for the entire implementation phase was US\$764,131.57. Roughly 15.8 percent of the overall budget was allocated to the global report, 38 percent to the regional review meetings designed to feed into the review of the VPoA; 33.4 percent for the training of policy makers and practitioners and 13 percent of capacity building for the development of bankable projects. The project budget allocation to different budget lines largely remained unchanged throughout the implementation period since no reallocations from the global project budget were foreseen. (Refer to Figure 2).

Figure 2: OHRLLS: Planned Budget Allocation: 2018 - 2020

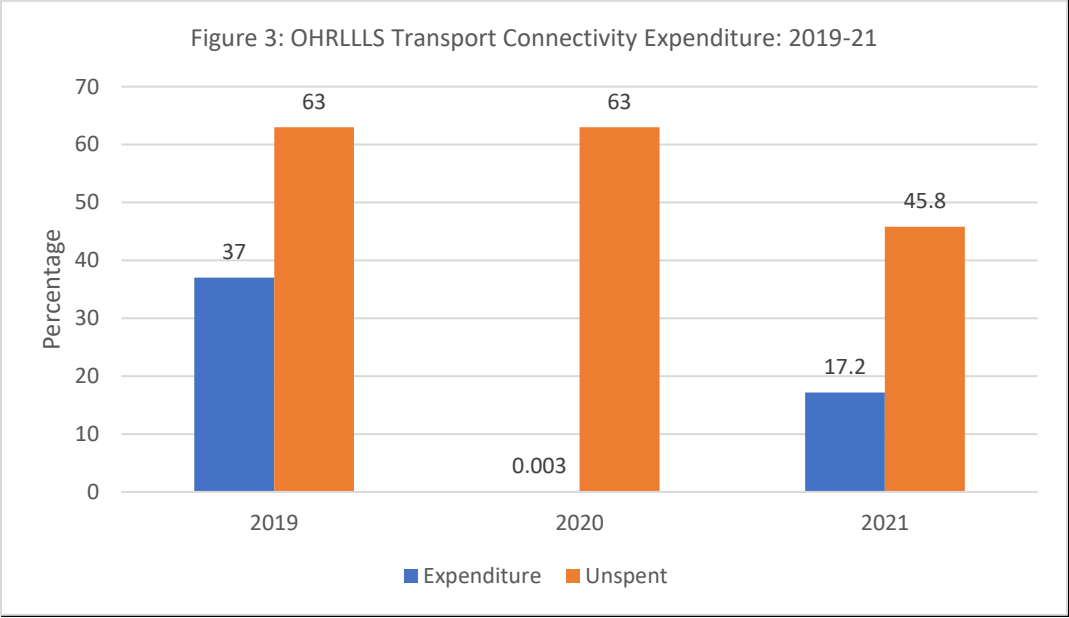


Resource allocation under Result Areas

For the Result Area 1, covered *‘increasing knowledge and capacity of policymakers in LLDCs to develop policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks for improving transport connectivity of the LLDCs including both the hard and soft infrastructure issues’*. This also included, strategically, the preparation of the global report and regional review meetings feeding into the review of the VPoA.

Result area 2 covered, *‘enhancing knowledge and capacity of government officials, and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries on how to develop bankable projects for improving connectivity, which a total planned allocation of US\$233,772 (33.4 percent) of the total budget’*. Roughly 87 percent of the budget covered, the preparation of the global report, regional review meetings and training for policy makers and practitioners to improve transport connectivity in targeted regions and Member States of LLDs and transit countries. Capacity building for the additional input needed to enable prioritized Member States to prepare bankable projects was about 13 percent of the overall budget. The cost of a bankable project was not estimated, realistically, a key lesson learnt. The development of a bankable project was planned to involve close interactions between technical experts and senior staff of Member States concerned.

Overall, 70 percent of the budget was allocated towards RRM and training and capacity building for policy makers and practitioners in MS. These allocations correctly reflected the priorities set at the planning stage of the project, reflecting emphasis of the project on capacity building and training to facilitate the improvement transport connectivity in LLDCs. Because the regional review meetings and the training of policy makers and practitioners had factored the convening of physical meetings, which were later held virtually, a significant proportion of the budget (about 46%) remained unspent at the end of the project period. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, although expenditure for the project had picked during the 2019 financial year, things got to standstill due to the COVID-19, during 2020, with recorded expenditure during the period nearly zero (Refer to Figure 3).



2.1.4 SUSTAINABILITY

From the development of the concept note, through to the preparation of the fully fledged project document, the project management team worked closely with key stakeholders and partners identified, namely, ECA, ESCAP, ECE, ECLAC and the African Development Bank (AfDB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB). The project partners were consulted and provided comments to the concept note and the Project Document, with representatives of stakeholders interviewed indicating that their contributions were largely factored in the development of the project document. To the extent possible, the partnership strategy which is key to sustainability worked well for the project.

Overall, the project is sustainable to the extent that it is grounded in linkages with Member States of LLDCs and beneficiary transit countries’ national policy linkages. To improve on sustainability, there was need for a stronger strategic phasing in of diversified financial, human and material resources, to deepen existing technical capacities, apart from the financial resources provided under the project. The potential for targeted resource mobilisation has been well articulated in the project design and by the UN-OHRLLS senior management.

The preparation of the global report was also largely a participatory process, involving a great variety of stakeholders, including regional commissions, contributions emanating from baseline studies undertaken within the regions and led by stakeholders with a strong presence in those areas. global report is an important knowledge product that is a reference to be used into the future.

A series of Regional and International events related to the development of transport infrastructure and connectivity were conducted within the Member States. UN-OHRLLS has plans to hold a Ministerial conference on transport which would cover all the geographical regions, and involve a range of key stakeholders. Transport infrastructure and connectivity stakeholders, including beneficiaries are

unanimous in that the sustainability of the project benefits depend on follow on activities, to deepen stakeholder cooperation at project level, at regional level as well as within Member States where the different prioritised interventions are based. UN-OHRLLS is aware of the strategic importance of this approach.

Baseline studies and pilot initiatives in selected MS: With reference to baseline studies undertaken, in the course of the implementation of the project, the visibility of the outputs was high, and the efforts were scaled up to feed into the global report and the VPOA Mid-Term Review. UNOHRLLS learnt important lessons which can inform the potential upscaling of the initiatives which were supported through the concluded project phase, hence there is some reasonable level of sustainability associated with them.

Relating to the training of policy-makers; UN-OHRLLS developed 3 sets of training modules. The sets of training materials included case studies from all regions on specific topics, which included:

- a) Developing Bankable Transport Infrastructure Projects: Case Studies, Experiences and Learning Materials for Landlocked Developing Countries and Transit Countries;
- b) Improving Transport Connectivity for LLDCs and Building of Resilient Transport Infrastructure to Support Accelerated Progress Towards the SDGs: Experiences and Learning Materials for LLDCs and Transit Countries; and
- c) Developing successful Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for increased transport connectivity: Case Studies, Experiences and Learning Materials.

To the extent that the modules had already been developed and can be reviewed and or improved upon for future use on similar projects, drawing on good practices, the training and capacity building strategy was set to be sustainable in the medium to long term.

There are also important lessons learned in the use of virtual means of interaction between resource persons and policy makers from LLDCs which can inform future programming of transport connectivity projects. These lessons have been documented in this Evaluation. There are fair prospects of coordinated action to revamp and re-establish the training under different arrangements, for example, on a region-to-region basis, connecting these efforts to a regional database and linkages with national level databases for information sharing and networking, on transport connectivity. There is a presumed presence of political will and commitment at MS level, in view of the prioritization of transport connectivity by most Member States in LLDCs.

At closure of the project, the project had completed a number of key tasks planned for the Action. Follow on activities by UN-OHRLLS were in the pipeline. For improved prospects of sustainability, a number of priority actions were needed in the post-project period:-

- Engaging subject matter specialists/technical experts and Member States – subject matter specialists needed for trainings. Financing the work of more specialists on transport connectivity on the ground to capacitate Member States on practical projects, in particular skills areas for more visibility in LLDCs.
- Consideration of more capacity building and training within the context of the COVID-19, assessing rationale of virtual trainings, which despite being good cannot substitute face-to-face

trainings and interactions; which enable participants to ask questions, interact more with resource persons and share experiences.

- Recipient priority driven participation with countries identifying their transport connectivity needs; linking these to bankable infrastructure projects.

Conducting training using pre-prepared modules on developing bankable transport infrastructure projects. The project has ended, in October, 2021. To ensure sustainability, there is need for an additional follow-up project that would carry over the process started through the training of policy makers and practitioners from Member States with additional deeper forms of engagement that focus more at projects that particular countries are seeking to prioritize and how they can mobilize resources to develop bankable projects.

Each LLDC Member State has a UN Office, with a Resident Coordinator in place. Within the different regions, indications are that there are credible regional training centres, for example, the UNECA supported IDEP, based in West Africa or its equivalent in Asia and Latin America. If engaged, adequately, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office and relevant regional training centres, could be instrumental in contributing to the sustainability of prioritised components of the projects, with the support of technical assistance team (TAT) whose base would be at regional level, but with strong linkages with UN-OHRLLS and other UN partners.

