



**Africa Transport Policy Program (SSATP)**

**An Institutional framework for the Third Development Plan**

## Acronyms

AFD	French Development Agency ( <i>Agence Française de Développement</i> )
AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
DP2	Second Development Plan
DP3	Third Development Plan
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SSATP	Africa Transport Policy Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WB	World Bank



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## Mid-term review

The main objectives of the review were to assess the progress made to achieve the second development plan (DP2) of the SSATP and to recommend, based on evidence gathered both in available documentation, from a survey of stakeholders and during field visits in a sample of beneficiary countries, which improvements are required to ensure full DP achievement as well as the program's future orientation.

The review focused on seven questions:

- To what extent the SSATP DP2 addressed the needs of the transport sector in SSA?
- To what extent the SSATP DP2 work program implementation supported RECs and partner countries transport policy reforms?
- To what extent the SSATP governance system was supportive to achieve the best possible outputs for the volume of funding received?
- To what extent the SSATP DP2 led to consistent policy reforms in partner countries, harmonized regionally?
- To what extent the SSATP DP2 activities provided an added value in regional and national transport policy reforms?
- To what extent the SSATP DP2 activities were coordinated with other partners' interventions?
- To what extent the SSATP DP2 contributed to promote transport policy cross-cutting issues?



## Conclusions of the MTR

At the time of the review, the contribution of the SSATP under DP2 to foster sound transport policies and strategies in SSA was still limited. The various institutional and operational factors that led to this situation are presented below. Operational factors and in particular delays in availability of funds, understaffing and the lack of SSATP team during most of 2011 had a negative impact on the program performance. It must also be recognized that policy development needs time, and that the results of advocacy rely on a complex set of stakeholders and players, which are far beyond the scope of the SSATP in its present set-up, explaining also the difficulties and the delays taken by the program to fulfill its mission and justifying the recommendations presented in section 3 of this note.

### **SSATP model for fostering sound policies**

During DP2, SSATP has started to transform its approach to fostering sound transport policies from mainstreaming to advocacy but with limited progress and impact. The diffuse mainstreaming model through projects from the development partners was progressively replaced after the Paris Declaration (2005) by country level multi-donors policy dialogue platforms. Alternative sources of funding from BRICs (and in particular China) for financing infrastructure development are now available and are far less demanding in terms of policy reforms than the traditional development partners contributing to the SSATP. The progressive increase of export tax revenues of most member countries is also further lessening reliance on development partners' resources and the donors' mainstreaming capacity.

Ownership of the program by member countries is low making it difficult for the program to be recognized as a partner in policy dialogue by countries. Due to its location, the SSATP is unanimously identified by SSA governments as a World Bank program. Location of the program in Washington makes it also difficult for the program to interact with countries and have a dialogue on policy development at the level of decision-makers. It is also considered as a donor-driven program. The program structure with a pre-defined set of activities lacks flexibility to respond to the demand from countries.

Since DP2 has started, SSATP has not adjusted to new challenges in the transport sector in Africa. The DP2 work plan addresses issues all relevant to the needs of the transport policy development. However, those issues were not selected and prioritized according to an update of the transport challenges in Africa. They almost carried-on on-going activities under DP1 and before. The strategic response was adopted in-house with limited involvement of the SSATP members.

SSATP leadership in policy development weakened. As a result, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the development partners and the partner countries are left on their own to select among multiplying hybrids of former good practices and emerging policy developments. Opportunities exist to regain the leadership in areas such as governance where SSATP produced a report on governance indicators in the transport sector, climate change where SSATP is leading the initiative to create an Environmentally Sustainable Transport Forum and trade facilitation where SSATP has developed a methodology to sustain corridor performance monitoring and is facilitating the meetings of the Transport Coordination Committee of the Regional Economic Communities.



The DP2 contribution to knowledge generation is underestimated by its stakeholders. With already three approach papers and three guidelines published, given the preserved reputation of the SSATP in terms of quality of its deliverables, more influence could have been gained on policy reforms. The quality of SSATP's publications was counterbalanced by the low capacity of the program at disseminating and advocating case studies and good practices.

