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**Mid-term Evaluation of IKI project  
“Mobilize Net-Zero - Facilitating the  
global transport transformation”**

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Summary

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## Summary

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Arepo GmbH was commissioned by Zukunft-Umwelt-Gesellschaft gGmbH (ZUG) to conduct the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the project “Mobilize Net-Zero – Facilitating the global transport transformation” (MNZ). It provides critical insights into the progress and challenges of the initiatives under Germany’s International Climate Initiative (IKI). Conducted between April and December 2025, this evaluation assesses the relevance; planning, steering and coherence; effectiveness; transformational impact and sustainability; as well as the IKI safeguards and standard indicators of the project in a formative way, with a view to potential changes in enhancing the project in the second half of its implementation period. This summary distills the key findings, evaluation methodology, and strategic recommendations, providing a concise overview for stakeholders involved in implementation and oversight of this project.

## Project Description

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The project addresses the decarbonization of the transport sector by aiming for national governments to increase their climate ambitions with the support of international partnerships. In many low- and middle-income countries, transport emissions are rising quickly as cities expand, motorization increases, and paratransit and informal transport fill gaps in formal public transport. Rwanda illustrates this trend, with transport accounting for around 13% of national emissions and road transport dominating sectoral CO<sub>2</sub> output, driven by a rapidly expanding motorcycle and paratransit fleet. In Latin America, where electricity systems are often comparatively low-carbon, transport has become one of the largest sources of energy-related emissions, responsible for around a third of regional CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The MNZ project works to build partnerships and create peer-to-peer exchange and knowledge sharing opportunities, while simultaneously supporting selected partner countries in planning and implementing sustainable, low-carbon mobility solutions.

The project runs from December 2022 to December 2030, following an extension from its original end date of 2028. It is funded with €28.87 million, including €4.27 million from the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN, formerly BMWK) and €24.6 million in external co-financing from Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) through the Green Climate Fund (GCF). MNZ has a global component and regional/country components in East Africa and Latin America. It uses a multilevel, multistakeholder approach at global, national and subnational levels, coordinated by GIZ, which is responsible for overall implementation and financial management. Agora Verkehrswende is an implementing partner funded via GIZ, contributing in particular to the global knowledge and policy work under Output I and advising the German government on international transport and climate partnerships.

The project targets national governments and subnational authorities (ministries responsible for transport, infrastructure, finance, economy, environment and climate, as well as city administrations) in participating African and Latin American countries and beyond. In Rwanda, the focus is on decarbonizing paratransit and preparing large-scale public transport electrification. In Latin America, MNZ supports a group of countries (including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay) that face common challenges of high

motorization, diesel-based freight, and severe urban congestion but are also emerging leaders in bus rapid transit and electric mobility. A second major target group is the international transport community: private sector actors, financial institutions, international organizations, think tanks, experts, academia and other GIZ transport projects. BMUKN's transport and climate unit is a key political partner receiving strategic and technical support. Women and vulnerable groups are recognized as particularly affected users, as they rely more heavily on public transport and are often underserved by systems designed around male commuting patterns; the project therefore emphasizes gender-sensitive transport data and planning.

Globally, MNZ aims to build and maintain an international transport climate community, increase transparency on transport commitments in NDCs and long-term strategies, and provide strategic advice to BMUKN on international transport alliances. This is intended to encourage countries to raise their ambition and implement stronger transport measures. At country level, MNZ aims to leverage co-financing, strengthen institutions and planning, and prepare concrete net-zero transport investments, particularly in public transport electrification and sustainable paratransit reform. The ultimate beneficiaries are users of more accessible, cleaner and safer transport systems in partner countries, including women and low-income groups.

There are five key outputs: two global outputs and three country/regional flagship components. Output I builds an international network and peer-learning platform, centered on the Transport & Climate Change Week (TCCW) and related events, and produces strategic analyses and policy proposals for the German Government; participation and engagement targets have already been exceeded. Output II further develops and operates the NDC Transport Tracker, including a new text-mining tool and dashboard; while the number of analyzed documents is still well below the target, usage of the dashboard has surpassed expectations. Output III is the Rwanda flagship on decarbonizing paratransit and public transport electrification; despite political and procurement-related delays, it has produced key knowledge products, organized high-level workshops, and mobilized preparatory finance, but the targeted volume of climate investment in preparation has not yet been reached. Outputs IV and V are Latin American flagship components implemented with AFD and CAF through the Green climate Fund (GCF): an investment-oriented sub-program in seven countries focusing on sustainable mobility ecosystems and electrification, and a second sub-program in three countries that has started with electromobility trainings and peer learning. Due to later start dates and complex co-financing arrangements, implementation of Output V is still at an early stage, while Output IV is only expected to begin in early 2026. As both components scale up, monitoring and coordination demands are likely to increase.

