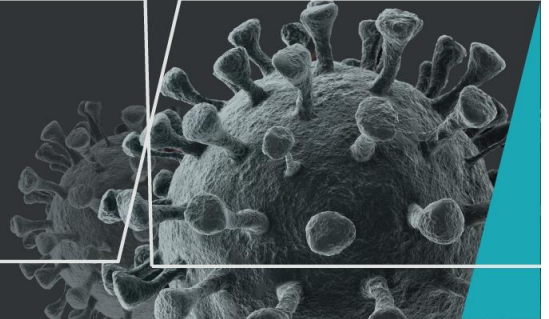


COVID-19 and TRANSPORT

Response & Recovery Research Fund



22 May 2020

Call for Project Concept Notes

COVID-19 is having a devastating socio-economic impact globally. It has been acutely felt by people in Low Income countries (LICs). Transport is at the centre of managing the spread of the pandemic and will be key to ensuring rapid and sustained recovery. A recent Call for Action has highlighted the need for: a) curation of LIC-specific information, b) a common platform for COVID-19 impacts information, and, c) transformative transport agenda for a post-COVID-19 world. The paper can be found [here](#).

As part of the UK Department for International Development's (DFID) response to COVID-19 the Research for Community Access Partnership (ReCAP) and the Applied Research Programme in High Volume Transport (HVT) have established a **COVID-19 Response & Recovery Transport Research Fund**. This fund seeks to support research that addresses COVID-19 and its effects and impacts on the transport sector: national, rural and urban. The fund will support research that provides:

- innovation and technology that can help manage immediate response and guide recovery
- evidence based thinking (thought pieces) and papers that guide response and/or recovery and policy in a changed transport world
- fast-tracking of knowledge, experience, learning resources and best practice to those who need it in LICs.

The **Research for Community Access Partnership (ReCAP)** is a programme funded by UK aid through the UK Government that supports applied research into low volume rural roads and transport services across 12 countries in Africa and five in Asia, respectively. Managed by Cardno Emerging Markets (UK) Ltd, ReCAP aims to strengthen the evidence base on more cost effective and reliable low volume road and transport services, thereby influencing policy and practice. ReCAP works on a portfolio of national and regional research, capacity building and knowledge management initiatives, in partnership with national research centres and other national, regional and transport sector partners. More information about ReCAP can be found [here](#).

The **Applied Research Programme in High Volume Transport (HVT)** is a five-year programme funded by UK aid focused on national and regional transport corridors and within cities in low-income countries (LICs). The objective of the programme is to increase access to transport services, making transport more affordable and accessible, more inclusive, safer and greener. Our beneficiaries are the governments and peoples in LICs in Africa and South Asia. HVT commissions research and draws on relevant case studies, other research, and lessons from other countries including those that have made the transition from low- to middle-income country status. More information on how HVT is sharing knowledge and guidance on dealing with the impact of COVID-19 on transport systems in LICs can be found [here](#).



We are very pleased to announce that the **COVID-19 Response & Recovery Transport Research Challenge Fund is now open and is inviting Project Concept Notes (PCNs)** from prospective grant beneficiaries for their proposed projects. Successful PCN applicants will be requested to submit full proposals for consideration at a later date.

A total budget of **£1 million** has been made available jointly by the ReCAP and HVT programmes for this Challenge Fund. As we are open to innovative ideas, we have purposely left the Challenge Fund to target a broad range of proposals – from brief insight papers to full research projects. Consequently, we have not included a fixed budget cap for each project, as they might vary widely. However, as an indication, we would expect to receive PCNs for three main categories of funding: smaller projects of up to £10,000 for short insightful papers and thought pieces, up to £20,000 for work involving more detailed analysis in relatively short timeframe (e.g. up to 2-3 months), and larger research projects of up to £50,000 of longer timeframe (e.g. 6 months). It is envisaged that some 30 to 40 projects may be awarded through the Challenge Fund.

The Challenge Fund comprises of three lots:

- Lot 1 – COVID-19 and transport including cross-cutting areas and inclusion
- Lot 2 – COVID-19 and low volume / rural transport
- Lot 3 – COVID-19 and high volume / national and urban transport systems

Each PCN will need to refer to one lot only by indicating the relevant lot in the application form. However, applicants are free to submit multiple PCNs (for difference projects) under more than one lot. In deciding the number of projects that can be awarded to any one applicant the capacity of the applicant to deliver and the overall risk to the programmes will be taken into consideration.

Lot 1 – COVID-19 and transport including cross-cutting areas and inclusion

Eligible areas for grant support under Lot 1 will focus on the effects and impact of COVID-19 on cross-cutting themes between low volume and high volume transport communities and systems. These include questions such as:

1. What are the opportunities that national response; economic stimulus, financing and recovery strategies bring for transport (incorporating passenger, freight, formal and informal, low and high volume transport) and how do we ensure that such opportunities are not missed?
2. What are the impacts of and responses to COVID-19 in addressing social inclusion and equity issues in low/high-volume transport (including e.g. gender differences in mobility impacts, impacts on personal security and sexual harassment particularly of women, impacts on mobility of people with disabilities, impacts on mobility of young and older people)?
3. What has the COVID-19 pandemic taught us about infection control and public health safety measures for both formal and informal transport systems?
4. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on road crashes?
5. Does the COVID-19 pandemic signal opportunities for a transition to low-carbon and cleaner transport systems (including transport-related air pollution and emissions, transition to low- or zero-carbon vehicles, ability to meet national and local climate change mitigation commitments etc.). What have we learned about the impacts and opportunities for climate change from the pandemic for the transport sector?
6. What lessons can be learned from other outbreaks/pandemics that are transferrable to the transport sector when addressing COVID-19 (e.g. HIV/AIDS, Ebola, SARS, Zika)?
7. What are we learning for transport planning mechanisms and processes for emergencies and essential services under COVID-19?



