Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Bus Transport post COVID19 Lockdown

Mr. Amegh Gopinath
Technical Expert (SMART-SUT)
GIZ
**SMART-SUT PROJECT BACKGROUND**

- **Project Brief:** GIZ is implementing the bilateral technical cooperation project "**Integrated and Sustainable Urban Transport Systems for Smart Cities in India (SMART-SUT)**" on behalf of the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) as a political partner.

- **Project Objective:** Improvement in planning and implementation of sustainable urban transport in selected cities.

- **Project Cities:** The implementation focuses on the pilot cities of Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore, and Kochi.

---

**Partner States & Cities**

- Bhubaneswar (Cuttack and Puri)
- Coimbatore (Chennai)
- Kochi (Thiruvananthapuram)
PUBLIC BUS TRANSPORT & ITS ROLE DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN
BUS TRANSPORT IN INDIA

Close to 75% of public transport trips in the country are by bus.

149,000 Public Buses

Served by 52 Govt. owned state transport undertakings and special purpose companies

25 Billion Passengers served in 2016-17
587 Billion Passenger kms served in 2016-17

Bus transport in India is already deficit in supply to meet the demand and is incurring financial losses continuously

Source: Road Transport Yearbook, MoRTH; Performance of STUs, CIRT; Efficient and sustainable city bus services, SUTP
Data from 41 reporting STUs for the year 2016-17
+ Shakti Foundation
ROLES PLAYED BY BUS TRANSPORT DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Limited public transport for essential services* | Acting as Guardians of Mobility during pandemic scenario

**Buses operated during COVID-19 lockdown**

- BEST Mumbai: 1500 buses
- MSRTC Maharashtra: 350 buses
- BMTC Bangalore: 200 buses
- DTC Delhi: 25% of the actual operations
- MTC Chennai: 150 buses
- UPSRTC Uttar Pradesh: 250 buses
- WBTC West Bengal: 15 buses

Sources: Compiled from various sources including personnel interview, news articles

**Multiple Roles adopted by bus transport agencies amid COVID-19 lockdown**

- **Goods delivery**
- **Sanitation vans**
- **Dedicated medical service buses**
- **Dedicated services for stranded migrants and students**

* As notified by Government of India

† Term coined by International Association of Public Transport (UITP)
ROLE PLAYED BY BUS TRANSPORT DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

The Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) had won the Award of Excellence for Innovations in Urban Transport during COVID-19 at 13th UMI Conference 2020 organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

❖ Social responsibility during the pandemic and initiative to shift to digital payment was also acknowledged
BUS TRANSPORT DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Buses for emergency services, MoBUS, Bhubaneswar
Image Courtesy: CRUT

KSRTC’s sanitizer bus, KSRTC, Karnataka
Image Courtesy: THE HINDU
IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON BUS TRANSPORT
**IMPACT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWN ON BUS TRANSPORT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Lockdown Phase</th>
<th>Recovery Phase</th>
<th>Normal Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>March – May*</td>
<td>Up to 1 year post lockdown</td>
<td>&gt; 1 year post lockdown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel/ Staff Cost</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Cost</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment to hired buses</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Revenue</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>Gradual increase</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*As per MHA, Gov

Bus transport will incur almost equivalent costs during lock down and recovery phase.

However, the revenue is expected to be way below the normal.
Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Bus Transport Post COVID-19 Lockdown
KEY CHALLENGES

- Meeting staff expenses and debt repayments
- Crowd Management inside and outside buses
- Reduction in demand and carrying capacity of buses
- Availability of fleet
- Service planning for uncertain demand
- Procuring equipment for safety of crew and sanitation material
Government of India in its last notification on 02 June, 2020 recommends to reduce services in places with high COVID incidences

- Rearrange the **seating capacity** keeping in mind the social distancing
- **Markings** to be made for queuing of the passengers at all relevant places
- Clear and frequent **communication** to commuters on do’s and don’t
- Implement **preparedness plans** dynamically
- Increase **PT capacity** to reduce crowdedness
- Encourage **e-ticketing**
- Re-organize the **routes and services**
- **Relief packages** to support operators and scale-up efficient supply

Source: Advisory on COVID19, MoHUA, GoI & CRRI
BUS TRANSPORT ADAPTATION FOR POST COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

SOPs for

1. **Offices/markets/work zones/employers**
   Work from home, staggered working hours