The only opportunities for advocacy organized by the SSATP at SSA scale were the two Annual General Meetings (AGM) organized in 2009 and 2010. Besides the statutory functions of this gathering that were not fully grasped by most participants, the experience sharing and the exposure to new perspectives and good practices are generally felt too constrained by an overloaded agenda to come to a consistent framework for inspiration. Still, the decision taken by the Board in 2011 not to have an AGM further reduced the capacity of SSATP for advocacy and exacerbated the lack of visibility and lack of ownership issues.

New initiatives and Infrastructure Action Plans at continental, regional and national levels are shaping the demand for policy reforms for the coming years, with only very limited contributions from the SSATP. SSATP provided analytical support to the Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program, managed by the African Development Bank and contributed to the preparation of the African Action Plan in preparation of the Decade of Action for Road Safety lead by the UNECA and African Union. However, SSATP has not been involved in the definition of the Program of Infrastructure Development for Africa (PIDA) which would need to be accompanied by a policy agenda to make it a success.

### **SSATP governance system**

The governance structure inherited from 2003 suffers from direction and oversight issues due to a weak definition of roles and responsibilities and due to constraints when attempting to combine a demand-driven approach with a program financed under a multi-donors trust fund.

The governance system does not provide for a clear decision-making process to amend the program and work plans. Participants to SSATP Annual General Meetings (AGM) lacked information on SSATP budget and management constraints. No monitoring and results-oriented framework was put in place to evaluate performance and results and to guide decisions. Ad-hoc demands expressed by AGMs led to unrealistic recommendations which needed to be reworked upon by the Board to fit into programming and budgeting constraints.

The program structure with a set of defined activities and budgets introduces rigidities which prevent to respond to new demands and ultimately reduces ownership. This was aggravated during the DP2 due to the delays between the design of the program (October 2007) and the start of implementation (2010 after the work plan was approved in October 2009) and due to slow implementation. Adjustments were decided at first (2009) by using the unallocated budget and then (2010) by abandoning several tasks, among those lagging far behind implementation schedule.

The DP2 implementation of the initial framework deviated progressively due to the low demand expressed for Theme 1 by member countries, lack of capacity of professional associations involved in Theme 2, and the need to compensate resources shortages while accommodating new demands. SSATP emphasis shifted from its former strong points (Road Maintenance and Financing, rural transport, transport planning) which came at mainstreaming stage, to nurturing transit facilitation (Theme 3) and identifying policy lines such as governance, climate change and sustainable transport.

The constituent assembly exists only on paper and has a very narrow role. The Annual General Meetings have failed to sustain the ownership of the program. In the absence of requirements in terms of their mandate and competence in transport policies, participants have no legitimacy and lack the strategic vision to comment or amend annual work plans.

The Advisory group meetings were replaced by planning retreats limiting the required focus on emerging challenges in transport policy development that would have been expected from high level transport policy experts.

17. Board membership does not include member countries albeit their representation by UNECA limited ownership. Private sector representation was ineffective in the absence of a private sector agenda. As a result, the Board is considered essentially donor-led.

18. The Program Manager's responsibilities are all encompassing between the Board and the Bank's TTLs, with no formal link with member countries and no direct authority on Bank's staff who implement program tasks.

### **Delivering DP2 results**

Since the time of the Road Management Initiative, which focused on and successfully promoted the creation of Road Funds, SSATP has significantly broadened its scope of work without increasing proportionally its capacity to achieve similar results in a larger number of policy areas.

SSATP has not been able to find effective relays in countries to compensate for its capacity constraints. The SSATP National Coordinators did not have the profile and a position that allow an influence on the decision-making processes on the various fields covered by transport policy. The National Coordinators were unknown from donors at country level. Even if known, they were not entitled to participate in policy dialogue as SSATP National Coordinators.

