

Proceedings of Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Mobility Forum II

Shankar Hotel, Lazimpat

21 December 2012



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Executive Summary

Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) and Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) in collaboration with Ministry of Physical Planning, Works and Transport Management (MoPPWTM) organized “Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Mobility Forum” to inform and sensitize stakeholders on sustainable urban transportation, share approaches/initiatives and forge collaboration and enhance coordination among various governmental, non-governmental and private sectors working on urban transportation. The program discussed the challenges, way ahead for improving urban transport system. Around 60 participants from national and local governmental agencies, non-governmental agencies, development agencies, private sectors including transport associations and media personnel participated in the event.

The program was mainly focused on strengthening and improving the Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM). The presenters talked about the current situation / challenges in this sector, shared best practices from around the world and the way ahead for better Urban Mobility. The panel discussion included the importance, challenges and way ahead in these areas. The forum provided recommendations to improve the current situation and highlighted on the need for better coordination and collaboration between different stakeholders. The forum also stressed on the need of regulatory body to oversee the challenges and performance in transport management.

1. Preface

1.1 Background

The sorry state of urban transport in Kathmandu Valley is posing a threat to the sustainable functioning and livability of the city. Traffic congestion, increasing air pollution, carbon emission and road fatalities are the direct consequences of poor transport management in the valley. The public transportation system of the valley is unsafe, inconvenient and inefficient. With rapid increase in population growth and increasing economic condition, there is rapid increase in the ownership of private vehicles. This increase in private vehicle causes traffic congestion in the already limited transport infrastructure of the valley and the situation is worsening each day. Further, the poor vehicle maintenance adds more emissions to the equation and causes serious respiratory diseases and health impacts.

Hence, with an objective to inform and sensitize stakeholders on sustainable urban transportation, sharing approaches/initiatives and forging collaboration and enhance coordination among various governmental, non-governmental and private sectors working on urban transportation Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) and Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) in collaboration with Ministry of Physical Planning, Works and Transport Management (MoPPWTM) organized “ Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Mobility Forum” on December 21, 2012. The program was supported by Fredkorpset Norway, Clean Air Asia and UN-HABITAT.

The program was divided into introductory session, keynote speech and panel discussion. There was good participation from major policy makers such as Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, Ministry of Physical Planning Works and Transport Management and their implementing departments. Also, the program ensured interaction between the key officials and the participating development agencies, civil society representatives, academia and initiated dialogues on the need and way of collaboration.

1.2 Objectives of the Program

The objectives of the program were to:

1. sensitize stakeholders on sustainable urban mobility (SUM) issues specifically on Non-motorized Transport system, Public Transport system and Vehicle Emission Testing system.
2. bring together all the stakeholders to discuss on urban mobility issues, share initiatives and best practices on SUM
3. initiate policy dialogues and partnership/collaboration among the stakeholders on SUM and better air quality in the Kathmandu Valley

1.3 Program participants

The forum was held on 21 December 2012 in Hotel Shankar, Kathmandu. Around 60 participants from national and local government agencies, non-governmental agencies, developmental agencies, academia, research institutions and private sectors including transport association members participated in the program. The participant details are attached in the annex.

The facilitator, panelist and presenters also were from various organizations working on Sustainable Urban Mobility in Kathmandu.

2. Forum Proceedings

2.1 Introductory Session

Ms. AmitaThapa Magar from Clean Energy Nepal/ Clean Air Network Nepal welcomed all the participants, panelists and keynote speaker to the program. Then Ms. Anjila Manandhar, Network Coordinator, Clean Air Network Nepal briefed on the objectives of the forum. This was followed by brief introduction of all the participants.

2.2 Keynote Speech

Mr. Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, in his keynote speech, accepted the worsening situation of urban mobility in Kathmandu. “Kathmandu’s air is not breathable, people wearing masks for their morning stroll explains the scenario,” he said. During his speech, he focused on the problems and hindrance that are seen in transportation of Kathmandu valley because of rapid growth population and unmanaged road system. He also highlighted the plans and strategies that Nepal government is taking as an action to improve traffic congestion of Kathmandu. He further talked about the re-introduction of Sajha Bus and how it paints a hopeful scenario for the public transportation. He further briefed plans for road safety and also prioritized on the role of non-motorized transport in the context of a developing country like Nepal.

