

Kurunegala, Sri Lanka

Partner city

Status of the project: ongoing technical assistance



Basic Information

Urban area: 11 km²

Population: 122,172 | Growth rate: 1.4%

GDP per capita: USD 3,853

Modal Share

Formal public transport: 25.3%

Informal private transport: 16.2%

Walking: 11.8%

Cycling: 1%

Private cars: 22.3%

Private motorbikes or 2-wheelers: 18.7%

Taxis: 1.3%

Other: 3.4%

National GHG emissions per capita: 1.67 (tCO₂eq)

Exposure to climate change: Low

Region capital city

Context

Kurunegala has 120,000 inhabitants, including 30,000 in the urban core. Despite being a relatively small town for Sri Lanka, it is the Capital city of both the North Western Province and the Kurunegala District.

According to the National Physical Plan (NPP) updated by the National Physical Planning Department (NPPD) of the Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development (MMWD) in 2018, Kurunegala urban area will count 1,000,000 inhabitants by 2050. This city should meet an annual growth rate of 2.5%, the highest of Sri Lanka. Kurunegala should become one of the main urban centre – even a “metro region” – of the East-West Development Corridor that guides the spatial and economic development at the national scale. Consequently, Kurunegala will face many challenges regarding urban development, employment, and transportation. The city has to plan its internal transport as well as connections with the other cities of the corridor and with Colombo, the national Capital City.

The city has a railway station (located in the South East of the urban core) and is located on a rail axis, but it does not play a major role in daily commuting as people usually commute by private motorised vehicles (car, motorbike and tuk-tuk) or by public bus. Currently, the Municipality of Kurunegala (the SUMP local counterpart) does not have the mandate or responsibility to finance mass public transport infrastructure nor the authority to borrow from international finance sources. The running costs of the collective transport system are, however, part of the public authority’s budget.

The objective of the project is the elaboration of a SUMP for the city of Kurunegala from the ground up since there is neither an existing public mass transit system nor an existing transport master plan for the city.

Support from the Partnership

Technical Assistance: Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)

Funded by: AFD

Funding amount: EUR 400,000

Implemented by: AFD through MobiliseYourCity Asia

Local counterpart: Municipality of Kurunegala

Supported Activities:

- MobiliseDays (35 participants)
- Diagnosis workshop (32 participants)
- Public Transport focus group
- Scenario analysis workshop

Status of implementation

Project start: March 2019

Expected project completion: March 2021

Completed outputs:

- Inception report (September 2019)
- Diagnosis report (March 2020)
- Scenario elaboration and comparison report (1st Draft, May 2020/ Revised Draft, December 2020)

Next expected outputs

- SUMP (February/March 2021)

Core impact indicators baselines

Indicator	Baseline - 2020
Air pollution Mean urban air pollution of particulate matter (in µg PM2.5) at road-based monitoring stations	30 µg/m ³ of PM2.5
Road safety Annual traffic fatalities in the urban area, per 100,000 inhabitants	37fatalities / 100,000 hab

Highlights in the past year

The SUMP elaboration had a satisfying progress from its start until the first half of 2020 with the delivery of the diagnostic and the draft of the proposed scenarios.

The COVID-19 crisis impacted the progress of the SUMP elaboration. Submitted documents have not been approved by the Kurunegala Municipality and other local counterparts since the last quarter of 2020, which has slowed down the SUMP process and postponed the SUMP final approval to 2021.