SSATP lost its relay at country level provided by World Bank staff following a strategic decision from the Board to disconnect SSATP activities from World Bank projects. Instead, the Board should have sought to strengthen the link with other development partners' projects. As a consequence, staff from other contributing donors remain little acquainted with SSATP developments and publications and don't use them as reference materials for policy dialogue.

The weak capacity and limited commitment to advocacy of regional/thematic associations (ARTA, AFERA...) impeded SSATP good practices dissemination.

The SSATP website has a limited visibility, is not available in French and evidence a strong link with the World Bank. Other transport related websites propose a more interactive approach (forum) and a wider array of background documents.

SSATP publications are not available with national authorities and not known by their potential users. Though kept at an adequate level of quality, SSATP publications are rarely seen as breakthroughs in policy development, and often applicable to only a limited group of countries.

At the time of the mid-term review, SSATP had few results to present beyond publications. The received DP2 contributions (\$8.5 million by end 2011 over \$15 million) were already 75% engaged/disbursed but SSATP recent publications contributing to define sound policies options (guidelines) were limited in number and in scope.

Cross-cutting issues are not explicitly mainstreamed in DP2 long-term plan and annual work plans. The SSATP contributed to promote cross-cutting issues in transport policy development even if only the HIV-AIDS activity reached yet the advocacy stage. Others activities are underway (governance indicators, gender and rural transport, creation of Sustainable Transport Forum) and partial achievements are encouraging.

There is no clear prioritization mechanism for strategic allocation of resources to activities. Activities facing limited, if any, buy-in from member countries were pursued beyond incubation, such as in Theme 1, while activities with a potential strong buy-in, such as rural transport, did not reach even that point.

### **SSATP resource-basis**

The lack of visibility of the impact of DP2 is increasing resources volatility. The EU and DFID contributions to the next long-term plan are suspended to the reaction of the SSATP to the present mid-term review. Other former EU bilateral donors have withdrawn due to the change in strategic priorities. The Trade Facilitation Facility (The Trade Facilitation Facility is a multi-donor Trust Fund managed by the World Bank to help countries to improve their competitiveness through concrete improvements in their trade facilitation system and by reducing trade costs) approved a US\$6.0 million funding request for a regional corridor improvement program managed by the SSATP. The French Development Agency approved a contribution of 500,000 Euros in 2011. Opening to North Africa might bring new contributors.

SSATP activities were standalone under the DP2 and no more associated with WB/EU/DFID in-country and regional projects. Resources for case studies and surveys are available at country level from donors' programs/projects but are not used to complement SSATP activities in particular to support the cost of implementing policy reforms, limiting therefore the scope of the program and its link with stakeholders

Other than a few World Bank's staff, other lead donors in the transport sector (EU, SIDA, DFID) are not involved in knowledge generation and quality control of SSATP products, at HQ level or country level. Only one seconded expert was provided for DP2 by Austria (and had a distinctive contribution on Transport Sector Data Management Systems). More diversified inputs and views are lacking in terms of experience sharing and innovative thinking.

Unanticipated EU financial and WB staff mobilization issues delayed the implementation of almost all DP2 activities unless those under Theme 3, less dependent on WB staff availability. Due to these delays, prolongation of DP2 was already envisaged back on 2010.

The program management team (PMT) was widely understaffed as collateral of budget constraints, leading to capacity shortcomings.

### **SSATP management**

The SSATP program managers did not impose themselves as champions in policy reforms in Africa; two-years co-terminus positions imposed by WB's procedures is too short a duration to allow becoming an acknowledged champion. The combination of thematic leader positions with regional coordinators ones, in order to reduce management costs weakened significantly the management capacity of the team.

The program was affected by management capacity issues from the first two successive Program Managers covering DP2 implementation. This brought the Board to micromanage the implementation of DP2 activities, particularly for organizing AGMs. Basic tools for managing/monitoring activities were not

available and are only being developed by the new team in place. The management of thematic activities by decentralized thematic leaders, without adequate support from the team in Washington, contributed to the general loss of leadership.

As a program, the SSATP needs to be supported by an operative structure for procurement and administrative/financial management. The WB provided this support efficiently.

