

RESEARCH PAPER

# UNDERSTANDING INFORMAL TRANSPORT IN AFRICA:

LABOUR IMPACT ASSESSMENTS  
AS TOOLS TO IMPROVE WORKERS'  
CONDITIONS

**VREF**

VOLVO RESEARCH  
AND EDUCATIONAL  
FOUNDATIONS



**Prepared by Global Labour Institute (GLI) Manchester, with support from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and the Informal and Shared Mobility in Low- and Middle-Income Countries Research Program of the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF). This report draws on extensive project work in Africa supported by Union to Union, SEKO and Kommunal in Sweden.**



The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a democratic, affiliate-led global federation of 740 trade unions in 150 countries, representing nearly 16.5 million working men and women in all transport sectors. The ITF passionately campaigns for transport workers' rights, equality and justice.



The Global Labour Institute in Manchester is a not-for-profit organisation supporting the international trade union movement through education and research. It specialises in political education, organisation and trade union policy with informal economy workers, gender equality, climate crisis and just transition, and the design and management of international workers' education programmes.



VREF, the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations, is the collective name under which four foundations collaborate to finance research and education in the areas of transportation, environment and energy. The overriding goal is to strengthen accessibility for all groups while at the same time radically reduce negative local and global environmental impacts of transportation.

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# SUMMARY

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Since 2010, the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and the Global Labour Institute (GLI) have been working on labour and employment issues in the informal transport industry, and have identified the urgent need to understand the current and potential future impact of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects on employment. As a result, the ITF commissioned GLI to undertake a sequence of Labour Impact Assessments in Nairobi (2017–18), Dakar (2019) and Abidjan (2022). The GLI was also commissioned by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) in Kampala (2019–20), and Ghana Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project (GUMAP) in Accra (2021) to undertake research using the same methodology.

Labour Impact Assessments share key common characteristics:

- participatory research methods,
- innovative research tools,
- a broad and inclusive definition of 'transport worker' to include all those directly dependent on informal transport for their livelihoods,
- partnership with local academic institutions,
- support for constructive dialogue and negotiation between trade unions and transport authorities,
- Most importantly, they are based on the active participation of trade unions and workers' associations representing informal transport workers.

In 2024, the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF), ITF and GLI recognised that there was an opportunity to review the research undertaken in all five cities, draw together some generalised findings and proposals that may have broader international value and relevance for public transport reform, review and document the participative research methodology that evolved through the sequence of projects, and identify opportunities for mainstreaming Labour Impact Assessments to improve workers' conditions during public transport reform initiatives.



Dakar mapping

# LABOUR IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The core research methods of Labour Impact Assessments include questionnaire surveys, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews among informal transport workers potentially affected by the introduction of BRT.

Unions and workers' associations are active partners and beneficiaries from the outset. This enables field research, particularly the large-scale questionnaire surveys, to have a higher chance that the workers being interviewed will trust the researchers sufficiently to give more honest and accurate information than they would when responding to questions from 'outsider' academic researchers or consultants.

These organisations representing transport workers actively participate in the planning and delivery of each project, supported by local academic partners.

Across the five cities:

3,221 interviews were completed in **questionnaire surveys** across the five cities, capturing data on workforce characteristics, working conditions, livelihoods, operations, awareness and attitudes towards BRT and proposals for reform.

41 **focus group discussions** explored in more depth the major issues participants currently face at work, the issues facing passenger transport, current awareness and knowledge of the proposed introduction of BRT and/or other proposed reforms, and their own ideas and suggestions for improvement.

88 **in-depth interviews** were completed among drivers, owner-drivers and small-scale fleet owners to build detailed illustrative examples of the micro-economics of operations, including the main factors that affect livelihoods, operating costs and income.

Where possible, draft research reports were presented and discussed in seminars attended by the unions, associations, academic partners, the relevant transport authorities and government representatives, and a range of other invited key stakeholders (such as lending institutions, donor organisations, and NGOs).

# MAJOR FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

**There are numerous occupations within the informal passenger transport workforce. Many people depend on it for their livelihoods, not just drivers or vehicle owners. These other workers are frequently overlooked when considering the impact of reforms on employment and the economy, and rarely included in consultations and surveys undertaken by transport authorities.**

The overwhelming majority of workers are men, although there are examples to be found of women drivers, conductors and motorcycle taxi riders. Most women directly dependent on the industry for their livelihoods are vendors in the terminals.

Despite some popular perceptions that the workforce is dominated by young people, the surveys revealed a wide range of ages. Similarly, despite a widespread view that informal economy workers are uneducated, most workers had completed secondary school education. Few workers, particularly drivers and motorcycle taxi riders, had completed any form of vocational training. Most workers have been in the industry for many years.

The informal transport economy is driven by the so-called '**target system**', within which the majority of drivers are informally employed by vehicle owners. Drivers pay a daily or weekly fee to the vehicle owner and derive their earnings from whatever money is left over after subtracting the target and other expenses. The target system has serious negative impacts for drivers and passengers alike, with drivers incentivised to work long hours and drive aggressively and dangerously to meet their daily target fees.

It is frequently difficult to determine vehicle ownership. In some cities, there is widespread belief that large fleets are owned by people with powerful political and commercial interests. Many taxi crews and stage workers do not know who owns the taxis they operate. Target payments are often made to owners' agents or proxies, rather than the owners themselves, and true ownership may be shrouded in secrecy.

Investment by large fleet owners may be declining as they fail to make good returns on their capital, while at the same time more small operators and drivers are entering the market. Owner-drivers and small-scale fleet owners are able to make a modest income, but many are unable to cover the true cost of maintenance or depreciation, so (in effect) drive the vehicles into the ground. Nevertheless, many drivers informally employed on the target system aspire to become owners.

Many owner-drivers and small-fleet owners are in debt, with vehicles bought with a loan from banks or vehicle dealers, often with very high rates of interest. Some drivers who are unable to access formal loans buy their own vehicles through 'work and pay', a form of hire purchase agreement between the driver and former owner (or other informal lender). The driver makes an initial large payment and then

the rest of the money is repaid on a very high interest rate.

The questionnaire surveys include questions designed to measure the **typical net income** of workers in different occupations. The resulting data have significant limitations. Many workers are not aware of their own accounts, or they do not separate personal spending from day-to-day necessary work expenses, and in a short street interview there is always the possibility that the respondent does not trust the surveyor sufficiently to give an accurate example of typical income and expenditure.

Moreover, income and expenditure can significantly fluctuate from one day to another. Disruptive weather, public events, political unrest, breakdowns, and other factors can all significantly affect earnings.

Despite these limitations, questionnaire surveys provide some approximation of net daily incomes. Most informal transport workers earn less than workers in the formal economy, although there are exceptions, particularly among skilled service workers such as mechanics. In all cases, reported earnings vary enormously. There are stark differences in earnings between men and women.

The difficulties in gaining an accurate picture of livelihoods through questionnaire surveys alone prompted the development of longer, in-depth interviews with a small sample of workers. These are designed to analyse patterns of income and expenditure in greater depth, although these are, at best, illustrative rather than definitive profiles.

For drivers on the target system, the single greatest cost of operations is the purchase of fuel, closely followed by the target fee itself. Other major costs include payments to other workers (conductors and relief drivers), police bribes, terminal fees and maintenance.

Typical daily earnings vary greatly between fleet owners, owner drivers/riders and target drivers and riders, depending on a range of factors, including the routes operated, the size

and condition of the vehicle, and the number of hours worked.

In most Labour Impact Assessments, there has been no attempt to measure the profitability of operations, so they are restricted to estimates of operational costs and revenue. In Kampala, however, there was an attempt to estimate the profitability of owner-drivers and small fleet owners. (There was no attempt to estimate the livelihoods or profitability of owners of large fleets.) Although very limited, these examples demonstrate that the industry is extremely precarious, and it does not take much for a driver or owner-driver to lose money. Profitability can vary wildly from one day to another. All it needs is a thunderstorm, a crackdown by police or a mechanical breakdown to push an owner-driver into debt. On the other hand, on a good day a driver can make good money. Most owners have no idea whether their business is profitable or not.

## Issues facing the workforce

When asked to identify the major problems faced at work, by far the most common response was **police harassment**. It appears to be a feature of the industry in every city. Police are accused of bribery, arbitrary arrests, extortion and brutality.

The informal transport economy is dominated by **insecure and precarious work**. Very few workers have any form of contract. There can be major fluctuations in income, depending on a variety of external factors – such as the weather, congestion, public events, ‘crackdowns’ on regulations, or levels of police harassment. Fluctuating costs – particularly sudden increases in the cost of fuel – can dramatically affect livelihoods.

There is **little or no social protection** – no provision, for example, for retirement, sickness, or maternity. Many workers depend on informal self-help organisations and welfare funds. The extent of insecurity was dramatically exposed



during the Covid-19 pandemic, which had a devastating impact on informal transport workers.

**Extreme working hours** are one of the most important characteristics of working life in the informal transport industry, the direct result of the target system. Workers paying high target fees to vehicle owners are unable to earn money for themselves until they have worked sufficient hours to pay the target. Long working hours lead to other major problems – aggressive driving, crashes, use of drugs and alcohol to keep awake, and other health problems, as well as the impact on family responsibilities and social life.

Vehicle crews and station workers suffer from a very **poor working environment**. Pollution from old and poorly maintained vehicles leads to very bad air quality. Terminals have very little shelter from rain, sun and dust. Lack of adequate sanitation is a particularly important issue, especially for women. Service workers, such as food vendors and mechanics, complain of expensive or unavailable water and electricity and lack of sufficient secure working space.

There is an undercurrent of resentment and frustration against what is perceived to be a **lack of respect** for transport workers, whether among passengers, the authorities, or the media. They are frequently portrayed as criminals and gangsters.

There are undoubtedly **high levels of crime** in and around informal transport, particularly petty theft and a general lack of personal security. Carrying cash makes drivers and riders particularly vulnerable to violent crime. There are also more structural problems of organised crime and criminal gangs, sometimes exacerbated or supported by police corruption. There is also a widespread belief that some of the illegal activity is linked to powerful politicians and others in authority.

Workers report a wide range of **health and safety problems**, closely connected to the poor working conditions, insecure

employment, quality of work equipment, and long working hours linked to fatigue. Aggressive driving and the poor state of the roads frequently cause crashes. There are also problems of drug and alcohol abuse, a consequence of the excessive working hours.

## Issues faced by women workers

There is **widespread discrimination** against women trying to find work in more lucrative and secure jobs, such as vehicle crew members, and off-road service areas tend to be dominated by men. There are still strong cultural and attitudinal barriers to women in the industry and hostility from vehicle owners, passengers and fellow workers. The lack of training opportunities, lack of sanitation in the workplace, and the lack of social protection such as maternity pay disproportionately affect women.

The major concern for many women when trying to get into the industry and during work, is the **widespread sexual harassment** – from vehicle owners, other transport workers and passengers. Women workers complain that they feel forced to 'put up' with harassment and demands for sex in order to keep their jobs.

## Organisation and representation

To those unaccustomed to the informal transport industry, a bus terminal or motorcycle taxi stage can appear to be chaotic and disorganised, but these workplaces are highly organised, with rules and procedures which are clear to everyone working there. The forms of workplace management and organisation vary considerably from city to city, but are often under the umbrella of a trade union or association, and often with overlapping membership of workers and vehicle owners.

There are major differences between the trade unions, their roles in the operational management of passenger transport, and their relationships with workers' and owners' associations. Some of these differences are rooted in their respective Francophone and Anglophone colonial and post-colonial histories, which have shaped labour laws, union structures and culture, and relationships between unions and political parties.

In some cases, there are major conflicts of interest for unions. Some are responsible for the management and operation of the routes and stations and maintain discipline over the workforce. Unions depend on the collection of fees for their income, rather than membership dues paid voluntarily. It can be a very lucrative business. On the other hand, unions defend and promote the interests of their members through negotiation and collective bargaining with the authorities to improve livelihoods and working conditions. These conflicts of interest can lead to considerable dissatisfaction among the workers.

## Awareness and attitudes towards BRT and reform

Except for Accra, where a version of BRT had already been introduced and therefore well-known, the surveys in every city included a question on whether the respondents were aware of BRT. In Nairobi and Abidjan, a clear majority had not heard of BRT; in the other cities, there was greater awareness.

Most workers interviewed are opposed to the introduction of BRT. In each city, focus groups were asked to discuss why BRT was or was not a good idea, and how BRT might affect their work. The most common reason for the negative reactions to the prospect of BRT is, not surprisingly, **fear of the potential loss of jobs and livelihoods**.

Workers also complain of the lack of effective consultation, a lack of respect for the experience and knowledge of informal

economy workers in the public transport industry, and exclusion from the development of plans and ideas for improvement.

There is a very high degree of cynicism about the competence and ability of the government to successfully deliver any major public transport improvement projects, based on the extent of corruption and the historical evidence of past failures. There is also a suspicion that BRT will only benefit the better-off passengers, or is proposed as a means of driving the poor off the streets.

On the other hand, some questionnaire respondents and focus groups participants highlight what they perceived to be some potentially positive impacts of BRT – benefitting the economic development of the country, improving the transport system and reducing congestion, bringing better quality employment, and contributing to a safer and cleaner environment.

## Attitudes towards reform policies and proposals

The first Labour Impact Assessment in Nairobi and the subsequent assessments in Dakar and Abidjan concentrated on the potential impact of BRT, but studies in Kampala and Accra were broader, investigating attitudes and awareness towards some of the other measures to reform and improve public transport being considered by the authorities.

The majority of workers interviewed find it very difficult to envisage a public transport system that operates under a different business model to the familiar cash-based fill-and-run operations run on a target system with many vehicle owners competing for business.

Workers are overwhelmingly negative to the idea of **scheduled services**, fearing a decline in work and income. Despite the explanation that it could lead to a stable fixed income (wage) and reduced working hours, the large

majority believe that it would make it more difficult to reach their daily target for the owners and would lead to even longer working hours.

Many believe that the **reorganisation of services into operating companies** would discriminate against them, and will only employ people they already know, or restrict jobs to their family members. Some think that companies (or the government) would be incapable of running the public transport system.

Vehicle crews are overwhelmingly opposed to the idea of **going cashless**, worried about the ability of passengers to use the system to defraud them and concerned about losing conductors' jobs. There are also worries that they will not have the necessary cash to cover essential expenses, such as police bribes and repairs. Service and station workers are universally opposed.

A large majority of respondents recognise the need for **fleet modernisation** and to replace old, polluting vehicles. Most believe that the government should pay for new vehicles or recompense owners for scrapping the old ones.

Taxi caller



# IMPACT

Interviews with some of the policymakers, researchers and industry representatives concerned with the reform of public transport reveal a noticeable shift in policy discussions in recent years, a growth of interest in understanding the internal dynamics of the industry, and a greater recognition that urban transport reform without the engagement of those stakeholders within the informal economy is likely to fail.

The contribution of Labour Impact Assessments to this shift in policy 'mood music' is difficult to judge, but they have had some influence.

Labour Impact Assessments have also had some impact in building a more detailed understanding of how the industry operates: such as employment relationships, business models, micro-economic eco-systems, and the internal organisation.

A detailed assessment of the direct impact on immediate livelihoods and working conditions of workers is beyond the scope of this review. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that the attention given to the workforce by the

assessments, especially where the reports and follow-up activities have been covered in local media, have led to some improvements – in the behaviour of the police, for example. There has certainly been a strengthened voice of workers, but progress in practical livelihoods and working conditions is slow.

The Labour Impact Assessments, particularly the seminars in which the reports from the research are presented and discussed, provide a very important opportunity for the participating unions and associations, the transport authorities and other stakeholders to meet – sometimes for the first time. This opens the door to the development of longer-term opportunities for discussion, consultation, and negotiation. They also lead to the improved organisational capacity and negotiating strength of unions and associations directly participating in the research.

Nevertheless, the capacity of the unions and associations remains very low in some of the cities to make the most of the opportunities, particularly where workers are divided into dozens of competing organisations.

# KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Building trust and respect

Overall, the lack of trust or confidence among workers in the capacity, ability or integrity of authorities responsible for transport planning, regulation and implementation is a major problem throughout the industry. Few transport authorities have the necessary knowledge or experience to understand the social, economic or political impact of their planning and regulation decisions on the informal workforce.

This can exacerbate both distrust among the workforce in the ability of government to manage or regulate the transport industry, and distrust of the proposals for reform. Workers see no evidence that the authorities have made any serious attempts to address the major issues facing the informal transport workforce. There is an absence of serious opportunities for workforce representatives to learn about and discuss ideas, and participate in the development of proposals for reform.

Where consultation does occur, it is often with employers (owners of vehicles) and/or after plans have already been decided or begun to be implemented, adding to the frustration and distrust of the workers and their representatives.

To build the essential level of trust and confidence to achieve reform that is inclusive of and supported by workers requires consultation and negotiation at the early stages of planning and development of projects, with agreed terms of reference and procedures.

In 2015, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted the ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy

Recommendation (R204). This provides a valuable policy framework for governments and transport authorities when considering the reform of services, including specific recommendations on the need for the inclusion of workers and employers/owners in planning. In reforming informal public transport, planners and authorities should develop and elaborate specific guidelines on the implementation of R204.

## Capacity-building for workers, owners and governments

Capacity development is needed for constituent organisations, both workers and informal employers (owners) to provide education and information to their members, enable them to democratically represent their interests, engage in policy development, and fully participate in negotiations with transport authorities. Greater capacity is also needed by government agencies and transport authorities to build an understanding of the industry, and to engage meaningfully with workers' and employers' organisations.

There is also an urgent need to support the development of unity and democratic accountability of representative organisations. The splintering of workers' and owners' representation into multiple rival unions and associations makes it very difficult for them and transport authorities to engage in coherent and articulate negotiation. Trade unions, workers' associations and owners' organisations need long-term investment in organisational development, democratic accountability, and conflict resolution and mediation, tailored to local political and social circumstances.

## Address the immediate concerns

It is essential that transport authorities recognise and acknowledge the immediate major problems identified by workers in the informal urban passenger transport industry, and establish procedures and structures capable of serious consultation and negotiation to find solutions. The key tasks include:

- Identify and implement alternatives to the target system, including formal employment within the public, private or cooperative sectors or through forms of self-employment.
- Establish efficient and comprehensive registration of vehicle owners, especially in the context of informal transport systems where true ownership is hidden or deliberately obscured.
- Transport authorities to take responsibility for removing barriers to good quality employment for women in transport, and to ensure working conditions that are safe from violence and harassment.
- Develop training programmes for workers, not just driver training for new bus services such as BRT, but broader opportunities for training and apprenticeships amongst all workers in the industry, with specific training and employment opportunities for women to remove gender-based occupational segregation.
- End police harassment and extortion. This should include acknowledgement of the scale of the problem by governments and transport authorities, coordination of policy and regulation between the security services and transport authorities, and the establishment of negotiation procedures with representative trade unions and associations to identify practical solutions.
- Improve working conditions. This should include practical improvements to the transport workplace, including sanitation, shelter, drainage, rest and catering areas, and other facilities.

- Ensure secure and safe working space for service workers, and access to affordable services (electricity and water), tools and equipment with which to work safely.
- Provide access to affordable capital for electrification and recapitalisation of vehicles, and identify sources of affordable loans or subsidies that will assist the recapitalisation of vehicles in the process of reform and environmental protection.
- Extend state-supported social protection programmes or, in the absence of adequate state provision, support workers' organisations who organise informal social protection services to extend and improve provision.

## Improving Labour Impact Assessment methodology

There is an opportunity to deepen our understanding through a more advanced statistical meta-analysis of the data gathered from those assessments already undertaken.

A more detailed and rigorous evaluation of methodology could be achieved through broader discussion involving the researchers in research institutions who played a significant role in each city, international research specialists, and representatives of the unions, associations and transport authorities involved.

Such an evaluation could include consideration of further technical improvements, such as the triangulation of research findings from other sources to validate and verify the data, or the development of cost-benefit analyses of potential investment in reform.

# Mainstreaming Labour Impact Assessments

There is a need to explore how the Labour Impact Assessment methodology can be adapted and developed for wider application in the procedures and policies of city authorities, national governments, multilateral development banks, and other international stakeholders when considering proposals for major public transport projects, as a condition for loans or grants.

It is essential that planning of projects to reform informal public transport includes Labour Impact Assessments, yet the ability and capacity of government agencies to conduct impact assessments alone is limited.

Trade unions and workers' associations are in a unique position to work alongside the authorities and research institutions to undertake Labour Impact Assessments, capable of gaining the trust and support of workers in the industry.

To extend, develop and mainstream Labour Impact Assessments requires a longer-term commitment to financially support a programme in Africa or in more than one region to build the capacity of unions and associations.

Such a programme should provide training and support for unions and associations, academic researchers and transport authorities from selected countries where major transport reform or infrastructure projects are being planned, to undertake Labour Impact Assessments, building on the experience of those organisations who have already participated.

It should also enable the participating organisations to discuss and exchange policy ideas, review practical progress on the immediate issues identified in the assessments, publish reports and policy guides on the reform and just transition of the informal transport industry, and contribute to emergent learning with other organisations, such as the VREF International Research Program, the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) Paratransit Working Group, the Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) Public Transport Network, and the ILO.

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# GLOSSARY

## Informal transport industry terms

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- Abakuma ekondo (Kampala)** — Wheel-clamper
- Adiaga Ndiayes (Dakar)** — Bus (35–45 seats)
- Apprentice (Abidjan)** — Conductor
- Boda-boda (Kampala)** — Motorcycle taxi
- Call-boy (Nairobi)** — Caller at terminal
- Car Rapide (Dakar)** — Minibus (20–30 seats)
- Chapa** – Minibus
- Chargeur (Abidjan)** — Despatcher
- Coxeur (Abidjan)** — Caller at terminal
- Daily sales (Accra)** — Target fee
- Drone (Kampala)** — Toyota Hiace 12-seater minibus
- L'embauche (Abidjan)** — Relief driver
- Ferraileur (Abidjan)** — Spare parts dealer
- Ferronnier (Abidjan)** — Ironmonger
- Floater (Accra)** — Vehicles operating outside terminals
- Gbâkâ (Abidjan)** — Minibus
- Gnambros (Abidjan)** — Callers/thugs
- Guichetier (Abidjan)** — Moneychanger
- Kamagera (Nairobi)** — Caller at terminal
- Matatu (Nairobi)** — Bus
- Mate (Accra)** — Conductor
- Mananbas (Nairobi)** — Caller at terminal
- Mudjero (Maputo)** — Caller at terminal
- Okada (Accra)** — Motorcycle taxi
- Parallelisme (Abidjan)** — Wheel balancer/tracking mechanic
- Piggaseti (Nairobi)** — Decoy passengers
- Radarman (Nairobi)** — Look-out (to warn of police)
- Soudeur (Abidjan)** — Welder
- Squad driver (Nairobi)** — Relief driver
- Target** — Daily fee to the vehicle owner
- Taxi (Kampala)** — Minibus
- Tout (Nairobi)** — Caller at terminal
- Tro-tro (Accra)** — Minibus
- Turnboys (Kampala)** — Tyre menders
- VTC** — 'Voiture de Transport avec Chauffeur' (Francophone Africa): platform-based ride-hailing services
- Vulcanisateurs (Abidjan)** — Tyre menders
- Wôro-wôro (Abidjan)** — Shared taxi
- Zomugaga (Kampala)** — Target fee

# ORGANISATIONS

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<b>ACAT-CE</b>	Associação dos Conductores, Auxiliares de Transportes Colectivos e Escolares, Mozambique
<b>ADEFO</b>	Associação de Defesa Dos Motoristas, Cobradores, Fiscais e organizador de parques, Mozambique
<b>AFD</b>	Agence Française de Développement
<b>AFTU</b>	Association de Financement des Professionnels du Transport Urbain (Dakar bus company)
<b>AMUGA</b>	Autorité de la Mobilité Urbaine dans le Grand Abidjan (Abidjan transport authority)
<b>ATGWU</b>	Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union (Uganda)
<b>C40</b>	Cities Climate Leadership Group
<b>CETUD</b>	Conseil Exécutif des Transports Urbains de Dakar (Dakar transport authority)
<b>CNOCP-CI</b>	Conseil National des Organisations de Conducteurs Professionnels de Côte d'Ivoire
<b>DBSA</b>	Development Bank of Southern Africa
<b>FES</b>	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
<b>GCTA</b>	Ghana Co-operative Transport Association
<b>GPRTU</b>	Ghana Private Road Transport Union
<b>GUMAP</b>	Ghana Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>KAMBE</b>	Kampala Metropolitan Boda Boda Entrepreneurs
<b>KCCA</b>	Kampala Capital City Authority
<b>KOTSA</b>	Kampala Operational Taxi Stages Association
<b>KTRN</b>	Kenya Transport Research Network
<b>MLGRD</b>	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (Ghana)
<b>MWU</b>	Matatu Workers Union (Kenya)
<b>OMT</b>	Observatório da Mobilidade e de Transportes de Moçambique
<b>PROTOA</b>	Progressive Transport Owners' Association (Ghana)

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<b>PUTON</b>	Public Transport Operators' Union (Kenya)
<b>SACCO</b>	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisation
<b>SATTS</b>	Syndicat Autonome des Travailleurs du Transport du Sénégal
<b>SDTTR</b>	Syndicat Democratique des Travailleurs du Transport Routier (Senegal)
<b>SINTRAT</b>	Sindicato Nacional do Trabalhadores dos Transportes Rodoviário e Assistência Técnica, Mozambique
<b>SOTRA</b>	Société des Transports Abidjanais (Abidjan bus company)
<b>SSATP</b>	Africa Transport Policy Program
<b>TAWU</b>	Transport Workers' Union of Kenya
<b>U2U</b>	Union to Union
<b>UDTS</b>	Union Démocratique des Travailleurs du Senegal
<b>UITP</b>	International Association of Public Transport
<b>URS</b>	Union des Routiers du Sénégal
<b>UTOF</b>	Uganda Taxi Operators Federation
<b>WIEGO</b>	Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

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Kampala transport station



# INTRODUCTION

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Urban passenger transport throughout low-income countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, is dominated by the informal economy. It directly employs millions of people in a wide range of essential occupations – very often in precarious, low-paid and harmful working conditions. Reform of passenger transport in these cities is urgently needed, to address acute problems of climate change, transport congestion, and inefficiency, and to improve the livelihoods and working conditions of the workforce.