At the level of beneficiary countries and possibly as well at regional economic community level, there have been challenges in sustaining efforts in capacity building and training, domestication of good practices in infrastructure development, developing appropriate legal/regulatory frameworks and adopting technical systems/processes to improve transport connectivity in the MS. The major binding constraint stated has been lack of resources to follow through with priority actions in filling in identified transport infrastructure development gaps, such technological and software requirements. Evidently, resource constraints remain a big challenge for many of the beneficiary countries and LLDCs. Many of the countries have proceeded to developing and implementing their own national strategies and programmes, with little or no evidence that shows a relationship or linkage with the regional policy processes and/or relevance to the regional transport connectivity issues. For example, in ECOWAS, SADC or UNECA, there is scope to consider the issue of transport connectivity within the framework of regional economic communities. Going forward, relating to the issue of ensuring that momentum is built for bankable projects, a number of actions are foreseen:-

- There is need to follow on engagements between OHRLLS, Member States and partners identified, building on existing linkages for consolidation phase, understanding the different stakeholder needs, developing projects to bankability.
- MS are required to be fully capacitated (technical capacity) to put together bankable projects, through partnerships for financing new projects; building know-how within government officials. Although the training sessions with government officials were deemed useful/valuable (Refer to positive feedback from training evaluations, 2021), they left some gaps, such that the efforts could not be sustained in the absence of additional measures to strengthen capacity at Member State level; and;

Example of capacity development and training efforts linked to the project

Box 1

Capacity development (CD) and training was a substantial focus of the UN-OHRLLS transport connectivity project, with a number of technical trainings (modules) in specific result areas targeted at policy makers and practitioners, especially Government, within the participating Member States (Africa, Asia and Latin America). However, the CD and training tended to be short-term and limited in scope and coverage, as expected for short duration projects. The approach of undertaking once-off training with a view to capacitating beneficiaries needed to be complemented with plans for additional measures which were not considered under the project due to funding modalities in place and limitations emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The thrust on support to development of bankable projects was a novel approach, which had the potential to generate a momentum of its own but could not be sustained because of challenges explained elsewhere in this Evaluation. An important lesson had been learnt which could form the basis of further future action, drawing on good practices. The baseline studies and regional review meetings which fed into the global report and the MTR of the VPoA, respectively, were a step in the right direction and sustainable through the on-going support of the UN-OHRLLS and other UN agencies. The capacities envisaged to be generated through the efforts of the project could be better complemented through approaches that sought to mobilise and engage regional training centres such as IDEP and others to position themselves as centres of excellence required to build up the momentum to sustain training and capacity building efforts in the area of transport connectivity to the level where the expected outcomes could be realised, in the long term.

2.1.5 IMPACT

Of significance, the project has been instrumental in the funding of baseline studies and RRM's conducted in all the three regions, Asia, Africa and Latin America, which have fed into up-to-date evidence-based analysis of the situation of transport infrastructure in LLDCs and transit countries. The baseline studies have in turn fed into the preparation of learning materials to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs which is funded by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund - United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund. The learning materials have been packaged in Training Workshops with three sets of modules covering the following topics:-

- “Strengthening Capacity to Design and Implement Policies and Identify Solutions that Promote Transport Connectivity for the Achievement of the SDGs” held virtually on 27 and 28 September 2021 for the Africa and Latin America region and on 30 September and 1 October for the Europe Asia Region; resulting in the publication of the document/module entitled: *Improving Transport Connectivity for LLDCs and Resilient transport Infrastructure to Support Accelerated Progress Towards the SDGs: Experiences and Learning Materials for LLDCs and Transit Countries* .
- “Strengthening Capacity in Developing Bankable Transport Infrastructure Projects for Enhanced Connectivity” held virtually on 6 to 8 April 2021 for Africa and Latin America region and on 18 to 20 May 2021 for the Europe Asia Region.
- “Developing successful Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for increased transport connectivity in Botswana” held Virtually on 11 and 12 October 2021.

As an illustration, for the first set, the learning materials are captured in modular form as follows:-

Module 1: Transport connectivity in the Global Frameworks of Sustainable Development;
Module 2: Transport Connectivity of LLDCs status, achievements, major challenges and recommendations;
Module 3: Resilient Transport Infrastructure – Experiences and Best Practices;
Module 4: Financing Transport Connectivity;
Module 6: Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Transport Connectivity – Experiences and Lessons;
Module 7: Collecting Data for Designing and Monitoring Policies that Promote Transport Connectivity for the Achievement of the VPoA and SDGs.

The materials are used as a vital advocacy tool for global change, raising awareness of participants about the importance of improving transport connectivity of LLDCs to access global markets and to achieve the SDGs, amongst other issues which include the development of contemporary transport policies and their integration into development strategies, and strengthening LLDCs' capacity to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity. Other focal areas of the learning materials are to review the current status and key achievements on transport infrastructure development in LLDCs, major challenges faced by LLDCs and transit countries to close transport infrastructure gaps with a view to improve their transport connectivity. The continued state of degradation of transport infrastructure in LLDCs and transit countries is highlighted, together with measures required to address the undesirable situation.

The Baseline Studies and RRM have been the bedrock of the review of the VPoA and the preparation of the global report, focusing on a number of prioritized result areas highly relevant to the improvement of transport infrastructure in LLDCs and transit countries. The global report was shared widely with the international community, including all relevant UN agencies, multi-lateral and bilateral donors, governments of LLDCs and transit countries, amongst other stakeholders. Through the support provided by the UN-OHRLLS, in collaboration with the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, the different outputs produced under this project have contributed to improved evidence based analysis and a comprehensive MTR of the VPoA and progress tracking.

Furthermore, with the training provided through the project, there have been largely positive feedback from the regions from most policy makers and practitioners drawn from the LLDCs and transit countries trained through the project. Indications have been that the project had a good start in pointing learning in the right direction in terms of covering areas of need and relevance, including ensuring good quality and delivery of module material delivered to the beneficiaries. Government level policy makers and practitioners found the training materials useful, for their use on daily basis in their work situation (Refer to relevant tables/figures). This was highlighted in the post-training feedback solicited following the training. However, there was need for the capacity building to go deeper to deal with case studies and more practical aspects of real projects where specific LLDCs needed engagement with UN-OHRLLS resource persons and capacity building experts.

Furthermore, there is need to assess and strengthen the capacity of LLDCs and transit countries to mobilize resources for transport infrastructure projects, something that is identified as a missing link at the level of both policy makers and practitioners in the Member States. Given that the project was well integrated in the VPoA and SDG 2030 agenda, UN-OHRLLS is urged to scale up that engagement through other opportunities that may be available through other programme areas within the organization or through other UN agencies and identified stakeholders. Going forward, strategies to ensure deeper forms

of cooperation between UN-OHRLLS and collaborating partners and LLDCs and transit countries than has been experienced through the project are foreseen, to ensure delivery of the VPoA and SDG outcomes, in the long term.

Given that the project also focused on feasibility studies, in order to generate impact, such assessments needed to be strengthened within LLDCs and transit countries to enable sustained analysis of all key cross cutting issues, for example, taking into account environmental sustainability, social returns, gender dimensions, South-South Cooperation and Delivery as One.

Cross-cutting issues

The delivery of outputs and results related to cross-cutting issues, for example, South-South cooperation and Delivery as One tends to be affected by the design of the projects and implementation modalities. For example, during the design of the transport connectivity project, UN-OHRLLS was able to share the project concept and project document with 5 UN agencies who were consulted for their comments. There is no evidence this project handled cross-cutting issues beyond the level of average projects, whereby it can be concluded a more dedicated approach, including re-focusing more in project progress reporting, with evidence-based analysis required in order to demonstrate what impact, if any have been realized from project interventions.

Female representation in the 'Training Workshop on Strengthening Capacity to Design and Implement Policies and Identify Solutions that Promote Transport Connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs' for 2021, stood at 36 percent, for the Africa region; 24 percent for the Asia region; for the training workshop on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Increased Transport Connectivity in Botswana (11-12 October, 2021), representation by women was 50 percent. UN-OHRLLS project management took gender equality seriously, with evidence of efforts to ensure that women were adequately represented in all training and capacity building workshops during the project period. However, the MS were ultimately responsible for ensuring that gender dimensions were taken into account in their countries and in interacting with internationally supported projects. To improve on the participation of women at various levels in the capacity building and training approaches to engage stakeholder groups, the UN-OHRLLS had positioned itself to sensitize through its advocacy strategy, on gender equality within MS of LLDCs and those from transit countries.

3. LESSONS LEARNT

For the key result areas, relating to the preparation of the Global Report, focusing on improving transport connectivity, building resilient transport infrastructure to support the accelerated progress of SDGs, regional reviews, UN-OHRLLS support to the Mid-term review of the VPoA; capacity building and training for policy makers and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries; notable success had been achieved at the closure of the project. Whilst, the limitations of the project in terms of timeline, funding and the capacity of implementing partners is acknowledged, important lessons had been drawn that are pivotal in the strategic positioning of the UN-OHRLLS and development partners for consolidated action to improve transport connectivity in LLDCs.

UN-OHRLLS Strategic positioning and building sustainable partnerships for improving transport infrastructure and connectivity in LLDCs and transit countries

1. There is need to pay more attention to capacity building/training within the context of the COVID-19, assess rationale of virtual trainings, good but cannot substitute face-to-face trainings and interactions; which enable participants to ask questions, interact more with resource persons, share experiences, etc.,
2. Explore possibility of engaging an Institute at regional level, for example, IDEP, and others so that material generated is sustained over time through strategic partnerships; with the right stakeholders being brought on board despite potential challenges; More recipient priority driven participation with countries identifying their needs; find experts with particular skills and use them to capacitate MSs; maybe partnerships from developed countries as well – learning from their experiences. There was also need to assess the potential for stronger in-country partnerships with UNCTs Resident Coordinators, to strengthen in-country collaboration, broadening technical teams and stakeholder ownership in the regions; transformative approaches to prioritizing bankable projects based on the demands of LLDCs concerned, needs assessment, with proper feasibility studies.
3. There is also need of more visibility, beyond the trainings with more practical action in MS; developing a fundraising strategy and implementation plan; a resource mobilization approach, beyond traditional partners in the UN, etc., to raise more funds for the activities; financing mechanism to bankable projects;
4. The UN-OHRLLS is urged to continue supporting, in a more strategic and visible manner, the initiative to establish a Trust Fund designed to broaden the funding avenues available for LLDCs and transit countries implementing the priorities of the VPoA, in particular in infrastructure and transport connectivity for LLDCs, to push economic development forward – support the establishment of a database of funding avenues for LLDCs, with more support from diverse international organizations.
5. For sustainability, there is need for key stakeholders involved (OHRLLS and her UN partners) to deepen capacity to assure continuity of funding of project activities – need for critical mass,

ensuring funding is sustained beyond the project phase; options for donors contributing to a Trust Fund, complementing limited regular OHRLLS budget, which does not extend to programmes, largely operations - pursuit of a diversified funding base.