Reporting at activity level on DP2 was undermined by a weak logical framework and management understaffing. The Board's was not in a position to give directions by lack of visibility and consequently micromanaged to get the team to report timely and purposively to be able to ensure oversight.

Reporting at output and outcome level, even if required by the EU Administration Agreement and for the sake of SSATP's visibility, was neither developed nor updated. The results framework was inadequate for monitoring and reporting. No clear baseline was established and results were too ambitious for the amount of resources available and at the same time were not clearly measurable. The development framework lists 47 activities for 36 partner countries and a budget of US\$20 million. This is on average \$11,800 per activity per country (increased to \$19,000 in the strategic framework). While indeed the program was not expected to achieve results for each activity in each partner country, this simple calculation emphasizes the challenge for the SSATP to achieve and monitor results in the absence of a realistic identification of results in view of the resources available. This challenge will be further exacerbated and considered carefully in the future with the proposal to broaden the mandate of SSATP to cover the five steps of policy development (identification, incubation, nurturing, mainstreaming and evaluation) compared to its current mandate mostly limited to dissemination of the program's policy work.

The initial budget underestimated implementation costs escalation but overestimated donor's contributing capacity (\$15m for the \$22m sought for). However, the results framework stayed the same and results were not adjusted to the resources available.



## Recommendations

Based on the above conclusions, this section presents an integrated framework of recommendations intended for bringing back the SSATP on its track, paving the way for a Third Development Plan capable of contributing significantly to most development needs of transport policy frameworks and tackling the continental challenges ahead.

### **Towards an African partnership**

*Adjust the SSATP mission statement to emerging needs for sound policy dialogue:* Since 2005 and the Paris Declaration, policy development in Africa changed completely as compared to the SSATP's glorious 90s with the RMI. If policy reforms are still largely donor-led, policy dialogue is becoming more balanced with alignment, harmonization and mutual accountability principles. Donors are increasingly focusing on result-based performance assessment frameworks to influence policy development rather than direct process-based conditionality. This margin of manoeuvre has resulted in the absence of policy models and in hybrid or short-term policies which have proved to become dysfunctional in solving structural deficiencies on which development partners are focusing. A neutral player is required for benchmarking policy frameworks advocated by parties with a reference. The SSATP should evolve towards that status. This new function should be added to its present mission statement covering the policy development chain (identification, incubation, nurturing, mainstreaming, and evaluation).

*Define the transport policy framework being the goal of the SSATP, with progress to achieve during the plan's period:* The actual vision of the SSATP of a sound policy framework remains vague, leaving to a large extent policymakers without a reference or a standard to benchmark country or regional frameworks and policy implementation. At the example of the EuroMed Transport Project, the SSATP should define a reference framework. The reference framework would be included in SSATP mission statement as the goal for policy development, the progress at regional and national levels becoming the pivotal outcome indicator of the program.

*Anchor the SSATP in Africa:* In almost all hypotheses, the SSATP must be located in Africa. Being closer to client countries and RECs will allow more direct support from the program and better interaction in particular with decision makers in Africa. Advocacy work which is emphasized in the new development plan requires frequent contacts and regular presence in the countries. However, even with an increased presence in Africa, adequate resources will be required to give the capacity to the program to carry out its work in the countries to achieve results.

*Promote cross-fertilization by extending SSATP coverage to North Africa:* Besides being mandatory for the African Union (AU), extending the program's coverage to North Africa yields a high cross-fertilization potential in policy development for emerging economies and adjusting policy framework to modern technology in transport (in ports and railways in particular).