It is increasingly recognised that the informal transport industry cannot be simply replaced by investment in large-scale transport infrastructure projects, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), but will continue to provide essential services, alongside or integrated with other transport modes. This requires innovative incremental reforms towards the reform of informal transport that retains and improves employment, improves transport services, and reduces harmful emissions.

There are, however, some serious obstacles, particularly distrust or opposition to reform from workers and other stakeholders in the informal transport economy, who are rarely included in serious consultation or negotiation in transport planning. If consultation is attempted, it is very frequently restricted to securing the support of informal ‘operators’, normally representatives of vehicle owners or route licence-holders.

Moreover, reform of the informal transport economy requires a detailed understanding of how the economy works in practice: the transactions and value chains, operating costs and revenues, employment relationships, profitability, debt, availability of capital investment, and other factors that combine as a complex economic and political ecosystem upon which millions depend for their livelihoods. It also requires a detailed understanding of the issues and problems currently faced by the workforce, including the working conditions, the precariousness of livelihoods, and the impact of conflict and criminality.

Since 2017, the Global Labour Institute (GLI) and local academic partners have undertaken Labour Impact Assessments in Nairobi, Kampala, Dakar, Abidjan and Accra, providing a unique understanding of employment relationships and working conditions in informal passenger transport, and made possible by the active engagement and participation of the workers and their representative organisations. These provided a detailed understanding of informal transport operations, economy and organisation, and explored the linkages between labour conditions and the viability of steps towards greater efficiency and decarbonisation of public transport.

The Labour Impact Assessments were commissioned by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) at the conception phase of BRT projects in Nairobi, Dakar and Abidjan. The same approach and methodology were adapted for research in Kampala, commissioned by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) to support the Government of Uganda and the Kampala Capital City Authority, and in Accra, commissioned by Transitec Consulting Engineers to support the Ghana Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project (GUMAP)<sup>1</sup>.

In 2024, GLI, in partnership with the ITF and the Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF), conducted a review and synthesis of findings and methodologies from the Labour Impact Assessments across the five cities. This report attempts to produce a synthesis of the major findings, lessons learned, and recommendations to sector actors, transport planners, and policymakers

concerned with wider reforms (not just BRT). It includes a review and practical guide to the methodology, paying particular attention to the innovative aspects of participation by trade unions and associations throughout the research process, and the development of research tools.

We conclude with recommendations concerning practical steps towards reform and integration of paratransit services. These are based on the inclusion of workers' representation in transport planning and regulation; the development of the Labour Impact Assessment approach for research into Informal and Shared Mobility, particularly in line with VREF's new research programme; and some action points for the application of Labour Impact Assessment approach and methods in the procedures and policies of city authorities, national governments, multilateral development banks, and other international stakeholders.



Accra ocada rider

# REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The review is based on the reports from the Labour Impact Assessments, drawing together some generalised findings, recommendations, and proposals that may have broader international value and relevance for public transport reform. This included, wherever possible, the aggregation of statistical data from surveys in each city to provide comparisons on workforce demographics and livelihoods, and the collation and summary of qualitative data taken from focus group discussions and interviews.

The desk research was complemented by 11 interviews:

04.06.2024

**Simon Saddier** — Senior Urban Transport Specialist, World Bank / SSATP

11.06.2024

**Dr Anne Kamau** — University of Nairobi

14.06.2024

**Dan Mihad** — General Secretary, Transport Workers' Union of Kenya

23.07.2024

**Dr Barry Knight** — Social Scientist and Statistician, CENTRIS<sup>2</sup>

15.07.2024

**Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song** — Senior Employment Intensive Specialist, ILO Geneva

24.07.2024

**Prof. Roger Behrens** — Centre for Transport Studies, University of Cape Town

31.07.2024

**Georges Bianco Darido** — Lead Urban Transport Specialist, World Bank

09.08.2024

**Bayla Sow** — Deputy Africa Regional Secretary, ITF

19.08.2024

**Emmanuel Dommergues** — Head of the Governance Unit, UITP

28.08.2024

**Louise Ribet (in written exchange)** — Senior Manager, Public Transport Network, C40

05.09.2024

**Joaquin Romero de Tejada** — Observatório da Mobilidade e de Transportes de Moçambique

Each interview was conducted and recorded on Zoom (with the exception of Barry Knight), over a period of 30–60 minutes, transcribed using otter.ai, and subsequently edited.

The questions varied, depending on the specific areas of interest of the interviewees, but included:

**How did the Labour Impact Assessment in [city] contribute to your:**

01. Understanding of the informal transport economy?
02. Policies on transport reform and projects in the city, including Bus Rapid Transit?
03. Engagement and negotiation with transport authorities?
04. Improved relationships with informal transport workers?
05. Improved capacity or strength of the union?

**How did the Labour Impact Assessment in [city] contribute to:**

01. An understanding of the informal transport economy and organisation?
02. Policy discussions on the reform of urban transport?
03. The practical implementation of transport projects?
04. Engagement and negotiation with transport workers?

**How have Labour Impact Assessments contributed to:**

01. An understanding of the informal transport economy and organisation?
02. Policies and programmes for the reform of urban transport?
03. The inclusion of workers' representatives (unions and associations) in planning and implementing transport reform?

04. As far as you know, what has been the impact, if any, on transport authorities in the cities concerned?
05. The research approach and methodology has evolved with each LIA, but the active participation of transport trade unions and associations remains central. How would you improve the methodology to enhance the impact?
06. How do you think that the approach could be applied in the procedures and policies of transport authorities and other major stakeholders?

## **'Informal transport'**

Throughout the report, we refer to the 'informal transport' economy, rather than the alternative terms 'paratransit' or 'popular transport'. This is to ensure that there is no confusion with reference to 'paratransit' which, in some circumstances, includes passenger transport in the formal economy. Likewise, 'popular transport', can have an ambiguous meaning. It reflects how informal transport dominates in many low- and middle-income countries, is affordable and flexible, and employs millions of people<sup>3</sup>. On the other hand, it can imply a positive characterisation of an industry that has many problems of terrible working conditions, poor passenger services, environmental damage, and widespread crime and corruption. 'Informal transport' also comes with problems, as it encompasses very diverse aspects of transport. Nevertheless, 'informal transport' economy is preferable, as we are primarily concerned with informality in the context of employment, which is well defined<sup>4</sup>.



## Reform and ‘formalisation’

We have avoided using the term ‘formalisation’, preferring to discuss ‘reform’ of informal transport. There are different definitions and approaches to formalisation, which can be confusing, although both transport authorities and informal transport workers recognise the need for urgent reform of informal passenger transport.

From the perspective of most transport authorities and planners, ‘formalisation’ is synonymous with ‘professionalisation’, ‘corporatisation’ or ‘standardisation’ of public transport, with an emphasis on the consolidation of vehicle ownership, the shift from ‘fill and run’ to scheduled services, and the introduction of new technologies. The Labour Impact Assessments have shown that most workers find it very difficult to envisage such a public transport system, and a majority are at least wary of these proposals, for fear of losing their livelihoods.

From a worker and trade union perspective, positive ‘formalisation’ means reform that leads to better transport services while improving livelihoods, working conditions and respect for labour rights.

## Currency calculations

Throughout this report, USD equivalent figures to local currencies are calculated based on historical exchange rates at the time of field research (see Figure 1).

Historic Forex rates		
City	Date of survey	USD 1.00
Nairobi	November 2018	KES 0.0098
Kampala	January 2020	UGX 0.00027
Accra	April 2021	GHS 0.17
Abidjan	May 2022	XOF 0.0016
Dakar	September 2019	XOF 0.0016

Figure 1. Historic Forex Rates<sup>5</sup>

## Comparative livelihood estimates

There are tables under the section on employment relationships and livelihoods which provide some comparisons between the cities of estimated or illustrative costs, revenue and net incomes, presented in local currencies and their historic US dollar equivalent. Ideally, these should be adjusted to reflect the differences in the cost of living and/or average incomes between the cities, but there is a lack of immediately available, reliable cost of living data available for all five cities.

ILO statistics on hourly earnings of employees provide a useful comparison (see Figure 2), although the data is only available for the country as a whole, rather than for specific cities, and is based solely on those in a formal employment relationship (i.e. 'employees'), excluding those working in the informal economy. Nevertheless, it may be a useful point of reference when comparing livelihood data in this report.

Average hourly earnings of employees							
		Total		Men		Women	
			\$USD		\$USD		\$USD
<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>	2019	XOF 1,046	1.67	XOF 1,117	1.79	XOF 817	1.31
<b>Ghana</b>	2022	GHC 12.76	2.21	GHC 14.56	2.52	GHC 9.27	1.60
<b>Kenya</b>	2019	KES 100.10	0.98	KES 103.15	1.01	KES 94.77	0.93
<b>Senégal</b>	2019	XOF 479	0.77	XOF 520	0.83	XOF 391	0.63
<b>Uganda</b>	2021	UGX 3,512	0.95	UGX 4,116	1.11	UGX 2,126	0.57

Figure 2. Average hourly earnings of employees<sup>6</sup>

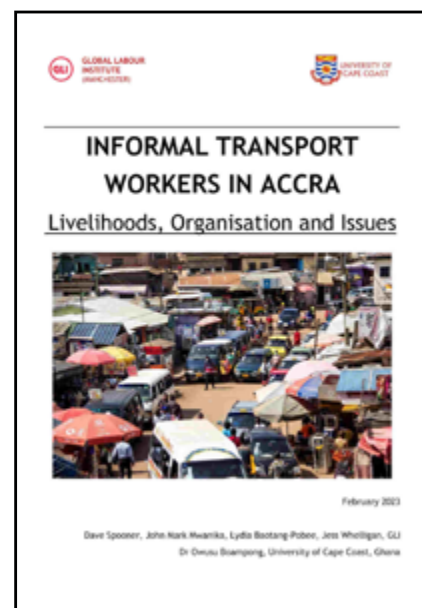
# BACKGROUND

The Global Labour Institute (GLI) has been working closely with the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) since 2010 on labour and employment issues in the informal transport industry. Initial GLI/ITF work included a literature review on Transport Workers in the Urban Informal Economy: Livelihood Profile (2011)<sup>7</sup> and a Baseline Survey on Precarious Labour and Decent Work (2012)<sup>8</sup>.

This research led to the launch of the ITF Informal Transport Workers' Project (2013–16)<sup>9</sup>, which supported ITF-affiliated unions in Latin America, Asia and Africa to explore policies and practical initiatives for the effective representation and organisation of informal transport workers.

The project highlighted an urgent need to understand the current and potential future impact of Bus Rapid Transit projects on employment, particularly in the informal transport industry. As a result, the ITF commissioned GLI in partnership with local universities to undertake a sequence of Labour Impact Assessments in Nairobi (2017–18)<sup>10</sup>, Dakar (2019)<sup>11</sup> and Abidjan (2022)<sup>12</sup>.

As a result of the research in Nairobi and Dakar, GLI was commissioned by Agence Française de Développement (AFD) to support the Government of Uganda and the Kampala Capital City Authority with research into the informal transport economy of Kampala (2019–20)<sup>13</sup>, using the same approach and methodology. This was designed to help understand how transport services can be incrementally improved and professionalised, reduce pollution, maximise opportunities for decent employment, raise labour standards, and integrate informal services in plans for new transport regulation and infrastructure, such as BRT.



Similarly, GLI was commissioned by Transitec Consulting Engineers to contribute to the Ghana Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project (GUMAP) of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development with research on the informal transport workforce in Accra (2021)<sup>14</sup>.

The GLI was subsequently also commissioned in 2024 by the World Bank and the Metropolitan Transport Agency for Maputo to undertake a Labour Impact Assessment survey in Maputo, as part of a study of market-share and value of bus and chapa operations currently licensed to operate in the future BRT trunk corridor and feeder routes. The report is due to be completed in winter 2024.

The approach and methods of each of these assessments stem from a recognition that urban passenger transport is dominated by the informal economy throughout Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs), particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, and millions of people in different occupations rely on the sector for their livelihoods – very often in precarious, low-paid and harmful working conditions. Reform of passenger transport in these cities is urgently needed, to address acute problems of transport emissions, transport congestion and inefficiency, and to improve the livelihoods and working conditions of the workforce.

It is increasingly recognised that the informal transport industry cannot be simply replaced by investment in large-scale transport infrastructure projects such as BRT, but will continue to provide essential services, alongside or integrated with other transport modes. This requires innovative incremental reforms towards the reform of informal transport that retains and improves employment, improves transport services and safety, and reduces harmful emissions.

There are, however, some serious obstacles, particularly distrust or opposition to reform from workers in the informal transport economy, who are rarely included in serious consultation or negotiation in transport planning. If consultation is attempted, it is very frequently restricted to securing the support of informal ‘operators’, normally representatives of vehicle owners or route licence-holders.



Moreover, reform of the informal transport economy requires a detailed understanding of how the economy works in practice: an understanding of the complexity of transactions and value chains, operating costs and revenues, employment relationships, profitability, debt, availability of capital investment, and other factors that combine as a complex economic ecosystem upon which millions depend for their livelihoods. It also requires a detailed understanding of the issues and problems currently faced by the workforce: such as the working conditions, the precariousness of livelihoods, and the impact of conflict and criminality.

There is very little adequate data collected by local or national governments on the informal transport economy. Therefore, most public transport reform is being planned without a detailed understanding of the system being reformed.

The Labour Impact Assessments are highly unusual, if not unique, in providing the perspectives of workers in the bus station, vehicle service area, or the street; based on their own experiences and in-depth knowledge of the industry. This is achieved through the participation of relevant trade unions and workers' associations representing informal transport workers throughout the research process and actively engaged in the questionnaire surveys, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

The assessments share key common characteristics: participatory research methods, innovative research tools, a broad and inclusive definition of 'transport worker' to include all those directly dependent on informal transport for their livelihoods, partnership with local academic institutions, and support for constructive dialogue and negotiation between trade unions and transport authorities.

The methodology, conclusions and recommendations from Labour Impact Assessments have generated considerable interest from a range of international stakeholders involved in public transport reform, including the World Bank, SSATP Africa Transport Policy Program, Africa Development Bank, the International Association of Public Transport (UITP), the International Labour Organization, and academic and NGO networks concerned with transport policy, social development and climate change.

ITF affiliates have used the findings of Labour Impact Assessments to engage with transport authorities and put forward union proposals for reform. Public launches of the Labour Impact Assessment reports have also generated considerable media interest.

There is now a need and the opportunity to review the research undertaken in all five cities, draw together some generalised findings and proposals that may have broader international value and relevance for public transport reform, review and document the participative research methodology that evolved through the sequence of projects, and identify opportunities for mainstreaming Labour Impact Assessments to improve workers conditions during public transport reform initiatives.

# LABOUR IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

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## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

In 2013, the ITF launched a new project coordinated by GLI to explore the organisation of workers in the informal transport economy, which successfully reached informal transport workers through ITF-affiliated unions in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

It drew on the previous experience of GLI staff in research and development projects with unions, associations and NGOs among workers in other sectors of the informal economy in the 1990s, notably street vending and market trading. This was undertaken with StreetNet International, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)<sup>15</sup>, and with affiliates of the International Federation of Workers' Education Associations (IFWEA)<sup>16</sup>.

The project introduced innovative, experimental methods, including working with and through 'mentor unions', and initial surveying ('mapping') of informal transport workplaces by unions in several cities. This not only made good use of existing union experience and capacities and was an effective use of resources, but also introduced new skills and policy perspectives for both mentor and mentored unions. It clearly had

the potential to be a powerful methodology and warranted further development<sup>17</sup>.

The project also led the ITF to recognise that the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit systems was likely to have major implications for transport workers in numerous cities. It was clear that very few of ITF's affiliates were aware of BRT or its potential impact, and that none had been consulted by the transport planning authorities.

By 2015, the ITF had agreed a plan with GLI to explore the implications of BRT for unions and workers in Africa.

With the financial support through the Swedish trade union development cooperation agency (Union to Union), this led to the first ITF-commissioned Labour Impact Assessment in Nairobi, undertaken with local transport unions during 2017–18, followed by Dakar in 2019 and Abidjan in 2022. As the result of the Nairobi research, GLI was also commissioned to conduct assessments by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) in Kampala in 2019, and by Transitec on behalf of the Ghana Urban Mobility and Accessibility Project in 2021.

The methodology is rooted in the principles of participatory research (“...research designs, methods, and frameworks that use systematic inquiry in direct collaboration with those affected by an issue being studied for the purpose of action or change, engaging those who are not necessarily trained in research but belong to or represent the interests of the people who are the focus of the research...”<sup>18</sup>) and the values of democratic trade unionism. Trade unions, cooperatives and other member-based associations that organise and represent workers in the informal transport economy are actively involved in the research process, from original design, through to fieldwork, reporting and evaluation.

**“The participatory aspect, that’s the best thing, because these people have the expertise. If we want to collect the expertise, we have to go and see them. I have plenty of ideas, but I’m not the one driving the thing. I don’t live there. They know everything, these people. We should just be opening our ears.”**

Emmanuel Dommergues,  
UITP, 19 August 2024

**“Worker dialogue and meaningful representation should be the backbone of any just transition in the transport sector. A participatory approach is valuable not just for equity outcomes. The process also helps to create acceptance of new transport projects, scope out potential resistance points and solutions to these, and thereby makes the development of new transport projects or transition plans more efficient.”**

Correspondence,  
Louise Ribet, C40, 28 August 2024

The approach is the result of long-term relationships between the ITF and its affiliated trade unions, and the inclusion of unions and workers’ associations as active partners and beneficiaries of the assessments from the outset. This enables GLI and the unions to undertake the field research, particularly large-scale questionnaire surveys, with a higher chance that the workers being interviewed or participating in focus groups will trust the researchers sufficiently to give more honest and accurate information than they would when responding to questions from ‘outsider’ academic researchers or consultants.

Roger Behrens, Director of the Centre for Transport Studies at University of Cape Town, for example, describes the experience of doctoral students attempting to get accurate information about labour conditions and revenue from minibuss taxi drivers in Cape Town.

**“When we would ask the drivers about the target and farebox revenue for the day, and how much they take home, we would get one answer. And when we asked the owners, we got a completely different answer. It started to be clear to us that there is this game that’s being played, and it’s being played all the time, so that the drivers have an interest in the owners not knowing what the true value is of the business and wanting to deflate that value constantly.”**

Interview, Roger Behrens,  
University of Cape Town, 24 July 2024

**“It struck me that you were able to begin to quantify some of that financial information in a way that that was unique. It piqued my interest to know how were you able to do this when those before you have been unable to? My back of the envelope theory would be that you are coming into this with ‘we are honest brokers, we are interested in your welfare, we need honest numbers’, and able to develop a trust relationship with your subjects. That meant that the answers that you got were perhaps more accurate.”**

Interview, Roger Behrens,  
University of Cape Town, 24 July 2024

According to statistician Barry Knight, in reviewing the Labour Impact Assessments (see Appendix: GLI’s Methods of Research on Informal Workers in Transport Systems, 26 August 2024), the method has five characteristic features:

- 01. Rigorously empirical:** statistical analysis of quantitative data gained in surveys and qualitative analysis of interviews, focus groups and discussions to give as complete a picture as possible within stated confidence intervals.
- 02. Participatory:** working closely with workers, relevant workers’ associations and trade unions to build a ‘bottom-up’ understanding of the complexities of the organic micro-economy of informal transport services in cities, while ensuring that those who provide existing transport are included and have a voice.

- 03. Grounded in values:** demonstrating respect for all people who are currently involved in transport and seeing the informal economy as a valuable part of how societies work.
- 04. Action based:** the research takes place in the context of new investment in infrastructure and is designed to support that process by including and respecting the views of all stakeholders by following up research with focussed discussions of recommendations.
- 05. A mixed team:** the above features require that the research team is composed of people with very different backgrounds. It must include technical experts such as data analysts, people who have expertise in transport systems, people connected into the world of trade unions, and local people who are involved in the informal transport economy.



# PROJECT COMPONENTS

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**1.**   
**Preliminary engagement with local unions and associations**

**2.**   
**Identification of local research partners**

**3.**   
**Preparation of draft research tools**


**4.**   
**Nomination of volunteer survey teams**

**5.**   
**Training workshop**


**6.**   
**Fieldwork**

- Questionnaire survey
- Focus group discussions
- In-depth interviews
- Stakeholder interviews
- Data entry

**7.**   
**Data estimate validation, management and analysis**

**8.**   
**Preparation of report**

**9.**   
**Report launch seminar**

**10.**   
**Feedback and follow-up**

The methodology evolved during the sequence of work in the five cities, although the main elements have remained constant throughout.

## Preliminary engagement of local unions and associations

Prior to any Labour Impact Assessment, it is essential that the participating trade unions and associations are fully consulted and engaged to ensure that they have ownership of the objectives, activities and anticipated outcomes of the research, and that they are appropriate and directly relevant to their development priorities. This includes discussions with and between union leaders on their strategy for the organisation of workers, their current and future relationships with transport authorities, and awareness and policies towards BRT and the reform of services.

In some circumstances, preliminary work is needed to build trust and cooperation between rival unions and/or between unions and non-union associations or other membership-based workers' organisations in the industry.

It should be noted that some organisations with members in the informal economy may be recognised or formally registered as trade unions but are very different from unions in the more traditional sense, especially where they play a major role in the ownership or management of informal transport operations. At the same time, there are

democratic organisations registered as NGOs, cooperatives, or wholly informal voluntary associations that organise and represent workers, clearly performing a trade union role, but prevented from being recognised as such by law or by the trade union movement itself, and unaware that they have the right to create or join a trade union, or consciously choose to remain independent<sup>19</sup>.

In this context, it is important to understand the organisational landscape of a city's informal transport economy prior to the start of a Labour Impact Assessment, and ensure the inclusion of the key relevant unions and associations from the outset. In some cases, for example, unions and/or associations that are not affiliated to the ITF are invited to participate alongside the local ITF affiliates.