He also presented the status of different projects and initiatives that the Ministry is taking and applauded CEN/CANN for undertaking the important role of advocating Sustainable Urban Mobility time and again and for sharing expertise and best practices on various mobility issues.

2.3 Technical Session

The Technical Session covered four presentations focusing on the Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM) and Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) program. The technical session basically gave an overview of the current situation in different issues; the challenges, best practices from other countries and way ahead for Nepal. The presentations were followed by individual Question and Answers (Q&A) round and issue-specific Panel Discussion.

Presentation I: Urban Transport and Air Quality Management in Kathmandu Valley- Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar , Regional Technical Advisor, South Asia, Urban Basic Services Branch , UN -HABITAT

Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar started his presentation with the fact that Kathmandu is topographically vulnerable to Air pollution risks. He listed the major factors for the vulnerability of Kathmandu valley i.e. topography, climate, altitude and high population and mentioned that the situation is worsening with the haphazard urbanization. He emphasized that because of these characteristics of the valley, it cannot be compared with other cities of Asia. “Kathmandu is one of the highest growing Urban Metropolitan Cities,” he stated. He also showed the different data of Kathmandu and highlighted the urgency of Sustainable Mobility Initiatives in the valley. He pointed out why Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system is a viable option for Kathmandu and also stressed that priority should be given to pedestrians and non-motorized modes of transport. “Other countries have prioritized motor vehicles, realized their mistakes and changed the focus to sustainable means of mobility again but had to pay more for their mistake. We have that advantage. We can learn from their mistakes and plan in a sustainable way”, he pointed out.

He mentioned that city itself is responsible for more than 70% of Climate Change and with Kathmandu growing at a break-neck speed, one could correlate Climate Change and Air Pollution. He also mentioned that this could open doors for more research opportunities and we could strengthen the capacity of our academia and research institutions as well.

Presentation II: Walking and Cycling: The Third Mode – Mr. Jeff Olsen, Architect and Planner Alta planning; State University of New York and author of ‘The Third Mode’.

Mr. Olsen was connected to the forum through skype from New York, USA. Mr. Prashanta Khanal from CEN was facilitating the conversation. He shared his experiences and challenges in promoting Non-Motorized Transport (NMT) and also provides recommendations/ way forward for promoting NMT. And general people’s attitude doesn’t consider it as an important mode of transport at all. “We teach our kids how to be careful on the road, how to cross the road safely, when it should be the other way round. The kids should have been free while the vehicles should have been taught how to drive properly and prioritize pedestrians. He also explained in detail about his book, which is one of the most comprehensive books on the importance of NMT and the ways to push for better policies for NMT.

Comments:

- What were the challenges you faced while promoting The Third Mode?
- In Kathmandu, cycling should not be the sole focus of sustainable Transportation. In some places, it is feasible to cycle all the way, while in some places, one cannot cycle all the way. Hence, the cycling should be fused with public transportation in a complementary way.

Presentation III: Public Transportation System: Challenges: Opportunities and way Ahead – Mr. Prashanta Khanal, Project Coordinator, Clean Energy Nepal/ Clean Air Network Nepal/ Sajha Yatayat Pvt. Ltd.

Through his presentation he focused on the status of public transportation in Kathmandu Valley and also talked about BRT system vs. Metro train. He compared the cost price of various modes of modern transportation that is in practice of various countries and also recommended to use BRT

System as it is cheap in price and can be brought in practice in the context of Nepal. He also presented data from “Public Transport User’s Survey” conducted by CEN/CANN in 2011/12 and shared that 30.5% people had said public transportation should be waited for long time while Standard bus carried 40 times more passengers. He also gave various other reasons as to why public transport in Nepal should be strengthened.