6. To develop bankable projects, more financial resources were needed; need for in-person to person meetings; resource mobilization, rolling out tangible projects. Different approaches are required. In some cases, MS may need to look into projects with regional dimension, good practices, borders, ports in beneficiary countries; with requirement of buy-in at national levels. These could be attractive to multi-lateral donors, for example, The World Bank, African Development Bank, Afreximbank, other development financial institutions, bilateral donors – creating more visibility, generating attractiveness; with private sector (investors, traders benefitting from projects, with higher prospects of sustainability and greater potential impact. Specific, tangible, practical aspects need to be emphasized for improved prospects of support of the projects from international donors – actual projects, presenting projects for implementation.
7. Focus more technical and complementary support to actual projects by region – for example, from: Asia, Africa, Latin America, being implemented, sharing best practices but with broad coverage; presenting relevant cases to participants, carefully selected for the Action from the different regions.
8. Focus more on enhancing participation in international trade, ACFTA, SADC Free Trade Area and cooperation between LLDCs in transport connectivity projects, addressing issues of regional dimension, attainment of SDGs 2030, objectives of the VPoA. – Getting specific regional support (joint within context of regional economic communities, ECOWAS, SADC, ASIA, Latin America).
9. Need for high breed approach in the future, add physical contact/face to face methodology to virtual contact. Need for identifying hybrid methods of capacity building, beyond virtual methods, innovative approaches, blended approaches, face to face interactions/combine with virtual communication.
10. Gender equality – The project takes gender equality into account, with a conscious effort to report on gender outcomes. However, men tended to dominate involvement in infrastructure projects. As far as recruitment of resource persons was concerned, there tended to be a balance, a development which was favourable to gender equality in transport infrastructure projects.
11. In future, more follow up, visibility of actions that demonstrate realisation of results or high potential for their ultimate achievement – medium to long term; prioritizing country specific needs to be identified and fed back to project management and resource persons to tailor develop training materials and relevant examples, illustrations, where necessary – prioritizing training to local level. Engaging subject matter specialists/technical experts in transport infrastructure development, regional training centres, for example, IDEP (Africa), others from other regions, creating more space to enable specialists on TC on the ground to capacitate MS on the project. Partnerships with regional entities, universities, research institutes – to enable regeneration of knowledge and training material; stronger recipient priority driven participation of LLDCs and transit countries, with clear identification of their needs. Finding experts with

particular skills and using them more strategically to capacitate MS; with stronger partnerships with developed countries as well might need to be considered – learning from their experience.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

- 1) For the transport connectivity project for LLDCs and transit countries, UN-OHRLLS has been successful in strategically using its convening power in building partnerships and mobilising a range of global stakeholders to lay building blocks for improving transport infrastructure and connectivity in beneficiary MS. However, there was room for the improvement in broadening and deepening the partnerships, with a view to accelerating prioritised action through traditional partners as well as non-traditional stakeholders. These have been spelt out in the recommendations of this study.
- 2) Whilst a promising head start had begun in selected cases, with the training and capacity building workshops that had been launched, there was room for developing more substantive and sustainable relationships with Member States and regional training centres in LLDCs and transit countries to achieve the objectives and outcomes spelt out in the VPoA and the relevant SDGs.
- 3) Despite the success achieved through the project as documented in this evaluation, stakeholders are of the view that whilst there is an understanding that the modules were adjusted to reflect regional differences, with specific examples used from each region, as necessary, more was required from the project management team. For example, the type of capacity building and training referred to for the project being evaluated is more effective when it is organized, tailored, a great deal more to certain region-specific issues and priorities. Improved consideration of different action responses between different regions would enable increased value added of the capacity building and training efforts.
- 4) Within the framework of a limited funding base, the project successfully initiated support in the form of technical assistance for transport infrastructure and connectivity for LLDCs and transit countries, through a multi-stakeholder approach involving the mobilization of a variety of resource persons. However, the support was limited because of unforeseen developments such as COVID-19.
- 5) Challenges were faced in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The support by the UN-OHRLLS to undertaking of baseline and comprehensive studies on the effects of COVID-19 in the context of transport infrastructure and connectivity was a step in the right direction.
- 6) There remained major gaps in the financing mechanisms for transport infrastructure and connectivity, with the existing approaches remaining somewhat fragmented and lacking momentum in building or generating the required result. Many governments, policy makers and senior practitioners in transport infrastructure in LLDCs and transit countries lacked adequate

knowledge of procedures and expertise in accessing the global financial market, that includes multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors and development banks, including opportunities for PPPs.

- 7) There are limits to which a short duration project with a limited funding base can do. For example, whilst follow up activities have been desirable, as stated by a good number of stakeholders during the process of this Evaluation, the combination of COVID-19 and financing constraints made the scheduling of substantive follow up activities to the LLDCs involved a major challenge.
- 8) Sharing of best practices:- The UN-OHRLLS has a comparative advantage to use its convening power more strategically in dealing with transport infrastructure and connectivity issues. Of particular note is in the dissemination of best practices amongst LLDCs and transit countries apart from support to projects. There is room for improvement to ensure that the relevant sets of modules, already developed are updated on a regular basis to capture new realities and best practices.

4.2 Recommendations

From the foregoing, a number of recommendations have been made, with a view to positioning, strategically, the UN-OHRLLS and its partners in transport infrastructure and connectivity.

- 1) The project generated good feedback from government officials, namely policy makers and practitioners who participated in capacity building and training components. From the evaluation, there is evidence that the project beneficiaries engaged through this action generated keen interest for continued technical assistance in developing bankable projects and designing policies to promote transport connectivity. UN OHRLLS should build on the momentum generated from the Action to develop a follow-up capacity building support project aimed at further assisting policymakers in LLDCs and transit countries to develop bankable projects with a view to securing a more diversified and substantive funding base.
- 2) Whilst the efforts made by the project management team are acknowledged, in future, there is need for greater emphasis and planning to ensure that the capacity building and training undertaken are organized, tailored, more strongly to deal with emerging region-specific issues and priorities. Improved consideration of different action responses between different regions (for example, between Africa and Euro-Asia) to enable increased value added of the capacity building and training intervention is recommended.
- 3) Financing and resource mobilization: Improvement in broadening and deepening the partnerships and relationships with multi-lateral and bilateral organizations, development banks and private sector; with a view to accelerating the implementation of prioritized action through traditional partners as well as non-traditional stakeholders.
- 4) UN-OHRLLS is urged to develop more substantive and sustainable relationships with Member States in LLDCs and Regional Training Centres (RTCs) in LLDCs and transit countries, with a view

to scaling up efforts at joint planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning on projects. A renewed thrust on the Delivery as One approach is also foreseen, where feasible.

- 5) The UN-OHRLLS ought to engage in building stronger partnerships, using the established high-level forum and decentralized structures, as appropriate, with the need for stronger follow-on engagements by UN-OHRLLS and partners in LLDCs and transit countries, building on existing linkages; through to the consolidation phase, with improved understanding of the different stakeholder needs and priorities in the regions and LLDCs.
- 6) There is room for more strategic engagement of the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in the different regions, combining with use of Regional Training Centres, where they are in place. A more strategic engagement of the UNRCO's Office and relevant RTCs, offer opportunities for contributing to the sustainability of prioritised components of transport infrastructure and connectivity interventions in LLDCs.
- 7) The opportunity for developing and implementing innovative technical assistance models for transport infrastructure and connectivity for LLDCs and transit countries are varied. For improved sustainability, one option is to consider engaging regional commissions collaborating with development partners more strategically. This is in view of the decentralized manner of the UN, with the scope to get other UN agencies to do more than what they did in the just completed project in partnering on transport infrastructure and connectivity.
- 8) As it pertains to the methodology of undertaking capacity building and training for LLDCs, there are opportunities for exploring hybrid options, beyond convening of virtual meetings, to include face-to face contact, where this is feasible. This is because of the widely acknowledged limitations posed by virtual communication, which constrains the degree of engagement of beneficiaries as well as the sustainability of benefits of crisis response measures. In this regard it will be important if resources that have been saved due to COVID-19 induced virtual training could be availed to undertake a follow-up in-person training to further build on the virtual training that was undertaken during the completed project. This additional training will be at no additional cost beyond the resources that are available but will yield greater impact.
- 9) The UN-OHRLLS also needs to take advantage of opportunities to scale up efforts at dissemination of best practices in developing transport infrastructure and improving connectivity amongst LLDCs and transit countries, beyond the existing strategies, the regional review meetings and training workshops of policy makers and practitioners.
- 10) UN-OHRLLS ought to ensure capacity is built to have relevant training materials/modules on improving transport infrastructure and connectivity in all official languages to enable dissemination to a wider audience.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference (TOR) – UN-OHRLLS

ToR for the evaluation of the Completed Project #: PDF-SDG-2018-07 “Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs”.

A. Background

These are the terms of reference for the evaluation of the project the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund (UNPDF) “Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs” to be conducted between 2018-2021. The Executive Agency for this project is United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), in close collaboration with UN ECA, UN ECE, UN ESCAP, UN ECLAC, the African Development Bank and Asian Development Bank.

Enhanced inter-regional and intra-regional transport connectivity is essential for increased trade, economic growth, poverty alleviation, integration into regional and global value chains and overall structural transformation of economies. This is particularly important for the 32 landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) who lack direct access to the sea, have long distances to ports and are marginalized from major transportation and services networks and depend to a great extent on transit routes across their neighbouring country territories for transportation of their exports and imports. However, transit transport infrastructure in LLDCs and many of their neighbours is typically inadequate to support their greater integration into regional and global trading networks. The LLDCs also face trade facilitation challenges in transit including cumbersome customs and border crossing procedures, and other costly services and operations. As a result, the LLDCs face high transport and overall trade costs that erode their competitive edge as well as their trade volumes resulting in a negative impact on their overall sustainable development. The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (VPoA) stresses the need to improve connectivity of LLDCs.

This project aimed to strengthen the national capacity of the LLDCs and transit countries to design policies to build hard and soft infrastructure and develop bankable infrastructure projects that are key to improved connectivity to global markets. The project was implemented as part of the comprehensive midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action in 2019.

The project generated concrete outcomes in the interests of LLDCs through analytical work, to analyze the situation; foster sharing of experience; undertook capacity building; and promoted multi-stakeholder partnership building to promote transport infrastructure connectivity and development of resilient transport infrastructure. The work was accomplished through the following expected accomplishments:

EA1. Increased knowledge and capacity of policymakers in LLDCs on the needed policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks for improving transport connectivity of the LLDCs including both the hard and soft infrastructure issues.