The potential benefits of Labour Impact Assessments must be clearly agreed and understood by the union and/or association leadership. This includes a recognition that constructive dialogue and negotiation with the authorities over the introduction of BRT – or other proposed reforms of services – is far more likely if the unions and associations have a detailed, documented 'bottom-up' understanding of the informal workforce and economy, particularly the major issues affecting their livelihoods, employment relationships and working conditions.



Dakar planning meeting with unions

## Identification of local academic research partners

Few unions in the countries concerned have the resources or internal capacity to undertake research to a high standard, yet it is important that Labour Impact Assessments are conducted with sufficient academic rigour to provide a solid basis for policies towards reform, and have credibility with transport policymakers and planners. In each case

the unions are partnered with locally-based academic researchers who provide advice and assistance in the design of research tools, training of survey teams and data management and analysis (see below). These partnerships can also provide long-term support, capacity-building, and access to research and policy forums<sup>20</sup>.

# Fieldwork

Fieldwork is undertaken by a small team working closely with the participating union(s) and/or association(s), normally consisting of the coordinator and a researcher from GLI, a locally-recruited organiser (normally nominated by the union), the academic researcher/data analyst, and (where necessary) an interpreter. The main fieldwork methods are questionnaire surveys, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, typically completed over a period of three weeks. In total, 3,221 questionnaires, 41 focus groups and 88 in-depth interviews were completed across six cities, including Maputo (see Figure 3).

Questionnaires, focus groups and in-depth interviews completed			
	Questionnaires completed	Number of focus groups	Number of in-depth interviews
Nairobi	607	9	8
Kampala	790	9	9
Dakar	181	3	9
Abidjan	529	9	27
Accra	239	6	20
Maputo	875	5	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,221</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>88</b>

Figure 3. Questionnaires, focus groups and in-depth interviews completed

Prior to the fieldwork, a set of **research tools** are prepared, including drafts of the questionnaire, the questionnaire survey sampling frame (numbers, categories, locations of workers to be interviewed), a training workshop programme, focus group discussion guidelines and target focus group participants (occupations and locations), and spreadsheet templates to guide the in-depth interviews. Women are purposefully over-represented in the questionnaire survey sampling frame to better capture the maximum amount of information about women in the informal transport industry.

The unions/associations nominate a **questionnaire survey team** of six or eight people. These are union/association staff members, representatives or activists with knowledge or direct experience of working in the industry, and with sufficient interpersonal communications and literacy skills to undertake the survey. Those team members who are working within the industry are paid a daily allowance to compensate for loss of earnings.



Kampala survey team

At the start of the fieldwork, the questionnaire survey team members participate in a two-day **training workshop**, which includes a discussion on the aims and objectives of the assessment, an introduction and detailed review of the draft questionnaire and sampling framework, and training on the conduct of the interviews themselves. Most importantly, it includes pilot surveys in which the survey team test the questionnaires in the streets and in terminals, report back, revise the questionnaires as needed and repeat the process.

The workshop is immediately followed by the **questionnaire survey** itself, typically conducted over six to eight days in which the team, working in pairs, return their completed questionnaires to the coordinator and data analyst at the end of each day, who check the quality of the reporting and lead a discussion on issues or problems that arise each day.

The design of the questionnaires has been developed and adapted over the sequence of the six cities, and amended to meet the varying detailed conditions and requirements of the terms of reference, but the core components remain the same:



Dakar training workshop fieldwork

- **Workforce characteristics**, including gender, age, educational background, vocational training, current job, membership of organisations (unions, associations etc), experience (how many years) in the industry and in current occupation. In later surveys, a further question was included to assess the extent that workers were internal or external migrants.
- **Working conditions**, including questions specifically on working hours and health and safety, as well as open questions on problems faced at work. Later surveys also asked what respondents liked about their work.
- **Livelihoods**. All interviewees are asked to estimate their typical income and expenditure, but with varying levels of detail. There are questions specific to drivers, covering vehicle ownership, levels of debt, the age of vehicle, routes operated, length of routes, the number of trips per day, amounts spent on fuel and amounts collected in fares. If working on a target basis, the driver is asked to state the normal daily target payment<sup>21</sup>.
- **Awareness and attitudes towards BRT and proposals for reform**. All interviewees are asked whether they are aware of BRT, and how they think it might affect them. In later surveys, the questions were extended to cover other common proposals for reform from transport planners, such as the introduction of scheduled services, the consolidation of ownership into new companies, and the cashless collection of fares. All questionnaires included final general questions that sought to collect views about current public transport services and suggestions for improvement.



Kampala questionnaire survey with boda-boda riders

With the exception of Abidjan, all the questionnaires were conducted manually on paper. In Abidjan, however, it was decided to experiment with **digitised questionnaires** using tablets, thus dramatically reducing the time and resources needed for data input and analysis. And indeed, it did result in many questionnaires being completed and the data entered in a relatively short time. Unfortunately, the results were less successful, particularly on the open-ended qualitative questions, where the surveyors tended to reduce the responses to a few short words, rather than write notes manually which gave time and space to capture nuanced or detailed responses, and (very importantly) capture some brief verbatim quotes.

Over the same period each assessment includes six to nine **focus group discussions**, each generally lasting one to two hours. These are typically eight to sixteen people sharing the same general category of occupation (vehicle crews, terminal workers, service workers) and/or workplace, with additional focus groups for women workers. In every project, the discussions are led by an experienced facilitator, working from guidelines drafted in advance, but amended in response to conditions and specific issues emphasised in terms of reference.

Each focus group explores in more depth the major issues participants currently face at work, the issues facing passenger transport, current awareness and knowledge of the proposed introduction of BRT and/or other proposed reforms, and their own ideas and suggestions for improvement.



Dakar focus group discussion

The venue is very carefully chosen to be close to the participants' workplaces, not too formal or intimidating (e.g. in a local café rather than an expensive hotel or formal institution), and participants are offered a modest allowance to compensate for loss of earnings (e.g. half a day's typical income).

Some focus groups are designed to specifically address awareness and attitudes towards BRT. This requires the facilitator to introduce BRT through a presentation using PowerPoint or flash cards covering the essential components (dedicated bus lanes, stations, driver-only operations, off-vehicle ticketing, scheduled service etc), using photos from Dar es Salaam as an example, and specific plans (if known) for the city.

The presentation is followed by discussion on implications for the city's transport system, how it might affect livelihoods and working conditions, and whether participants have confidence in the authorities to successfully implement a BRT project.

Recognising the limitations of the questionnaire survey and focus group discussions to gain a detailed analysis of livelihoods, employment relationships and the micro-economy, Labour Impact Assessments have developed a methodology around **in-depth interviews** with drivers (both target-based and owner-drivers) and fleet owners. These are one-to-one interviews, each lasting approximately an hour, attempting to build detailed illustrative examples of operating costs and income on a 'typical' day's operation. An example of an in-depth interview with a Kampala driver is provided in Figure 4.

The interviewees are volunteers, identified by union or association members, on the firm understanding that all information will be handled in strictest confidentiality, and that they will not be identified by their real names. There is clearly some risk of bias in this selection method. A union or association may wish to emphasise evidence of low income in a campaign for better conditions, for example, and nominate interviewees whose livelihoods



are particularly precarious. On the other hand, the interviewees may be more willing to provide reliable and accurate information if they trust the union's or association's endorsement of the research and their anonymity.

They are paid a small allowance to compensate for loss of earnings, although in many cases the interviews are held during quiet times in the middle of the day, and compensation is not required. The interviews are held in quiet and secluded locations near the workplace (normally an office or hotel room).

### Example of in-depth Interview (Kampala driver)

Name and date: Julius, 23/01/2020		
<b>Route</b>	Entebbe Route	
<b>Stage</b>	Entebbe Stage	
<b>Number of seats</b>	14 seats	
<b>Age of vehicle</b>	2 years	
<b>Working days per year</b>	353 days	
<b>Km travelled per day</b>	280 Km	
<b>Fuel cost per Km</b>	353.63 per Km	
<b>Annual costs in UGX</b>	<b>UGX per day</b>	<b>UGX per year</b>
Target (per day/year)	85,000	30,005,000
Fuel (per day/year)	99,015	34,952,295
Conductor (per day/year)	40,000	14,120,000
Relief conductor (per day/year)		
Relief driver (per day/year)		
Breakdown repairs (per month)		
Routine service (per week/year)		
Carwash (per day, every two days/year)	10,000	1,040,000
Police bribes (per month/year)	40,000	480,000
Fines (per year/year)	200,000	200,000
Callers (per day/year)	8,000	2,824,000
Night guard (per day/year)	2,000	706,000
Stage guides (per day/year)		
Abakuma Ekondo (per day/per year)	1,000	353,000
Stage guide bribes (per/day)	8,000	2,824,000
<b>Total annual costs</b>		<b>87,504,295</b>
<b>Annual income</b>		
<b>Passenger fares (per day/year)</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>105,900,000</b>
<b>Annual income less expenditure</b>		<b>18,395,705</b>
<b>Daily net income</b>		<b>52,112</b>

Figure 4. Example of in-depth interview, Kampala driver

The interviews are structured around a spreadsheet template. The first questions attempt to capture the main factors that affect operating income and costs: the vehicle type/model, the routes operated and terminals where the driver is based, the number of return trips per day, the fare, number of passengers, age of vehicle, number of working days per year, and typical distance travelled per day.

These are followed by questions on main operating costs typically borne by drivers (or motorcycle taxi riders), including the daily target (unless a vehicle owner), fuel, the conductor, relief drivers, breakdown repairs, routine service costs, cleaning, police bribes and fines, insurance and night guards/parking, insurance, and the various fees that drivers are obliged to pay, for example to the terminal management and terminal staff, to welfare funds, or to licensing authorities, which of course vary from city to city.

The driver is then asked to give an indication of a typical day's income from fares.

The template for vehicle owners, either owner-drivers or small-scale fleet owners, is slightly different, and includes questions about the purchase price of the vehicle, loan conditions (if relevant), interest rates, weekly or monthly repayments.

When all the figures are entered in the spreadsheet, it produces an estimate of net income. The figures are then gone through in detail, especially if the resulting estimated net income is clearly unusual – perhaps showing a particularly large loss or profit – and each item reviewed and discussed, until the interviewee is satisfied that it reflects reality.

The fieldwork is backed up by **stakeholder interviews** with a range of organisations, depending on circumstances, but may include local transport planning or licensing authorities, unions and association leaders, vehicle suppliers, lending institutions, interested NGOs and research organisations.

## Data management and analysis

Questionnaire data entry is normally undertaken by the data analyst themselves, or by others (typically post-graduate students) with experience in the preparation of data entry, processes and procedures of data entry, and using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), supervised by the data analyst. Data processing begins with serialisation of received questionnaires with unique identification numbers, followed by coding of the open-ended questions. These processes are overseen by the Survey Supervisor.

The entry is followed by data cleaning: checking sample point details, dates, missing data, wild codes and linkages across related questions. The first step of checking involved going back and verifying data from the completed questionnaires. Further checks are carried out by running frequencies for each variable and in the cases of linked questions, cross-tabulations among others.

Analysis of quantitative data is performed using SPSS, involving the generation of descriptive statistics in the form of percentages, charts, frequency tables and cross-tabulations using valid percentages. The open-ended responses are coded to generate nominal and ordinal data. In addition, verbatim responses are captured on a spreadsheet, the quotes from which are used to complement or illustrate the descriptive statistics. The data, owned by GLI or held by GLI by arrangement with the commissioning organisations, are stored in both analogue and electronic forms.

Each focus group is attended by a rapporteur who takes detailed notes of the discussion. In addition to using the spreadsheet template to analyse operational costs and revenues, the in-depth interviewer and other stakeholders also take notes from comments and discussion. All of these notes, including direct quotes, are collated together with the open-ended questionnaire responses, and integrated into the final report.

## Report launch seminars

A draft report from the research is presented and discussed with representatives of the unions and associations. In most cases, this is immediately followed by a seminar to launch the report, attended by the unions, associations, academic partners, the relevant transport authorities and government representatives, and a range of other invited key stakeholders (such as lending institutions, donor organisations and NGOs). These seminars provide important opportunities, not just to review the findings of the research, but also to facilitate contacts and discussion between the unions, the associations and the authorities.

## Follow-up

Every Labour Impact Assessment is conducted in line with the ITF's long-term programme of support and capacity building for the affiliated unions that participate in the research.

At a local level, this can include training for union organisers and support for consultation, negotiation and dialogue with transport stakeholders. In some cities, this has included partnerships with support organisations (notably financial and logistical support from local offices of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung) and continued support from local academic researchers.

Representatives of the unions and associations also participate in ITF Africa regional strategy seminars, generally held annually (interrupted during Covid) to compare experiences of BRT and reform initiatives, discuss the outcomes of the Labour Impact Assessments, and determine priorities for organisation and representation.



Nairobi launch seminar

# LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

There is a danger of 'survey fatigue' in some locations, with multiple research projects seeking data on operations from the same locations. In Accra, for example, some workers approached by the surveyors were initially reluctant to 'open up' and be interviewed because they said they had participated in a number of such surveys without seeing any benefit.

There can be problems of friction between workers within the informal industry, especially between minibus drivers and motorcycle taxi riders. In Accra, for example, okada riders believe that tro-tro drivers can be abusive and deliberately knock them off their bikes, and were therefore reluctant to engage with the questionnaire surveyors from the tro-tro industry.

Surveyors have to constantly adapt to the working patterns of drivers, meaning that the time taken to complete questionnaires can often be longer than initially anticipated. In some cases, drivers leave the terminal before completing their questionnaire because their bus is full. Surveyors are obliged to wait until the driver returns from their trip before completing the interview. To interview 'floating drivers' who are not tied to a particular terminal and are constantly on the move, surveyors may have to join the drivers in their vehicle and conduct the interview while the driver was driving.

Limitations on the time of respondents as well as the day-to-day distractions of the working environment meant that some questionnaires were only partially completed.

The questionnaire surveys included questions designed to measure the typical net income of workers in different occupations within informal passenger transport. The resulting data has significant limitations. Many workers are not aware of their own accounts, or they do not separate personal spending (such as food, school fees, housing) from day-to-day necessary work expenses (such as daily fee, fuel, bribes). The first attempts to analyse net daily incomes from the questionnaire surveys in Nairobi and Dakar were abandoned because of these difficulties. Subsequent surveys improved the wording of the question sufficiently to justify analysis, although the problem inevitably persisted to some extent.

More generally, in a short street interview there is always the possibility that the respondent does not trust the surveyor sufficiently to give an accurate example of typical income and expenditure.

Moreover, income and expenditure can significantly fluctuate from one day to another. Disruptive weather, public events, political unrest, breakdowns, and other factors can all significantly affect earnings<sup>22</sup>. Transport operations may not be the only source of income for a worker or vehicle owner – they might also run another business, or be partly employed in another occupation, such as a market stallholder, or spare parts dealer, for example.

# MAJOR FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

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## THE WORKFORCE: OCCUPATIONS

**There are many occupations within the informal urban passenger transport industry, and therefore many more people who depend on it for their livelihoods, not just drivers or vehicle owners. These other workers are frequently overlooked when considering the impact of reforms on employment and the economy, and rarely included in consultations and surveys undertaken by transport authorities.**

Occupations documented in Nairobi, Dakar, Kampala, Accra and Abidjan fall within three distinct categories:

### **On-board crews**

- Bus, minibus and taxi drivers and motorcycle taxi riders employed on the so-called 'target system', where the driver or rider pays the vehicle owner a daily fee, along with the other operational expenses, including fuel.
- Owner-drivers and owner-riders, who may own their vehicles outright, may have outstanding loans, or are paying a previous owner in instalments.
- Relief drivers ('l'embauché' in Abidjan, 'squad driver' in Nairobi), paid by the main driver to operate the vehicle during rest periods or when the driver is attending to other business.
- Bus or minibus conductors ('apprentice' in Abidjan, 'mate' in Accra), paid by the driver as a daily fee or a proportion of net income after operational expenses, responsible for collecting fares, dealing with passengers, and assisting the driver in other tasks as needed. Conductors may spend several years working with one driver, sometimes a family member, learning to operate the vehicle and intending to become a driver.
- Relief conductors.

## Station workers<sup>23</sup>

- Callers ('coxeurs' in Abidjan; 'mananbas', 'touts', 'call-boys' or 'kamagera' in Nairobi) 'call' or lure passengers to board buses or minibuses.
- Despatchers ('chargeur' in Abidjan) organise the departure and arrival of vehicles at the station.
- Station managers/masters ('Chef de Gare' in Abidjan), employed by station owners or representative of the transport union where a union is responsible for the station's activities.
- Union representatives ('Agent Syndical' or 'Délégué' in Abidjan).
- Money changers/lenders ('Guichetier' in Abidjan) provide or lend a bag of change for a small fee.
- Public toilet supervisors.
- Insurance agents, often representing insurance companies.
- Administrative staff – workers who are members of the local trade union office, such as the treasurer, general secretary, or organising officer.
- Vendors – especially food vendors for the station workers and passengers.
- Hawkers – moving from vehicle to vehicle, selling to passengers.
- Vehicle washers, sweepers and cleaners.
- Loaders.
- Porters.
- 'Seat warmers' ('piggaseti' in Nairobi) – often students, paid a small tip or a free ride to temporarily occupy a seat to give the impression to potential passengers that the bus is about to leave.
- Wing mirror menders (Nairobi), providing and installing spare bus wing mirrors, especially in very congested streets and stations where wing mirrors are frequently broken.
- Mobile phone/data salespeople.
- Guards and security officers.

## Service workers

Service workers are based in stations or other locations, either close to stations or on major routes.

- Electricians.
- Mechanics: repair vehicles on site in the event of a breakdown or accident, or provide regular routine maintenance.
- Painters.
- Sound system technicians.
- Tyre menders ('vulcanisateurs' in Abidjan, 'turnboys' in Kampala): repair tyres or wheels in the event of a puncture, tyre change).
- Spare parts dealers ('ferrailleur' in Abidjan).
- Ironmongers ('feronnier' in Abidjan).
- Welders ('soudeurs' in Abidjan): assemble metal or plastic parts using small equipment (gas, welding paste).
- Sheet metal workers: rebuild the bodywork of vehicles.
- Calligraphers: vehicle sign-writers.
- Graphic artists ('décorateurs' in Abidjan).
- Wheel balancers/tracking mechanic ('parallélisme' in Abidjan).
- Radiator repairers.
- Glaziers: change or repair broken windscreens and windows.
- Upholsterers and tailors: make or mend seat covers.
- Look-outs ('radarmen' in Nairobi): warn drivers of police activity.
- Vehicle 'clamp keepers' ('abakuma ekondo' in Kampala): prevent minibus taxis from picking up and dropping off passengers without being registered at a city centre terminal station, by fitting wheel clamps to be removed on payment of a fine.

# THE WORKFORCE: DEMOGRAPHICS

The survey in each city included questions covering the basic demographics of the workforce, including gender, age, education, training and duration of employment.

Unsurprisingly, the overwhelming majority of workers in the informal passenger transport industry are men, although there are several women conductors in Dakar's Car Rapide and Adiaga Ndiayes services, and women okada riders in Accra. Most women directly dependent on the industry for their livelihoods are vendors in the terminals, particularly food vendors.

Despite some popular perceptions that the workforce is dominated by young people, the surveys revealed a wide range of ages. The majority of workers are 25 years old or more. In Dakar for example, 90 percent of workers interviewed were over 25 years old, 53 respondents (31 percent) were between 25–34, and 58 (34 percent) were 35–44. In Kampala, 82 percent of respondents were over 25, 318 respondents (43 percent) between 25–39, and 288 (39 percent) were more than 40.

Similarly, despite a widespread view that informal economy workers are uneducated, a majority of workers in most cities had completed secondary school education, with the exceptions of Dakar, where a large proportion (40 percent) were reported to be uneducated, and only 25 percent had completed middle or secondary education; and Abidjan, where most workers had no secondary or tertiary education, and 28 percent of women had not completed any schooling whatsoever. These different education levels may simply reflect the

opportunities and level of education in society as a whole, reflected in the industry's workforce.

Few workers, particularly drivers and motorcycle taxi riders, had completed any form of vocational training, although 96 percent of matatu drivers and mechanics in Nairobi claimed to have received training. In Accra, none of the drivers or riders had received any training at all.

Most of the workers have been working in the industry for many years, with the exception of Nairobi's matatu workforce, and motorcycle taxi riders in Kampala and Accra.

The questionnaire survey in Accra included a question about the origins of the workers. This revealed that a large majority (82 percent) of the workforce interviewed (91 percent of taxi drivers, 91 percent of service workers, 88 percent of okada riders) were internal migrants, having been originally from elsewhere in Ghana, and the majority of them (56 percent) had moved to Accra within the last 20 years. Many of these workers are obliged to send a substantial proportion of their earnings to their families and communities in their hometowns and villages. Many drivers' mates, for example, were reported to save money by sleeping in their vehicles, rather than pay for rental accommodation. Women migrant workers were more vulnerable to discrimination and sexual harassment.

Figure 5. Workplace demographics

## NAIROBI Matatu (bus) workforce

### Gender

**19%** of respondents were women, mostly vendors.

### Age

**13%** were under the age of 25. **60%** were between 25 and 39 years old.

### Education

Nearly **60%** had completed secondary education, and **19%** were college graduates.

### Training

Overall, more than **40%** had received some form of vocational training. **96%** of drivers and mechanics claimed to have been trained.

### Duration of employment

Most workers, **52%**, had been in their current occupations for four years or less. More than **80%** had been in their current jobs for less than ten years.

## DAKAR Car Rapide and Adiaga Ndiayes workforce

**13%** of vehicle crews were women, nearly all conductors. Other women in the industry were nearly all vendors.

Wide age range. More than **90%** were 25 years old or older.

A large proportion – **40%** – were reported to be uneducated, and only **25%** had completed middle or secondary education.

**17%** reported that they had received vocational training of any sort, with only a very small number with driving qualifications.

Long-term employment was predominant, with **75%** having more than five years' experience and **16%** with 20 years.

## KAMPALA Taxi (minibus) crews (drivers and conductors)

### Gender

Drivers almost exclusively men. A small number of women conductors.

### Age

Wide age range. **82%** were 25 years or older, and **39%** were 40 years old or older.

### Education

The majority – **68%** – had completed secondary education or more. Nearly **10%** were college graduates.

### Training

Most – **90%** – had received no additional training since leaving school or college. Only **6%** had received driver or road safety training.

### Duration of employment

The majority had worked in the taxi industry for ten years or more. **27%** had worked in the industry for more than 20 years.

## KAMPALA Boda-boda (motorcycle taxi) riders

Almost exclusively men.

The majority – **65%** – were between 25 and 39 years old, and **22%** were over 40.

The majority – **64%** – had completed secondary education or more. **6%** were college graduates.

Less than **5%** had received training of any kind. Less than **2%** had received motorcycle driving training.

More than **60%** had been in the boda-boda industry for four to ten years, and **20%** had worked for more than 10 years.



## ACCRA Tro-tro crew

### Gender

Almost exclusively men.

### Age

Wide age range. More than **50%** of crew members were between the age of 25 and 49.

### Education

**62%** had completed Junior High School, **14%** Senior High School, and **3%** college.

### Training

Very few respondents – less than **14%** – reported that they had received any other forms of training, and none reported having received training as drivers or riders.

### Duration of employment

**73%** had worked in the transport industry for more than five years, and **55%** for more than 10 years. However, **83%** of okada riders had worked for less than 5 years while **71%** of taxi drivers had worked for more than 15 years.

## ACCRA Taxi drivers

All taxi drivers were men.

Wide age range. More than **60%** of drivers were between the age of 25 and 49.

**59%** had completed Junior High School, **18%** Senior High School, and **6%** college.

Very few respondents – less than **14%** – reported that they had received any other forms of training, and none reported having received training as drivers or riders.

**73%** had worked in the transport industry for more than five years, and **55%** for more than 10 years. However, **83%** of okada riders had worked for less than 5 years while **71%** of taxi drivers had worked for more than 15 years.