*Diversify SSATP resources to embody the African partnership and allow a long term perspective:* Besides development partners' contributions, the partnership nature of the SSATP in the future should be translated in a nominal membership fee (of around \$50K), allowing for a stable annual resource basis of some \$2 million devoted to the permanent staff of the SSATP and travel costs. Resources from

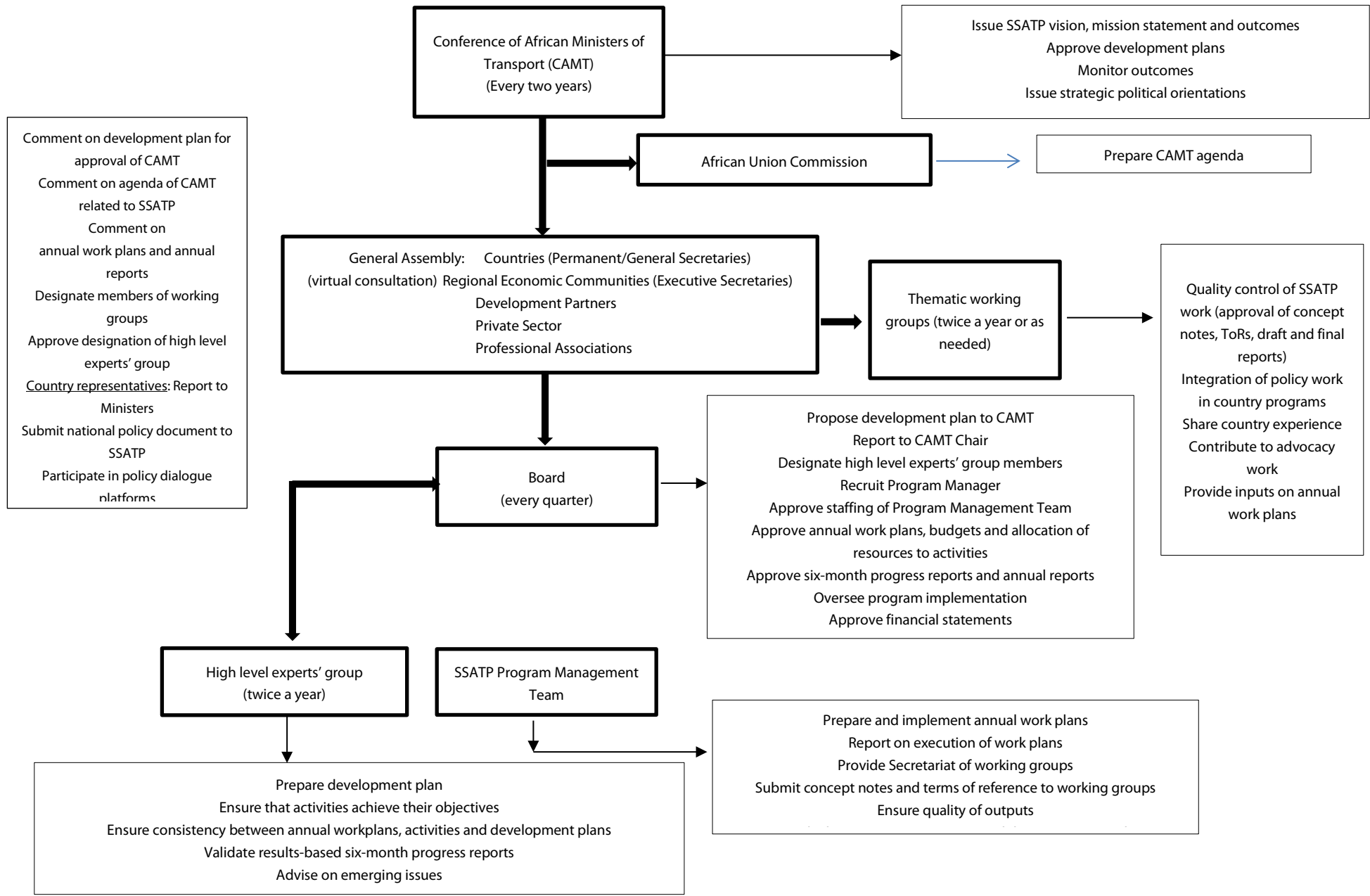
development partners would in this hypothesis target specific components of the long term plan; contributions by seconded experts should be strongly encouraged among bilateral donors.