EA2: Enhanced knowledge and capacity of government officials, and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries on how to develop bankable projects for improving connectivity.

To achieve EA1, substantive background studies/reports were prepared for the 3 regions (Africa, Euro-Asia and Latin America) on improving transport connectivity for LLDCs in the regions. The regional reports formed background information for the regional review meetings. A global report was then prepared based on the regional reports. The global report analyzed the progress made, the best practices, lessons learned, and suggested recommendations on policies and strategies to improve transport connectivity and building of resilient transport infrastructure.

The second component of activities under EA1 involved consultative regional review meetings as part of the Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action to comprehensively assess the progress made in improving connectivity of the LLDCs to global markets; exchange experience, lessons learned and best practices; identify common challenges and solutions; and formulated specific recommendations for accelerated implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and improved transport connectivity of LLDCs. The regional review meetings included the LLDCs, transit countries, the development partners and other relevant stakeholders.

To accomplish EA2, the project was supposed to undertake a 4-day training session of policy-makers from Ministries of Transport of LLDCs and practitioners along the “Belt and Road” on how to promote transport infrastructure connectivity and development of resilient transport infrastructure to be hosted in China. However, the global training was cancelled due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In light of this set-back, project activities were amended to undertake virtual training of policy-makers from Ministries of Transport from LLDCs and transit countries. The virtual training was undertaken in two parts: Part 1 and Part 2 and both parts were held repeated for the Africa - Latin America region and the Asia-Europe region in order to take into account the time difference. For the workshop in the Africa-Latin America region the Government of Botswana hosted the training virtually.

Part 1 training was a training workshop on “Strengthening Capacity in Developing Bankable Transport Infrastructure Projects for Enhanced Connectivity” that was successfully held virtually on 6-8 April 2021 for the Africa-Latin America region and 18 to 20 May 2021 for the Asia-Europe region.

Part 2 training was the training workshop on “Strengthening Capacity to Design and Implement Policies and Identify Solutions that Promote Transport Connectivity for the Achievement of the SDGs”. The training was successfully held on 27 and 28 September 2021 for the Africa and Latin America region and on 30 September and 1 October for the Europe Asia Region.

For both training, consultants were recruited to prepared training modules that were used for the training event. Furthermore, specialized experts were invited as resource persons to share expertise on specific thematic areas.

The second component of activities under EA2 involved working closely with two LLDCs who are part of the “Belt and Road Initiative” and provide them with technical capacity building support to prepare

bankable projects to improve transport connectivity. This activity was supposed to be in person, but because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the technical assistance had to be done virtually.

UN-OHRLLS worked closely with partners for the project and provided Botswana and Mongolia capacity building support towards preparation of bankable projects to improve transport connectivity. Whilst the project was also supposed to collaborate and contribute towards a feasibility study to a selected road project in both countries. Further to the information that was provided to OHRLLS we found out that the cost of supporting the feasibility study for bankable projects was beyond what was originally costed. Therefore, the project decided to work in a different direction. The project then focused on virtual capacity building training on Developing successful Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for increased transport connectivity in Botswana. The Government of Botswana requested for specific training on public private partnerships and identified the topics that they needed training on. The training was successfully held virtually on 11 and 12 October 2021 and 21 government officials from Botswana participated in the training. The virtual customized training was in lieu of the physical training that was planned and included in the project document.

For Mongolia, UN-OHRLLS worked closely with ESCAP and commissioned a joint study on Promoting transport connectivity along the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor. The aim of the technical paper was to comprehensively assess the current status of the transport-related development of the China-Mongolia-Russian Federation Economic Corridor, estimate the demand in transportation of people and goods along that corridor, identify priority areas of its development and propose a set of recommendations for consideration by the corridor countries. UN-OHRLLS and ESCAP also organized a joint capacity building workshop on strengthening connectivity along the China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor that was held in a virtual format on 21 October 2021. The training was attended by 23 participants mostly from Mongolia and 1 from China and 3 from Russia.

B. The project's period spanned from November 2018 to October 2021. Evaluation objective and criteria

B1. Evaluation purpose and objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess, as systematically and impartially as possible, the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the capacity building activities undertaken by UN-OHRLLS through its completed funded project "Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the "Belt and Road Initiative" to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs". The evaluation is designed to generate information on the impact of the completed project and results achieved to ensure accountability. It will also be forward-looking by providing recommendations on how to improve the relevance, impact and sustainability of similar work in the context of the 2030 Agenda and UN priorities.

The results of the evaluation will be presented to the management unit of the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund (UN DESA). The evaluation results will directly feed into UN-OHRLLS programme of work.

B2. Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation will assess the overall performance of the completed project against the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

In addition, the evaluation will aim to examine the extent to which cross-cutting or over-arching issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, South-South cooperation, and the Delivering-as-One approach have been mainstreamed in the project’s initiatives during implementation, in accordance with several General Assembly resolutions, including 53/120 (para 3), 60/1 (paras 59).

The evaluation questions will be refined and finalized in the inception report to be prepared by a consultant, based on consultation with the UN-OHRLLS and selected stakeholders as well as an initial review of the available documents and data. Tentative questions to be answered by the evaluation under each evaluation criterion are presented below:

Evaluation criteria	Tentative evaluation questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the work of the UN-OHRLLS’ completed project (training/capacity building, research, advisory services and partnership building) responded to the priorities and needs of the Member States, particularly LLDCs and transit countries, in planning and implementing the 2030 Agenda? • To what extent has the work of the project, including its thematic and geographical focus, been aligned with the objectives and priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries and the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund’s priority areas? • What adjustments were needed to make the UN-OHRLLS’s funded project more relevant to the Member States, particularly developing countries, in supporting their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, including responding to emerging challenges?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project delivered its planned activities according to the set timelines? • To what extent has the work of the UN-OHRLLS’s project been complementary to that of existing global programmes, regional/interregional initiatives, as well as other UN and non-UN actors supporting Member States in achieving sustainable development including avoiding redundancy? • To what extent the project has made use of its resources and its synergies with core OHRLLS resources in delivery OHRLLS mandate. • Are there comparable lower-cost alternative strategies or modalities for timely delivery of work that would allow achieving the expected outcomes?
Effectiveness	<p>Overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the combination tools and methodologies developed, regional reviews, training workshops organized, and materials, developed as part of this project, beneficial in supporting capacity building in LLDCs and transit countries to improve their transport connectivity? <p>Training/capacity building</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective has the projects’ training/capacity building activities been in enhancing the participants’ individual capacities to contribute to governments’ efforts to improve transport connectivity and implement the 2030 Agenda (immediate outcomes)? • How effective and timely have the project teams been in selecting the participants to training/capacity building activities to ensure that the knowledge and skills gained be best utilized to support the efforts of the Member States, particularly developing countries, to plan and implement the 2030 Agenda (immediate outcomes)? • To what extent have the participants to the funded project’ training/capacity building activities utilized the knowledge and skills gained in contributing to the efforts of their organizations/governments to plan and implement the 2030 Agenda (intermediate outcomes)? <p>Knowledge generation & transfer and research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective has the project been in disseminating its research and other knowledge products to their targeted audiences (immediate outcomes)? • To what extent have the targeted audiences of research and knowledge products found the information provided useful (immediate outcomes)? • To what extent have the targeted audiences of research and knowledge products utilized the information provided in supporting their organizations/governments/ efforts to plan and implement the 2030 Agenda (intermediate outcomes)? <p>Advisory services/ technical assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective has the project been in identifying and responding to the demands for its advisory services in supporting the Member States, particularly developing countries, in their efforts to plan and implement the 2030 Agenda? • To what extent have the beneficiaries of projects advisory services found the services provided useful in supporting their efforts to plan and implement the 2030 Agenda (immediate outcomes)? • To what extent have the beneficiaries of the project’ advisory services utilized the services provided in planning and implementing the 2030 Agenda (intermediate outcomes)? <p>Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective has the project been in enabling effective and efficient sharing of resources through building partnerships with other UN and non-UN organizations and practitioners supporting sustainable
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	development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (intermediate outcomes)?
Impact (longer-term outcomes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the impacts of the work of the completed funded project on LLDCs and transit countries, in relation to their efforts to enhance transport connectivity and achieve sustainable development?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are the identified outcomes of the UN-OHRLLS’s project sustainable? • What measures have been built in the project design and implementation to promote the sustainability of the outcomes? • What additional measures could be taken to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes over time?
Good governance, gender equality, environmental sustainability, South-South cooperation, the Delivering-as-One approach mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project mainstreamed all or any of these cross-cutting perspectives in the design and delivery of its activities?

C. Work assignment

C1. Scope of work

An external evaluation consultant (henceforth referred to as the “Evaluator”) is expected to conduct the evaluation from 22 November 2021 to 14 January 2022. During the inception phase, the Evaluator will undertake an initial documentation review and, as necessary, consultation with select stakeholders, and prepare an inception report, which will present the final evaluation questions, approach and methodology, including a list of stakeholders to be consulted, and draft data collection instruments. The data collection phase of the evaluation will run for approximately 10 days, followed by the data analysis phase. The Evaluator will prepare and submit a draft evaluation report by 31 December 2021 for a review by the Evaluation Manager with the final evaluation report expected by 14 January 2022.

The timelines of the evaluation, however, will be adjusted as necessary based on any circumstances beyond control of the Evaluation Manager.

The evaluation will cover all areas of the completed projects activities of including capacity building, research and partnerships assessing the project outcome, and identifying the factors which influenced the outcome.

C2. Methodology

The evaluation will apply the following mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods:

- A **desk review** of all relevant documents, including:
 - Documents related to the project activities including but not limited to:
 - Substantive regional review background reports, reports of the regional review meetings, global report, training modules, reports of the training workshops, report on the China-Mongolia Russia corridor.
 - Documents related to the management of the completed project, including but not limited to:
 - Full-Fledged Project Documents (Prodocs), results budgeting and workplans
 - Progress reports submitted by implementing entities and reviews/memos/letter with guidance by the Management Unit of the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund
 - Final project report
 - Financial performance
 - Outreach material and communication for dissemination
 - Publications and researches funded by the project
- **Interviews** - The evaluator is required to conduct interviews via telephone and video-conference facilities with wide range of stakeholders and all relevant implementing partners including UN ECE, UN ECA, UN ESCAP, UN ECLAC and African Development Bank, and the Government of Botswana.
- **Surveys** of the beneficiaries of the completed projects work that include participants from LLDCs and transit countries who attended the regional review meetings and the training workshops.