## ACCRA Okada riders

### Gender

**86%** of okada riders were men.

### Age

Wide age range, although slightly more younger drivers. More than **70%** of riders were between the age of 25 and 49.

### Education

**42%** had completed Junior High School, **28%** Senior High School, and **3%** college.

### Training

Very few respondents – less than **14%** – reported that they had received any other forms of training, and none reported having received training as drivers or riders.

### Duration of employment

**73%** had worked in the transport industry for more than five years, and **55%** for more than 10 years. However, **83%** of okada riders had worked for less than 5 years while **71%** of taxi drivers had worked for more than 15 years.

## ABIDJAN Wôro-wôro and gbâkâ workforce

**15%** of all those in the workforce were women, almost all of whom were vendors.

Women and men were of all ages, with the majority between 25 and 50.

Most workers had no secondary or tertiary education. **28%** of women had not completed any schooling whatsoever.

—

**48%** had been in the industry for less than 10 years, and **49%** for 10 to 50 years, but no women had worked for more than 19 years.



Accra upholster

# LIVELIHOODS AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

## The target system

The informal transport economy in sub-Saharan Africa (and elsewhere in the Low- and Middle-Income Countries) is driven by the so-called 'target system', within which the majority of drivers are informally employed by vehicle owners.

Target drivers pay a daily or weekly fee ('zomugaga' in Kampala, 'daily sales' in Accra) to the owner of the vehicle they drive, and derive their earnings from whatever money is left over after subtracting the target and other expenses, such as paying a conductor and buying fuel, from the income generated from passenger fares. This is the common relationship between vehicle owners and drivers in the informal transport industry. See Figure 6 for illustrations of typical target payments.

The target system has serious negative impacts for drivers and passengers alike, with drivers incentivised to work long hours and drive aggressively and dangerously to meet their daily target fees.

The target system also dominates the motorcycle taxi industry. In Kampala, most boda-boda riders do not ride their own bikes but pay daily targets to owners, typically UGX 10,000 (USD 2.70) per day. These are sometimes owners of large and very profitable fleets. But riders complain that many of them avoid their responsibilities.

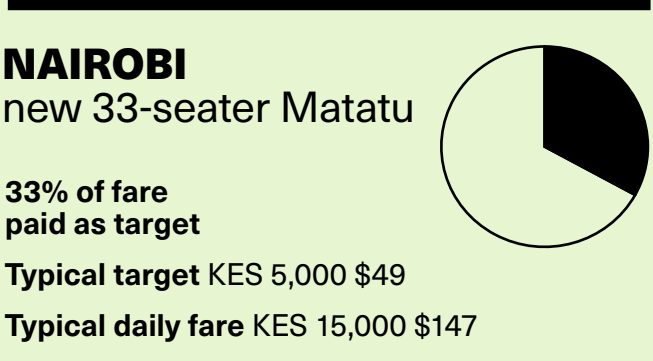
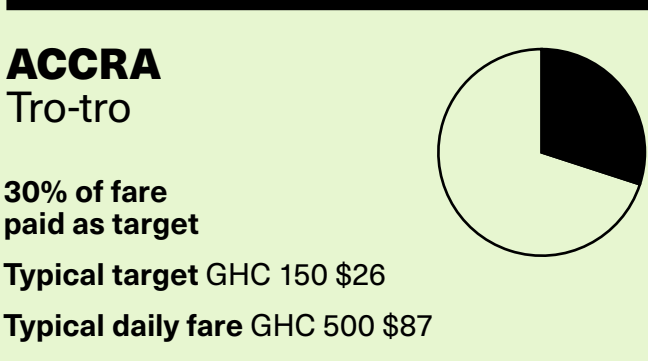
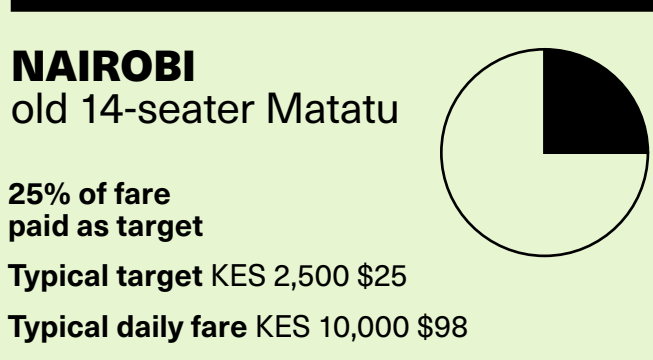
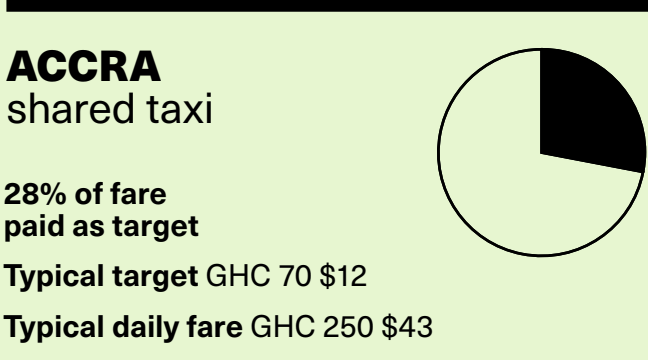
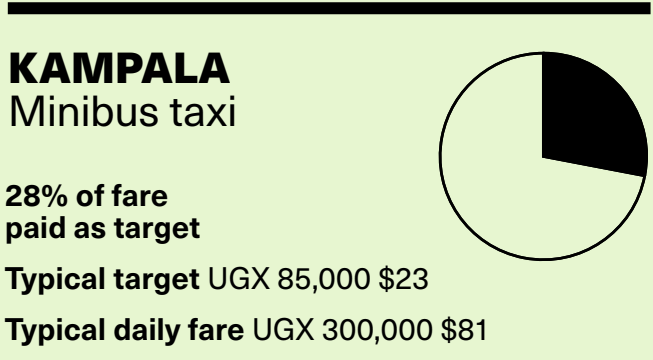
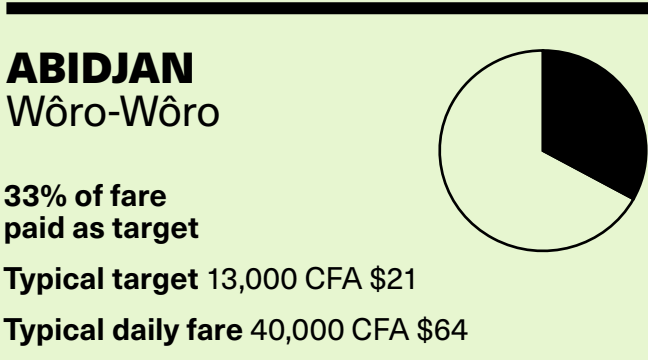
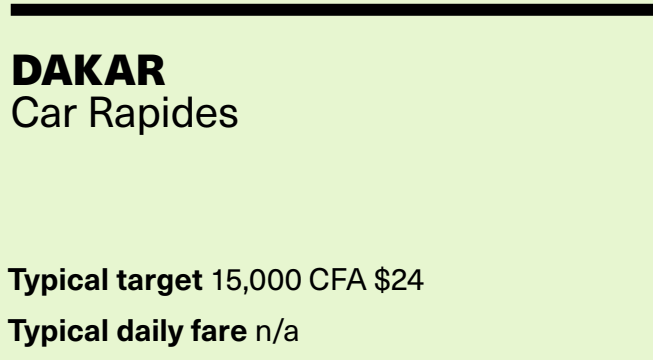
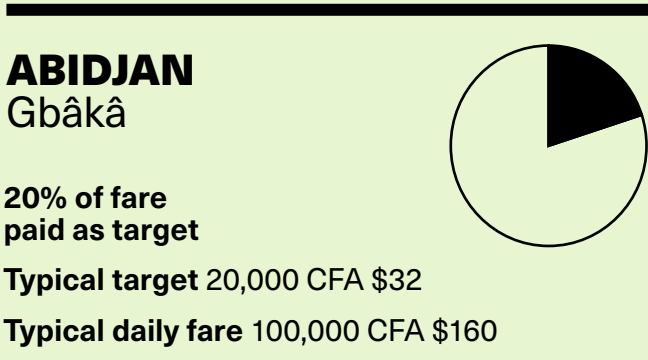
**“We lack the capital to own our own motorcycles, most of the people ride motorcycles for their bosses which reduces on their income.”**

Boda-boda stage leaders, 2020, Kampala

**“The boda-boda owners who are our bosses don't mind about the problems we encounter on the road. They only mind about money and, in case of an accident or police arrest, they always rescue their bikes and give them to other riders to make money for them... We shouldn't get boda-bodas from their owners instead we should cooperate in our own associations to get our own boda-bodas for the betterment of our being.”**

Boda-boda stage leaders, 2020, Kampala

Figure 6. Typical Daily Target Payments



## Vehicle ownership

In some cities, notably in Nairobi and Kampala, there is widespread belief among matatu and minibus taxi workers and transport professionals that large fleets of taxis are owned by people with powerful political and commercial interests. Many taxi crews and stage workers do not know who owns the taxis they operate. Target payments are often made to owners' agents or proxies, rather than the owners themselves, and true ownership is shrouded in secrecy. This presents a major problem in understanding the industry from a fleet ownership perspective and identifying owners' representatives. It also has serious implications for the workers themselves, since ownership by police officers or powerful officials can lead to flouting of regulations that endangers vehicle crews. Complaints by the workers or their organisations can also lead to further harassment.

Nevertheless, there are some indications in Kampala, for example, that minibus taxi ownership is slowly shifting. Fundamentally, there is an over-supply of vehicles, making it difficult or impossible to make a profit. Discussions with Kampala minibus taxi workers suggest that investment by large fleet owners is declining as they fail to make good returns on their capital, while at the same time more small operators and drivers are entering the market.

Interviews reveal that owner-drivers and small-scale fleet owners in Kampala buy vehicles and are able to make a modest income, but many are unable to cover the true cost of maintenance or depreciation, so (in effect) drive the vehicles into the ground.

Elsewhere, while most vehicles are operated by drivers working on the target system, a minority are owner-drivers (12 percent in Accra, 22 percent in Abidjan, for example). In Accra, 29 percent of tro-tro drivers, taxi drivers or okada riders reported that they owned their own vehicle, with taxi drivers having the highest rates of ownership (51 percent) and tro-tro drivers the lowest (12 percent). Nearly

all Accra vehicle owners (95 percent) own only one vehicle.

## Financing and debt

Many drivers informally employed on the target system aspire to become owners.

Assuming that a would-be owner does not have the capital to buy a vehicle outright, the vehicle will be bought with a loan from banks or vehicle dealers, often with very high rates of interest, or from friends, family, or informal savings and credit cooperatives. Of the Accra drivers/riders who own their vehicles, for example, 34 percent purchased them through a loan, with the majority of borrowers still repaying their loan. Most loans are from a bank (48 percent) or from friends or family (44 percent). A gbâkâ owner-driver in Abidjan pays XOF 1m per year (USD 1,650) in loan repayments. In Nairobi, owner-drivers reported outstanding loans of KES 300,000 (USD 2,900) for an old 14-seater matatu and KES 2,600,000 (USD 25,500) for a new 3-seater, paid over two to three years, each with an annual interest rate of 10 percent.

There is evidence from Accra that drivers are starting to buy their own vehicles from their former owners, who recognise that they can generate a higher profit from the interest paid on loans than operating a vehicle. Many buy through 'work and pay' – a form of hire purchase agreement between the driver and former owner (or other informal lender). The driver makes an initial large payment and then the rest of the money is spread over a period of between six months and two years at the equivalent to a very high interest rate, perhaps 100 percent. over the loan period.

In some cities, such as Kampala, the loan will be obtained from large fleet owners acting as middlemen – often people with influence and power in the transport industry, who may borrow from the banks and re-lend the money on interest, rather than owning the vehicle directly and operating on the target system. Typically, such a loan in Kampala would be repaid over six to twenty-four months at anything between 10–40 percent interest.

In some places, finance is also available through non-profit microfinance organisations, such as the Women's World Banking Ghana, where the vehicle dealer is paid directly by the bank, and the vehicle is registered in the bank's name until the driver clears the loan in the required three years. The scheme has attracted some criticism for alleged high interest rates.

Many of the new owners have little or no real business experience but are attracted by the low cost of entry into the industry. But given the very slim profit margins, they find it difficult to meet the repayments. This places pressure on the driver to work long hours, and to avoid the cost of routine maintenance, which inevitably reduces the life-expectancy of the vehicle – typically five to eight years. Major repairs or maintenance, such as the replacement of tyres, will be undertaken on credit, thereby increasing the financial pressure. One Nairobi interviewee, a former driver who managed to raise sufficient capital to buy an old 14-seater matatu, explained in detail how it proved impossible to make any profit, and was forced to give up the business.

There is clearly a huge difference between the income of an owner with sufficient capital to purchase a large fleet of new 33-seat vehicles (especially if they can finance the vehicles without loans) and an individual who borrows sufficient money to buy an old 14-seat matatu.

Lack of access to affordable loans is also an obstacle to motorcycle taxi riders who wish to purchase their own motorcycles.

**“The organisations that give us boda-bodas on loan charge us a very high interest. A boda-boda bought on cash costs 4,500,000 shillings (USD 1,215) yet for them they give it to us at 8,500,000 shillings (USD 2,295) payable in one year.”**

Boda-boda riders, 2020, Kampala

# Livelihoods

## Questionnaire data

Despite the limitations (see Methodology), the questionnaire surveys in Accra, Abidjan and Kampala did provide some approximation of net daily incomes. On average, in Accra, tro-tro drivers earned GH¢ 58.91 (USD 10.19), conductors GH¢ 35.50 (USD 6.14), and taxi drivers GH¢ 48.97 (USD 8.47). In Abidjan, half of crew members (gbâkâs and wôro-wôro) earn between CFA 10,000 and CFA 20,000 (USD 16–32).

Motorcycle taxi riders earn considerably less. In Kampala, average net earnings for a boda boda rider were UGX 21,000 (USD 5.67),

while in Accra okada riders earned GH¢ 39.44 (USD 6.82).

Station workers in Kampala had average net earnings of UGX 24,750 (USD 6.68), while in Abidjan, 60 percent of station workers earn less than CFA 10,000 (USD 16). Service workers in Kampala earned an average of UGX 37,000 (USD 10), while in Abidjan, nearly half of service workers earn less than CFA 10,000 (USD 16). See Figure 7 for analysis of net daily earnings of minibus taxi stage and service workers in Kampala from questionnaire data, as an example.

Figure 8 provides a very rough comparison with average earnings for workers in the formal economy, assuming a standard eight-hour day, as estimated by the ILO.

### Kampala minibus taxi stage and service workers net daily earnings

Ugandan Shillings	\$USD	Stage workers	Service workers
Less than 10,000	2.70	12.9%	14.9%
10,000 – 15,000	2.70 – 4.05	15.9%	9.8%
16,000 – 20,000	4.32 – 5.40	12.9%	14.0%
21,000 – 25,000	5.67 – 6.75	5.3%	5.1%
26,000 – 30,000	7.02 – 8.10	26.5%	17.2%
31,000 – 35,000	8.37 – 9.45	4.5%	4.7%
36,000 – 40,000	9.72 – 10.80	6.8%	8.4%
More than 40,000	More than 10.80	15.2%	26.0%

Figure 7. Kampala stage and service workers net daily earnings (questionnaire data)

### Average daily earnings of employees (assuming eight-hour day) in \$USD

	Total	Men	Women
Côte d'Ivoire	13.39	14.30	10.46
Ghana	17.66	20.15	12.83
Uganda	7.59	8.89	4.59

Figure 8. Average daily earnings of employees<sup>24</sup>



Kampala mechanics

This suggests that most informal transport workers earn less than workers in the formal economy, although there are exceptions, notably in Abidjan, and among service workers (particularly, one can assume, skilled service workers, such as mechanics).

In all cases, but particular among station workers and service workers, reported earnings varied enormously. There are stark differences in earnings between men and women. In Abidjan, for example, 62 percent of women workers (mostly vendors) earned less than CFA 10,000 (USD 16), compared to 30 percent of men.

**“After the day’s sales, the (women) water sellers earn profits that vary from CFA 3,000 to 4,000 (USD 4.80–6.40). Also, those involved in rubbish collection have a weekly income of CFA 8,000 (USD 9.60) while the sweepers have a monthly income of CFA 30,000 (USD 40.00).”**

Adjamé Texaco vendor, Abidjan



Data analysis of the questionnaire responses in Abidjan demonstrates that a large majority of all workers earn less than USD 30 per day, and only a very small proportion earn more than USD 50 (see Figure 9). Not surprisingly perhaps, on-board vehicle crews earn substantially more than the station and service workers.

Abidjan net daily income		On-boards crews		Station workers		Service workers		Total	
CFA franc	\$USD								
Less than 10,000	Less than 16	29	13%	64	63%	92	51%	185	36%
10,000 – 19,000	16 – 30	115	51%	17	17%	36	20%	168	33%
20,000 – 29,000	32 – 46	61	27%	5	5%	15	8%	81	16%
30,000 – 39,000	48 – 62	19	8%	8	8%	12	7%	39	8%
40,000 – 49,000	64 – 78	1	0%	0	0%	2	1%	3	1%
50,000 – 59,000	80 – 94	0	0%	0	0%	13	7%	13	3%
60,000 – 69,000	96 – 110	1	0%	3	3%	1	1%	5	1%
70,000 – 79,000	112 – 126	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
80,000 – 89,000	128 – 142	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
90,000 – 99,000	144 – 158	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	1	0%
More than 100,000	More than 160	0	0%	3	3%	8	4%	11	2%
<b>Total</b>		<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 9. Abidjan daily net income (Questionnaire data)

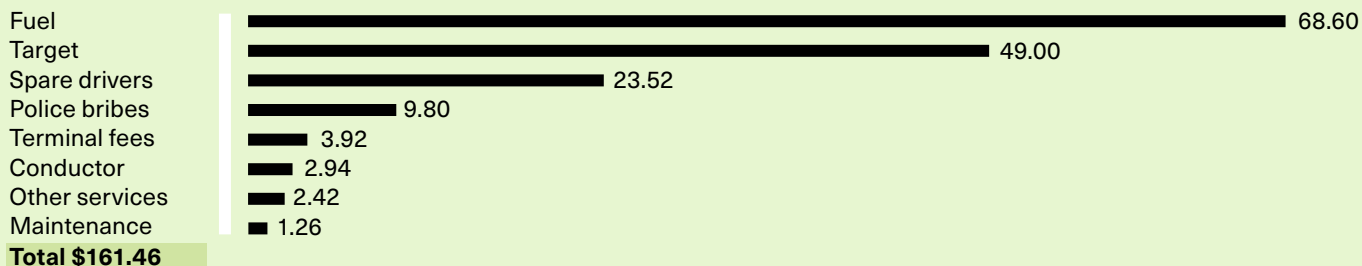
## In-depth interview illustrations

The difficulties in gaining an accurate picture of the micro-economy of the informal passenger transport industry through questionnaire surveys alone prompted the development of longer in-depth interviews with a small sample of workers. These are designed to analyse patterns of income and expenditure in greater depth, although these can only give a snapshot of livelihoods and profitability and are, at best, illustrative rather than definitive profiles.

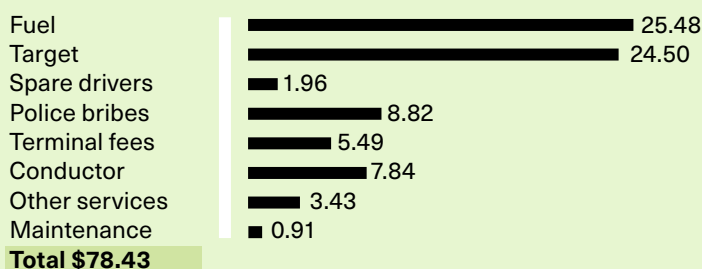
Not surprisingly, in all five cities, the single greatest **cost of operations** for drivers on the target system is the purchase of fuel, closely followed by the target fee itself. Other major costs include payments to other workers (conductors and relief drivers), police bribes, terminal fees, and maintenance. See Figure 10.

Figure 10. Illustrative examples of minibus daily operational costs in **\$USD** (in-depth interviews)

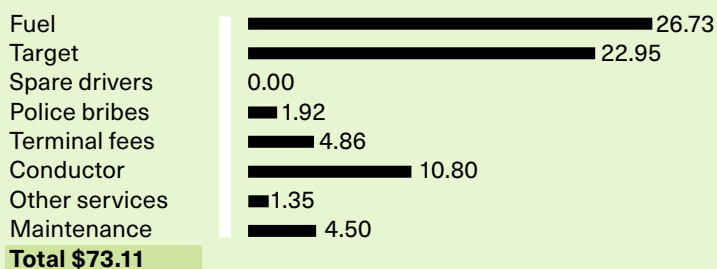
### NAIROBI 33-seater Matatu



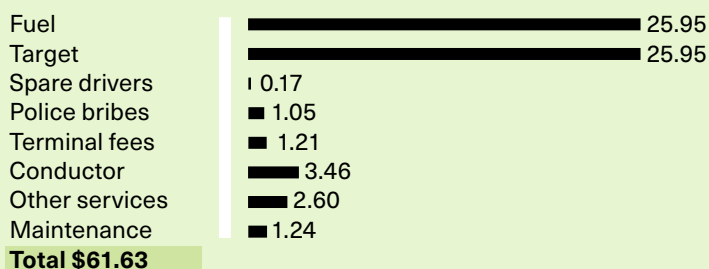
### NAIROBI 14-seater Matatu



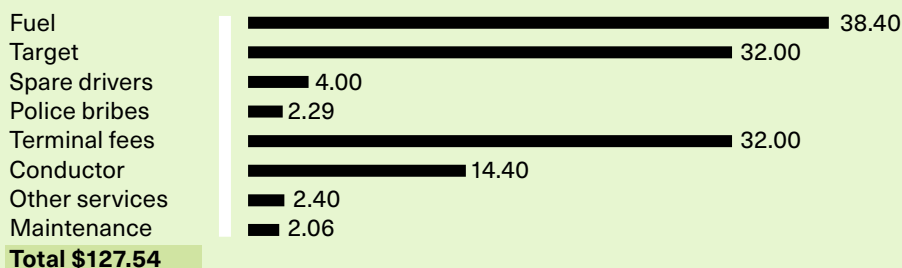
### KAMPALA 14-seater Taxi



### ACCRA 14-seater Tro-tro



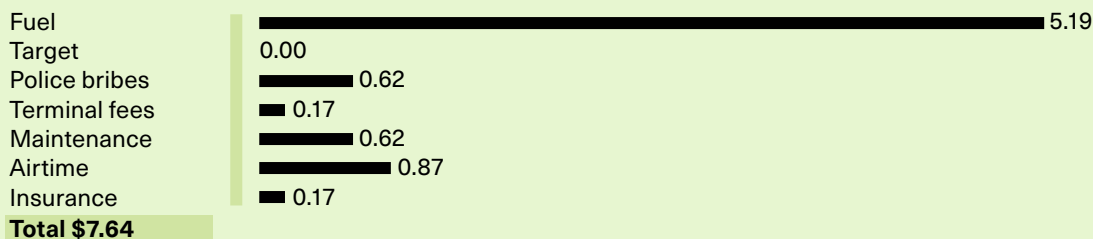
### ABIDJAN 18-seater Gbâkâ



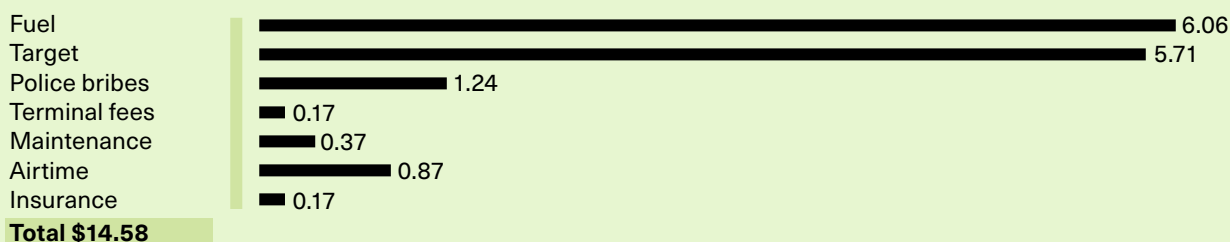
Similarly, as shown in Figure 11, a motorcycle taxi rider's greatest cost by far is fuel. For riders on the target system, the second greatest cost is the target fee. Other costs are small by comparison, but almost identical – police bribes, maintenance, airtime (cost of mobile phone), insurance, and terminal fees.

