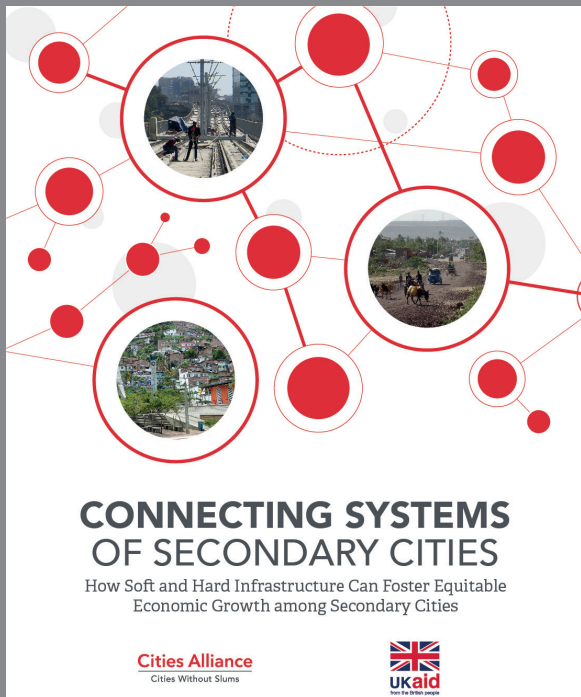


Cities Alliance

Cities Without Slums

CONNECTING SYSTEMS OF SECONDARY CITIES

How Soft and Hard Infrastructure Can Foster Equitable Economic Growth among Secondary Cities



The publication can help local governments:

- Assess and analyse the extent to which their cities are economically connected at both the national and international level;
- Implement cluster strategies to achieve economies of scale and foster greater collaboration among cities; and
- Plan investments on hard and soft infrastructure assets to foster strategic Local Economic Development

Connecting Systems of Secondary Cities features case studies that show how investments in hard and soft infrastructure and regional connectivity can foster equitable economic growth. Examples of case studies include China, the Danube region, New Zealand, and Rwanda.

Why are Secondary Cities Important?

Secondary cities play a critical role as hubs of economic, government, cultural and education activities within national systems of cities. While the importance of secondary cities is increasingly recognised, growing inequalities are emerging between systems of cities and regions, with metropolitan areas often prospering at the expense of smaller cities and rural areas. Small and medium-sized (or intermediary) cities are home to around 30 per cent of the world's population, but they generate little more than 15 per cent of global GDP. This gap will widen unless governments introduce policies to foster equitable economic growth within systems of secondary cities.

Creating collaborative advantage through connected secondary cities

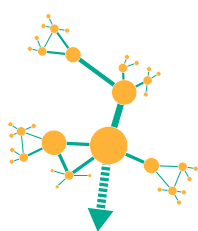
The size, efficiency, management, functionality and connectivity of systems of secondary cities all have a significant impact on the economic development of nations and regions. More equitable growth paths require investment in hard and soft infrastructure, at all levels, to improve connectivity. The size and scale of these investments should be determined by future demand, technology, risk, and other anticipated changes.

If enhanced connectivity is to be used as a strategy to support the economic development of secondary cities, policy makers must understand the need for integration of hard and soft connectivity elements, and how governments can facilitate their development.

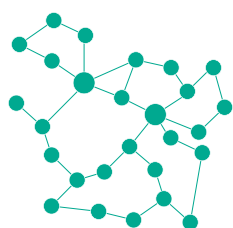
Breaking new ground in systems thinking for secondary cities

Connecting Systems of Secondary Cities seeks to spark a new way of thinking on approaches to developing systems of secondary cities. It argues for more systems-based thinking in how governments support the development of systems of cities, rather than a structured hierarchical approach.

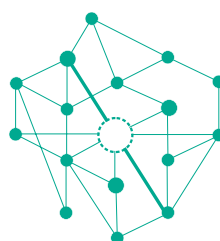
In rapidly urbanising countries with one or more dominant megacity, many secondary cities have a high and expensive dependency on them for access to markets, goods, supply chains, transport, and advanced business and community services. Moreover, secondary cities often have low levels of lateral connectivity and trade between transportation corridors – making it hard to attract investments, jobs, or add value to exports due to economies of scale and high transaction costs. Networks are critical to improving the level of communications, exchange and movement among systems of secondary cities.



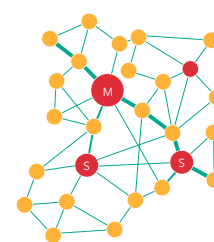
Hierarchical network



Random network



Regular network

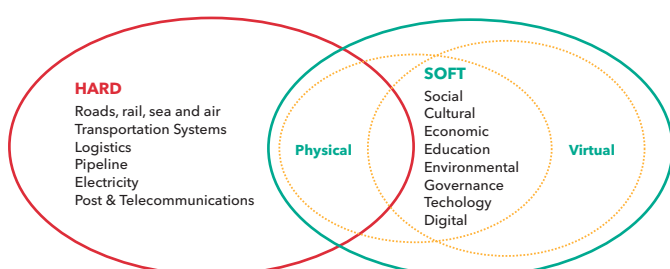


Scale-free network

Investing in Hard and Soft Infrastructure

Many networks will require investment in hard infrastructure, such as transport and communications, and soft infrastructure to facilitate greater economic, social, cultural and governance exchange. This involves building city, industry and firm partnerships, as well as collaborative governance and economic development.

Collaboration is also vital to finance such hard and soft strategic infrastructure, through arrangements to share revenue as well as development, operating and maintenance costs.



Five key questions for local governments

1. How important is connectivity to the development and prosperity of systems of secondary cities?
2. How are systems of secondary cities connected?
3. What connectivity factors impede secondary cities from having access to markets, expanding trade, information, commerce, knowledge and improved flows within systems of cities?
4. What approaches have some secondary cities taken to improve connectivity?
5. What collaborative investment in hard and soft infrastructure can secondary cities make to support their development and prosperity?