Panel Discussion

Mr. Kanak Mani Dixit, Chairman of Sajha Yatayat Pvt. Ltd shared the status of Sajha Yatayat and talked briefly about the model of Sajha Yatayat and explained how it is focused on Kathmandu valley to be extended later. He highlighted that transportation should be focused to lower middle class people and the need of coordination in transportation. He also talked about why BRT System is a viable option for Kathmandu and stressed on the formation of a strong network to maintain the initiatives. “Public transportation should be strong to serve the poor and should be able to lure in the marginal motorcyclist group to use public transport.” He urged the government to facilitate the increase in Bus Ridership.

Mr. Bijay Bahadur Swar, Senior Vice President, Federation of Nepalese National Transport Entrepreneurs (FNTE) highlighted that public transportation is not only a service providing enterprise but is also a basis of employment and livelihood for a considerable group of population. He also said that through transportation system is a basis of livelihood for 2 million people directly and indirectly. He stressed that policy is the main problem in Nepal and ineffective implementation is worsening the situation. He said “the discussions, policies are always focused on the welfare of passengers, but equal attention should also be given to the welfare of transport professionals/ employees, such as building proper capacity, creating basic facilities for the drivers and conductors on the road.” He also focused on the need of scientific route delineation and experimenting new routes on the basis of need assessment.

Mr. Shail Shrestha, President of Kathmandu Cycle City 2020, did a short presentation on the benefits of cycling and the need for cycle-friendly policies and infrastructure. He also talked about the international standards for safe cycling infrastructure and stressed that the current road expansion drive can be an opportunity to construct and implement the cycle friendly infrastructure. He shared the initiative by Nepal Army to cycle to headquarters every Friday. He also stressed that change is possible and it can be brought about with right attitude and supporting policies.

Mr. Tulsi Prasad Sitaula, Secretary of MoPPWMTM clarified that the government is indeed promoting NMT in both policies and implementation. He also shared that while building footpaths and cycling amenities, the government is facing criticism from the local people themselves. He mentioned that because of these opposition from local people the road expansion drive was taking longer than expected and appealed stakeholders and organizers to assist the government achieve its target by consulting with local people and advocating the importance of NMT.

Mr. Kedar Bahadur Adhikari, Chief Executive Officer, Kathmandu Metropolitan City shared KMC’s initiatives and preparations for making Basantapur a vehicle free zone. He also shared how KMC had started the night-bus service which is creating a difference and being applauded by public. He said that though KMC has started these initiatives, it is difficult to sustain it.

Presentation IV: Vehicle Emission Testing in Nepal – Ms. Kritya Shrestha, Research and Policy Officer, Clean Energy Nepal/ Clean Air Network Nepal

Ms. Shrestha focused her presentation on the Vehicle Emissions and the status of Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) program in Nepal. She started the presentation with the impacts of vehicle emissions and gave a schematic diagram on how they were generated and how they could be controlled. She then presented the status of I/M Program in Nepal and talked about the challenges and way ahead. She also shared the best practices of Sri Lanka and how Nepal could move ahead on a stronger I/M program.

Sharing : Metropolitan Traffic Police Division

Mr. Rabindra KC, DSP from Metropolitan Traffic Police Division shared the experiences and challenges of Traffic Police in Vehicle Emission Testing Program and on Traffic Management in Kathmandu. He shared that because of malpractices and the lack of punishment it is difficult to catch and punish the gross emitters. “When, we were doing roadside emission tests, and traffic would cross check in civil uniforms, they could catch 300 instances of malpractices per day.” He also implied that apart from lack of proper enforcement, the main problem lay in lack of awareness amongst general public.

2.4 Open Discussion

The program ended with an open discussion amongst the stakeholders on challenges and issues of Urban Mobility in Kathmandu and the ways ahead. The discussion was facilitated by Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar. The discussion basically continued around the following major topics:

1. Strengthening Institutional capacities

- Our transport practices are not guided by a vision. So far the decisions have been made on an ad-hoc basis and hence the transport sector has been getting unsustainable. We need a vision directed comprehensive transport policy and better standards.
- There is a certain complementary relationship between government bodies and public enterprises but we lack proper policies or frameworks to define it. The lack of this framework results in less government control and limitation of other opportunities. Hence, proper policies should be drafted to facilitate public private partnership in the transport sector .
- Proper focus should be given on implementation. We have policies but the implementation of these policies is almost zero.
- Another issue that is crippling the entire transport sector is that it lacks a regulatory body. There should be a regulatory body to analyze the gaps, impacts of certain decisions which also has the authority to penalize the wrong doers (may it be government body or private transport entrepreneur) and also coordinate the collaboration between various stakeholders.

