Cities for Mobility

World Congress 2008 City of Stuttgart
June 1-4, 2008

The Transport System in the City of Yaoundé, Cameroon

Presented by

Mr Gilbert Tsimi Evouna
Government Delegate of the Urban Council of Yaoundé

Dear Mayors, dear participants,

I am happy to present to you the experiences on urban transport of the City of Yaoundé of which I am the mayor.

During my presentation I shall cover the following points:

– The context
– The characteristics of urban transport in Yaounde
– The problems of urban transport
– The measures taken by the public authorities of the city
– The perspectives in transport management
I The context

Yaoundé, the capital of the Republic of Cameroon, is an agglomeration of 304 square km with about 2 million inhabitants and an average population growth of 6.8% annually.

The institutional and elementary framework of urban transport is characterized by multiple stakeholders. This sometimes entails overlapping competencies and responsibilities making coordination of joint action difficult.

1. The characteristics of transport in Yaoundé

1.1. The road network and equipment

The major part of the administrative and commercial activities is concentrated in the centre of town, while the residential areas are mainly situated in the periphery. Traffic arteries are therefore running mainly from the periphery to the centre of town and vice versa. In general, the road network is made up of three categories:

- The main roads forming the principle traffic routes of the city
- Secondary roads that are in number limited and which are concentrically linking the different quarters of town
- And last but not least tertiary roads that generally are not paved and that ensure the linkages within town quarters.

In total the road network consists of 450 km paved road and 900 km of dirt roads.
2. Parking areas

In general, parking solutions have not been satisfactory yet with more severe problems during working hours in the centre of town. Moreover, the general habits of drivers to insist on parking directly in front of their destination, aggravates the problem.

However, a beginning of a solution has been found for this problem by regulatory measures that have recently been put in place by the authorities of the urban city council complemented by the establishment of specific parking spaces for taxis and buses.

3. Traffic signalisation equipment and road marking

In general the signalisation is insufficient, but there are efforts to improve on the horizontal and vertical system as well as traffic and street lights.

4. Modes of transport in Yaounde

With regards to passenger transport, we distinguish seven different modes.

Collective taxis are the first and most important mode of transport. They proceed generally by picking up and dropping passengers on the way. They make up the major part of transport in the centre of town and more than 50% of passengers use this kind of transport. However drivers and passengers still do not respect sufficiently the designated drop off areas.
This entails consequently continued traffic congestions and cause much too often accidents.

**The second mode** of transport is made up of mainly privately imported second hand vehicles. They allow the owner to ensure the transport for his family to work, to school as well as to run all other kinds of errands.

**The third mode** of transport is going on foot which is the most common way of commuting, particularly for short distances.

**The fourth mode** of transport are mini buses that circulate in the periphery of the city with specific destinations. They serve citizens living in the peri-urban zones and in the suburbs.

**The fifth mode of transport** are motorbikes. This kind of transport has become, with the importation of low cost motorbikes from China, the cheapest way of transport for the citizens with limited income. In addition to motorbikes used for individual purposes, there are moto-taxis, also known as bentskinns. Their rapidly increasing number causes massif disturbances to the traffic flow. To improve on that situation, the authorities of the Yaoundé Urban Council have defined specific zones for motor-taxi activities. They are only authorized to circulate in the peri-urban areas.

**The sixth mode of transport** are busses: As the city keeps on growing the mini buses cannot satisfy anymore all the demands for transport from the periphery to the center and back. For that reason more and more bigger busses ensure transport to and from these zones with specific destinations and designated passenger entry points.
Since August 2006 a new transport company which is called “the bus” has been created. Their buses circulate on specially designated lanes according to the density of the traffic. The company is a public private partnership between a private investor and the city of Yaoundé. The mayor of the city of Yaoundé is the president of the board of the company.

**The seventh mode of transport** are the tricycles and bicycles, which are because of the hilly environment or topography of Yaoundé not very popular and therefore rarely used.

### III The problems of urban transport in Yaoundé

Yaoundé encounters the following problems in its urban transport system:

- Insufficient infrastructure and equipment
- The behaviour of the citizens (bad driving, non respect of regulations, and disorderly parking)
- Lack of security (aggressions, accidents due to drunk driving of some drivers)
- Bad attitudes of security forces in traffic controls
- Lack of maintenance of the vehicles
- Insufficient quantity and quality of vehicles for public transport
IV Measures taken by the local authorities to solve these problems

The urban council of Yaounde has undertaken several measures to improve the road system:

– Construction of final bus stations, bus stations and shelters for inner city traffic,
– Installation of horizontal and vertical traffic direction systems, reparation of traffic lights,
– Construction of foot ways,
– Renovation of the public lightening system and
– Construction of inter-city bus stations.

V Future perspective

In order to improve on the public transport situation the City of Yaounde is planning on elaborating and implementing a communication strategy for all stakeholders involved in public transport systems, such as citizens, the public and private sector as well as the transport trade unions.

Thank you very much for your attention