**Why this project?**

Road transport is a key factor in helping economies thrive and reducing poverty. Its unique door-to-door services are instrumental in providing access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities and leisure anytime, anywhere to everyone.

When road transport is properly promoted and facilitated through reduced time, costs, red tape and increased professionalism within the industry, it can become even more efficient in delivering its essential economic and social services.

In 2010 and 2011, the Council of Arab Transport Ministers of the League of Arab States (LAS), called on the authorities of all Arab States to take the necessary measures to ensure the sustainable development and increased efficiency of road transport, as the main contributor to economic growth in the region, and to improve professionalism within the sector and enhance road safety.

**Who is behind this project?**

The Islamic Development Bank (IDB), as a key financial contributor fostering economic development and social progress in the region, grants loans and other forms of financial assistance to countries, projects and companies.

The Arab Union of Land Transport (AULT), representing the road transport industry in Arab States, which coordinates the efforts of its members to develop the land transport sector in all Arab countries by promoting operational efficiency, received a Technical Assistance grant from the IDB.

The International Road Transport Union (IRU), as the global representative of the road transport industry, offered its 65 years of expertise in promoting and facilitating road transport worldwide to this project, as AULT implementing partner of the IDB Technical Assistance grant.

**Three focus points**

**Road Transport Facilitation Strategy**

Two studies were conducted over 6 months to contribute to the preparation of a strategy and action plan for trade and road transport facilitation in League of Arab States (LAS) countries.

They analysed the status of key UN transport Conventions in LAS countries, collected data about the main impediments to international road transport within the region, identified the benefits of the TIR System for trade facilitation in LAS countries and its economic integration with world markets, and formulated a TIR Action Plan for LAS countries for accession and implementation of the TIR Convention.

**Road Safety**

Only limited statistics are available about the causes of accidents involving trucks in the region, and information is almost non-existent.

A feasibility study was therefore conducted to assess the possibility of implementing the scientific model of the European Truck Accident Causation (ETAC) study for a similar future implementation in LAS countries (LASTAC), with a view to identify and effectively address the main causes of accidents involving trucks and concretely enhance road safety for all road users.

**Professional Training**

The human factor is central to effectively improving road transport efficiency and safety. Professionals must be appropriately trained to safely perform their duties. For this reason, selected training entities in LAS countries have been identified to benefit from IRU Academy programmes.

Experts have transferred the knowledge and skills necessary to properly implement and deliver IRU Academy professional training programmes on the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) and on the Certificate of Professional Competence for Managers (CPC Manager).
Main objectives

The IDB-AULT-IRU joint project is expected to:

a. Increase professional competence for fleet managers and drivers;

b. Improve road safety through scientific research, identifying the main causes of accidents; and

c. Optimise road transport facilitation strategies.

Which should in turn help achieve:

a. Efficient professional services that increase trade and profitability;

b. Government action on the main cause of accidents, hence safer roads; and

c. Harmonised and fast procedures at borders to reduce border waiting times.

The project in figures

Flash this code to watch the project movie

See also the project’s five executive summaries: Road Transport, Facilitation, Road Safety, CPC Manager and ADR Driver Training, and full study at www.iru.org/en_idb_ault_iru_joint_project.

Next steps

In order to improve efficiency of road transport services in the pan-Arab region, facilitation of trade and road transport, enhancement of road safety and increased professionalism in road transport operations can be achieved by the implementation of the following key recommendations:

- Transport stakeholders must develop and increase cooperation in the transport of goods and passengers through Public-Private Partnership;

- Transport stakeholders must work in partnership to reduce red tape, and harmonise Customs and other inspection procedures at border crossings;

- LAS Member States should access to the 7 global main UN trade and road transport facilitation instruments, such as the TIR Convention, the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, the ADR, the ATP as primary means to eliminate non-physical barriers and reduce transportation costs and facilitate economic integration;

- Create ancillary infrastructure facilities along the international road transport corridors in the Arab world for truck and bus drivers, in particular nearby border crossings;

- Ensure viability of the road transport industry through the adoption and implementation of harmonised rules for access to profession in the occupation of road transport on the basis of existing international standards;

- Establish harmonised professional driver and manager qualification frameworks and implement high quality professional training and testing capabilities recognised at international standards;

- A Truck Accident Causation Study is needed and feasible in LAS countries.