## **Evaluation Objectives**

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The main objective of this MTE is to assess the status of implementation, the achievement of objectives, and the challenges faced by the MNZ project across the following evaluation criteria: relevance; planning, steering and coherence; effectiveness; transformational impact and sustainability; adequacy of social and environmental safeguards and compliance with IKI standard indicators. The findings from this MTE inform strategic direction and operational adjustments of the project. For GIZ, the German ministry BMUKN, and the IKI office at Zukunft – Umwelt – Gesellschaft gGmbH (ZUG), the evaluation provides a comprehensive assessment of the project's achievements to date and offers conclusions and recommendations on how to address the implementation challenges identified.

## Methodology

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The evaluation employed a robust, theory-based mixed-methods approach to ensure a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the project's performance. This approach involved a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including document analysis, internet research, contribution and thematic analysis of interviews, and a World Café. An additional aspect of the methodology was the reconstruction of the project's Theory of Change (ToC). The reconstructed ToC provides a more detailed and accurate depiction of the causal links between the project activities, outputs, and outcome, allowing for a deeper analysis of its logical coherence and effectiveness.

Evidence was gathered from a wide range of sources to validate findings, including project internal documents, interviews, and validation with general literature and internet sources. The evaluation team conducted a total of 42 (13 during the Rwanda mission) key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with a total of 14 persons. Interviews were conducted during the Berlin Transport and Climate Change Week (TCCW) 2025 with worldwide representatives, during a 1-week field mission with stakeholders from Rwanda, as well as remote interviews with representatives from GIZ, the consortium partners, and other transport-related institutions. These interviews provided rich qualitative data, which was supplemented by quantitative analysis drawn from project documents and reports as well as internet-based research on specific aspects.

The evaluation process was iterative, involving multiple rounds of data collection, triangulation, analysis, and validation. This approach ensured that the findings were not only evidence-based but also reflective of the complex realities faced by the projects. The evaluation findings from the field mission were discussed in a debrief with the Rwanda project team to ensure that conclusions and recommendations were based on correct facts.

## Main Findings per Evaluation Criterion

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**Relevance:** MNZ is highly relevant to partner governments' priorities on transport decarbonization and aligns well with global frameworks such as the Paris Agreement and transport-related SDGs. It tackles key barriers frequently cited by partners, such as limited access to finance, weak political will, car-centric planning, data gaps and fragmented responsibilities, mainly through peer learning, capacity building and analytical tools. The Transport & Climate Change Week (TCCW) is widely perceived as a particularly useful format, offering concrete exchanges on electrification, public transport and financing models and helping inform NDC updates, strategies and project ideas. Also, the NDC Transport Tracker responds to governments' needs for benchmarking and transparency, though its level of awareness and day-to-day use remain limited. In Rwanda, Output III is strongly aligned with NDC priorities and the urgent need for cleaner urban mobility; the current focus on public transport electrification and enabling policies aligns with national preferences, even if it moves away from the original ambition to pilot a transformative paratransit reform. Overall, MNZ is designed in a gender-responsive way and recognizes women's specific mobility needs, but has not fully exploited gender-transformative potential. The main relevance gaps concern limited engagement of high-level political leaders and only partial linkage to actual financing and investment pipelines.

**Planning, Steering and Coherence:** Planning is solid for the global components (Outputs I–II): scopes, work packages, timelines and risks are clearly defined, and the reconstructed Theory of Change now better reflects causal links. By contrast, planning for the implementation-oriented components (III–V) is weaker. The paratransit concept for Output III was developed before Rwanda was chosen, leading

to misalignment and a later shift toward bus electrification. Outputs IV and V are constrained by complex and slow co-financing arrangements with AFD and CAF. The mixed architecture—global knowledge work almost complete while investment components are just starting—has required extensions and the spin-off of MNZ II. The results framework is mostly SMART but lacks annual targets and includes a few underspecified indicators. Monitoring is well organized at output level via a central table and event tracker but does not systematically cover activities. Budget planning required two formal amendments, which is manageable but shows that initial assumptions did not fully match reality. Steering is generally effective: a central coordination role, quarterly global meetings and a shared monitoring system underpin results-based management and accountability. Output III is monitored centrally and in-country, although delays and political uncertainties have complicated steering. Cooperation formats are appropriate, combining bilateral and multilateral engagement and leveraging the complementary roles of GIZ and Agora. The project is well connected to other initiatives, with TCCW functioning as an important hub, but links to high-level policymakers and financial institutions remain weaker than they could be.

