Purpose of presentation

The rapidly growing populations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America include millions of persons with disabilities. While efforts are going forward to improve access to bus and rail transport, it is clear that transport for persons with mobility, sensory, and cognitive disabilities must also include a growth in door-to-door transportation using mini-buses, vans, autorickshaws, and a variety of other small vehicles. As matters stand now, efforts to promote jobs, health, and education are often frustrated by a lack of transport for such persons. Accordingly, Access Exchange International is planning a guide to how to implement these services. The purpose of this presentation will be to present key recommendations from this guide.

Approach and methodology

The guide will compile the experience of selected accessible paratransit systems in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. This experience will be supplemented by lessons learned by practitioners in the USA with many decades of experience in the paratransit field in order to assist newcomers to the field. The guide will discuss different models of door-to-door transport, funding sources and sustainability issues, vehicle procurement, driver and staff training, and ongoing evaluation through user input, service monitoring, and performance indicators. The guide will introduce issues of scheduling and dispatching, marketing, maintenance, options for fueling and garaging, and issues of compliance with local regulations. Passenger policies and prioritization of service through different mechanisms will be presented so that demand will be brought into line with supply. The guide will include a major emphasis on the range of funding mechanisms employed by door-to-door systems in cities around the world, along with methods to reduce cost per trip through coordination with NGOs and government agencies.

Results and conclusion

Currently door-to-door services in many locales in less-wealthy countries are delivered by many NGOs and agencies with small vehicle fleets to provide services to their clients. Scaling up has proven difficult. Yet barriers to expanded service are being broken by a number of cities. This guide is planned to enable stakeholders to consider ways to expand their current or proposed services to meet a broader range of pressing needs for a larger number of passengers while providing more trips at a lower cost per trip. The presentation will be aimed at the broader community of current and potential service providers who need to benefit from the hard won
experience of practitioners on the front lines of providing door-to-door transport in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

Topic Code B: Best practices and innovations