

## Plenary: Tackling poverty: What is the role of transport?

25 May 2023, 14:30-16:00 | [Session outline](#)

The second Summit plenary highlighted several crucial aspects of transport that contribute to poverty alleviation and economic development, including the supply of transport infrastructure and services; comprehensive transport and urban planning to ensure affordability, safety and inclusivity; the role of informal transport and two-wheelers; and the importance of emerging new modes and vehicle technology.

The panel identified infrastructure development as a fundamental factor, particularly in developing economies. Infrastructure is the backbone of transport systems and plays a pivotal role in breaking the vicious circle of poverty. It was noted that investing in infrastructure is a top priority for countries such as Brazil and Senegal, where the accessibility of communities is essential. By attracting public and private investment, states can acquire the necessary resources to develop infrastructure, positively affecting communities.

Comprehensive planning emerged as a critical element in ensuring effective transport systems. The panel emphasised that transport initiatives should align with specific urban and rural demands. Comprehensive planning should consider diverse mobility patterns and access levels, addressing different communities' challenges. Urban planning is a strong element in addressing accessibility and ensuring equitable access to essential services such as education and healthcare.

The discussion also shed light on the significance of informal public transport services. While sometimes lacking optimisation, they play a crucial role in serving communities and providing employment opportunities. The panel highlighted the need to facilitate and integrate informal services in the formal transport framework, particularly in areas with limited formal transport options. Informal services cannot be removed if no better alternative is available.

Motorcycles were also recognised as a potential solution, especially in developing economies, due to their accessibility, affordability and agility. However, the panel emphasised the need for regulation to ensure safety and harmonisation with other modes. Striking a balance between leveraging the benefits of motorcycles and addressing the associated challenges is essential.

The session also explored the role of new transport modes and technologies. The panel acknowledged the potential of innovative solutions and emphasised the importance of tailoring modes and vehicles (such as ride-sharing and electric vehicles) to the local context to maximise positive impacts. The panel also suggested a temporary reduction of transport costs to incentive people to adopt new transport modes and services. However, it is necessary to strike a balance between ensuring affordability and mitigating the financial risks.

Safety and inclusivity were recurrent themes throughout the discussion. The panel heard that transport planning and design should consider the specific needs of different user groups including women, who often face unique challenges and different travel patterns. Designing transport systems that are safe and inclusive for all individuals is essential to promote equitable access to transport services. Designing transport systems that prioritise safety and inclusivity can remove mobility barriers and enable mobility for all.