

KENYA PRIVATE SECTOR ALLIANCE

CONCEPT PAPER

CREATION OF A TRANSPORT INSTITUTE / A SCHOOL OF TRANSPORT STUDIES

Introduction

The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) is the apex body of the Private Sector in Kenya with a membership drawn from various sectors of the economy. KEPSA advocates on behalf of the Private Sector in respect of high-level national cross-cutting issues. It also coordinates the Private Sector's engagement on public-private sector dialogue with the various arms of government.

Since its establishment in March 2003, KEPSA has sought the integration of the Private Sector as an equal partner with the various arms of government and other stakeholders in the formulation of laws and policies. Its overarching goal is to create an environment conducive to business which makes Kenya a globally competitive investment destination with a high ranking in the ease of doing business index. An enabling policy and legislative environment is of essence.

It is towards this end, that KEPSA has established mechanisms of engagement with various arms of government and, in particular, the Executive, Judiciary and Legislature. These engagements are facilitated through various mechanisms such as the Presidential Round Table, Speaker's Round Table, Ministerial Stakeholders' forum and Judiciary Forum. At each of these forums, the Private Sector has raised specific issues of concern and sought building consensus with the respective organs.

One issue that has arisen is the need to create an Institute of Road Transport Studies or a School of Road Transport Studies. This is necessitated by the fact that transport is a key component of any economy because it facilitates movement of people (passengers) and goods (freight) from one destination to another. There are several modes of transport namely; road, rail, air, marine and in-land waterways, pipeline and non-motorized transport as described in the Integrated National Transport Policy.

Why we need an Institute of Transport Studies or School of Transport Studies.

Road transport facilitates movement of about 95% of the total number of passengers and goods in Kenya. In Kenya, road transport is a major catalyst of economic development and contributes significantly to the GDP. It constitutes both motorized and non motorized means of transport. Motorized transport in Kenya includes buses, matatus, taxis, cars, trucks and motorcycles; while non-motorized transport includes pedestrians, hand carts, animals and animal drawn carts. Road transport is a lucrative sector that employs more than 500,000 people mostly youths and it is estimated to be worth billions of Kenya Shillings.

When considering road transport, it is important to note that it comprises three components; infrastructure, vehicles and load (people and freight). Infrastructure (what we can term as "hardware") and Transport (what we can term as "software") can only function effectively and efficiently if the human capital that build the hardware and manage the software are well trained or are competent.

In the recent past there has been massive investment by the government in the development of the hardware (building of roads, bridges, highways, etc.) to convey vehicles. There, however, has been little or no funding towards the development of road transport related hardware to convey goods and passengers. There has been no funding for road transport aspects (road safety, driver training, fleet management, transport planning, transport economists, automotive engineers, transport research, transport financing etc.). By comparison, road transport funding from the exchequer has been way below funding allocation to develop Air, Rail, Marine and pipeline.

At this point it is worth noting that government has invested heavily in funding Parastatals that regulate or manage other modes (Air – KAA, KCAA and East African School of Aviation; Marine and Inland Waterways – KPA, KMA, KSL, KFS and Bandari College; Rail – KR, SGR and Railway Training Institute; Pipeline – KPL and Murendat Pipeline Training Centre). To date the only Parastatal handling, unfortunately, both regulation and management of road transport is NTSA. It is disturbing to note that staff at NTSA have not had or enjoyed training comparable to what other Parastatals staff has had. Look at the curriculum vitae of staff running these other Parastatals and you will note that most are very well trained, some of them abroad, using public funds.

Road infrastructure is built using Civil and Structural Engineering staff well trained in government funded institutions (Tertiary Colleges and Universities). Infrastructure agencies (such as, Roads Board, KENHA, KURA and KERA) are funded using exchequer and fuel levy that incidentally is levied from transport activities. Transport has not only been under funded, there has been no human resource development to match what has been put in to train engineers building infrastructure. Transport sector has been left to Private Sector players with little government assistance in terms of policy, legal, regulatory, institutional framework and even operation.

Whereas road transport makes an immense contribution to GDP, 90% of the human capital that runs and manages this important industry is largely youthful and are in most cases untrained. Drivers, conductors, motorcycle riders, either learn their trade on the job or get training from driving schools for a duration of not more than twenty (20) hours in a driving school. These driving schools are majorly owned by the Private Sector who until recently did not have even a Curriculum.

Take Public Service Vehicle (PSV) drivers in Nairobi, as an illustration. One PSV driver handles close to 500 passengers every day, a translating to about 182,000 passengers annually. He drives about 350 kilometers a day. However, after training as an ordinary driver for 20 hours in one month, he/she is then required to hold a driving license for only four years after which he/she is eligible to become a PSV driver, without any other or further training. A conductor on the other hand does not go through any form of training.

The result of government not investing in the training of human resources, to run and manage road transport, has been an increase at a high rate of transport externalities witnessed in our country currently. The kind of accidents we experience on our roads, the heavy pollution, congestion, poor driver attitudes, corruption and cartels are all but manifestations of lack of properly trained human resources in planning, regulating, operating and management of road transport sector.