C3. Tasks

The Evaluator will undertake the following tasks:

- Initial review of relevant documents
- Preparation of an inception report with finalized evaluation scope and focus, evaluation questions and methodology, including information on data sources, sampling and key indicators, as well as draft data collection instruments (i.e., interview guides and survey questionnaires)
- Data collection and analysis based on the finalized methodology
- Preparation of an evidence matrix presenting a summary of evidence collected through each data collection method by evaluation question
- Development of a draft evaluation report, based on the template presented in Annex 1, for a review by the Evaluation Manager
- Revision/finalization of the evaluation report based on comments received

D. Expected outputs and delivery dates

The main output of the consultancy is the Evaluation Report. The main consultancy deliverables will entail:

- a. Development of annotated outline of the evaluation report in consultation with UN-OHRRLLS, including survey design and intended target audience for the survey.
- b. Draft of the evaluation report
- c. Finalization of report and submitting to UN-OHRRLLS

Delivery dates are as follows:

The milestones and deadlines that the consultant is expected to meet are highlighted in the table below:

	Deliverable	Timeline
1	Annotated outline based on outline contained in the Annex and evaluation plan including design of survey, data collection instruments and interview protocols and overall evaluation framework.	10 days by 6 December 2021
2	Undertake interviews, conduct analysis, draft and submit draft evaluation report	18 days by 30 December 2021
3	Revised and submit Final evaluation report, including all annexes	5 days by 14 January 2022

E. Evaluation ethics

The evaluation of the completed activities of the project PDF-SDG-2018-07 “Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs” is to be carried out according to the ethical principles and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).⁶ The Evaluator should demonstrate behavioral independence, impartiality, credibility, honesty, integrity and accountability in conducting the evaluation in order to avoid biasing the evaluation findings. The Evaluator must also address in the design and conduct of the evaluation procedures to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers.

F. Duration of contract and remuneration

The duration of the contract will be for is for a total of 33 working days within the period 22 November 2021 to 14 January 2022.

G. Location of assignment

The consultant will undertake the review and interviews remotely.

H. Travel

The consultancy work does not require travel.

⁶ UNEG (2020), [Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#); UNEG (2008), [Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system](#)

I. Evaluation budget, fees and payment schedule

The Evaluator's consultant fees will be commensurate with experience and determined in accordance with the standards set by the United Nations. The fee will be released in one payment to the consultant upon the completion of all the deliverables of the TOR as indicated in the above Activities, Expected Outputs and Milestones, and upon certification from the Supervisor that the tasks have been satisfactorily carried out.

National consultant's budget is sourced from project PDF-SDG-2018-07 "Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the "Belt and Road Initiative" to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs"

J. Performance indicators

The performance indicators will be the timeliness and quality of the deliverables submitted in compliance with the terms of reference, as assessed by the Evaluation Manager.

K. Qualifications of consultants

The evaluation consultant will be selected based on the following technical criteria:

- A minimum of 10 years demonstrated experience in designing and conducting evaluations in the area of sustainable development, particularly its economic, social and environmental dimensions, and/or other internationally agreed development goals, including a minimum of 5 years internationally
- Demonstrated ability to design and conduct qualitative and quantitative research and data collection methods, including interviews and surveys
- Good understanding of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), development mandates and approaches to capacity development and technical cooperation
- Excellent analytical and writing skills
- Master's or higher degree in a relevant discipline (e.g., economics, sociology, international relations, public policy, international development, transport), or a first-level university degree in combination with seven additional years of qualifying experience
- Experience working in diverse cultural settings and demonstrated cultural sensitivity
- Fluency in oral and written English (knowledge of another UN language is an advantage)

L. Staff in Charge

The staff-in-charge who will be responsible for supervising the work of the consultant are Ms. Gladys Mutangadura, Senior Programme Officer, Email: mutangadura@un.org, under the overall guidance of Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Chief, Policy Development, Coordination, Monitoring and Reporting Service and the Director of UN-OHRLLS.

Annex 2. Outline of the Evaluation Report

The suggested outline for the evaluation report includes the following sections.

1. Title and opening pages

Include the following:

- Name of the office/programme evaluated
- Time frame of the evaluation and date of the report
- Name of the evaluator
- Name of the organization commissioning the evaluation
- Acknowledgements

2. Table of contents

List chapters, sections, figures/charts, tables and annexes

3. List of acronyms and abbreviations

4. Executive summary

A stand-alone section of maximum 2-3 pages, including:

- A brief description of the office/programme evaluated
- The evaluation purpose, objectives and scope
- The evaluation approach and methodology
- A summary of key findings, conclusions and recommendations

5. Introduction

Include the following background information:

- The purpose and objectives of the evaluation
- The primary audience/users of the evaluation
- Identify the project(s) that was evaluated—see upcoming section on intervention;
- Acquaint the reader with the structure and contents of the report and how the information contained in the report will meet the purposes of the evaluation and satisfy the information needs of the report's intended users.

6. Description of the intervention

Describe the basis to understand the logic of the evaluation methodology (including theory of change), assess its merits and understand the applicability of the evaluation results. The description needs to provide sufficient detail for the report user to derive meaning from the evaluation.

The description should comparatively (among the projects' group):

- Describe what is being evaluated, who seeks to benefit, and the problem or issue it seeks to address;
- Explain the logical framework, implementation strategies, and the key assumptions underlying the strategy;
- Identify the phase in the implementation of the project and any significant changes (e.g. plans, strategies, logical frameworks) that have occurred over time, and explain the implications of those changes for the evaluation;

- Identify and describe the key partners involved in the implementation and their roles;
- Describe the scale of the project, such as the number of components (e.g. phases of a project) and the size of the target population for each component;
- Indicate the total resources, including human resources and budgets;
- Describe the general background and context of the social, political, economic and institutional factors, and the geographical landscape within which the intervention operates and explain the effects (challenges and opportunities) those factors present for its implementation and outcomes;
- Point out design weaknesses (e.g. intervention logic) or other implementation constraints (e.g. resource limitations).

7. Evaluation objectives and scope

This section should provide a clear explanation of the evaluation's scope, primary objectives and main questions.

- Evaluation scope: The report should define the parameters of the evaluation, for example, the time period, the segments of the target population included, the geographic area included, and which components, outputs or outcomes were and were not assessed, including the reasons why they were not assessed;
- Evaluation objectives: The report should spell out the types of decisions evaluation users will make, the issues they will need to consider in making those decisions, and what the evaluation will need to achieve to contribute to those decisions;
- Evaluation criteria: The report should define the evaluation criteria or performance standards used. The report should explain the rationale for selecting the particular criteria used in the evaluation;
- Evaluation questions: Evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate. The report should detail the main evaluation questions addressed by the evaluation and explain how the answers to these questions address the information needs of users.

8. Evaluation approach and methodology

The description of the methodology should include, among others:

- Data collection and analysis methods and data sources, including stakeholder groups interviewed and surveyed disaggregated by gender, and sampling strategy, if applicable
- Key methodological limitations

9. Findings

Present the evaluation findings with supporting evidence. They should be clearly articulated and presented as statements of facts that are based on the analysis of data. They should be structured around the evaluation criteria and questions so that report users can readily make the connection between what was asked and what was found.

10. Conclusions

Present general conclusions that clearly follow from the findings and respond to evaluation questions, and insights and lessons learned pertinent to the decision-making of the intended users

of the evaluation. The conclusions should reflect the evaluator’s professional opinion and add value to the evaluation results.

11. Lessons learned (if applicable)

As appropriate, the report should include discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation, that is, new knowledge gained from the project (including context outcomes, insights on evaluation methods) that are applicable to a similar context. Lessons should be concise and based on specific evidence presented in the report.

12. Recommendations

Provide practical and feasible recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation and supported by the evidence presented in the Findings section around key questions addressed by the evaluation.

13. Annexes

Include:

- Evaluation TOR
- Data collection instruments (e.g., interview guides, survey)
- List of individuals interviewed
- List of documents reviewed
- Project or programme results map or results framework;
- Summary tables of findings, such as tables displaying progress towards outputs, targets, and goals relative to established indicators;

Annex 3: Data Collection Instruments: Evaluation Questions/Checklist

Transport Connectivity Project Evaluation

UN-OHRLLS

Provisional questions to be answered by the evaluation under each evaluation criterion are presented below:-

Project being evaluated:- Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs (Project Ref. No. PDF-SDG-2018-07)

Name of respondent/address: Although useful, this is optional. The evaluator would observe confidentiality for all those providing information.

Purpose/Objectives of the evaluation

- iv. To assess, as systematically and impartially as possible, the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the capacity building activities undertaken by UN-OHRLLS through the completed project “Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked

Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs”;

- v. To generate information on the impact of the completed project and results achieved to ensure accountability, and;
- vi. To provide practical recommendations on how to improve the relevance, impact and sustainability of similar work and interventions in the context of the 2030 Agenda and UN priorities.

A. Relevance/Project Design

Comment on the relevance of the project design?

A1. Is the project as designed aligned to the strategic objectives of the UN, the Vienna Programme of Action, transport connectivity and the 2030 Agenda? ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

Elaborate on your response _____

A2. For each of the relevant planned activities, in your view, to what extent has the OHRLLS completed project being evaluated responded to the priorities and needs of the Member States, particularly LLDCs and transit countries, in planning and implementing the 2030 Agenda? Examples prioritized activities include in the following:-

(a) Regional review meetings (Vienna Programme of Action, transport connectivity)

(b) Training and or capacity building sessions _____

(c) Other areas of interventions (specify) _____

Response: To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

Where feasible, give some evidence to elaborate on your response _____

A3. To what extent has the specific work of the project, including its thematic and geographical focus, been aligned with the objectives and priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries and the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund’s priority areas. *Please elaborate and cite specific examples and evidence, where possible.*

A4. What adjustments or changes can you consider, if any, were needed, to make the UN-OHRLLS’s project more relevant, improve in its design and or make it more appropriate to the Member States, particularly landlocked developing countries, in supporting their efforts to implement transport connectivity activities, Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda. Consider relevant project intervention responses to emerging challenges where these have been or were identified.

