Environmentally sustainable and healthy urban transport (ESHUT)

1. Background

One of the consequences of rapid urbanization is the development of an urban infrastructure, driven by uncontrolled motorization to transport the ever increasing number of people and goods to, from and within urban areas. The result is neither conducive to the health of the urban population, nor is it environmentally sustainable.

The policy, design and practice of urban transport systems all have significant implications for the health and safety of people through air and noise pollution and greenhouse gas (CO2) emissions generated by motor vehicles, road traffic crashes, physical activity or inactivity, exposure to second hand smoke in confined public transport systems, lack of accessibility or barrier-free transport system for persons with disabilities, older persons, and so on.

A new paradigm for urban mobility and access is needed, which must be based on an environmentally sustainable and healthy alternative, including, for example, non-motorized transport (e.g. bicycling and walking) and efficient public transport systems to reduce use of private motor vehicles, easy access to and barrier- and smoke-free public transport and road safety. Cities need such an environmentally sustainable and healthy urban transport (ESHUT) system that promotes a win-win strategy to achieve co-benefits in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, air and noise pollution, road traffic injuries and second hand smoke, and increasing opportunities for physical activity, as well as health and social equity by ensuring safe and equal access to urban public transport.

Examples of ESHUT activities are:

- Bicycle friendly city (provision of bicycle lanes, bicycle parking facilities, bicycle rental services)
- Pedestrianization (safe and accessible pedestrian footpaths/walkways, crossings and overhead bridges, benches, kiosks, public sanitary conveniences, car-free streets and days)
- Bus rapid transport and mass rapid transit (priority bus lanes, hybrid or electric buses, light rail transport or subways, fare free or reduced fare services)
- Increased connectivity at stations/stops (park and ride, bicycle parking, pedestrian access ways, metered taxi stands)
- Transport demand management (special toll for private vehicles, fuel tax, parking levies)

ALLIANCE FOR HEALTHY CITIES

- Barrier-free and safe roads, walkways and public transport (easy access and use by persons with disabilities, older people, children and pregnant women, lighting at night, road safety measures)
- Health-promoting and hygienic public transport (tobacco-, alcohol- and drug-free buses and trains, and stations and stops, hygienic and clean public sanitary conveniences)

2. Good Practice Awards

The World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific calls for application for good practice awards in Healthy Cities as follows:

Awards given:

Outstanding practices and innovative, successful approaches to environmentally sustainable and healthy urban transport.

Eligible applicants:

All members of the Alliance for Healthy Cities

Materials to be submitted:

A written report, a slide presentation, and other supporting materials (e.g. photo or video documentations), describing (1) the approach and activities undertaken to promote environmentally sustainable and healthy urban transport, (2) measurable outcomes/impacts of implementing the approach and activities, and (3) other information considered useful for evaluating the submission.

Deadline for submission:

16 August 2010

Support for travel to the 4th Global Conference of AFHC in Gangnam, Seoul:

Awardees will be invited to attend and speak on their experiences at the session on ESHUT at the 4th Global Conference of AFHC in Gangnam, Seoul, 26-29 October 2010.

3. Contact Information

Applications to both awards and any queries should be sent to:

Health Promotion Unit/Environmental Health Unit
WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific
P.O. Box 2932, United Nations Avenue)
1000 Manila, Philippines
Fax: +63(2)521-1036
Email: hpr@wpro.who.int or ogawahi@wpro.who.int