Figure 11. Illustrative examples of motorcycle daily operational costs in **\$USD** (in-depth interviews)

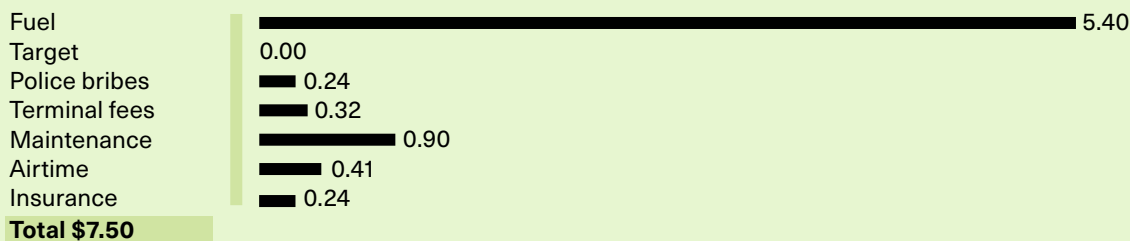
### ACCRA Okada Owner-Rider



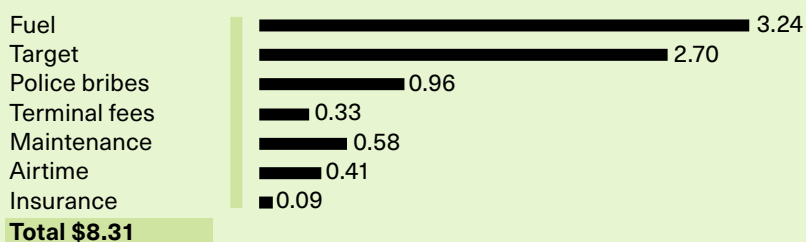
### ACCRA Okada Target-Rider



### KAMPALA Boda-Boda Owner-Rider



### KAMPALA Boda-Boda Target-Rider



Illustrative estimates of typical daily earnings of drivers and riders drawn from the in-depth interviews reveal a wide range of gross income (fare revenue) and net income between fleet owners, owner drivers/riders and target drivers and riders. See Figure 12.

Figure 12. Minibus and bus illustrative net daily earnings (from in-depth interview data)

Minibus and bus illustrative net daily earnings			\$USD
Abidjan	Gbâkâ fleet owner	XOF 69,799	111.68
Abidjan	Gbâkâ fleet owner	XOF 64,131	102.61
Abidjan	Gbâkâ owner-driver	XOF 54,745	87.59
Abidjan	Gbâkâ fleet owner	XOF 43,220	69.15
Accra	Trotro fleet owner	GHS 346	59.86
Nairobi	Matatu owner-driver	KES 5,494	53.84
Accra	Trotro fleet owner	GHS 270	46.71
Abidjan	Gbâkâ target driver	XOF 29,090	46.54
Abidjan	Gbâkâ target driver	XOF 28,552	45.68
Accra	Tro-tro owner-driver	GHS 193	33.39
Abidjan	Gbâkâ target driver	XOF 20,125	32.20
Accra	Tro-tro target driver	GHS 140	24.22
Nairobi	Matatu target driver	KES 2,318	22.72
Abidjan	Gbâkâ owner-driver	XOF 13,902	22.24
Abidjan	Gbâkâ owner-driver	XOF 11,198	17.92
Accra	Tro-tro owner-driver	GHS 83	14.36
Kampala	Taxi target driver	UGX 50,074	13.52
Accra	Tro-tro fleet owner	GHS 74	12.80
Nairobi	Matatu target driver	KES 1,126	11.03
Kampala	Drone taxi conductor	UGX 30,375	8.20
Accra	Tro-tro owner-driver	GHS 45	7.79
Abidjan	Gbâkâ target driver	XOF 4,515	7.22
Kampala	Taxi fleet owner	UGX 17,533	4.73
Kampala	Taxi target driver	UGX 14,150	3.82
Kampala	Droner taxi owner	UGX 10,271	2.77
Kampala	Taxi owner-driver	UGX 6,452	1.74
Nairobi	Matatu owner-driver	KES 134	1.32

Reported daily fare revenue varies greatly, depending on a range of factors, including the routes operated, the size and condition of the vehicle, and the number of hours worked (see Figure 13). The accuracy of the figures also depends on the ability or willingness of the interviewees to give realistic estimates of fare revenue.

Figure 13. Comparison of reported daily fare revenue (from in-depth interview data)

<b>Comparison of reported daily fare revenue</b>		
		<b>Range in \$USD</b>
<b>Gbâkâ (minibus)</b>	Abidjan	104.00 – 173.00
<b>Matatu (bus)</b>	Nairobi	100.00 – 150.00
<b>Tro-tro (minibus)</b>	Accra	61.00 – 88.00
<b>Taxi (minibus)</b>	Kampala	43.00 – 81.00
<b>Wôro-wôro (shared taxi)</b>	Abidjan	48.00 – 80.00
<b>Shared taxi</b>	Accra	35.00 – 61.00
<b>Okada (motorcycle taxi)</b>	Accra	17.00 – 21.00
<b>Boda-boda (motorcycle taxi)</b>	Kampala	7.00 – 11.00

## Minibus and bus owners and drivers

Daily fare revenue for gbâkâ drivers in Abidjan was reported to be 65,000 to 108,000 francs (USD 104–173); in Accra, 353 to 508 cedis (USD 61–88); in Kampala, 160,000 to 300,000 shillings (USD 43–81), and in Nairobi, 10,000 to 15,000 shillings (USD 100–150).

Among minibus and bus owners and drivers, a fleet owner can earn more than USD 100 net per day, although an owner-driver of a relatively new or larger vehicle in good condition can also earn a substantial income.

At the other end of the income range are those with very old vehicles, owners in substantial debt, or drivers who work on substantially fewer days in a year. It suggests that some drivers are making little or no money at all.

## Shared taxi owners and drivers

Daily fare revenue for shared taxi drivers in Accra was reported to be between 200 and 350 cedis (USD 35–61) per day; and in Abidjan, 30,000 to 50,000 francs (USD 48–80).

Fleet owners of shared taxis in Abidjan and Accra can earn a substantial net income, as shown in Figure 14. An analysis of the income and expenditure of one Abidjan wôro-wôro fleet owner of seven vehicles suggests that he was earning more than USD 200 per day. The owner with net earnings of more than USD 60 per day had three vehicles.

At the other end of the spectrum, the analysis of four of the wôro-wôro target drivers suggests that they were making a loss.

Figure 14. Shared taxi illustrative net daily earnings

Shared taxi illustrative net daily earnings			\$USD
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro fleet owner	XOF 125,317	200.51
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro fleet owner	XOF 41,846	66.95
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro owner-driver	XOF 22,059	35.29
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro fleet owner	XOF 21,885	35.02
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro owner-driver	XOF 18,388	29.42
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro owner-driver	XOF 17,175	27.48
Accra	Shared taxi fleet owner	GHS 110	19.03
Accra	Shared taxi owner-driver	GHS 104	17.99
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro owner-driver	XOF 10,723	17.16
Accra	Shared taxi target driver	GHS 61	10.55
Accra	Shared taxi target driver	GHS 55	9.52
Accra	Shared taxi target driver	GHS 49	8.48
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro target driver	XOF 3,345	5.35
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro target driver	-XOF 192	-0.31
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro target driver	-XOF 245	-0.39
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro target driver	-XOF 1,334	-2.13
Abidjan	Wôro-wôro owner-driver	-XOF 1,401	-2.24

## Motorcycle taxi owners and riders

Figure 15 provides some illustrations of net daily earnings for motorcycle taxi owners and riders in Accra and Kampala. Boda-boda riders in Kampala claim that they typically receive between 27,000 and 40,000 shillings (USD 7–11) in fares per day, depending on the number of hours and days worked, the location of the stage and the state of the vehicle. In Accra, most okada riders claimed to earn between 100 and 120 cedi (USD 17–21).

Figure 15. Motorcycle taxis illustrative net daily earnings (in-depth interview data)

Motorcycle taxis illustrative net daily earnings			\$USD
Accra	Owner-Rider	GHC 67	11.59
Accra	Owner-Rider	GHC 66	11.42
Accra	Owner-Rider	GHC 57	9.86
Accra	Target Rider	GHC 40	6.92
Kampala	Owner-Rider	UGX 13,851	3.74
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 13,207	3.57
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 12,250	3.31
Kampala	Owner-Rider	UGX 8,803	2.38
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 7,972	2.15
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 6,675	1.80
Accra	Target Rider	GHC 7	1.21
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 3,387	0.91
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 2,937	0.79
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 2,707	0.73
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 1,803	0.49
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 1,327	0.36
Kampala	Target Rider	UGX 180	0.05
Kampala	Target Rider	-UGX 240	-0.06
Kampala	Target Rider	-UGX 967	-0.26

# Profitability

In most Labour Impact Assessments, there has been no attempt to measure the profitability of operations and they were restricted to estimates of operational costs and revenue. In Kampala, however, there was an attempt to estimate the profitability of a taxi (minibus) owner-driver, a taxi owner and a 'drone' taxi owner<sup>25</sup>. There was no attempt to estimate the

livelihoods or profitability of owners of large fleets, although it was understood that many are withdrawing from ownership because of the meagre returns on capital. Simply scaling up from examples of owner-drivers would not have taken into consideration the likely access to alternative sources of capital borrowing, lucrative relationships with those in power and influence, and the possibilities of avoiding (or benefitting from) extortion and corruption.

## Illustration of Kampala minibus taxi owner-driver profitability

Age of taxi at time of purchase (years)	14			
Purchase price in UGX	20,000,000			
Loan in UGX	10,000,000			
Loan period (years)	6			
Interest	22.00%			
Operational life expectancy (years)	6			
Passenger fares per day	160,000			
Operating days per year	340			
<b>Costs in UGX</b>		<b>Total in UGX</b>		
Principal (purchase price)		-20,000,000		
Interest		-8,945,866		
Fuel (per day)	50,000	-102,000,000		
Loading fees / guides (per day)	18,000	-36,720,000		
Police bribes and fines (per week)	80,000	-24,960,000		
Conductor (per day)	12,000	-24,480,000		
Breakdown repairs (per year)	2,400,000	-18,517,464		
Routine service (per month)	200,000	-14,400,000		
Car wash (per week)	30,000	-9,360,000		
Callers (per day)	5,000	-10,200,000		
Parking / guard (per day)	2,000	-4,080,000		
PSV licence (per year)	600,000	-3,600,000		
3rd party insurance (per year)	120,000	-480,000		
<b>Total costs</b>		<b>-277,743,330</b>		
<b>Passenger fares per day</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>288,220,023</b>		
<b>EBITDA</b>		<b>39,182,559</b>		
<b>Net income</b>		<b>10,236,693</b>		
<b>Investment</b>	FIRR	38.80%	ROI	1.96
<b>Equity</b>	EIRR	66.20%	ROE	2.02

Figure 16. Illustrative example of minibus driver profitability (February 2020)



Although very limited, the illustrative examples of minibus driver profitability (see Figure 16) demonstrate that the industry is extremely precarious, and it does not take much for a driver or owner-driver to lose money. The profitability can vary wildly from one day to another. All it needs is a thunderstorm, a crackdown by police, or a mechanical breakdown to push a driver into debt.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a devastating impact when public transport was effectively shut down and workers were left with little or no income. The ILO estimated that there was an 81 percent decline in earnings for informal economy workers across Africa<sup>26</sup>.

**“You realize that in the informal economy in Kenya – and in many parts of East Africa – they live hand to mouth... and the restricted movements mean no livelihoods at all – livelihood has been destroyed, because they have nothing to eat by the end of the day.”**

Dan Mihadi, general secretary, Transport and Allied Workers’ Union, Kenya, 14 June 2024<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand, on a good day a driver can make good money. Most owner drivers have no idea whether their business is profitable or not. They simply survive from day to day and hope that the next day will be a good one. Many will have some other potential source of income. If they have a particularly bad day, an owner-driver might get some money as a caller, manage to sell some phone cards, or withdraw savings from their stage-based welfare fund, for example. At worst, they will be forced to borrow more money from a moneylender, and risk falling into a spiral of debt.



Kampala owner-driver

The owner-driver, as shown in Figure 16, bought a fourteen-year-old vehicle for 20 million shillings with an operational life expectancy of a further six years. The driver had available capital of 10 million shillings and borrowed a further 10 million on an interest rate of 22 percent.

The taxi is capable of generating a daily average income from passenger fares of 160,000 shillings, declining by 5 percent each year as the taxi suffers wear and tear and therefore becoming less attractive to passengers over its lifetime. The taxi can operate 340 days per year, considering days lost through maintenance or external circumstances.

Fuel consumption is inefficient, so fuel costs are high. The vehicle is in poor condition, so less attractive to passengers and attracts frequent fines and demands for bribes from police. It breaks down frequently, costing a lot in refurbishment and repairs.

The owner-driver has a meagre but positive operational profit over the life of its investment. However, these profits should cover both wages and his capital investment. If one were to assign all the operational profit to capital remuneration (i.e. saving all this profit without any money left to pay his own wages), the internal rate of return on equity (EIRR<sup>28</sup>) would be an apparently high 66.22 percent per year. However, the owner-driver cannot afford not to use a significant part of his net income for his and his family's survival. The financial analysis demonstrates that when the owner-driver spends more than a meagre 4,674 shillings per calendar day, the rate of return decreases to zero or less, and the owner's initial capital is eaten away (even without taking inflation into consideration).

The operational losses occur in the last year of operation, when declining fare revenues become insufficient to cover operational expenses and the reimbursement of the outstanding loan. Saddled with this expensive loan, the owner-driver has no alternative but to maintain operation. He has no alternative other than finding additional sources of revenue (or another loan) to provide a livelihood and cover his losses.

# ISSUES FACING THE WORKFORCE

## Police harassment

When asked to identify the major problems faced at work, by far the most common response was the problem of police harassment. It appears to be a feature of the industry in every city. See Figure 17.

Questionnaire respondents citing police harassment as problem at work			
	Total respondents	Respondents citing police harassment	
Accra motorcycle taxi riders	33	18	55.0%
Nairobi (all workers)	901	474	52.6%
Accra tro-tro crews	114	41	36.0%
Accra taxi drivers	34	8	24.0%
Kampala motorcycle taxi riders	339	54	15.9%
Dakar (all workers)	288	32	11.1%
Accra service workers	67	3	4.5%

Figure 17. Questionnaire respondents citing police harassment as problem at work

Police are accused of bribery, arbitrary arrests, extortion and brutality. Drivers and conductors are routinely stopped on the streets for minor or non-existent infringements. They are threatened with arrest, large fines, or their vehicle being impounded. The only alternative is to pay the bribe.

**“The issue is corruption because once the traffic officer identifies something small with your taxi; he or she just turns off the engine and stands aside just waiting to hear the ‘Luganda’ (bribe you give to the traffic office when caught in wrong).”**

Taxi crews focus group, 2020, Kampala

**“We... suffer disturbance from the police who keep robbing us of all the money we make even if all our documents are legitimate.”**

Tro-tro drivers and mates focus group, 2021, Accra

In Nairobi, police bribes and fines are a major drain on income. There are ‘polite bribes’ – routine, often multiple, daily payments of Ksh. 200–400 or more (USD 2–4), where police officers work their way each morning along queues of waiting buses collecting a small bribe from each driver<sup>29</sup>. This may afford protection from arrest or further harassment. There are heavier intermittent fines for minor traffic violations (such as not wearing the

correct uniform or licence badge, contravening a matatu route), typically of Ksh.1–2,000 (USD 10–20) per week.

In Accra, ‘floater’ tro-tro drivers (unregistered drivers/vehicles operating outside of terminals and unions’ regulatory structures) are actively encouraged and protected by police officers who demand routine payments for each ‘floater’ vehicle departure. Police take advantage of the technically illegal status of the Accra okada industry in order to extort money from the riders or demand free rides.

**“The police have taken advantage of our not being legalized to always extort monies from us without cause. They take advantage of us and earn from us instead. The other disturbing thing is that they do not pay us when they use our services.”**

Okada riders focus group, 2021, Accra

Gbâkâ drivers in Abidjan consistently claim they must routinely make extortion payments to police of 40–50,000 CFA (USD 64–80 per month)<sup>30</sup>.

Service workers also face harassment, arrests, confiscation of goods in raids.

## Insecure and precarious work

The economy is dominated by insecure and precarious work, whether the worker is informally employed by vehicle owners through the target system or by other informal workers (e.g. conductors paid by drivers), or as an own-account worker, such as a vendor, cleaner or mechanic.

Very few workers have any form of contract. In Dakar, only six percent of respondents reported that they had a contract with an employer. Only one woman, out of forty surveyed, had an employment contract. In Nairobi less than four percent of Matatu workers had any form of written agreement or contract. In Kampala, nine percent of taxi crews, eight percent of service workers, and six percent of taxi stage workers had any form of written agreement with the person who pays them to do their job.

There can be major fluctuations in income, depending on a variety of external factors – such as the weather, congestion, public events, ‘crackdowns’ on regulations, levels of police harassment. Fluctuating costs – particularly sudden increases in the cost of fuel – can dramatically affect livelihoods.

Like workers in the informal economy everywhere, there is little or no social protection – for example, no provision for retirement, sickness, or maternity. Many workers depend on informal self-help organisations and welfare funds.

In Kampala, for example, each taxi (minibus) and boda-boda (motorcycle taxi) stage organises a welfare fund for drivers. Stage leaders are responsible for collecting contributions from registered stage members, including drivers, conductors, spare drivers, callers, and loaders. However, drivers typically prefer to pay their welfare contributions, along with any other fees, on a per-trip basis.

The amount usually corresponds to the fare of one passenger for that specific trip.

The extent of insecurity was dramatically exposed during the Covid-19 pandemic, which had a devastating impact on many millions of informal transport workers. In many countries, public transport was effectively shut down, and workers were left with little or no income. The ILO estimates that the first month of the crisis resulted in a 60 percent decline in the earnings of informal workers globally. In Africa and Latin America, where the economic impact of lockdown and containment measures was particularly acute, the ILO estimated an 81 percent decline in earnings<sup>31</sup>.

**“You realize that in the informal economy in Kenya – and in many parts of East Africa – they live hand to mouth... and the restricted movements mean no livelihoods at all – livelihood has been destroyed, because they have nothing to eat by the end of the day.”**

Dan Mihadi, Transport Workers' Union interview, 2020, Kenya

## Long working hours

It is sometimes difficult to assess the number of hours actually worked by bus/minibus crews or motorcycle taxi riders. On some bus routes or motorcycle taxi stands there may be fairly constant demand. But on others there may be slack periods in the middle of the day when drivers and riders are resting or doing other activities, such as running errands or making deliveries.

Nevertheless, the extreme working hours are one of the most important characteristics of working life in the informal transport industry.

Among Kampala taxi crews, more than 36 percent of respondents claimed to work more than 15 hours per day. Ten crew members claimed to be working 19 hours a day. Nearly all taxi crews worked six or seven days per week, with 40 percent working seven days. Twenty-seven percent of crews explained, however, that their working time was irregular and/or unpredictable.

Kampala boda-boda riders worked for an average of 12.9 hours per day and 6.4 days per week. More than 83 percent of riders worked 12 hours per day or more, and 17.4 percent claim to work more than 16 hours. Nearly all riders work six or seven days a week, and nearly half work a seven-day week.

Most matatu workers in Nairobi, including service workers and those working in terminals, worked 12 hours a day. Matatu crews worked for an average of nearly 15 hours per day. In Dakar, 35 percent reported working for nine to twelve hours per day, and 53 percent for more than 12 hours. Forty percent reported that they worked seven days per week. In Accra, 50 percent worked for 13 hours or more per day. In Abidjan, 19 percent work seven days a week.

The extremely long working hours are the direct result of the target system. Vehicle crews and motorcycle taxi riders paying high target fees to vehicle owners are unable to earn money for themselves until they have worked sufficient hours to pay the target.

Long working hours lead to other major problems – aggressive driving, crashes, use of drugs and alcohol to keep awake and other health problems, as well as the impact on family responsibilities and social life.

## Working environment

**“There is a lot of pollution from old taxis and boda-boda. Such vehicles should be in the village doing farmwork, not in town, but this is also brought by the high interest on loans. The loans should be put on a smaller interest so that people can easily acquire new ones to avoid pollution.”**

Boda-boda riders, focus group discussion,  
Kampala, 2020

Respondents were asked whether they have had health problems or injuries as a result of work in the transport industry. In Abidjan, 77 percent of respondents felt that they were at risk of illness. In Nairobi, more than 30 percent and in Dakar, more than 35 percent reported health problems or injuries. Many of the health problems were associated with a hazardous working environment, particularly bad air quality. Surprisingly, of the 192 who responded in Accra, only 6.3 percent reported problems. The low response in Accra is mysterious – perhaps problems of misunderstanding with the surveyor, or that Accra has better working environmental conditions and better road safety.

Most stations have a very poor working environment, with high day-time temperatures and lack of shade and shelter from rain and sun, dust and an unhygienic working environment. Service workers, such as food vendors and mechanics, complain of expensive or unavailable water and electricity, and lack of sufficient, secure working space.

Working conditions in Kampala’s taxi parks, stages and service areas were reported to be extremely poor, for example. There had been no attempt to maintain or upgrade the taxi parks for a long time. There was no shelter from rain or sun, poor or non-existent sanitation, and very unhygienic facilities for the preparation and serving of food <sup>32</sup>.

Lack of adequate sanitation is a particularly important issue, especially for women.

**“They have given our public toilets to private people to run them. You cannot find these public toilets everywhere. They are not on our terminals; they are not everywhere. We have to walk far to reach the toilets each time. The toilets lacked proper sewage drainages, most of them were blocked. You find that litter is all around. There is no good disposal system.”**

Matatu conductor and member of the  
Transport Workers’ Union of Kenya<sup>33</sup>

**“For women, particularly, they find it hard to use those toilets, and there’s no alternative, and we cannot leave our work and go to people’s homes and ask to relieve ourselves. It isn’t easy. We can’t hold on. We work for at least seven hours and cannot hold on from 5am until 1pm without going to relieve ourselves. It’s impossible.”**

Dakar Dem Dikk bus conductor<sup>34</sup>

## Lack of respect

**“I am one of those you just love to hate. We’re the backbone of Kenya’s black market, expected to pay off everyone from police to criminal gangs. Perhaps you don’t have any idea what it’s like to be the black sheep of the country, but let me explain: we wake up at three every morning to bring milk to Nairobi, from there we take cops who have been on night duties home, then pick up newspaper vendors, company drivers, office workers and your school kids”.**

Nairobi matatu driver, quoted in Daily Nation<sup>35</sup>

Throughout the surveys, interviews and focus groups, there is an undercurrent of resentment and frustration against what is perceived to be a lack of respect for transport workers, whether among passengers, the authorities, or the media. They are frequently portrayed as criminals and gangsters. They are blamed for traffic crashes, congestion and poor roads. They are despised and feared. Yet they play a fundamental role in a city’s economy.

Workers claim that there is a general lack of respect for their profession and believe that their issues and concerns are ignored by those in power.

**“There is no respect for the taxi driving profession. Offices and institutions in Ghana do not give us the minimum respect or even audience to hear our issues and concerns. The situation has been the same since I started driving in 1974.”**

Taxi drivers’ focus group, Accra, 2021

Vehicle crews face hostility from passengers. The surveys reveal that issues concerning rude and disrespectful passengers and customers rate highly among problems cited by respondents.