B. Efficiency

B1 In your view, to what extent has the project delivered its planned activities according to the set timelines? ____ To a large extent = 1; To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0;

B2 Were any delays encountered? ____ Yes = 1, No = 2,
If delays were encountered, what were the factors behind the delays? Elaborate.

B3 In your view, to what extent has the work of the UN-OHRLLS's project being evaluated been complementary to that of existing related global programmes/projects, regional/interregional initiatives, as well as other UN and non-UN stakeholders supporting Member States in achieving transport connectivity and sustainable development including avoiding redundancy or duplication of effort ? ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

Elaborate on your responses/give evidence, if feasible _____

B4 To what extent has the completed project made use of its resources and its synergies with core OHRLLS resources in delivering the OHRLLS mandate. ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

B5 Are there comparable lower-cost alternative strategies or modalities for timely delivery of specific intervention activities (refer to project being evaluated), outputs and or work that would allow achieving the expected outcomes? ____ Yes = 1, No = 2;

Elaborate on the potential strategies and opportunities, including the justification, if feasible ____

C. Effectiveness

Tools and systems

C1 What tools, systems and methodologies were developed for the project being evaluated ?

Were these adequate? ____ Yes = 1, No = 2,

Elaborate on your response _____

C2 Were regional reviews, training workshops organized and convened, and materials, developed according to plan, as part of this project; ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0;

Elaborate on the response _____

C3 In your view, to what extent was the material beneficial in supporting capacity building in LLDCs and transit countries to improve their transport connectivity? ____

To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

D. Sustainability (focus on multiple level)

D1 To what extent is the policy level sustainability of the OHRLLS transport connectivity project? ____

To a large extent = 1; To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

Elaborate on response _____

D2 What financial measures are in place, e.g., Member State or regional level, to strengthen the financial sustainability of the transport connectivity interventions ?

Elaborate _____

D3 To what extent are the identified outcomes of the UN-OHRLLS's transport connectivity project sustainable? _____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

Elaborate _____

D4 What measures have been built in the project design and implementation to promote the sustainability of the transport connectivity project outcomes? Specify, including any additional measures, if

E. Good governance, gender equality, environmental sustainability, climate change, South-South cooperation, the Delivering-as-One approach mainstreaming

E1 In your view, to what extent has the project mainstreamed all or any of the key cross-cutting perspectives or issues in the design and delivery of transport connectivity outcomes? ____

To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

E2 Kindly elaborate on mainstreaming of specific issues or dimensions, where feasible, opportunities created and or and challenges faced in delivery of transport connectivity outputs for the delivery of expected outcomes

F. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for UN-OHRLLS Future programming ?

F.1 What lessons have been learned with the transport connectivity project?

F.2 What recommendations can you make for the future programme and implementation of the transport connectivity and similar projects/interventions?

Evaluation Questions/Checklist

OHRLLS Transport Connectivity Evaluation

Questionnaire B – Other UN Partners and International Organisations

Provisional questions to be answered by the evaluation under each evaluation criterion are presented below:-

Project being evaluated:- Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs (Project Ref. No. PDF-SDG-2018-07)

Name of respondent/address: Although useful, this is optional. The evaluator would observe confidentiality for all those providing information.

G. Relevance/Project Design

Comment on the relevance of the project design?

A1. Is the project as designed aligned to the strategic objectives of the UN and the 2030? _____

To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

Elaborate on your response _____

A2. For each of the following planned activities, in your view, to what extent has the OHRLLS completed project being evaluated responded to the priorities and needs of the Member States, particularly LLDCs and transit countries, in planning and implementing the 2030 Agenda?

Examples prioritized activities include in the following:-

(d) training/capacity building, research _____

(e) technical assistance teams, advisory services _____

(f) strategic partnership/alliance building) _____

(g) Other areas of interventions (specify) _____

Response: To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

Where feasible, give some evidence to elaborate on your response _____

A3. To what extent has the specific work of the project, including its thematic and geographical focus, been aligned with the objectives and priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries and the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund’s priority areas. *Please elaborate and cite specific examples and evidence, where possible.*

A4. What adjustments or changes can you consider, if any, were needed, to make the UN-OHRLLS’s project more relevant, improve in its design and or make it more appropriate to the Member States, particularly developing countries, in supporting their efforts to implement transport connectivity activities and the 2030 Agenda. Consider relevant project intervention responses to emerging challenges where these have been or were identified.

B. Efficiency

B1 In your view, to what extent has the project delivered its planned activities according to the set timelines? ____ To a large extent = 1; To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0;

B2 Were any delays encountered? ____ Yes = 1, No = 2,

If delays were encountered, what were the factors behind the delays? Elaborate.

B3 In your view, to what extent has the work of the UN-OHRLLS's project being evaluated been complementary to that of existing related global programmes/projects, regional/interregional initiatives, as well as other UN and non-UN stakeholders supporting Member States in achieving sustainable development including avoiding redundancy or duplication of effort ? ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

Elaborate on your responses/give evidence, if feasible _____

B4 To what extent has the completed project made use of its resources and its synergies with core OHRLLS resources in delivering the OHRLLS mandate. _____

To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

B5 Are there comparable lower-cost alternative strategies or modalities for timely delivery of specific intervention activities (refer to project being evaluated), outputs and or work that would allow achieving the expected outcomes? _____ Yes = 1, No = 2;

Elaborate on the potential strategies and opportunities, including the justification, if feasible _____

Partnerships

C14 How effective has the project been in enabling effective and efficient sharing of resources through building partnerships with other UN and non-UN organizations and practitioners supporting sustainable development and the implementation of transport connectivity activities and the 2030 Agenda ____

To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

Elaborate and or cite examples of functional partnerships at practical level _____?

D. Good governance, gender equality, environmental sustainability, climate change, South-South cooperation, the Delivering-as-One approach mainstreaming

F 1 In your view, to what extent has the project mainstreamed all or any of the key cross-cutting perspectives or issues in the design and delivery of transport connectivity outcomes?

____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

F2 Kindly elaborate on mainstreaming of specific issues or dimensions, where feasible, opportunities created and or and challenges faced in delivery of transport connectivity outputs for the delivery of expected outcomes

G. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for UN-OHRLLS Future programming ?

G.1 What lessons have been learned with the transport connectivity project?

G.2 What recommendations can you make for the future programme and implementation of the transport connectivity and similar projects/interventions?

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/CHECKLIST

OHRLLS TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY EVALUATION

MEMBER STATES – STAKEHOLDERS/BENEFICIARIES

Project being evaluated:- Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs (Project Ref. No. PDF-SDG-2018-07)

Name of respondent/address: Although useful, this is optional. The evaluator would observe confidentiality for all those providing information.

A. Efficiency

A1 In your view, to what extent has the project delivered its planned activities according to the set timelines? ____ To a large extent = 1; To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0;

A2 Were any delays encountered? ____ Yes = 1, No = 2,

If delays were encountered, what were the factors behind the delays? Elaborate.

B. Effectiveness

B2 Were regional reviews, training workshops organized and convened, and materials, developed according to plan, as part of this project; ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0;

Elaborate on the response _____

B3 In your view, to what extent was the material beneficial in supporting capacity building in LLDCs and transit countries to improve their transport connectivity? ____

To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 0

Training/capacity building

B4 In your view, how effective has the projects' training/capacity building activities been in enhancing the participants' Member States and individual capacities to contribute to governments' efforts to improve transport connectivity and implement the 2030 Agenda? ____

Highly effective = 1; Average = 2, Not satisfactory = 3

Elaborate on your response _____

B5 How effective and timely have the project teams been in selecting the participants to training /capacity building activities to ensure that the knowledge and skills gained are best utilized to support the efforts of the Member States, particularly developing countries, to plan and implement transport connectivity and the 2030 Agenda ? ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

Elaborate on your response _____

B6 To what extent have the participants to the funded project' training/capacity building activities utilized the knowledge and skills gained in contributing to the efforts of their organizations and or governments to plan and implement transport connectivity interventions and the 2030 Agenda ? (Beneficiaries focus) ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3;

Advisory services/ technical assistance (focus on beneficiaries)

B10 How effective has the project been in identifying and responding to the demands for its advisory services in supporting the Member States, particularly developing countries, in their efforts to plan and implement transport connectivity activities and the 2030 Agenda? ____

To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

Elaborate _____

B11 To what extent have the beneficiaries of projects advisory services found the services provided useful in supporting their efforts to plan and implement transport connectivity activities and the 2030 Agenda ? ____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

Elaborate _____

B12 What emerging challenges exist, if any, in utilization of the technical advisory services?

B13 To what extent have the beneficiaries of the project' advisory services utilized the services

provided in planning and implementing implement transport connectivity activities and the 2030 Agenda (intermediate outcomes)? ___ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3
Elaborate _____

H. Impact (longer-term outcomes) – beneficiaries focus

C1 What are the impacts of the work of the completed funded project on LLDCs and transit countries, in relation to their efforts to enhance transport connectivity and achieve sustainable development? Specify and elaborate _____

C2 Are there any potential impacts not realized at the time of the evaluation but would be realized in the medium to long term? ___ Yes = 1, No =2
Elaborate on your answer _____

I. Sustainability (focus on multiple level)

D1 To what extent is the policy level sustainability of the OHRLLS transport connectivity project? ___ To a large extent = 1; To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3
Elaborate on response _____

D2 What financial measures are in place, e.g., Member State or regional level, to strengthen the financial sustainability of the transport connectivity interventions ?
Elaborate _____

D3 To what extent are the identified outcomes of the UN-OHRLLS’s transport connectivity project sustainable? _____ To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3
Elaborate _____

D4 What measures have been built in the project design and implementation to promote the sustainability of the transport connectivity project outcomes? Specify, including any additional measures, if needed _____

E. Good governance, gender equality, environmental sustainability, climate change, South-South cooperation, the Delivering-as-One approach mainstreaming

E1 In your view, to what extent has the project mainstreamed all or any of the key cross-cutting perspectives or issues in the design and delivery of transport connectivity outcomes? ___
To a large extent = 1, To a limited extent = 2, Not at all = 3

E2 Kindly elaborate on mainstreaming of specific issues or dimensions, where feasible, opportunities created and or and challenges faced in delivery of transport connectivity outputs for the delivery of expected outcomes _____

F. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for UN-OHRLLS Future programming ?