2. Strengthening Public Transportation System

- The public transport should move ahead in the framework of public-private partnership. This will ensure adequate fund and protect the enterprise from potential politicization.

- The government should take necessary steps such as customs waiver; ensure accessibility to suitable maintenance to favor the smooth running of such transport companies.
- The government should have a strong policy to control and guide the privately owned public transport companies. The politicization of transportation system should be stopped and government policies should ensure that the companies run more in a service oriented way.

3. Strengthening Non Motorized Transportation

- The policies should be clearly defined. If government wants to promote Non-Motorized modes of transport, then the policies and laws should facilitate the NMT promotion. For eg: government says they want to promote NMT, but it is encouraging private vehicle by lowering the custom tax and introducing various financial schemes.
- The cycle lanes should be prioritized. The recent road expansion drive provides ample opportunities to include cycle tracks on the road but government should implement the commitment and prioritize the NMT in action.

4. Strengthening I/M Program in Nepal

- The status of I/M program in Nepal is embarrassing. It is very rudimentary and ineffective. Either it should be stopped completely or it has to be reformed.
- A committee should be formed, working group task force should be formed which will provide a set of recommendations to the government to strengthen/ reform the VET program.
- More advocacies and campaigning are necessary to heighten the issue for reformation of VET program.

3. Recommendations

The discussion was very helpful in identifying the issues and the potential ways ahead. The recommendations for Ways Ahead from the discussion are listed below:

- Strengthen the institutional capacity of all the stakeholders, generate data trends and more to build insights and develop policies based on these research outcomes.
- Create a multi-stakeholder assessment committee to assess the situation and provide concrete recommendations, which will be utilized/ implemented by the government and their divisions.
- The vision of policies should be clear. There should be a clear strategy on transport and all the policies, regulations should facilitate and complement to achieve the policy. If there are any conflicting policy, gaps; they should be addressed, revised and enforced.
- Implementation should be strengthened. There should be a regulatory body in the Transport Sector that will oversee the regulation of various laws, performance of different divisions, and advocate at the grass root level and also has the authority to take action against malpractices. The regulatory body should also act as a collaborative body.
- A common forum, facilitated by should be established which will collect the suggestions from general people and experts alike and provide solutions and advocacy to implanting organizations.

4. Conclusion

The program was successful in bringing around 60 stakeholders from different government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sectors, transport Associations, researcher, practitioners, media, and academia and research institutions to a common forum dedicated to identify and facilitate the solution of Urban Mobility issues of Kathmandu.

The program sensitized the stakeholders on Sustainable Urban Mobility issues, inform best practices from around the world and promote collaboration amongst wider stakeholders. The program identified many gaps in the transport sector and the discussion sessions brought all the stakeholders at an open level to identify the possible “in-house” solutions to the program.

The sharing of best practices from around the world on various issues gave a clear understanding on the practical implementation of the solutions on these issues. The presentation on Non-Motorized Transport by International expert through skype was also very helpful to aware the stakeholders on the challenges in formulating NMT policy in the country. The skype presentation also highlighted the organizer institution’s commitment to prioritize environment friendly options.