**“Our main difficulties are related to customers. Indeed, when a customer gives you his machine, after the repair, he refuses to give us an estimate and prefers to pay us according to his means. He gives us begging tokens which deteriorate our means of subsistence.”**

Mechanic in Adjamé, Abidjan, 2022

**“The major problem we face is that the passengers have a way they complicate our job in a way that they pay less money than what we had agreed on for a particular journey when they reach their destination and sometimes they don’t pay at all. They undermine us knowing that we can’t fight and force them to pay.”**

Women taxi conductors focus group, Kampala, 2020

Motorcycle taxi riders are particularly targeted. In Accra, where motorcycle taxis (okada) remain technically illegal, riders complain that cars purposefully knock them down in the road. In Kampala, where crashes and injury rates for boda-boda riders are particularly high, there is a widespread belief that injured boda-boda riders are deliberately ill-treated by medical authorities.

It is of course true that there are major problems of criminality and violence in many cities, and that the behaviour of some workers can be aggressive and intimidating (see next page).

# Crime

There are undoubtedly high levels of crime in and around the informal transport, particularly petty theft and a general lack of personal security.

In Kampala, boda-boda riders are particularly vulnerable to violent thieves and passengers who evade fares.

**“We get customers who don't want to pay after their ride. They run away without paying and some of them are robbers who kill our colleagues and steal their motorcycles... There are also those who pretend to be boda-boda riders, yet they are thieves. They even create fake stages and the police don't do anything to arrest them. Instead, if you complain about them and try to interfere with their activities, the police ends up arresting you.”**

Boda-boda stage leaders, 2020

**“Sometimes when you take a passenger and reach their destination, they just run away without paying. Some even hit our riders' heads and kill them to take their motorcycles.”**

Kampala Metropolitan Boda Boda Entrepreneurs Executive Committee, 2020

Carrying cash makes drivers and riders particularly vulnerable to violent crime. This is an important factor in encouraging workers to adopt cashless payment systems (see Awareness and attitudes towards reform, below).

But there are also more structural problems of organised crime and criminal gangs, sometimes exacerbated or supported by police corruption.

In Abidjan, for example, the notoriously violent behaviour of gnambros was one of the most important problems identified by workers, particularly the gbâkâ (minibus) drivers, in the in-depth interviews and focus groups. Gnambros ('big toughs') work in or around bus stations, loading passengers into the vehicles, typically charging drivers a 'loading fee' per trip. Armed with sticks, brass knuckles, slingshots, or 'caiman teeth' (a kind of stake to puncture the wheels of vehicles), they threaten violence to dissuade any uncooperative driver<sup>36</sup>.

In Kampala, workers believe that the police protect the criminal gangs who establish or take over informal or unrecognised taxi and boda-boda stages.

**“There are taxi stages alongside the roads that are not under the law, yet they are owned by big people in the government like in Bwaise. There is a lot of politics in it. All taxis should be allocated space in the taxi park to avoid those who park on the roadside because they are the ones that have a lot of issues.”**

Boda-boda senior cadres,  
Kampala, 2020

There is also a widespread belief that some of the illegal activity is linked to powerful politicians and others in authority. In Nairobi, it is widely believed that efforts to reform the matatu industry are hampered by powerful people (politicians, police, government officials) who covertly own large fleets of vehicles. In Kampala, large sums of money are spent by politicians, political candidates and government officials to attract support and votes from boda-boda riders, which is believed to disrupt and interfere in riders' own democratic representation, and to undermine attempts to properly regulate the industry.





Kampala transport station

## Crashes and ill health

Workers from all five cities report a wide range of health and safety problems, closely connected to the poor working conditions, insecure employment, quality of work equipment, and long working hours linked to fatigue.

In Abidjan, over three-quarters reported being at risk of illness, and 39 percent had been victims of crashes and other traffic incidents. In Dakar, 35.8 percent said they suffered health issues or injuries in context of their work, particularly fatigue, crashes and illnesses such as headaches and asthma. Thirty-two percent reported a hazardous working environment, specifically lack of shelter, condition of work equipment and accidents.

Women particularly raised problems in the workplace, including issues with sanitation or unsafe conditions. In Dakar, 50 percent of women experienced health problems due to lack of shelter against bad weather because they are predominantly working outside. Such problems are poised to get worse as climate change accelerates, worsening health-threatening conditions such as extreme heat and storms.

Many of the common health complaints, such as asthma, sore throats, and headaches, are attributed to dust and air pollution. It is well established that air pollution exposure is a serious problem for workers in the sector, leading to respiratory and cardiovascular problems<sup>37</sup>. In Nairobi, a third of respondents reported respiratory problems most likely linked to poor wages leading to bad working conditions and long hours of exposure to fumes and dust. In Dakar, traffic jams were blamed for the poor environment.

**“The government must help us with traffic jams because that has adverse effects on our health. There are asthmatics, people who have heart problems. So, it is important to take out mutual health insurance that will cover you when you fall ill.”**

Bus station focus group, Dakar, 2019

Aggressive driving and the poor state of the roads are frequently referred to as a cause of crashes, including potholes, particularly during rainstorms when hazards might be hidden. There are also problems of drug and alcohol abuse, a consequence of the excessive working hours.

There is a particularly high occurrence of crashes among motorcycle taxi riders, often caused by bad or aggressive driving by private car owners and passenger vehicle drivers. Victims are frequently new, inexperienced and young riders, particularly those coming into town from rural areas.

Crashes are also often caused by the bad state of repair of vehicles. This is made worse by the poor quality and high cost of spare parts and tools.

# ISSUES FACED BY WOMEN WORKERS

Although the industry in all five cities is heavily dominated by men, there are still substantial numbers of women dependent on it for their livelihood, particularly in the service occupations, such as vendors in terminals.

There is widespread discrimination against women trying to find work in more lucrative and secure jobs, such as vehicle crew members, and off-road service areas tend to be dominated by men. There are still strong cultural and attitudinal barriers to women in the industry and hostility from vehicle owners, passengers and fellow workers.

Callers in the terminals can refuse to call passengers if they see that it is a woman on the door working as a conductor, for example. Passengers sometimes simply wait until another taxi is available rather than ride with a woman conductor (Women conductors focus group, Kampala, 2020).

The lack of training opportunities, lack of sanitation in the workplace, and the lack of social protection such as maternity pay, disproportionately affect women. In Abidjan, women vendors find it difficult to access investment capital, leading to low profits, and face harassment from municipal police officers in the terminals, and loss of income when evicted or relocated.

## Sexual harassment

The major concern for many women when trying to get into the industry and during work, is the widespread sexual harassment – from vehicle owners, other transport workers and passengers.

In both Nairobi and Dakar, more than 15 percent of women surveyed, when asked to identify the major problems they face at work, reported sexual harassment. In Abidjan, according to data published in 2017 on sexual harassment on SOTRA bus services, women aged 14-39 years old frequently faced harassment throughout the day<sup>38</sup>.

Women workers complain that they feel forced to 'put up' with harassment in order to keep their jobs. In Kampala, for example, women seeking work in the taxi industry, like anyone else, have to first get a place on a taxi (minibus) stage, normally requiring a payment to the stage chairman. If they do not have sufficient money, the stage chairman can demand sex.

**“Some of the conductors confirm that if you don't have money to pay the stage chairman to get a job, you use your body to pay. This normally happens at the stages near Pioneer Mall, where there is a gentleman who takes advantage of the females who want to work.”**

Women taxi conductors focus group,  
Kampala, 2020

**“If you do not yield to their advances, they insult you and all manner of bad things. Our work is difficult. The more you behave friendly and open to them, the more they take advantage of you. If you frown or avoid them, you are tagged as proud and arrogant so mixing the two is very difficult. It may even affect our marriages if you do not take care. Some men even want to flirt and call you at odd hours in the night.”**

Women station workers focus group,  
Accra, 2021

**“We are harassed by male passengers; they abuse us and call us all sorts of names, they say that it seems we have failed in our marriages, that we are mannerless, we should just go back home and look after our children and other passengers just touch our bodies as they please (bad touches). The male passengers are so biased, they don’t want us to do this kind of job.”**

Women taxi conductors focus group,  
Kampala, 2020

Harassment is experienced from both passengers and workmates. The problem is exacerbated by high density on bus rides, as a result of bus shortages.



Abidjan women's FGD

# ORGANISATION AND REPRESENTATION

To those unaccustomed to the industry, a bus terminal or motorcycle taxi stage can appear to be chaotic and disorganised, but these informal workplaces are highly organised, with rules and procedures which are clear to everyone working there.

The forms of workplace management and organisation vary considerably from city to city, but often under the umbrella of a trade union or association, and often with overlapping membership of workers and vehicle owners.

## **Accra Trotros (minibuses) and Taxis (shared taxis)**

Predominantly organised under a trade union (Ghana Private Road Transport Union – GPRTU), but with some terminals organised under an owners' association (Progressive Transport Owners Association – PROTOA) or a cooperative covering both owners and drivers (Ghana Co-operative Transport Association – GCTA)

## **Accra Okadas (motorcycle taxis)**

Variety of riders' associations organise different okada 'stations', such as the Accra Okada Riders Association or the Circle Okada Riders Association.

## **Kampala Taxis (minibuses)**

Mostly organised in an association (Kampala Operational Taxi Stages Association KOTSA), with a claimed membership of 30,000<sup>39</sup> in 2020. KOTSA is affiliated to the main transport trade union (Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union – ATGWU). KOTSA membership overlaps with associations covering long distance taxi routes, such as Kampala-Entebbe or Kampala-Jinja.

## **Kampala boda-bodas (motorcycle taxis)**

Organised through a variety of associations, but mostly under the Kampala Metropolitan Boda-Boda Entrepreneurs (KAMBE), with a claimed membership of 48,000 in 2020. Affiliated to ATGWU.

## **Nairobi matatus (buses)**

Owners organised through route-based Savings and Credit Cooperative Organisations (SACCOs). Very few workers are members of associations or unions, although the Transport Workers Union of Kenya (TAWU) is attempting to organise workers among SACCOs, and other unions do exist (Matatu Workers Union and the Public Transport Operators Union), but with a very small membership.

## **Dakar car rapides (25 seat minibuses) and ndiaga ndiaye (35-45 seat converted trucks)**

Dakar bus stations are managed by 'Economic Interest Groups' (EIGs) – consortia of vehicle owners. Routes are determined by numerous associations and cooperatives. Workers are organised through a patchwork of associations, self-help groups and unions, including the Union des Routiers du Sénégal (URS), Syndicat Démocratique des Travailleurs du Transport Routier (SDTTR), and the transport federation within the Union Démocratique des Travailleurs du Sénégal (UDTS). However, many workers are not in any organisation.

## **Dakar TATA/AFTU (semi-formal bus service)**

Managed by AFTU (Association de Financement des Professionnels du Transport Urbain). Drivers, conductors and dispatchers represented by Syndicat Autonome des Travailleurs du Transport du Sénégal (SATTS).

## **Abidjan Gbâkâs (minibuses) and Wôro-wôros (shared taxis)**

Terminals supervised by one of large numbers of trade unions, organised into commune-based and national federations. Drivers are nationally represented by the Le Conseil National des Organisations de Conducteurs Professionnels de Côte d'Ivoire (CNOCP-CI) composed of 122 unions from Abidjan and inland towns.

There are major differences between the trade unions in the five cities, their roles in the operational management of passenger transport, and their relationships with workers' and owners' associations. Some of these differences are rooted in their respective Francophone and Anglophone colonial and post-colonial histories, which have shaped labour laws, union structures and culture, and relationships between unions and political parties.

In the Anglophone countries, the transport unions can be traced back to the 1930s, guided under the influence of British unions, when the respective colonial administrations legalised African trade union organisations. The Transport Workers Union of Kenya (TAWU) traces its roots to the Nairobi African Taxi Drivers' Union (formed in the late 1930s), the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union (ATGWU) was originally the Uganda Motor Drivers' Association (formed 1938), and the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) evolved from the Gold Coast Motor Union (formed 1935).

In Francophone Africa, transport unions began to appear in the 1940s, but in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, the current transport unions trace their origins to the late 1950s or early 1960s, at the time of independence.

Up until the 1980s, unions had a substantial membership in the state-owned bus companies, but these were in decline due to debt and the impact of structural adjustment programmes, and most were privatised. The privatised companies in Kampala, Accra and Dakar collapsed in the 1990s. The privatised Nairobi company (Kenya Bus Service) still exists but with much-reduced operations, while the Abidjan company (SOTRA) remains state-owned, but with reduced operations. Meanwhile, the informal transport economy expanded in all five cities.

In **Nairobi**, TAWU has very few members in the matatu industry, despite attempts to organise the workers within some of the route-based SACCOs<sup>40</sup> that group together matatu owners. They have been effective, however, in beginning to organise among drivers in some of the ride-hailing companies operating in Nairobi. Alongside TAWU are two other ITF-affiliated unions with a presence in Nairobi – the Matatu Workers' Union (MWU) and the Public Transport Operators' Union (PUTON), which were established in recent years specifically to organise among matatu workers, but they remain very small.

In **Kampala**, ATGWU provided an outstanding example of how a trade union could successfully organise among informal transport workers. Its leaders recognised that the vast majority of transport workers were working in the informal economy, organised not in trade unions but in associations. The union then initiated a programme of dialogue with the association leaders to learn how the industry was organised, and how the associations functioned. This led to a mutual realisation that an affiliation of the associations in ATGWU would benefit both: the union would regain a mass membership and organisational power; the associations would benefit from trade union rights and institutional relationships with the authorities. The union signed a sequence of memoranda of understanding, and then affiliation, particularly of the large associations representing taxi (minibus) and boda-boda (motorcycle taxi) workers. Between 2008 and 2015, ATGWU's membership increased from 2–3,000 to more than 100,000<sup>41</sup>.

In **Accra**, each trotro terminal is comprised of various branches, with each branch operating a specific route or set of routes. It is estimated that there are over 300 tro-tro terminals in the Greater Accra region, operated by at least 25 unions and associations. The Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU) is the largest tro-tro operators' association in the country. Its membership is drawn from both the trotro and shared taxi industry, and includes both drivers and vehicle owners. GPRTU historically

had a monopoly in controlling, regulating and operating Ghana's trotro industry due to its close relationship with successive governments. In 2005, vehicle owners formed the Progressive Transport Owners Association (PROTOA), covering both the tro-tro and shared taxi industry. It claims to operate 30 tro-tro branches in Accra.

The modern histories of unions in Côte d'Ivoire and Sénégal can be traced back to the political parties in power immediately following independence from France in the 1960s. In both countries, the ruling parties established single trade union federations with a legal monopoly over organisation and representation. By the 1990s, this monopoly had broken, splintering into numerous competing organisations, and a proliferation of very small under-resourced unions with weak internal democracy.

In **Abidjan**, there are approximately 350 unions and 30 federations registered in Côte d'Ivoire gbâkâ and wôro-wôro services, although most are not really operational on the ground. These unions depend on 'line fees' and loading fees at the terminals for their income and take turns in the day-to-day management of the business. Similarly, in Dakar, there are numerous associations and cooperatives covering workers and owners of car rapides and ndiaga ndiaye vehicles.

## Conflicts of interest

There are major conflicts of interest for the unions in Abidjan and Accra. On the one hand, they are responsible for the management and operations of the routes and stations and maintain discipline over the workforce. Unions depend on the collection of fees paid per route (line fees) and fees paid at the station per journey (loading fees) for their income, rather than membership dues paid voluntarily. It can be a very lucrative business. On the other hand, unions are supposed to defend and promote the interests of their members through negotiation and collective bargaining with the authorities to improve livelihoods and working conditions.

These conflicts of interest can lead to considerable dissatisfaction among the workers. This was an issue highlighted by tro-tro drivers in Accra and accepted as a historical problem by some union leaders. Drivers complain that they feel exploited and neglected by unions.

**“These GPRTU leaders are just using us for their own gains, can you imagine they call us ‘common drivers’... “Right now, we are having a big challenge of fuel prices going up every day, yet the so called ‘workers’ leaders’ are quiet.”**

Tro-tro drivers focus group, Accra, 2021

**“All drivers are automatically members of the (union). So to drive you have to be a member of the umbrella organisation which is the union. The mission of this umbrella organisation is to defend the rights of drivers and to organise transport routes by zone. However, the defence of drivers’ rights by the unions and the umbrella organisation is never respected and carried out, because they are left to their own devices.”**

Wôro-wôro focus group, Abidjan, 2022

GPRTU leaders indeed acknowledged that the past leaders were more concerned with politics than connecting with the workers:

**“We decided to elect a new strong GPRTU leadership that is now seriously looking into workers’ issues, starting with the recent increase of fuel. The past GPRTU leadership used to do the union activities in a political way. We need to ensure that the government starts to listen and respect the transport workers. In Ghana, public transport workers, especially trotro, are not respected.”**

Interview with GPRTU leadership, Accra, 2021

Despite these and other problems, the unions in Accra, Kampala and (to a certain extent) Nairobi are relatively well-organised. In Dakar and Abidjan, however, the capacities of the transport trade unions are very low.

Mechanic





# AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS BRT AND REFORM

## Awareness of BRT

Except for Accra, where a version of Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) had already been introduced and therefore well-known, the surveys in every city included a question on whether the respondents were aware of BRT. As shown in Figure 18, in Nairobi and Abidjan, a clear majority had not heard of BRT. It was interesting to note that in the year between the two surveys conducted in Nairobi, the number of those aware improved markedly as the result of more media coverage. A supplementary question in 2018 asked where the awareness of BRT had come from, to which 53 percent said the media, but nearly half referred to others within the industry, particularly matatu (bus) owners and crew members.

Accra terminal



## Attitudes towards BRT

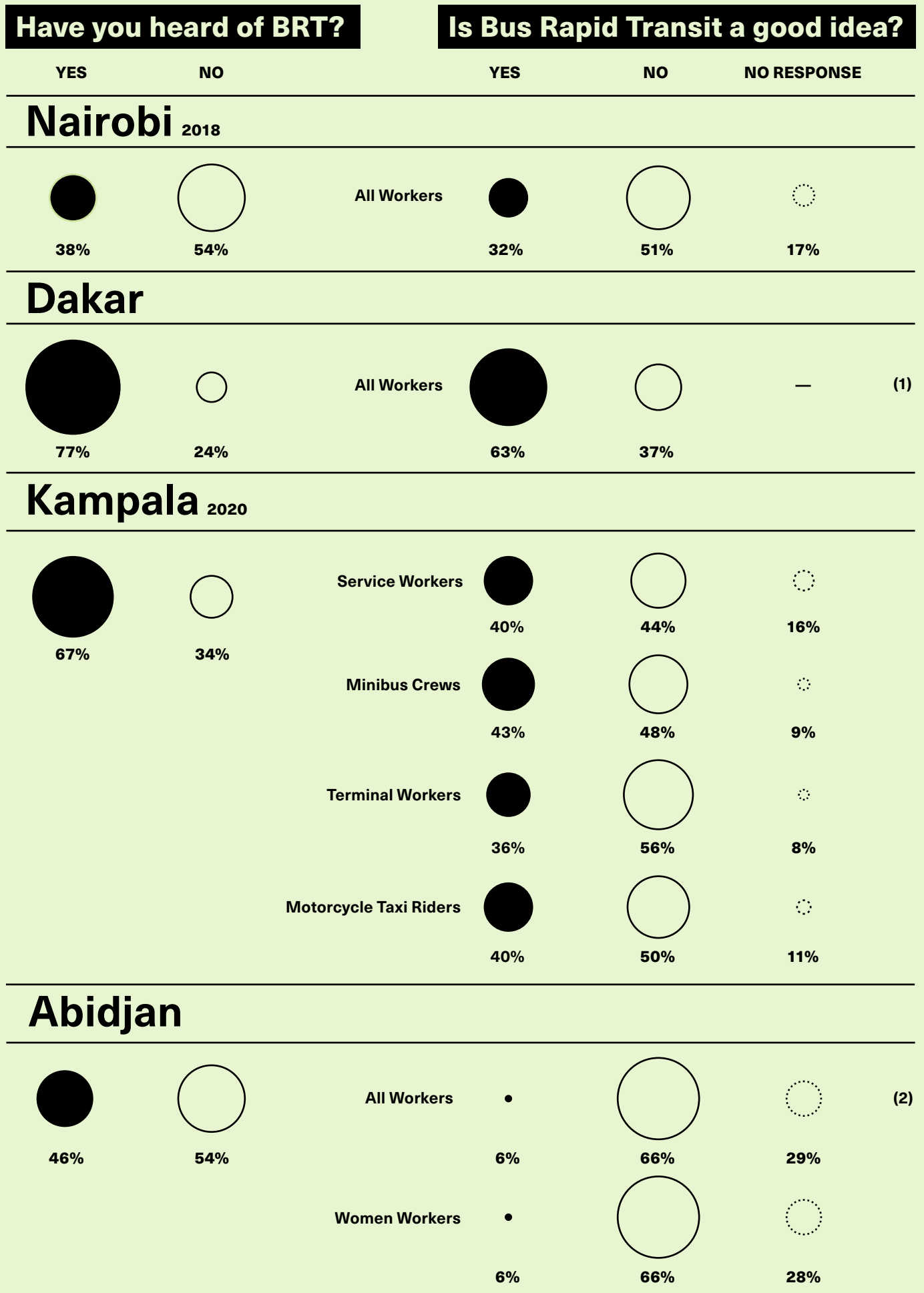
Most workers interviewed were opposed to the introduction of BRT, although in Nairobi, most workers were unaware of it and the proportion of workers opposed to the introduction of BRT increased as more workers became aware. See Figure 19.

The data from Kampala was analysed to see whether there was any difference in attitude between different groups of workers, and the data from Abidjan was analysed to see whether there was any difference in the attitudes between men and women. In both cases, opposition to BRT was consistent.

In each city, focus groups were asked to discuss why BRT was or was not a good idea, and how BRT might affect their work.

Figure 18. Awareness of BRT

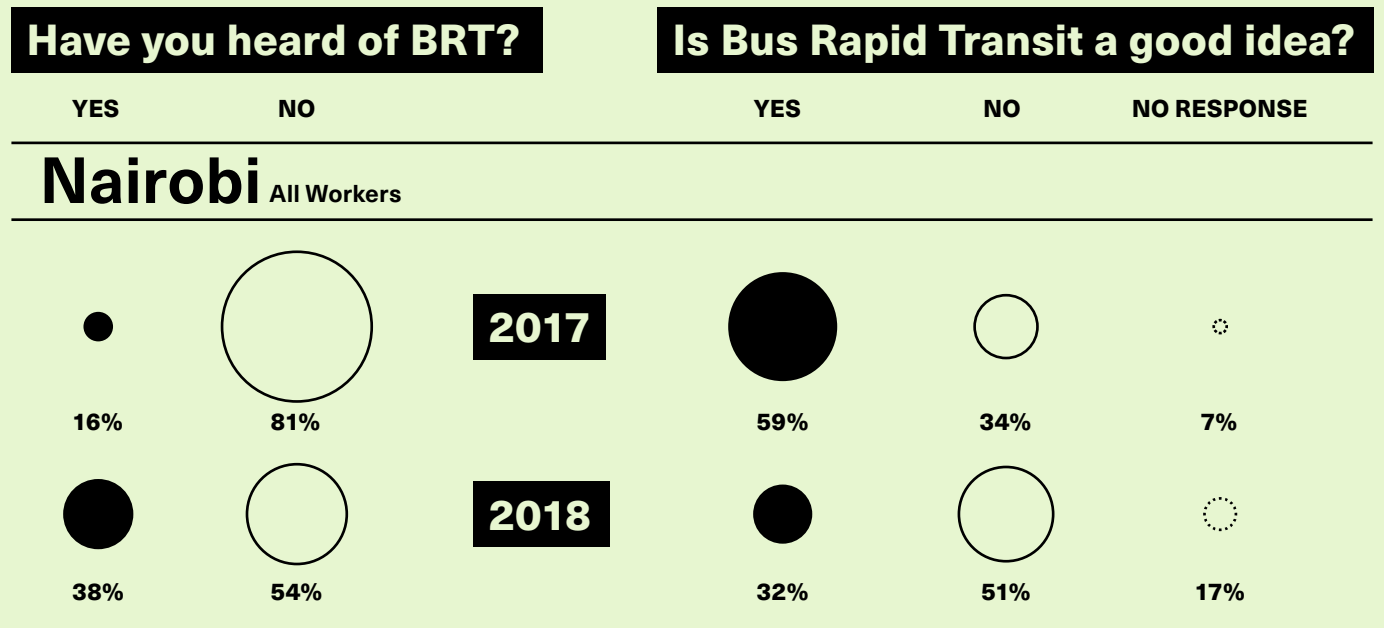
Figure 19. Attitudes towards BRT



(1) The question in Dakar was phrased “Have you heard about BRT?” followed by “If yes, do you think BRT is a good idea?”