F.1 What lessons have been learned with the transport connectivity project?

F.2 What recommendations can you make for the future programme and implementation of the transport connectivity and similar projects/interventions?

Annex 4: List of Individuals Interviewed and or Contacted

UN-OHRLLS

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Annex 5: Selected References

1. UN-OHRLLS, April 2019, 1st Progress Report LLDC,

UN-OHRLLS, 2019, Draft Global Report on Improving Transport Connectivity for LLDCs and Building of Resilient Transport Infrastructure to Support Accelerated Progress Towards the SDGs

UN-OHRLLS, Annex (e) Complete Contacts List of Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

Terms of Reference (ToR) – UN-OHRLLS; The evaluation of the Completed Project #: PDF-SDG-2018-07 “Strengthening the capacity of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to design and implement policies that promote transport connectivity for the achievement of the SDGs”.

Partner implementing entities, DESA, ESCAP, ECA, ECLAC, ECE.

6. UN-OHRLLS, April, 2020, 3rd Progress Report

All Modules Bankable Project, UN-OHRLLS, UNECA, ECLAC, UNECE, UNESCAP

UN-OHRLLS, Project Document, 2018

Memo UN-OHRLLS Progress Report, 29 April, 2021

Memo UN-OHRLLS Second Progress Report, 31 October, 2019

UN-OHRLLS, Third Progress Report, 30 April 2020

UN-OHRLLS, Fifth Progress Report, 2020

UN-OHRLLS, Sixth Progress Report, 2021

UN-OHRLLS, Consolidated Project, September, 2018

UN-OHRLLS, 26 April, 2021, Fifth Progress Report

UN-OHRLLS, 5 December, 2019, Remarks By Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; Briefing to the Press on the Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action

Annex 6: Project Results Map or Results Framework/Logical Framework Reviewed

	Results chain	Indicators	Baselines (incl. reference year)	Targets (incl. reference year)	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective: Impact	To strengthen the national capacity of the LLDCs and transit countries to design policies to build hard and soft infrastructure and develop bankable infrastructure projects that are key to improved connectivity to global markets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technical capacity to design policies and strategies for transport connectivity projects ○ Policies and strategies designed and implemented 	<p>Number of LLDC with technical capacity to develop policies for transport connectivity projects -----</p> <p>Number of policies targeted at supporting development of bankable projects (0 in 2018)</p>	<p>5 LLDC with technical capacity to develop policies and strategies for transport connectivity by 2022</p> <p>4 LLDC have developed the appropriate policy frameworks by 2022</p>	<p>Global report on transport connectivity in LLDCs and transit countries</p> <p>M & E reports</p> <p>M & E reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These had not been fully developed in the PD logframe. - Political goodwill and capacity of LLDCs and transit countries to mobilize financial resources for investing in long term programmes to improve transport connectivity - High level interest in developing new policies to build hard and soft infrastructure, develop bankable projects to improve transport connectivity to global markets
Specific objective(s): Outcome(s)	To enhance the capacity of LLDCs and transit countries under the “Belt and Road Initiative” to develop policies and regulatory frameworks, and solutions for resilient transport infrastructure and increased connectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of policies and regulatory frameworks developed and implemented 	0 number of policies in place	Up to 5 policies developed for LLDC and transit countries by 2022	Project M & E progress reports	The momentum to develop appropriate policies, strategies and long-term programmes to increase transport connectivity in place or established

Outputs	Enhanced knowledge and capacity of government officials, and practitioners in LLDCs and transit countries on how to develop bankable projects for improving connectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of policy makers capacitated through trainings to develop and support the implementation of transport connectivity policies 	0 policy makers in 2018 capacitated	50% of the LLDC policymakers involved in the project trainings adopting and implementing best practices in enhancing transport connectivity learnt.	M & E progress reports	- High level political commitment from Member States and regional level; at economic community level in different regions.
Outputs	<p>Training sessions for policy-makers from Ministries of Transport of LLDCs and practitioners along the “Belt and Road” strengthen capacities of beneficiaries to promote transport infrastructure connectivity and development of resilient transport infrastructure.</p> <p>- Capacity development for the preparation of bankable projects in the selected 2 LLDCs strengthened.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of projects financed by multi-lateral (e.g., Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and African Development Bank, other partners) and or other financing mechanism ○ Projects not secured funding but in the pipeline in LLDCs ○ Number of LLDCs and transit countries taking independent initiatives to develop bankable projects to improve transport connectivity, within the context of their regional economic communities or regional blocs (e.g, ECOWAS, SADC, East African Community, ASEAN, and others) 	<p>No transport connectivity projects in LLDCs or any of the targeted regions financed</p> <p>No projects in the pipeline</p> <p>0 in 2018</p>	<p>At least 2 bankable projects identified and financed by 2022</p> <p>2 projects in the pipeline by 2021</p> <p>2 by 2022</p>	<p>M & E progress reports</p> <p>M & E progress reports</p> <p>M & E progress reports</p> <p>Global report</p>	<p>Relevant ministries and governments in LLDCs embrace new modes of interventions in improving transport connectivity, take a leading role in mobilizing resources, multi-lateral, bilateral donors, PPPs and other mechanisms to facilitate formulation and implementation of transport connectivity projects (prioritized hardware and software components);</p> <p>The development of bankable infrastructure projects firmed up (actualized), with follow up action and the level of beneficiary Member States;</p> <p>The development of the bankable projects in transport connectivity will make tangible contribution to the development of the “Belt and Road Initiative” as defined in the PD</p>

Annex 7: Summary Tables, Graphs, Figures of Findings

The tables and figures in this section highlight the effects of selected training sessions undertaken by UN-OHRLLS; the relevance of the transport connectivity projects to LLDCs and transit countries. Data from other training sessions has been analyzed, with results factored in this Evaluation. Refer to Figure A1; Workshop held in the Asia Region, 30 September – 1 October, 2021.

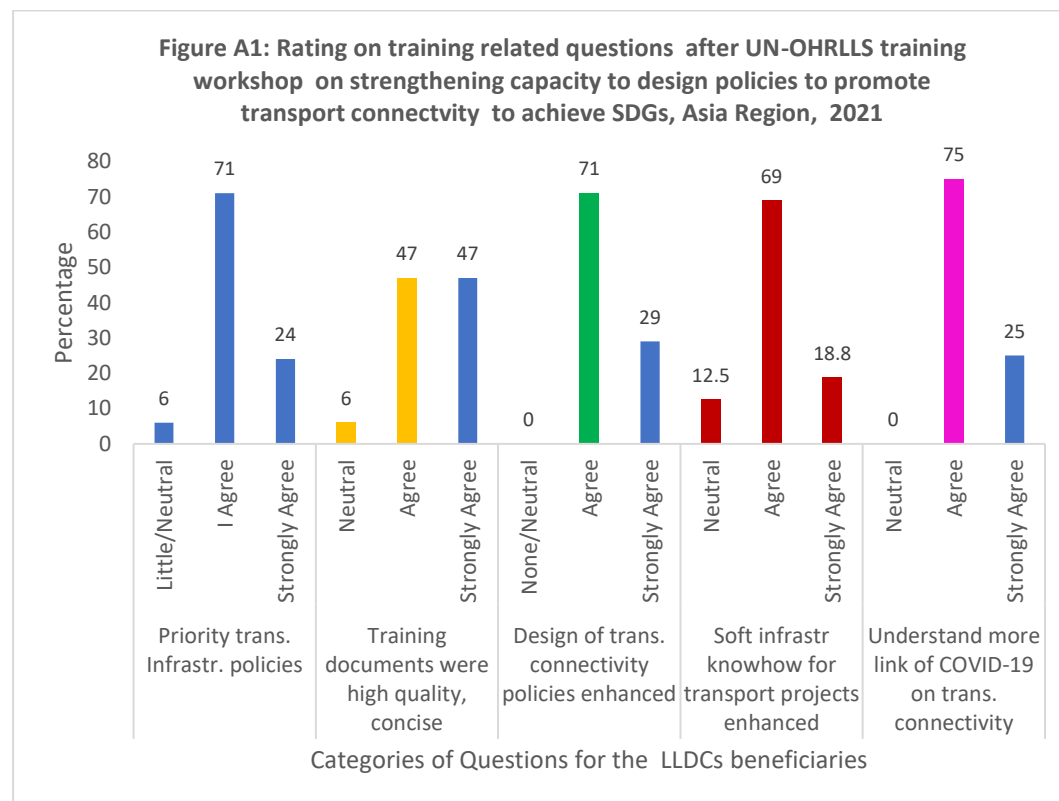
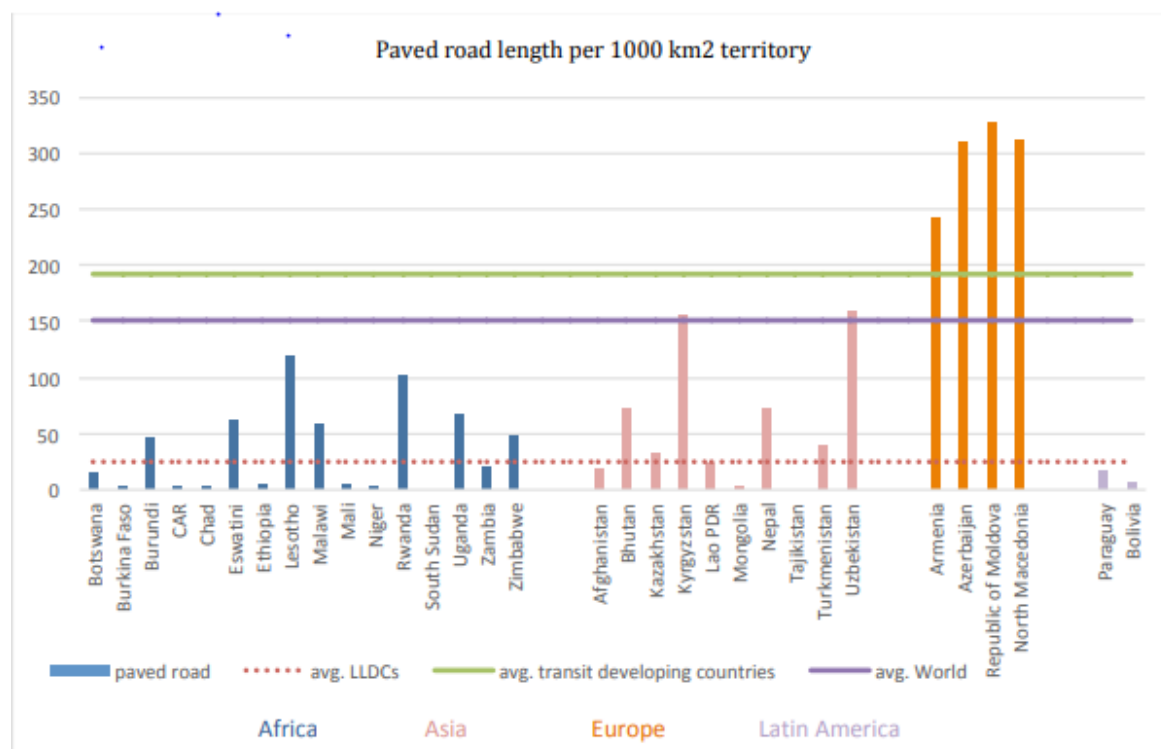


Figure A2 shows the paved road density of LLDCs. LLDCs generally have relatively poor road network, with a lower paved road density than their counterparts in transit developing countries. This underlines the relevance of the OHRLLS transport connectivity project.