**Effectiveness:** The project logic remains valid and has not required fundamental redesign, only moderate refinement of indicators and outputs. At output level, performance is strong for Outputs I and II: three TCCWs, multiple events, studies and discussion papers, the NDC Transport Tracker and the Transport Data Commons Initiative are in place. Output III in Rwanda, despite a six-month delay, has largely delivered its planned strategic and preparatory activities for public transport electrification. Outputs IV and V are still in early implementation and could not meaningfully be assessed. Outcome-level evidence is emerging but limited and mostly indirect. There are plausible contributions to more ambitious transport content in NDCs and to concrete planning and project pipelines (e.g., Rwanda's NDC 3.0 and Transport Sector Strategic Plan), but formal outcome indicators have not yet been met, partly due to timing and to external factors such as political decisions and finance. The NDC Transport Tracker has clear potential for impact but is underused and currently too descriptive for many practitioners' needs. Overall, MNZ is effective at delivering outputs and initiating promising change processes, but measurable outcome shifts are only starting to appear.

**Transformational Impact and Sustainability:** MNZ's main transformational contribution lies in strengthening enabling conditions (governance, data systems, peer learning and international cooperation) rather than delivering direct, quantifiable emission reductions. TCCW and related formats support cross-regional learning, peer pressure and shared narratives; Output III contributes to institutional learning and investment pipelines in Rwanda. However, several gaps limit transformational potential: high-level policymakers are not systematically engaged; structural coordination between climate and transport institutions is weak; and connections to concrete finance and business models are partial. Gender aspects are acknowledged but not yet used in a transformative way. The project helps build structures that could outlast its lifetime, such as data practices, peer-learning routines, networks and links between German and international debates, but their durability depends on continued funding, clear institutional anchors and stronger political ownership, especially for the NDC Transport Tracker and recurring events such as TCCW.

**Safeguards:** MNZ's low-risk (C) safeguards rating is plausible. Identified risks relate mainly to labour conditions, safety for vulnerable groups in public transport and potential impacts on indigenous and marginalized communities in future implementation. Mitigation relies on GIZ/Agora procedures and inclusive consultations. Reporting is brief but regular; no negative environmental or social impacts have been observed so far.

**IKI Standard Indicators:** The current IKI Standard Indicators only partly capture MNZ's contribution. SI 1 (mitigation) is set to zero because MNZ's enabling role cannot be directly translated into attributable GHG reductions, even though it clearly raises mitigation potential. SI 4 (capacity) is suitable; the project has already exceeded its target for people supported through trainings and events. Potential contributions to SI 3 (adaptation) and SI 5 (leveraged finance) are not yet reported but would better reflect MNZ's work on resilient transport systems and investment preparation.

## **Main Recommendations**

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The recommendations focus on strengthening the strategic orientation, implementation capacity and visibility of Mobilize Net Zero.

**Strategic alignment and project planning:** Strategically, it is proposed to extend the timeframe for Output III beyond June 2026, with clear break conditions, and to develop a dedicated paratransit project in another East African country so that expected outputs can be completed. GIZ should continue to leverage Green Climate Fund (GCF) resources with a clear scaling rationale, remain flexible regarding IKI opportunities, and invest in sustained engagement and internal learning on GCF processes. The finance dimension should be deepened by linking MNZ more systematically to financiers and investment pipelines and by addressing legal and regulatory reforms needed for electrification. Cooperation with development banks and initiatives such as the City Climate Finance Gap Fund should be expanded to jointly mobilize resources for e-mobility.

**Coordination, partnerships and synergies:** The political profile of TCCW should be raised to become a high-level flagship event that regularly involves ministers and senior policymakers through targeted, politically framed formats. In Rwanda, GIZ should strengthen coordination and synergies with donors and local governments, especially Kigali City and surrounding cities alongside MININFRA, to align e-mobility efforts and implement MNZ interventions..

**Project activities, tools and capacity building:** Improve the NDC Transport Tracker's usability and practical value by enhancing navigation/visualizations, adding implementation tools (e.g., regulatory and financing examples, case studies, progress tracking), and linking it more systematically with the Changing Transport website to boost uptake. Meet ongoing capacity needs through follow-up trainings that clarify institutional application and by institutionalizing Communities of Practice to sustain peer learning beyond TCCW.

**Monitoring, indicators and transparency:** Monitoring should be improved through stronger mechanisms to track MNZ achievements, revising key indicators (notably 4.2 and 5.1) and broadening reporting on IKI Standard Indicators.

**Outreach and dissemination:** Outreach should be strengthened through a structured dissemination strategy for MNZ products and activities and by encouraging implementing partners to publish technical reports to share lessons learned, increase transparency and support resource mobilization.