82 ← (2) The question in Abidjan was phrased “Do you think BRT will have an impact on your business?” followed by “If so, how?”

Figure 20. Awareness of BRT and Attitudes towards BRT: Nairobi 2017 – 2018



## Fear of loss of jobs or income

The most common reason for the negative reactions to the prospect of BRT is, not surprisingly, fear of the potential loss of jobs and livelihoods.

**“Many of the people will be laid off. For instance, the conductors, stage callers, drivers, because only few drivers will be needed to operate BRT buses. It is a great risk that majority of the current taxi drivers will be rendered unemployed and yet they can’t go below a level of driver to become bus ticket issuer. People who sell taxi tyres, those who do the servicing, washing bay boys will all be unemployed. The women who sell tea, food and snacks in the taxi parks and to taxi operators will be affected because they will have nowhere to earn a living as taxis perish from the city centre.”**

Taxi (minibus) crews focus group, Kampala, 2020

**“Those kinds of buses will take away jobs from the ordinary person in the matatu industry because they cannot be repaired by the ordinary mechanic (here). They cannot even fit in this garage. They will also require special spare parts which ordinary suppliers cannot afford. It is for the rich.”**

Service workers focus group, Nairobi, 2019

## Lack of effective consultation

There is a general view that there is a lack of respect for the experience and knowledge of informal economy workers in the public transport industry, and exclusion from the development of plans and ideas for improvement.

**“(Discussions around BRT are)... just talk, because our suggestions will never be respected by government or KCCA. They will take a decision in their favour with an idea of how they profit but not how they would benefit us as people who have been in public transport sector. You just wait and see what they will do; you can never advise them.”**

Taxi stage workers focus group, Kampala, 2020

## Government incompetence

There is a very high degree of cynicism about the competence and ability of the government to successfully deliver any major public transport improvement projects, based on the extent of corruption and the historical evidence of past failures. Even those in favour of BRT are pessimistic about whether the systems will be operational, or whether they will last long because of corruption.

**“Our leaders here are so greedy and corrupt they won’t be able to construct such roads for the buses. They always do shoddy work and eat all the money, so the roads won’t last long for the buses to operate here... No-one could build such roads here in Uganda because here there is bad politics and corruption. I don’t think the roads will be to (the BRT) standard, that shouldn’t worry us as boda-boda riders because they will only work for like five years and phase out.”**

Boda-boda riders focus group, Kampala, 2020

**“Government projects never reach a successful conclusion. For example, the Regional Express Railway (TER) has never worked ever since it was launched and the building work was at the root of problems that residents are living through now.”**

Lat Dior bus station focus group, Dakar, 2019

**“If it is the government to implement it then we forget about the BRT system because many programmes that sounded good have all collapsed, and others didn’t take off because of government and political interference. The commitment from government to run BRT will not be there and there is no element of sustainability if handled by the government.”**

Minibus crews focus group, Kampala, 2020

**“The implementation of the BRT will increase unemployment among transporters in Côte d’Ivoire. This will lead to a reduction in wôro-wôro. For example, for 1000 wôro-wôro in Cocody, with the arrival of the BRT, only 200 wôro-wôro will be able to work properly. If there are three drivers per car, this creates a job crisis for 2,400 drivers. The BRT will only be able to integrate a maximum of 100 drivers.”**

Wôro-wôro drivers focus group, Abidjan, 2022

Women workers, many of whom are vendors in terminals, are fearful that they will be driven away from the BRT terminals, or that the new stations will have no space for vendors.

**“The arrival of this new transport system will destroy our business. Where will we go? Who will pay for our children’s schooling? These are our worries, because of we are single mothers who fight every day to ensure the survival of our children.”**

Women workers focus group, Abidjan, 2022

## Who will benefit from BRT?

There is a suspicion that BRT will only benefit the better-off passengers or is proposed as a means of driving the poor off the streets.

**“Those buses are already planned for the sons of people in the government not for the drivers that have been driving the taxis.”**

Service workers focus group, Kampala, 2020

By formalising and regulating fixed fares, the poor could be excluded.

**“We, the lay people, sometimes have less money for the journey we have to travel so we plead and negotiate with the taxi drivers to take us for less money, yet in the (BRT) buses there won’t be any negotiations, and the prices are fixed.”**

Service workers focus group, Kampala, 2020

On the other hand, some questionnaire respondents and focus groups participants highlighted what they perceived to be some potentially positive impacts of BRT.

**“It’s a plus, because we can no longer transport the people of Abidjan properly because of the traffic jam. If the BRT has its own line, it will not have an impact on our activity. But if the BRT is relocated, the town hall will have to find places to relocate us to ensure the continuity of our activity.”**

Wôro-wôro drivers focus group, Abidjan, 2022

Questionnaire surveys and focus groups revealed that the small minority of workers who are positive about the arrival of BRT support it for a variety of reasons, such as benefitting the economic development of the country, improving the transport system and reducing congestion, bringing better quality employment, and contributing to a safer and cleaner environment.

## Attitudes towards reform policies and proposals

The first Labour Impact Assessment in Nairobi and the subsequent assessments in Dakar and Abidjan concentrated on the potential impact of BRT and the attitudes towards BRT by the informal economy workers. The studies in Kampala and Accra were broader, investigating attitudes and awareness towards some of the other measures to reform and improve public transport being considered by the authorities, including:

- introduction of scheduled bus and minibus services, shifting away from the customary ‘fill and run’ to services running on a timetable;
- reform of vehicle ownership and management of operations, replacing owner-drivers and small-scale vehicle owners with new formalised operating companies;
- removal of cash from the system through the introduction of cashless payments (and thereby enabling integrated city-wide ticketing); and
- replacement of older more polluting vehicles, and modernisation and upgrade of vehicle fleets.

As shown in Figure 20, the majority of workers interviewed in Accra find it very difficult to envisage a public transport system that operates under a different business model to the familiar cash-based fill-and-run operations run on a target system with many vehicle owners competing for business. None of the Accra focus group participants had heard of the idea that vehicles depart at a set time, even before they were full – and many found it difficult to comprehend. Union leaders had a negative experience of the attempted introduction of BRT and the Aayololo service in Accra, and distrust the government’s capacity to implement change.

Accra’s tro-tro workers are overwhelmingly negative to the idea of **scheduled services**, fearing a decline in work and income. Despite the explanation that it could lead to a stable fixed income (wage) and reduced working hours, the large majority believed that it would make it more difficult to reach their daily target for the owners and would lead to even longer working hours.

A few positive respondents believe that scheduled services could reduce stress and provide more rest periods for trotro crews, although several of these agreed with the idea on the condition that the government provides financial support and/or reduced the cost of fuel to compensate.

### Accra tro-tro crews attitudes to suggested reforms

	Total responses	Opposed		In favour	
<b>Scheduled services</b>	84	81	96%	3	4%
<b>Operational reform</b>	55	45	82%	10	18%
<b>Going cashless</b>	74	70	95%	4	5%
<b>Fleet modernisation</b>	61	14	23%	57	93%

Figure 21. Accra tro-tro crews attitude towards reforms

The women working as vendors are more positive, believing that the system could be good if it is well implemented and trotros use the stations to load, which will help the livelihoods of vendors and other station and service workers, especially if it increases the number of passengers using the terminals. But they doubt that the drivers will agree, unless they fully understand the proposals, can be convinced that their earnings will not be affected, and see the benefits of the provision of social insurance that would accompany formalised employment contracts.

Many drivers believe that the **reorganisation of tro-tros into operating companies** would discriminate against them, and will only employ people they already know, or restrict jobs to their family members. They also worry that they will demand ‘certificates’ (qualifications) before

offering jobs, and others believe that it will lead to less pay. Some think that companies (or the government) would be incapable of running the public transport system, and more generally, several drivers were fearful of company rules and regulations.

The few drivers who welcomed the proposal to hand operations to new companies are positive towards the prospect of regulating the number of vehicles on the road, improving discipline, maintaining vehicles to a higher standard, and paying a predictable monthly salary.

Station and service workers are concerned that the company will employ their own staff to maintain and service vehicles, leaving them without work, or exclude them by demanding qualifications. Others do not believe that private companies are capable of running public transport.

Drivers and drivers' mates are overwhelmingly opposed to the idea of **going cashless**. Drivers are particularly worried about the ability of passengers to use the system to defraud them, and concerned about the jobs for their conductors. Many fear that they lack knowledge about the technology, and that the system will not work or will delay payments. There are also worries that they will not have the necessary cash to cover essential expenses, such as police bribes and repairs. Service and station workers are universally opposed.

A few drivers are more positive, suggesting that it could reduce the pressure on the conductors, make payment easier, and reduce friction between the mates and passengers, although technical network problems may cause confusion. A slim majority of Accra's taxi drivers and okada riders are also more positive, particularly in reducing the spread of disease, reducing crime and making payment easier.

**Fleet modernisation.** A large majority of respondents recognise the need to replace old polluting vehicles, and – as to be expected – most believe that the government should pay for new vehicles or recompense owners for scrapping the old ones. Those opposed believe that rather scrapping the old vehicles, the government should help owners repair or upgrade their current vehicles with new engines.

Some service workers, particularly mechanics, fear that new vehicles will require less maintenance and reduce demand for their services, or require new skills and tools that are not available to them.

Accra terminal



# IMPACT

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## What has been the impact of Labour Impact Assessments?

This includes the impact on the policies and programmes of the authorities responsible for public transport, the livelihoods and working conditions, the organisational strength and negotiating strength of the unions and associations, and their broader policies and strategies for the reform.

## Have they had any impact on the policies and programmes of the authorities responsible for public transport?

Interviews with some of the policymakers, researchers and industry representatives concerned with the reform of public transport reveal a noticeable shift in policy discussions in recent years, a growth of interest in understanding the internal dynamics of the industry, and a greater recognition that urban transport reform without the engagement of those stakeholders within the informal economy is likely to fail.

**“There is a convergence of factors, pushing transport authorities to pay more attention to this aspect of their transport system. It comes from the general discourse on paratransit being more visible and people being exposed to that theme in international conferences and meetings that they go to... It’s just become more and more present.”**

Interview, Simon Saddier,  
World Bank/SSATP, 4 June 2024

**“From the from the World Bank’s perspective, the goal is never to try to displace the system. Perhaps long time ago there, there might be examples of this. But our goal and all of our projects, including the cities (covered in Labour Impact Assessments), is to find a way to improve and integrate these operators into an integrated system... Long before actually implementing a BRT or any mass transit system for that matter, there should be a process of reform transformation. That requires government leadership intervention. The question is how? What should be done and how: this is what we’re trying to focus on.”**

Interview, Georges Darido,  
World Bank, 31 July 2024



The contribution of Labour Impact Assessments to this shift in policy ‘mood music’ is difficult to judge, but they have had some influence.

**“In many ways, it has opened doors for our engagement with the sector workers. I would say that increasingly, we are now having in Kenya, a complete shift, maybe not accomplished, but a shift in the way the policymakers are engaging.”**

Interview, Anne Kamau,  
University of Nairobi, 11 June 2024

**“At the Semaine de la Mobilité et du Climat held in Dakar in 2022, for example, the topic was there very prominently. A lot of the representatives from the transport authorities across the continent go to these meetings, and they realise there is something happening. I think the Labour Impact Assessments are part of the dynamic. They also concretise and materialise this discourse and give decision-makers a point of reference. Because to go beyond the discourse, you need to have something solid that you can use to inform the decisions you’re going to make... Each piece of work slowly contributes to changing the mindset. In that respect, it’s definitely contributing.”**

Interview, Simon Saddier,  
World Bank/SSATP, 4 June 2024

In some cities, the publication and launch of the Labour Impact Assessment reports were widely reported in the media. In Dakar, for example, newspaper articles covering the publication of the report stimulated a detailed response from the transport authority (CETUD), opening the door to dialogue between unions and CETUD for the first time<sup>42</sup>.

Labour Impact Assessments have also had some impact in building an understanding of how the industry operates: such as employment relationships, business models, micro-economic eco-systems, and the internal organisation.

**“Any reform of public transport needs to start with a thorough consultation and consideration of those on the frontline of the transport sector: drivers, ticket collectors, station clerks, mechanics and so forth. This thorough consultation must also be complemented by a quantitative assessment of the socio-economic impacts any public transport reform is likely to have, so that the adequate risk mitigation measures are put in place.”**

Correspondence, Louise Ribet,  
C40, 28 August 2024

**“Sometimes this industry is seen as chaotic. But people don’t understand it. This is why the Labour Impact Assessments are very good. It helps us and it helps governments understand how this industry works, which is really step one. Who owns the vehicles who operates the services? I think fundamentally, once you understand the current business model, then you can talk about what changes are possible and how they can be integrated into a larger vision for public transport in the city and maybe even incorporating them into the new operations.”**

Interview, Georges Darido,  
World Bank, 31 July 2024

**“I think you were able to get insight into the breadth of this economic ecosystem, insofar as you were able to unpack that it’s not just an owner and a driver in this world, there are a whole lot of suppliers, services, and people that make a living out of the (industry)... There is an intricate set of jobs that are linked in, in all sorts of quite complex ways, other authors haven’t really unpacked because they tended to focus on the drivers. This was a strength of your method.”**

Interview, Roger Behrens,  
University of Cape Town, 24 July 2024

**“My overall comment on the (Labour Impact Assessment report) that I really found remarkable, was that there is so much detail. It’s so rich, it’s so well done. The thing that I really find so interesting, is the data that you collect understanding who’s doing what. What are the different responsibility roles? How are they linked, contractual, direct, indirect, etc?”**

Interview, Emmanuel Dommergues,  
UITP, 19 August 2024

**“You focus very strongly on the informal workers directly involved – what their conditions are like, and how they may be impacted to these changes or proposed investments, which I think is super-interesting. By contrast, we (at the ILO) mostly look at the infrastructure side... (particularly) during the construction phase, so our focus is more employment in the construction sector, rather than transport sector. Of course, the infrastructure is the basis for the transport sector, but you are interested in once it’s built, how does the system**

**operate? And how is it impacted? The informal sector is typically very absent or somewhat invisible in the kind of judicial data which we heavily rely on for a lot of our analysis... We should do more to bring in this complimentary qualitative dimension as well, which we don’t get from official data.”**

Interview, Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song,  
ILO, 16 July 2024

Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song (ILO) describes how previous experience working on the introduction of BRT in Johannesburg was strongly influenced by the experience of BRT in Colombia.

**“A lot of (the strategy) came from the Colombian experience, which was kind of an illusion of shifting from this chaotic, informal system to a highly efficient, formal system. We were told the (informal workers) became bus drivers, and everybody was happy. South Africa did not roll like that, which is also why I am interested in these studies. This incremental transition to formalisation is really important in this context. I think the way you approach this with studies is very helpful. What are the complexities? I think it’s sometimes too simplified or too formulaic. How people approach it is like a formula about how to train people from informality to formality, and there’s no formula.”**

Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song, ILO, 16 July 2024

## Have they led to any improvements in the immediate **livelihoods and working conditions of workforce** in those cities?

A detailed assessment of the direct impact on workers in the cities concerned is beyond the scope of this review. Whether, for example, any practical progress has been made in addressing the immediate issues faced by the informal workforce in each city. On the surface at least, little seems to have changed. Nevertheless, there is some anecdotal evidence

that the attention given to the workforce by the assessments, especially where the reports and follow-up activities have been covered in local media, have led to some improvements, in the behaviour of the police, for example. There has certainly been a strengthened voice of workers, but progress in practical livelihoods and working conditions is slow.

## Have the assessments led to the improved **organisational capacity and negotiating strength of unions and associations** directly participating in the research?

The Labour Impact Assessments, particularly the seminars in which the reports from the research are presented and discussed, provided a very important opportunity for the participating unions and associations, the transport authorities and other stakeholders to meet – sometimes for the first time. This opened the door to the development of longer-term opportunities for discussion, consultation, and negotiation.

In Kampala, for example, the publication<sup>43</sup> and discussion of the labour impact research commissioned by AFD led to the formation of a consultative forum that brought together all the drivers' associations, an owners' association, the city authorities, and leading researchers from Makerere University, facilitated by ATGWU and supported by FES. The outcomes included the merger of five different drivers' associations into the Uganda Taxi Operators Federation (UTOF).

In Maputo, the research process itself is playing a constructive role in developing cooperation between SINTRAT<sup>44</sup>, the long-established transport trade union, and more recently formed associations, ACAT-CE and ADEFO<sup>45</sup>.

**“The current union, the traditional transport union here, comes from this kind of vertical unions, from the (former) socialist point of view, but they lost the roots with the workers. The good thing is that the workers started to try to organise some kind of workers' association, and with your work, I know that they are (building cooperation) with this union. It looks like it's something is happening, and it's great, because they are bringing the legitimacy to defend the workers.”**

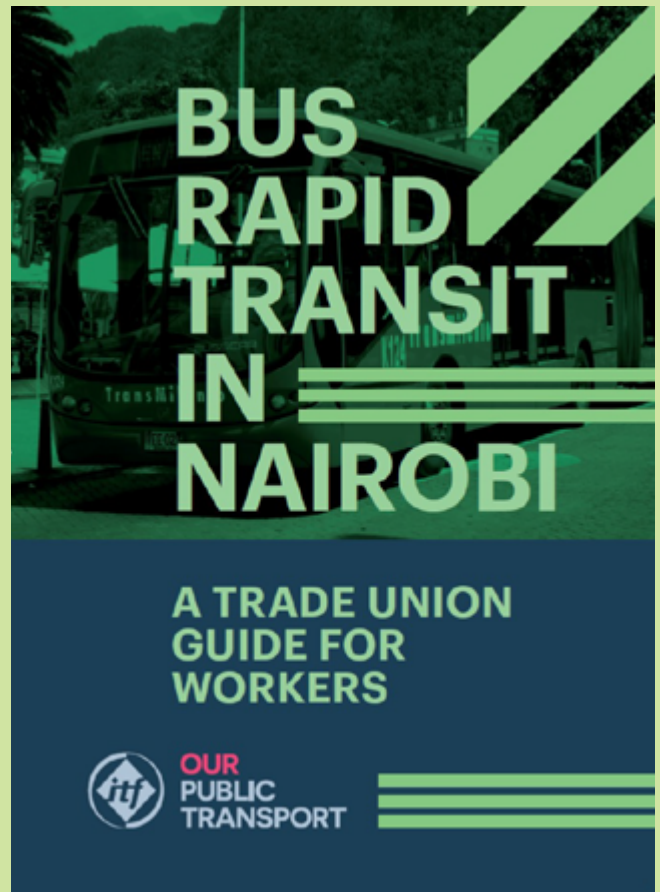
Interview, Joaquin Romero de Tejada, OMT Mozambique, 6 September 2024

In Nairobi, the Labour Impact Assessment played an important role in bringing the union together with academic researchers, NGOs, transport engineers, NAMATA (Nairobi Metropolitan Area Transport Authority) and other stakeholders into the 'Socially-Just Public Transport Working Group'. Anne Kamau, the convenor of the Kenya Transport Research Network at the University of Nairobi, also thinks that the assessment played an important role in raising awareness among the workforce itself.

**“The workers themselves have gained some level of consciousness in terms of the need to be recognised. When the initial plans throughout the BRT were announced, they were not included in the planning, and some of them stormed the meeting, to seek recognition. The workers have become more forceful in terms of asking for their space and recognition, but also sending the message that the government cannot really work without them.”**

Interview, Anne Kamau,  
University of Nairobi, 11 June 2024

The unions in Nairobi also played an important role in disseminating information about BRT to workers in the matatu bus and minibus industry, through the distribution of pamphlets explaining what BRT is, what it might look like in Nairobi, and what can be done to give workers a strong voice in BRT planning and implementation.



In Dakar and Abidjan, the assessments were key to the development of new relationships between the unions and the transport authorities.

**“I don’t (think the unions) would be focusing on informal transport without the job the research did, the possibility to contact directly CETUD in Senegal, or to contact directly AMUGA in Abidjan. I recently had a meeting with the regional director of transport covering Abidjan, for example, not at the political level, but at the operational level.”**

Interview, Bayla Sow, Deputy Africa Regional  
Secretary, ITF, 9 August 2024

Nevertheless, the capacity of the unions and associations in some of the cities to make the most of the opportunities remains very low, particularly where workers are divided into dozens of competing organisations.

**“The major problem is the level of education or our informal drivers and our union. They don’t really understand the results and the recommendations of the Labour Impact Assessments. They are focused on the daily basic operations. The problem is that the level of organisation, the level of capacity of the union, is very low. We don’t use the full potential of the Labour Impact Assessment.”**

Interview, Bayla Sow, Deputy Africa Regional Secretary, ITF, 9 August 2024

## **How have the assessments influenced the policies and strategies of trade unions, including the ITF and its affiliated trade unions, and the broader international movement?**

The organisation and representation of workers in the informal economy presents some important challenges for trade unions. Historically, many trade union leaders have been reluctant to organise among workers in the informal economy, for a variety of reasons.

Some thought that the informal economy was peripheral and would disappear with economic growth or modern industrial development, that trade unions are only for workers in a formal employment relationship, or that they were impossible to organise into sustainable democratic organisations. Most importantly, there was (and still is) worry that workers in the informal economy are not ‘workers’, but self-identify as entrepreneurs, or micro-enterprises.

At the same time, many workers in the informal economy regard trade unions as organisations defending the interests of those in formal employment who are already in a privileged position of regular work, social protection,

respected employment rights and so on, and not interested or capable of supporting those in the informal economy.

In 2002, a landmark Resolution of the ILO’s International Labour Conference concerning decent work and the informal economy<sup>46</sup> recognised that workers in the informal economy had the same rights as all other workers, including the right to social protection, freedom of association, and the right to collective bargaining, regardless of the existence of an employment relationship.

This resolution, and the debates and discussions that led up to it, shifted the discourse within the international trade union movement, and the need for strong democratic organisation and representation of workers in the informal economy became more prominent.

## **Increasingly, the question became not whether unions should be organising among informal economy workers, but how?**

Before a union can begin to include and effectively represent informal economy workers, it has to understand far more about how the informal economy works in practice: the jobs and occupations, the employment relationships, the issues faced by the workers, and the potential counterparts for collective bargaining.

The ITF started a process of learning in 2013 through the four-year Informal Transport Workers Project which supported unions in Latin America, Asia and Africa to explore policies and practical initiatives for the effective representation and organisation of informal transport workers<sup>47</sup>. But the Labour Impact Assessments provide a far deeper and more detailed analysis of operations in the cities concerned.

**“The Labour Impact Assessments (enabled the ITF) to understand, really, what the informal sector about, all the job surrounding the informal sector, not only drivers, but all the others, mechanics, electricians, etc. It let us understand the potential of unionisation we have in the informal sector. It also gave us the possibility to know really the different challenges we are facing in this sector. It gave us the possibility to really get in touch with the agencies and the structures in charge of public transport, of urban transport, not at the political level, but at the operational level.”**

Interview, Bayla Sow, Deputy Africa Regional Secretary, ITF, 9 August 2024



# KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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## BUILDING TRUST AND RESPECT

Overall, the lack of trust or confidence among workers in the capacity, ability or integrity of authorities responsible for transport planning, regulation and implementation is a major problem throughout the industry. New announcements of policies, regulations or infrastructural projects are generally met with widespread scepticism. Even when workers are favourably disposed to proposals, they lack confidence in the authority's ability to implement them. Workers perceive institutional corruption to be widespread and deeply rooted.