### **Integrate partnership in the governance structure**

*Adapt the governance system to a continental partnership, with the political backing of the AU:* The legitimacy of the SSATP must come from the political level at continental level. The AU is the only such instance and has already a forum dedicated to transport with the Conference of African Transport Ministers (CATM) that has all the attributes to become the SSATP's Constituent Assembly. The CATM should approve the SSATP mission statement and the long-term development plans. The Annual Assembly (AA) would comment on annual work plans prepared by the management and annual evaluation plans. The AA would comprise representatives from countries and RECs at Permanent/General/Executive Secretary level with the mandate and the authority to discuss and decide on policy issues and representatives from Development Partners, private sector and professional associations.

The Board is in charge of management oversight. Board members should include country representatives (REC membership is excluded by the subsidiarity principle if the AU Commission is Board member). The Board would recruit the program management, oversee program implementation and propose to the AA the designation of the High-level Experts Group in charge of policy direction and quality control during the preparation and implementation of the development plans. Thematic working groups with each representative designated by its counterpart in the AA would contribute to knowledge generation and provide orientations for the annual work plan. The new SSATP organization is shown in the below organogram.

47. *Increase leverage capacity with country and RECs delegates contributing to nurturing in thematic working groups and task forces:* The country and REC membership implies an active participation to the policy development process rather than staying locked in a client approach. The working groups should become the place where advancement in the policy chain of a given challenge is followed, results are approved at each stage, and then dissemination is promoted.





## Achieving SSATP Outcomes

48. *Tackle emerging challenges combined to a demand-driven approach:* The demand-driven approach, from partner countries or development partners, focused in the past either on general topics or on technical issues, making it uneasy to design an all-encompassing long-term plan. The long-term plan should be based on a need assessment survey, followed by a business plan embarking needs, financial constraints and operational capacities of all program' players to come to an adequate response strategy (with scenarios).

49. *Emphasize sustainability of program activities:* Sustainability is the capacity of the programme to continue its existence and functioning beyond its end in terms of its capacity to ensure continued funding but also to make its results widely spread, used and exploited continuously. Sustainability of results is a key parameter for the overall success of the programme but also for the main benefit of its stakeholders. It is of paramount importance that the achievements of the programme are fully exploited by the stakeholders and that any duplication of future work is avoided.

50. *Mutualize knowledge generation among development partners:* Rather than implementing by itself all case studies, pilots and evaluations, the SSATP should focus on elaborating Concept notes, standards and specific TORs and share them with in-country and regional development partners' programs. The SSATP staff and associated experts (from the development banks) and consultants would ensure peer reviewing, quality control and editing. The SSATP would publish and disseminate the reports contributing to its policy development orientations.

51. *Match capacity and expectation for results:* In order to enable the program manager to focus on leadership and advocacy, a PM deputy position in charge of the management should be created; the main task of the program management team should be the secretariat of the thematic working groups; the program should extent the recourse to seconded experts and long term consultants for knowledge generation, with the development banks focusing on concept notes and peer reviewing only. The facilitation of the working groups and further dissemination of good practices would require 2-3 long-term key expert positions and a consistent amount of unallocated short term experts.

52. *Adjust advocacy to the Internet era on behalf of a model of diffuse dissemination:* The process of modernizing and adjusting the SSATP website should be pursued, in particular introducing an interactive forum pattern, and in all the possible extent with a partnership with existing knowledge initiatives.

53. *Ensure extensive reporting on SSATP outputs and outcomes:* The basis of an outcome-based reporting (How are the outputs used?) should be developed and regularly updated. It should be included in an overall communication scheme supportive to the re-assertion of SSATP leadership in fostering good practices and sound transport policies.

53. *Organize Africa Transport Policy Forum every two years and regional workshops alternatively:* The Africa Transport Policy Forum should focus on experience sharing, dissemination of good practices and networking. Cost-sharing should be systematically looked for with other infrastructure and transport related initiatives, as well as sponsoring by the private sector or bilateral donors. The SSATP financial contribution should be limited, besides organizing the event, to travel costs of the SSATP country representatives. The Forum should take place once every two years, with more regional and thematic focused workshops in-between.