

## **Background Paper: About EMBARQ**

### **What is EMBARQ?**

Established in May 2002, with the support of the Shell Foundation, *EMBARQ* – The World Resources Institute Center for Transport and the Environment – acts as a catalyst for socially, financially, and environmentally sound solutions to the problems of urban transport. The focus of its first five years of operation will be cities in developing countries where air pollution, traffic congestion, and lack of access to clean and convenient transport are most acute and the poor bear the brunt of the problem.

### **How EMBARQ Works:**

*EMBARQ*'s strategy is to foster viable government-business-civil society partnerships whose members are committed to finding solutions to the transportation-related problems facing the cities in which they operate. Within the framework of these partnerships, *EMBARQ* is empowered to identify, test, evaluate, and implement reasonable and effective solutions to local transport problems within a three to five year time horizon.

*EMBARQ*'s business model calls for working partnerships with three major cities every five years, entered into on a staggered basis. This model will ensure *EMBARQ*'s ability to effectively manage multiple-city projects while still engaging in education, outreach and prospecting for future partner cities.

The staggered initiation of projects, in two-year intervals, will allow appropriate engagement on the part of *EMBARQ* staff to carry each project through five proposed stages:

1. Establishment of a city partnership.
2. Creation of a city-based *Center for Sustainable Transport* in the partner city, staffed primarily by local actors in the transport community.
3. Identification of a sustainable transport system appropriate to the partner city.
4. Creation of an ambitious, achievable, work plan that results in transport changes which provide measurable improvements in traffic congestion, air quality, and overall quality of life for the city's inhabitants.
5. Extrication of *EMBARQ*, leaving a viable *Center for Sustainable Transport* behind to manage urban transport in cooperation with the city government.

### **Whom EMBARQ Works With:**

The *EMBARQ* model represents a *social and political* approach to transport planning and traffic management. *EMBARQ*'s research, strategies, and activities inherently recognize that traffic, air pollution and congestion are made by individuals with different needs and interests, whose roles (driver, pedestrian, homeowner, and politician) change, even during the course of a day.

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**Government** – *EMBARQ* identifies and works with key decision makers who are politically, socially, and financially empowered to find and implement lasting solutions to transportation and air quality problems in major cities in the developing world. Governments must be the dominant force in these partnerships, as the implementation of transportation policy is inherently a governmental activity.

**Private Sector** – Historically, it has been the private sector that has played a vital role in any lasting transport solutions. They alone are positioned to make the investments in clean fuel and vehicle research and development that will lead to the kinds of cost-effective and efficient technologies needed to solve the problems of urban transportation. Increasingly, the private sector sees its role as a partner with government in finding solutions to urban transport problems. Furthermore, the private sector is beginning to take on the provision of urban mass transit, freeing governments of the fiscal burden.

**Civil Society** – Over the past decade, engagement with civil society has become an increasingly prominent precursor to successful implementation of both business and government initiatives worldwide. What government and business sector entities are *able* to do has become increasingly dependent upon what they are *empowered* to do by civil society.

### **Where *EMBARQ* Works:**

*EMBARQ* currently operate in two of the world's 10 largest megacities – those with populations over 10 million.

On May 31, 2002, *EMBARQ* entered into a formal agreement with the government of the Federal District of Mexico City – the world's second largest megacity – and a major environmental NGO to create the *Center for Sustainable Transport for Mexico City*.

On November 1, 2003, *EMBARQ* and the Shell Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding with the government of the City of Shanghai – the world's ninth largest megacity – to create the *Shanghai Sustainable Transport Partnership*.

### **The *EMBARQ* team:**

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### **For more information on *EMBARQ*:**

visit [www.EMBARQ.org](http://www.EMBARQ.org) or contact Christopher Laqan, WRI media officer, (202) 729-7684.