Figure A2: Paved road density of LLDCs

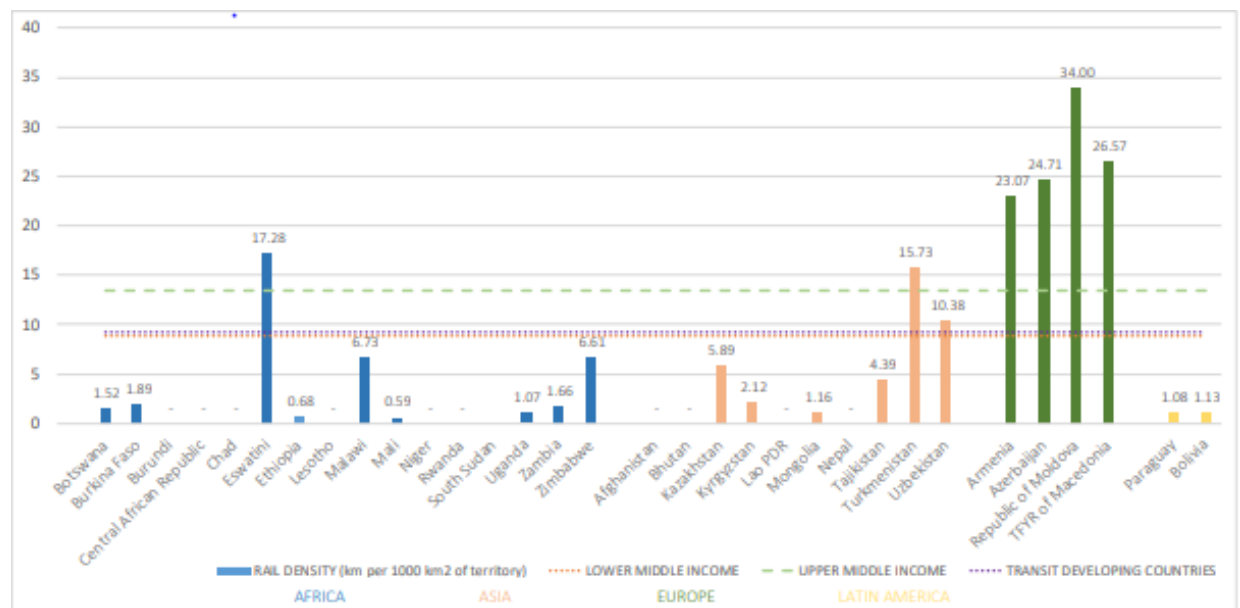


Source: UNCTAD (2014), UN-OHRLLS (2019b), UN-OHRLLS (2019c)

In Global Report, UN-OHRLLS, 2020.

Figure A3 shows African LLDCs have much lower rail density than other regions and the average of both low-middle income economies. African and Asian low rail density shows the low investment committed to this transport infrastructure.

Figure A3: Rail Density LLDCs and Transit Countries



Source: World Bank Open Data. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IS.RRS.TOTL.KM> (accessed on 12 February 2021) and <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.SRE.TOTL.K2> (accessed on 20 January 2020).

Note: Data is most recent available ranging from 2000 to 2019

UN-OHRLLS data shows that the pace of provision of railway infrastructure in LLDCs, especially in Africa is low. The total African railway network of 74,775 km (mostly situated in North Africa and Southern Africa) has very low density, with over 26,362 km of missing links (UN-OHRLLS, 2018). The network continues to deteriorate due to poor maintenance. This makes railway unattractive to transit traffic and is unable compete with road transport. Refer to Table A1.

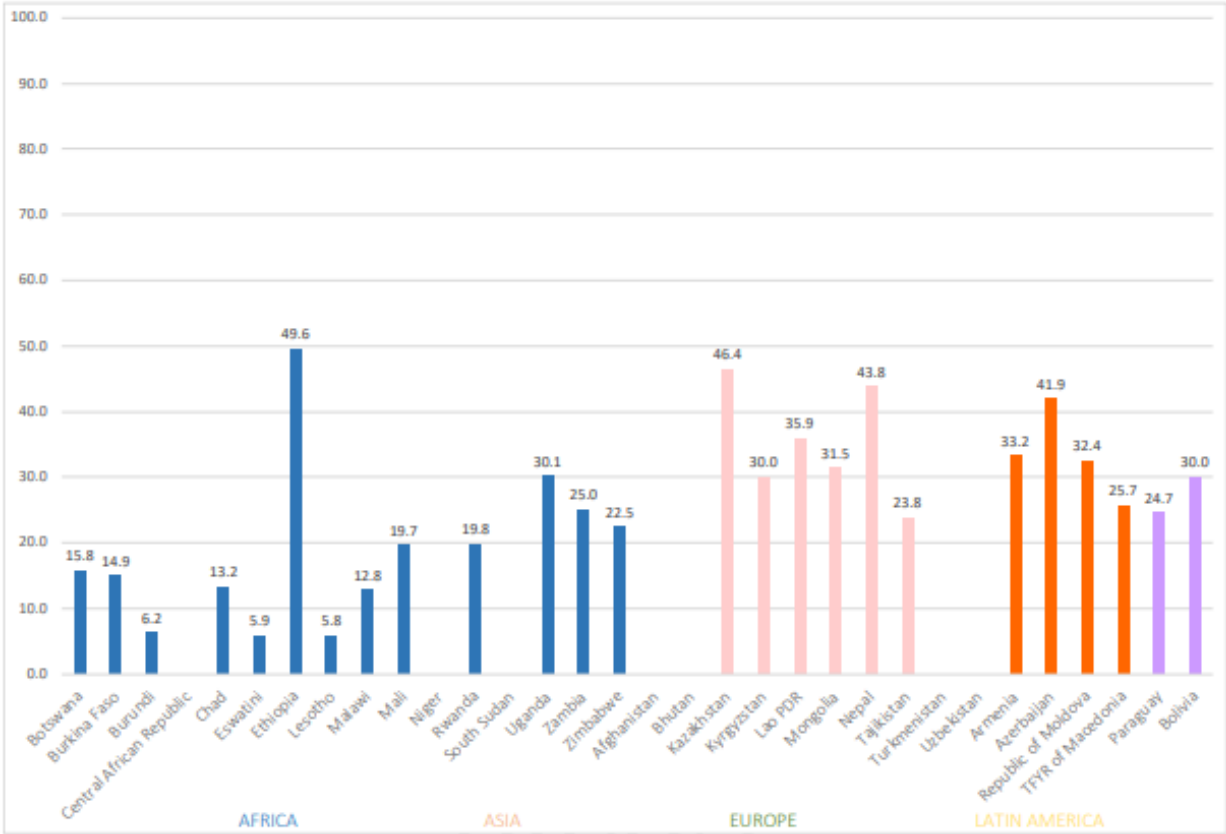
Table A1: Railway development projects in African LLDCs

Country	Description	Status
Burkina Faso	Upgrading of 1,200 km narrow gauge railway between Abidjan and Ouagadougou	No data
Burundi	New high-speed railway from Mombasa to South Sudan, DR Congo and Burundi for US\$5.2bn (will be mostly funded by China).	To be constructed
Chad	Construction of ± 2,000 km Douala to N’Gaoundéré to N’Djamena	No data
Mali	Upgrade the Mali section of the 1,228 km to standard gauge between Bamako and the border with Senegal	Feasibility
Rwanda	Construction of Mirama Hills to Kigali standard gauge railway (part of Mombasa - Kigali Railway Project)	Project structuring
South Sudan	New railway Juba-Bor-Malakal-Renki-Sudan border	Project definition
Uganda	Construction of Kampala to Kasese standard gauge railway (part of Mombasa - Kigali Railway Project)	Project structuring
	Construction of Kasese to Mirama Hills standard gauge railway (part of Mombasa - Kigali Railway Project)	Project structuring
	Construction of Malaba to Kampala standard gauge railway (part of Mombasa - Kigali Railway Project). Length: 1084 km.	Tendering
	Construction of Tororo to Gulu to Pakwach standard gauge railway (part of Mombasa - Kigali Railway Project).	Project structuring
Zambia	Extend Chingola - Solwezi Railway to the border with Angola (length 536 km) as part of North-South Multimodal Transport Corridor.	Feasibility
Zimbabwe	Beira-Harare (part of the Beira-Nacala Multimodal Transport Corridors)	Construction

Source: African Union (n.d.). PIDA website (<https://www.au-pida.org/pida-projects/>), accessed on 12 February 2021.

Figures show that all LLDCs have a low score less than 50, indicating their limited air connectivity, because of a number of factors that impede air traffic development in those countries. Except for Ethiopia, which has managed to be a cut above the rest because of their highly competitive air transport system, the rest of the LLDCs in Africa are struggling. Refer to Figure A4.

Figure A4: Weighted score airport connectivity 2019



Source: World Economic Forum 2019

(In UN-OHERLLS Global Report, 2021).