Lot 2 – COVID-19 and low volume / rural transport

Eligible areas for grant support under Lot 2 will focus on the effects and impact of COVID-19 on rural communities and access to transport. . These include questions such as:

1. What have been the effects/impacts of COVID-19 on rural transportation systems (including the informal transport sector) and what successful innovative solutions have been adopted to keep transport moving?
2. What have been the impacts of COVID-19 on rural transport system costs?
3. What are the technology and innovation based solutions that can be deployed to cost-effectively address COVID-19 impacts on rural transport, road design and construction, and support to rural communities (e.g. food and medical supplies) – including health and safety considerations for rural transport design and implementation?
4. What are the impacts of and responses to COVID-19 on rural communities' access to essential services (food, energy, education, health centres, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) services, etc.)?
5. What have been the impact and implications of social distancing on rural transport?
6. What have been the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on rural development from the transport perspective and in what ways can rural transport systems support post-COVID-19 economic recovery and rural development?
7. What changes do we need to make to the role of rural transport for COVID-19 response services (e.g. mobile COVID-19 testing services, vaccine delivery when and if available, etc.)?
8. With reference to COVID-19 experience, how can we build rural transport systems that are resilient to climate change, shocks, future pandemics and disaster?

Lot 3 – COVID-19 and high volume / national and urban transport systems

Eligible areas for grant support under Lot 3 will focus on the effects and impact of COVID-19 on strategic, national, urban and inter-urban transport systems. These include:

1. What have been the effects/impacts of COVID-19 on national and urban transport systems (including the informal transport sector) and what innovative solutions have been adopted to keep transport moving?
2. What changes do we need to bring to transport planning and managing and operating urban transport as a result of shocks such as COVID-19? How can the transport sector ensure access to essential services such as food and healthcare and access to workplaces for key workers during periods of lockdown?
3. How have urban transport operators managed operations during lockdowns and what practices need to be sustained through recovery and beyond?
4. What technology and innovation based solutions have emerged for urban and high volume transport as a result of the pandemic? How can the best of these be scaled through recovery and beyond? This would also address walking, cycling, informal and shared services.
5. How exposed have transport workforces been to COVID-19 and what solutions are available to reduce risk and exposure?
6. What lessons have been learned and what good practices exist for freight transport and logistics in the continuity in supply chains, (at either international, national or urban scales) as a result of COVID-19?
7. How should land transport (passenger and/or freight) across districts, cities, states and national boundaries be managed under COVID-19? What are the sharable lessons?
8. How do we make social distancing work for urban, rural and/or national transport systems?



To encourage innovation and possible influence on future programming by both DFID and ReCAP/HVT's efforts with responding to this or a future pandemic, other areas may be considered accordingly on a case-by-case basis, providing there is linkage to COVID-19 response and recovery in the context of transport in Low-Income Countries (LICs).

Individual and/or organisation are eligible to submit PCNs, independently or in collaboration with other individuals or organisations. The proposed interventions must have relevance to the low income countries in Africa and South Asia, currently supported by ReCAP and HVT.

All researchers are eligible to submit PCNs. Proposals from or including researchers based in one or more of the DFID focus countries are particularly welcome.

Upon receipt, PCNs will be reviewed according to set compliance screening and criteria, including:

- **Challenge:** What is the COVID-19-related transport challenge that the proposal seeks to address?
- **Approach and Methodology:** Including innovation where applicable
- **Impact:** Potential to empower people, and inform policy decisions, government strategies and/or investments in LICs on appropriately responding to the impacts of COVID-19 in the transport sector
- **Knowledge exchange:** Fostering the exchange of learning in addressing the COVID-19 challenge between high-income or middle-income countries and low-income countries
- **Value for money:** Proposed projects should clearly demonstrate that costs are both appropriate and commensurate to expected benefits. Evidence of value for money could also include the existence of co-funding, or collaboration with another transport-focused development programme
- **Measurability:** Projects must describe the main impacts they are expected to have with clearly defined project-specific indicators designated for monitoring the impact of the project
- **Time-bound:** Time is of the essence. Project delivery time should be as short as possible and strike a balance between quality and speed.

Attached are the template and guidance for preparing PCNs.

ReCAP and HVT may award any number of research grants or none, depending on the availability of funds and Programme continuation. Moreover, ReCAP and/or HVT may consider applying additional funding to individual projects on a case-by-case basis that meet a Programme's emerging research priorities, subject to the performance of the grantee.

The deadline for submission of PCNs is **17:00 (BST), Monday, 8 June 2020**. Please submit electronically to recap.procurement@cardno.com and HVTprocurement@imcworldwide.com. Please ensure that your PCN is submitted by no later than this date in order to enable the consideration of your proposed project.

Should you have any questions about the grant application process, please do not hesitate to contact the ReCAP and HVT Programme Management Units (PMUs) on recap.procurement@cardno.com and HVTprocurement@imcworldwide.com.