It is worth noting that majority of those who manage the road transport industry even at the Ministry in charge of Transport (National Government) and at Departments in charge of Transport (County Governments), though well trained, on very rare occasions would that training be relevant to road transport planning, regulating, operation, management, etc. Perhaps that is why we do not get consistent implementation and follow-up of government policies in the road transport sector. It is therefore right to say that the road transport industry lacks relevant trained human resources to plan

and manage the industry effectively. Demanding professionalism from human capital in this sector by the government is like a case of wanting to reap where one has not sowed! It is like expecting a hospital to run without nurses, clinical officers, laboratory technicians and medical doctors who are in most cases trained by government funded institutions.

Taking a cue from other forms of transport mentioned elsewhere in this paper, it is worth noting that it is only road transport that does not have a post-secondary government owned institution that specifically addresses its training needs. Just like, for a long time, road transport had no government authority (Parastatal) until the creation of National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) in 2012. Like mentioned before, Rail transport has the Railways Training Institute, Air transport has the East African School of Aviation, Marine transport has Bandari College and Murendat Pipeline Training Centre.

In other sectors/ministries, we see heavy government involvement in training of personnel to handle issues concerning that given ministry, for example; in the Ministry of Education, we have teachers and lecturers trained to handle students; in Ministry of Health, we have nurses para-medics and doctors trained to handle patients; in Office of the President we have police/security officers trained at Kiganjo and Embakasi to deal with security; in Ministry of Agriculture we have agricultural extension workers to deal with farmers; in Tourism we have Utalii College to deal with tourists; while in Wildlife we have warders trained by KWS to deal with animals!

It is only in road transport sector that we do not have training institutions to properly train personnel to handle passengers, motor vehicles and freight. Note that the training being advocated here is not that of operatives such as drivers. We are alive to the fact that driver training issues are being addressed.

Objectives and benefits of establishing an Institute of Transport Studies or School of Transport Studies

In Kenya, road transport courses being taught at post secondary level focus more on infrastructure, touch a little bit on the means of transport but are totally lacking on human capital development. Only a few institutions such as Technical University Kenya (formerly Kenya Polytechnic), Kabete Technical Training Institute etc. offer quasi-transport related courses. Automotive repair trade and craft courses such as automotive mechanics, electricians and welders offered by Kenya Industrial Training Institute (KITI) are no longer articulated by the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA). The appendices programs that accompanied these courses have nearly collapsed. We are also alive to the fact that government institutions such as National Youth Service have the capacity to train operatives in the road transport industry.

The objective is therefore to request that Ministry in charge of Transport, Ministry in charge of Labour, Ministry in charge of Industrialization and Ministry in charge of Devolution work together to ensure all transport related programs are included in TVET Institutions that now being built.

Other than automotive engineering and fleet management courses which a number of institutions are reluctantly picking up to offer, mostly, at Certificate and Diploma level; other courses such as transport economics and financing, transport planning, transport research, transport policy, public transport operation and management, freight transport, logistics, distribution and supply chain, transport engineering, transport and land use, automotive engineering, fleet management, intelligent transport systems, etc. are virtually non-existent in both in middle level and higher education institutions. In fact there are no degrees offered in all transport studies in Kenya leave alone road transport sector.

The objective of setting up a Transport Institute or approach a university to open a School of Transport Studies to offer such courses right from Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate, Master to PhD levels is to enable Kenya to develop human capital that will not only enable the road transport infrastructure be efficient in the delivery of passengers and freights but also be able to manage transport externalities that are costing the economy colossal amounts.

Developing our own professionals will reduce dependence on expatriate consultants who are often called in when we want to undertake a transport project.

The Institute or School shall carry out transport research and become a depository of all open data and findings road transport.

To reduce costs linked to transport externalities road transport has to be professionalized. Professionalized road transport will ensure we create safe roads, affordable fares and livable urban areas. We will create careers and thereby create decent employment for our unemployed youths.

To create synergy with other modes of transport we perhaps may need to host road transport studies and at Railway at Railway Training Institute or amalgamate the existing institutions of transport studies i.e. Bandari, Railway Institute, East African School of Aviation and Mwendat Pipeline Training Centre to create an Institute of Transport Studies or a School of Transport Studies. This can reduce the cost of running these many institutions.

Funding an Institute of Transport Studies or School of Transport Studies

In the past there has been very little funds allocated from the exchequer by parliament to manage transport activities. It is imperative that Ministry in charge of Transports ensures that in its budget preparation transport activities such as the development of human capital are included.

Funding for development of such an Institution or School, can be from government allocation or can be through a creation of a training levy charged on insurance, vehicle license renewal, driving license renewal or as part of fuel levy. Students can be given loans through HELB which will provide the Exchange Transaction funds. Government can negotiate loans and grants from international agencies or development partners. Partnership with Universities that offer Transport Studies will perhaps provide technical assist to assist the establishment of the Institute or School. Some rolling Stock suppliers may also assist.

Conclusion

This document has been prepared with a view to providing insight information on how, given adequate resources inflow, the creation of an Institute of Road Transport Studies or a School of Road Transport Studies is essential in improving our road transportation system and how this institution can be developed into a center of excellence that is responsive to road transport problems and needs, and one that has strong national, regional and global connections.

MUKABANAH EDWINS

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