2. **Buses and transport authority/operator**
   Increase supply of buses, occupancy < 1/3rd, disinfecting buses, CCTV cameras for monitoring & No AC

3. **Passengers**
   Mandatory masks, unidirectional passenger movement, rear door boarding and front door alighting

4. **Driver and conductor**
   Temperature checks, separating driver area by screens and Mandatory use of mask and gloves, cash box, digital ticketing

5. **Bus shelters**
   Maintain distance in queue, frequent sanitization

6. **Bus stops/terminals/depots/interchanges**
   Floor marking for social distancing, regular sanitization

7. **Pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure**
   Reclaiming streets for crowd management, min footpath width of 2.5 m and dedicated cycling lanes

Measures listed out in the document should be implemented after assessing the aftereffects of COVID-19 in the state. These measures are suggestive and should be used in combination with various instructions issued by Government time to time.

TIMELINES
3 MONTHS POST LOCKDOWN
and to be reviewed thereafter.
A typical CRUT bus shelter with social distancing message, one passenger seated per seat and with floor markings for passengers to wait at a bus shelter (Source: GIZI CRUT)

Transparent curtain separating driver’s area (Source: TriMet, Oregon)
ORGANISING PASSENGER OCCUPANCY IN PLACES WITH HIGH COVID INCIDENCES

Key actions:
• Increase supply of buses/frequency on high demand routes by hiring private buses, school and college buses
• Fare collection through digital payment modes for cashless ticketing
• Marking seats for seating inside the buses, at bus stops and at terminals

Image Courtesy: GIZ
STAGGERING WORKING HOURS TO REDUCE PEAK DEMAND

Staggered working hours to reduce the demand and hence to maintain desirable social distancing

Normal operations

8:00 AM 9:00 AM

Usual Peak Hour

Post COVID-19 lockdown scenario
Maintain safe social distancing

7:00 AM 8:00 AM 9:00 AM 10:00 AM

Staggered Peak Hour

Peak Passenger demand needs to be reduced by adopting staggered working hours for offices/markets/work places

Cities such as Mumbai, Kolkata and few others implemented staggered work timings to avoid crowding
DEMONSTRATION OF STAGGERED DEMAND (BHUBANESWAR CASE)

Step-1: Identification of **high demand bus stops**
High passenger demand bus stops in Bhubaneswar

Step-2: Activities locations around **influence zone of 1 km**
Major locations with high passenger demand bus stops in Bhubaneswar

Image Courtesy: GIZ
STEPS TAKEN TO MANAGE COVID-19 FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

- **MTC & TNSTC (Tamil Nadu)** applied for loan from Government Banks to manage the salaries & other fixed cost

**Taxes and surcharges:**

- **Nagaland** imposed a COVID-19 cess of Rs 5 per litre on diesel and Rs 6 per litre on petrol and other motor spirits through a notification

- **Assam** government increased taxes on petrol by Rs 6 and on diesel by Rs 5

- **Meghalaya** government imposed 2% sales tax surcharge on both petrol and diesel

- **In Delhi,** Petrol price hiked by Rs 1.67 per litre while diesel price hiked by Rs 7.10 per litre

- **Punjab** extended 100% Motor Vehicle Tax waiver till December 31 to bail out transporters from COVID crises (for all stage carriage, mini and school buses etc.)

- **Kerala** exempted Road Tax for three months for private buses (from July 2020)

- **Gujarat** had waived off road taxes for passenger vehicles till September 2020
RECOMMENDATIONS: ENABLING PUBLIC BUS TRANSPORT

- Identify alternate sources for revenue generation methods (currently dependent on ticket and pass sales)

- Digitization and use transit data to identify emerging travel patterns and rationalize existing routes/services for efficiency improvement

- Plan for dynamic changes in demand and supply (travel need and staggered travel plan)

- Stagger work hours to reduce peak demand

- Use social media and other digital platforms to communicate passenger information, public service, citizen engagement, etc.
Introduce temporary tax waivers, reschedule debt and extend the validity (insurance, permits, fitness)

Dedicated bus lanes

Develop digital payment options

Support from the central government and states: fund for stabilization and revitalization

Involve private sector to increase fleet capacity (procurement + underutilized private buses)

Capacity building and trainings for staff upskilling on soft skills and technical skills
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36 + 40
53113 Bonn, Germany
T +49 228 44 60 - 0
F +49 228 44 60 - 17 66

E amegh.gopinath@giz.de
I www.giz.de