Annex A: List of Participants

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| | | | | |

Annex B: Program Schedule

| Time | Agendas | Presenter/ Moderator/Panelist |
|--------------|---|---|
| 8:30-9:00 | Registration/Tea | |
| 9:00- 9:10 | Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome remarks Objectives and expected outputs of the forum | Ms. Anjila Manandhar, Program Coordinator-Clean Air, Clean Energy Nepal/Clean Air Network Nepal |
| 9:10-9:20 | Keynote Speeches | Mr. Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, Secretary, Ministry of Physical Planning, Works and Transport Management (MoPPWTM) |
| 9:20 – 9:40 | Presentation: Urban Transport and Air Quality Management in Kathmandu Valley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual Overview Challenges and Opportunities Way forward | Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar, Regional Technical Advisor- South Asia, Urban Basic Services Branch, UN-HABITAT |
| 9:40-10:00 | Presentation: Non-motorized Transport System- The Third Mode <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of non-motorized transport (NMT) for more connected, healthy and livable society US perspectives, experiences and challenges in promoting NMT NMT design guidelines and standards Sharing best practices form US and around the world Provide recommendations/way forward for promotingNMT | Mr. Jeff Olson, Architect and Planner-Alta planning; State University of New York; Author- The Third Mode |
| 10:00-10:50 | Panel discussion: Making Kathmandu a pedestrian and cycle friendly city | Panelists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Tulasi Prasad Sitoula, Secretary, MoPPWTM Mr. KeshavSthapit, Commissioner, Kathmandu Valley Development Authority/Ministry of Urban Development Mr. KedarBahadurAdhikari, Chief Executive Officer, Kathmandu Metropolitan City Mr. Shail Shrestha, President, Kathmandu Cycle City 2020 Moderator: Mr. BhushanTuladhar |
| 11:00-11:10 | Short Tea break | |
| 11:10- 11:30 | Presentation: Public Transport System- Challenges, Opportunities and Way ahead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status of public transportation in | Mr. Prashanta Khanal, Clean Energy Nepal/Clean Air Network Nepal |

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|--------------|---|---|
| | <p>Kathmandu Valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Rapid Transit system Vs. Metro train • Sharing best initiatives from other cities • Recommendations/way forward | |
| 11:30-12:20 | <p>Panel Discussion: Strengthening Public Transport system in Kathmandu Valley</p> | <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Sharad Chandra Poudel, Director General, Department of Transport Management (DoTM)/MOPPWTM • Mr. BijayaBdr. Swar, Senior Vice President, Federation of Nepalese National Transport Entrepreneurs (FNNTTE) • Mr. Kanak Mani Dixit, Chairperson, SajhaYatayat <p>Moderator: Mr. Kamal Pandey, Former joint secretary, MoPPWTM</p> |
| 12:20- 12:40 | <p>Presentation: Vehicle Emission Testing Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need of Vehicle Emission Testing Program • Status of VET Program In Nepal • Best Practices from Sri Lanka • Way forward | <p>Ms. Krity Shrestha- Clean Energy Nepal/Clean Air Network Nepal</p> |
| 12:40-13:30 | Lunch | |
| 13:30- 14:15 | <p>Panel Discussion: Vehicle Emission Testingsystem (I/M) in Nepal</p> | <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Dipak Devkota, Department of Transport Management • Mr. Rabindra KC, DSP, Metropolitan Traffic Police Division • Mr. Jay Ram Adhikari, Under Secretary, Ministry of Environment Science and Technology <p>Moderator: Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar, UN-HABITAT</p> |
| 14:15-15:10 | <p>Group Session: Strategies and plans for sustainable urban mobility in Kathmandu Valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-motorized Transport system • Public Transport system • Vehicle Emission Testing System | |
| 15:10-15:15 | <p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion remarks • Way ahead • Vote of Thanks | CANN member |
| | Tea/cookies | |

Annex C: Photos of Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Mobility Forum II



Photo 2 :Ms. Amita Thapa Magar, CANN welcoming the participants



Photo 1: Ms. Anjila Manandhar, CANN sharing the objectives of the forum



Photo 3: Mr. Tuls Prasad Sitaula, Secretary of MoPPWTM delivering the keynote speech



Photo 4: The participants of Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Mobility Forum



Photo 3: Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar, UN-HABITAT giving an overview of Air Quality and Urban Mobility Scenario in Kathmandu



Photo 4: Mr. Padam Lal Maharjan from Sajha Yatayat commenting on Mr. Jeff Olsen's presentation through Skype



Photo 7: Mr. Prashanta Khanal, CANN presenting on the Public Transportation Scenario in Kathmandu



Photo 8: Ms. Kritya Shrestha, CANN presenting on the status of I/M program in Nepal