**“I think a lot hinges on this trust relationship. Our experience in the sector has been that the levels of mistrust are really high in all directions. Individual vehicle owners within the same association don't trust each other. Association leaders don't trust the government because of policy over decades of saying 'we eventually we want to replace you, we want to get rid of you guys and replace you with the BRT'. There is a sense in the industry that their backs are against the wall, everybody's against them. The government wants to get rid of them and their competitors want to destroy them. So the default is to be distrustful of the person that you speak with.”**

Interview, Roger Behrens,  
University of Cape Town, 24 July 2024



Few transport authorities have the necessary knowledge or experience to understand the social, economic or political impact of their planning and regulation decisions on the informal workforce, or appreciate the need to consult or negotiate.

**“I have a transport engineering background. We trained to look at it as an engineering system. How do you most efficiently get people from A to B. I can completely see the kind of hyper-efficient system, but it’s not going to fly in the social context.”**

Interview, Maikel Lieuw-Kie-Song,  
ILO, 16 July 2024

This can exacerbate distrust among the workforce in the ability of government to manage or regulate the transport industry, and distrust of the proposals for reform. Workers see no evidence that the authorities have made any serious attempts to address the major issues facing the informal transport workforce. There is an absence of serious opportunities for workforce representatives to learn about, discuss ideas, and participate in the development of proposals for reform.

Where consultation does occur, it is often with employers (owners of vehicles) and/or after plans have already been decided or begun to be implemented, adding to the frustration and distrust of the workers and their representatives. To build the essential level of trust and confidence to achieve reform that is inclusive of and supported by urban passenger transport workers requires consultation and negotiation between the transport authorities, planning agencies and regulators, and representatives of unions and associations, at the early stages of planning and development of projects, with agreed terms of reference and procedures.

Early consultation also enables workers’ representatives to assist the authorities in shaping proposals and decisions that are more likely to be supported by the workforce and successfully implemented. Informal workers have unique knowledge and skills in the operations, market structures and political economy of their industry which are invaluable in developing realistic and practical plans for reform.

In 2015, the International Labour Organisation adopted the *ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation (R204)*. It recommends that governments should:

**“Take urgent and appropriate measures to enable the transition of workers and economic units from the informal to the formal economy, while ensuring the preservation and improvement of existing livelihoods, ... respecting workers’ fundamental rights, and ensuring opportunities for income security, livelihoods and entrepreneurship during the transition.”<sup>148</sup>**

R204 provides a valuable policy framework for governments and transport authorities when considering the reform of services, including specific recommendations on the need for the inclusion of workers and employers/owners in planning. In reforming informal public transport, planners and authorities should develop and elaborate specific guidelines on the implementation of R204.

# CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR WORKERS, OWNERS AND GOVERNMENTS

Capacity development is needed for constituent organisations, both workers and informal employers (owners), to provide education and information to their members, enable them to democratically represent their interests, engage in policy development, and fully participate negotiations with transport authorities. Greater capacity is also needed by government agencies and transport authorities to build an understanding of the industry, and to engage meaningfully with workers' and employers' organisations.

As the ILO's tripartite meeting on urban transport concluded in 2021, it is essential to:

**“...Build the capacity of constituents, including relevant authorities and representative organisations of workers and employers in the informal economy, to develop strategies and engage in effective social dialogue to promote the creation of decent and sustainable jobs in the formal economy, to facilitate a transition to formality, and to enable a just transition to the future of work that contributes to sustainable development.”**

ILO, Conclusions of the Technical meeting on the future of decent and sustainable work in urban transport services, ILO Sectoral Policies Department, Geneva, 2021

For workers, their unions and associations need to be capable of providing education and information for their members, potential members, and their leaders to understand the issues at stake, develop ideas and policies for reform, and democratically represent those policies in consultations and negotiations

with their counterparts in the authorities and owners' associations. It is also important that unions and associations do not simply represent crew members (drivers, conductors, motorcycle taxi riders) but organise among all those workers whose livelihoods depend on the informal transport industry.

At the heart of the problem lies confusion and conflict of interest between workers and vehicle owners. This is made more difficult by the continuing confusing use of the term 'operator', which is frequently used as a catch-all to describe all those with a stake in informal operations, including the workers but, in practice, is often restricted to owners when authorities engage in consultation.

**“The work of some vehicle owners evolved from conductor to driver to owner and to fleet owner. That's make confusion inside the association of owners, because sometimes, until now, they represent all the operators in front of the of the government, municipal government and national government, because they feel like they have the legitimacy to defend all the sector because they were drivers or started as conductors. But we know that when you start to be an owner and think as an entrepreneur, as a businessman, the workers start to be on the other side, and you are not the right person to represent them. And this is the problem right now.”**

Interview, Joaquin Romero de Tejada, OMT  
Mozambique, 6 September 2024

Unions themselves also include both workers and owners in their membership. Many of the issues faced affect both groups, particularly owners of very small fleets, and interests may be shared, but there are some key differences. Most obviously, the daily targets are set by the vehicle owners, which has a very direct impact on the livelihoods and working conditions (especially working hours) of vehicle crews and, indirectly, all the other workers in the informal supply chain.

Some unions and associations manage these contradictions successfully, and targets are often set through informal negotiations and consensus within the organisation, or directly between the individual owners and crews. But in some cases, it is the owners who dominate the union or association, and frequently hold leadership positions, with limited accountability.

The problem becomes serious when unions become the de facto owners and/or managers of operations, leading to sharp conflicts of interest. In these circumstances, there is an urgent need to separate the functions: on one hand, the democratic representation of members' interests, and on the other hand, the management of business operations in running terminals and routes.

These conflicts of interest become particularly acute, for example, when considering the introduction of BRT. Unions may wish to extend or convert their business interests to become investors or owners in the proposed BRT services, often encouraged by the authorities responsible for BRT implementation, while the workers are concerned about the possible loss of jobs and livelihoods.

It is no different for associations of owners and employers in the industry. Owners of small fleets frequently complain that they have little information and that their interests are not represented.

There is also an urgent need to support the development of unity and democratic accountability of representative organisations. The splintering of workers' and owners' representation into multiple rival unions and associations makes it very difficult for them and transport authorities to engage in coherent and articulate negotiation. There are examples of success in achieving greater unity from which lessons can be drawn, particularly from Kampala, where the union has played a major role in promoting merger and unity between associations and between the associations and the union itself. But these strategies are not easy to simply reproduce elsewhere.

Trade unions, workers' associations and owners' organisations need long-term investment in organisational development, democratic accountability, and conflict resolution and mediation, tailored to local political and social circumstances.

# ADDRESS THE IMMEDIATE CONCERNS

## “Why wait for BRT? Why can’t the government deal with the matatu issues now?”

Matatu crew focus group, Nairobi, 2018

It is essential that transport authorities recognise and acknowledge the immediate major problems identified by workers in the informal urban passenger transport industry, and establish procedures and structures capable of serious consultation and negotiation to find solutions.

The main issues identified by workers through the impact assessments are found in every city.

### Alternatives to the ‘target system’

Identify and implement alternatives to the target system (see ‘Livelihoods and employment relationships’, above), including formal employment within the public, private or cooperative sectors or through forms of self-employment, and the registration of vehicle owners, especially in the context of informal transport systems where true ownership is hidden or deliberately obscured.

This requires finding imaginative and innovative solutions and experimentation, through pilot projects, for example. Recent pilot projects in South Africa have demonstrated that it is possible to reform the target system but it requires further development and longer-term investment to ensure sustainability<sup>49</sup>.

### Gender equality

Authorities, unions and vehicle owners’ associations all have a responsibility to end gender discrimination, violence against women, and sexual harassment. Transport authorities need to take responsibility for removing barriers to good quality employment for women in transport, and for working conditions that are safe from violence and harassment. The member-based organisations need to review their rules and constitutions and introduce education programmes for members to address gender inequality.

Widespread sexual harassment demands particular attention, through public education and awareness-raising campaigns backed up by legislation, action by unions and associations against perpetrators, and practical measures to improve safety for women workers and passengers, such as new bus services and the use of CCTV.

## **Access to vocational training**

Develop training programmes for workers, not just driver training for new bus services such as BRT, but broader opportunities for training and apprenticeships amongst all workers in the industry, particularly in the context of the reform of vehicle testing and licencing, the electrification of operations, and specific training and employment opportunities for women to remove gender-based occupational segregation.

## **Harassment and corruption**

End police harassment and extortion. Urgent action is required to solve the problem of conflicts created by endemic harassment, extortion and corruption by police and security forces. This should include, as a first step, acknowledgement of the scale of the problem by governments and transport authorities, coordination of policy and regulation between the security services and transport authorities, and the establishment of negotiation procedures with representative trade unions and associations to identify practical solutions.

## **Working conditions**

Improve working conditions. This should include practical improvements to the transport workplace (including terminals, roadside stops, and garages) that would have an immediate impact on working conditions, including sanitation, shelter, drainage, rest and catering areas and other facilities. This should also include facilities for the workers at interchanges between formal and informal services, such as interchange stations between BRT trunk and feeder routes.

Ensure secure and safe working space for service workers, such as mechanics, caterers, and technicians, who need secure access to land and property to undertake their business without the threat of eviction or harassment, and access to affordable services (electricity and water), tools and equipment with which to work safely.

## **Access to affordable capital**

Provide access to affordable capital for electrification and recapitalisation of vehicles. Governments and transport authorities need to identify sources of affordable loans or subsidies that will assist the recapitalisation of vehicles in the process of reform and environmental protection and removing the cycle of debt faced by vehicle owners.

## **Access to social protection**

Extend state-supported social protection programmes or, in the absence of adequate state provision, support workers' organisations (unions, associations, self-help groups) who organise cooperative welfare funds and other informal social protection services to extend and improve provision.

# IMPROVING LABOUR IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Although the underlying approach of participatory research remained consistent throughout, the details of research methods evolved from project to project over eight years: learning from the experience in each city and consequently amending research tools and methods. There were also some differences in the research terms of reference between the different commissioning bodies (ITF, AFD and MLGRD), which required modification of the research tools and analysis and presentation of data, but also refined the methods adopted for subsequent research.

With this experience, there is now an opportunity to develop a **standardised set of core research tools** (questionnaires, focus group discussion guidelines and in-depth interview templates), and a common framework for data analysis to ensure consistent capture of key comparable data (e.g. livelihoods or working conditions disaggregated between occupations, gender, or transport modes) between cities.

There is also an opportunity to deepen our understanding through a more advanced statistical **meta-analysis of the data** gathered from those assessments already undertaken. In the short time and limited resources available, it has not been previously possible to realise the full potential of analysis of the rich data captured in the questionnaire surveys across the five cities (six, including Maputo).

These recommendations are based on a desk-based review of the reports from the Labour Impact Assessments and other closely related documentation, supplemented with a limited number of interviews with some stakeholders and transport specialists. **A more detailed and rigorous evaluation of methodology** could be achieved through broader discussion (perhaps a conference or a sequence of seminars) involving the researchers in research institutions who played a significant role in each city, research specialists in the VREF International Research Program (IRP) in Informal and Shared Mobility (ISM), the UITP Paratransit Working Group, the ILO and other relevant forums, and representatives of the unions, associations and transport authorities involved.

Such an evaluation could include consideration of further technical improvements, such as the triangulation of research findings from other sources to validate and verify the data, or the development of cost-benefit analyses of potential investment in reform.

# MAINSTREAMING LABOUR IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

**“The number one thing for transport authority to say are that these labour assessments are the preliminary element to be done to ensure success to implement your transport projects. That’s the key message...”**

Interview, Emmanuel Dommergues, UITP, 19 August 2024

Labour Impact Assessments in the five cities (six, if Maputo is included) have made a substantial improvement in the detailed understanding of the informal transport industry: how the micro-economy functions in practice, the range of occupations and livelihoods, the internal organisation and employment relationships, and so on. They have provided evidence of the major issues facing the workforce, as identified by the workers themselves. They have provided some tentative quantified estimates of the potential impact of BRT on employment.

This information is crucial when considering potential reform of the informal transport industry.

We need to explore how the Labour Impact Assessment methodology can be adapted and developed for wider application in the procedures and policies of city authorities, national governments, multilateral development banks, and other international stakeholders when considering proposals for major public transport projects, as a condition for loans or grants.

The ILO's report to the 2021 tripartite sectoral meeting on urban transport<sup>50</sup> specifically suggested that “workers request that governments and/or major lenders undertake

a Labour Impact Assessment in order to gather information about the informal transport workforce and estimate the potential impact of formalization (for example of the bus rapid transit system) on livelihoods. Whereas the lending criteria of most development banks include compulsory environmental and social impact studies, they do not require studies of the impact on employment”.

The World Bank recognises that its environmental and social framework requires ‘citizen engagement’, and it is “essential that these include not just citizens, but the stakeholders that may be impacted... and labour is certainly an important one. We are advising teams, as they prepare... projects to engage as much as possible with the relevant industries, to understand how they operate, and try to identify ways to mitigate any impact or opportunities for them to develop”. (Interview, Georges Darido, World Bank, 31 July 2024)

Nevertheless, while the World Bank insists on environmental and social impact assessments of projects and management procedures to ensure that workers employed to work specifically in relation to the project are treated fairly and in safe and healthy working conditions<sup>51</sup>, there is no obligation to

assess the impact on livelihoods, rights and working conditions of workers affected by the implementation of projects.

Consideration of labour conditions needs to be seen as not just something to be addressed within infrastructure projects but as a problem that demands attention in its own right for the health and wellbeing of large numbers of people working in the sector, as well as the sector's role in the health and wellbeing of passengers and communities who rely on these services for access to opportunities and services.

Supporting better working conditions is an essential reform in and of itself that needs more attention, especially if we are to improve major public health issues like crashes, livelihood issues, and passenger improvements.

Analysis of recent passenger satisfaction surveys in five African cities found that, “Where driver interests are unrepresented in industry organisations and drivers have little stake in businesses, poorer passenger satisfaction results from less courteous customer interactions, less safe driving behaviour, and less responsive service headways” and “more assured driver income ... contributes to less aggressive driver behaviour and therefore higher passenger satisfaction”.<sup>52</sup>

More work needs to be done to show the importance of improving worker conditions as reform to reach better transport service and access outcomes.

It is essential that planning of projects to reform informal public transport include Labour Impact Assessments, yet the ability and capacity of government agencies to conduct impact assessments alone is limited.

**“It would be difficult for a transport authority to carry out its own assessment of the of the sector. There’s the question of skills. We know that it involves soft skills and understanding that are very difficult to put in a report in a way that allows you to interact and to build rapport with the industry. I think it’s hard to transfer those skills... Typical transport authorities have a lot of people coming from an engineering or planning background, but they might need more people from the social sciences with an understanding of how to organise large scale qualitative surveys.**

**“There is also the problem of perception. Transport authorities are perceived as the government, if not the enemy... with power over your economic interest that can create problems for you. I don’t see operators opening up, especially about the financial dimensions of the business or anything like that to transport authorities... I think having peers talking to peers, and especially entering the sector from the union or coming from the union world, definitely gives you a great advantage in terms of access, with the credibility to open doors.”**

Interview, Simon Saddier,  
World Bank/SSATP, 4 June 2024

Trade unions and workers' associations are in a unique position to work alongside the authorities and research institutions to undertake Labour Impact Assessments, capable of gaining the trust and support of workers in the industry.



To extend, develop and mainstream Labour Impact Assessments requires a longer-term commitment, perhaps through a consortium of VREF with the World Bank and/or others, to financially support a programme in Africa, or in more than one region, to build the capacity of unions and associations.

Such a programme should provide training and support for unions and associations, academic researchers and transport authorities from selected countries where major transport reform or infrastructure projects are being planned, to undertake Labour Impact Assessments, building on the experience of those organisations who have already participated.

It should also enable the participating organisations to discuss and exchange policy ideas, review practical progress on the immediate issues identified in the assessments, publish reports and policy guides on the reform and just transition of the informal transport industry, and contribute to emergent learning through the VREF International Research Program, the UITP Paratransit Working Group, the C40 Public Transport Network, the ILO, and other relevant forums.

It is hoped that the publication of this report will be followed by presentations and discussions at international events where the reform of informal transport is on the agenda, to broaden the discussion on the future of Labour Impact Assessments and proposals for a development programme.

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# APPENDIX:

## NOTE ON GLI'S METHODS OF RESEARCH ON INFORMAL WORKERS IN TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

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### Purpose

This note (a) describes and (b) assesses the value of the methodology used by GLI in its published research studies on informal workers in transport systems in five cities (Abidjan, Dakar, Nairobi, Accra and Kampala).

Each of the five studies has been designed to assist and encourage informal economy workers' representatives to engage constructively in the planning process of rapid transport systems and to identify policies and initiatives towards the reform of employment in the paratransit industry.

### Five characteristics of the method

The GLI mixed method approach to research has five characteristic features:

01. Rigorously empirical: statistical analysis of quantitative data gained in surveys and qualitative analysis of interviews, focus groups and discussions to give as complete a picture as possible within stated confidence intervals.
  02. Participatory: working closely with workers, relevant workers' associations and trade unions to build a 'bottom-up' understanding of the complexities of the organic micro-economy of paratransit in cities, while ensuring that those who provide existing transport are included and have a voice.
  03. Grounded in values: demonstrating respect for all people who are currently involved in transport and seeing the informal economy as a valuable part of how societies work.
  04. Action-based: the research takes place in the context of new investment in infrastructure and is designed to support that process by including and respecting the views of all stakeholders by following up research with focussed discussions of recommendations.
  05. A mixed team: the above features require that the research team is composed of people with very different backgrounds. It must include technical experts such as data analysts, people who have expertise in transport systems, people connected into the world of trade unions, and local people who are involved in the informal transport economy.
-

## Assessment of the method

Having described the method, the next step is to assess its value in measuring the kinds of changes that take place in relation to the investment of transport infrastructure.

To do this, we ask four key questions. Does the method:

01. Enable all stakeholders to own the results?
02. Provide useful results?
03. Have a robust methodology?
04. Present the results simply while acknowledging the deeper complexity?

Taking each question in turn:

### 1. Ownership of the results

The participatory method builds trust and ensures that people who are often left out of research studies are included. This is a model of doing research 'with' rather than 'on' people, with the result that people will recognise themselves in the findings and increase the likelihood of them supporting the conclusions of the research. Including trade unions in the studies, while centrally important in ensuring the participation of workers, has the added benefit of encouraging unions to become an actor in development processes.

### 2. Useful results

The fact that the views of all key stakeholders are included in the study means that changes made are likely to result in outcomes that can be implemented without major flaws. The research will also identify problems that will remain even after the system has been changed and begin to find ways to fix them.

### 3. Robust methods

Obtaining data from multiple sources and using assured ways of assessing confidence levels in data help to ensure the validity and reliability of findings. Ever-growing data sets enable testing and improving interpretation of data.

### 4. Simplicity of presentation

While the research studies involve the collection and analysis of complex data from different sources, the results have been written up in clear and compelling ways that are easy to understand.

## Potential for further development

The five studies allow for the development of meta-analysis of the data collected. This would enable advanced statistical analysis to compare the situations in five cities, together with deep probing into the factors that help or hinder the development of large-scale infrastructure projects that bring gains to transport systems but simultaneously threaten livelihoods.

**Barry Knight, 26 August 2024**

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# ENDNOTES

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20. In Kenya, for example, the partnership with the Institute of Development Studies at University of Nairobi led to union participation in the Kenya Transport Research Network and engagement with other practical initiatives to improve passenger transport in Nairobi.
21. In response to the difficulty in gaining accurate estimate of net income due to variations depending on external factors (such as weather, time of the year, public events), the Maputo questionnaire includes fare income on typical, busy and slow days, to gain a sense of by how much income can vary.
22. The questionnaire used in Maputo included questions to estimate the variations in daily fare income for chapas (minibus) drivers: "How much do you collect in fares on a typical day? How much do you collect in fares on a very busy day? How much do you collect in fares on a very slow day?"
23. Stations' being terminals, platforms, stages, bus stops, 'taxi' parks, motorcycle taxi stands etc. In other words, passenger boarding points.
24. 'See Comparative livelihood estimates, above. Source: ILO / ILOSTAT, SDG Indicator 8.5.1 Average Hourly Earnings OF Employees by Sex. [https://rshiny.ilo.org/dataexplorer54/?region=AFRICA&lang=en&id=SDG\\_0851\\_SEX\\_OCU\\_NB\\_A](https://rshiny.ilo.org/dataexplorer54/?region=AFRICA&lang=en&id=SDG_0851_SEX_OCU_NB_A)
25. Toyota Hiace Drones are up-market 12-seater minibuses used as taxis, mostly serving long-distance routes. Drone taxi crews can earn considerably more than their counterparts in the traditional Toyota minivans. Passenger fares are higher. A new vehicle is more fuel-efficient, less likely to break down and in good condition, attracting less extortion and fines from police.
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28. EBITDA: “earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization”: total earnings from fare revenue after all operational costs are deducted, not including payments to the lender, i.e. the principal and interest. Internal Rate of Return (IRR): represents the yearly financial gain from the capital invested at the beginning in %. If calculated on the investment: Financial IRR (FIRR). If calculated on the equity, Equity IRR (EIRR).
29. Witnessed at first-hand by GLI researchers, Nairobi, November 2018.
30. In-depth interviews and focus groups
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34. Ibid.
35. Quoted in Daily Nation. <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/witness/2012/7/17/the-reluctant-outlaw-a-nairobi-matatu-drivers-story>)
36. During the 2011 war, the Gnambros were reportedly armed and were promised payment by the president-elect Alassane Ouattara, but when payments failed to materialise, they turned to the transport stations for income, enforcing the payment of fees from drivers with violence.
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39. By law, all matatus must be registered under Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs), which manage the day-to-day operations, including setting routes and fare structures.
40. See Spooner, Dave and John Mark Mwanika. 2017. Trade unions in transformation: Transforming transport unions through mass organisation of informal workers in Uganda, FES, Berlin. <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/13643.pdf>

41. KOTSA claimed membership in 2020. At the time of the research there were about five different taxi drivers' associations. As a consequence of the Labour Impact Assessment a 'consultative forum' was established with the support of ATGWU and FES, which brought together all the drivers associations, an owners' association and the city authorities. This process led to the merger of all five drivers' associations into the Uganda Taxi Operators Federation (UTOF). UTOF membership figures are unknown at the time of writing.
42. See CETUD. 2021. BRT et Main d'Œuvre Locale : Le CETUD Remet en Cause le Rapport ITF-Labogehu-GLI <https://mail.cetud.sn/index.php/medias/news/projet-brt/347-brt-et-main-d-oeuvre-locale-le-cetud-remet-en-cause-le-rapport-itf-labogehu-gli>
43. Spooner, Dave, John Mark Mwanika, Shadrack Natamba, and Erick Manga. 2020. Kampala Bus Rapid Transit Report: Understanding Kampala's Paratransit Market Structure. GLI/AFD. <https://www.gli-manchester.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/GLI-Kampala-Paratransit-Report-June-2020.pdf>.
44. Sindicato Nacional do Trabalhadores dos Transportes Rodoviário e Assistência Técnica (SINTRAT)
45. Associação dos Conductores, Auxiliares de Transportes Colectivos e Escolares (ACAT-CE) and Associação de Defesa Dos Motoristas, Cobradores, Fiscais e organizador de parques (ADEFO).
46. ILO 2002. Resolution and conclusions concerning decent work and the informal economy. International Labour Conference, 90th session, 2002 Geneva. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc90/pdf/pr-25res.pdf>
47. See Bonner, Christine. 2016. ITF Informal Transport Workers Project 2013-16 Evaluation Report. <https://www.itfglobal.org/en/resources/informal-transport-workers-project-evaluation-report>.
48. ILO. 2015 A. Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation (R204). [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:3243110:NO](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:3243110:NO).
49. See for example, ODA's pilot project with the Cape Town 7th Ave Minibus Taxi Association in Mitchells Plain, which introduced a scheduled service model, and claimed to have reduced crews' working hours from an average 14 hours per day to 7.5 hours per day with no driver redundancies. Passenger satisfaction with the new service averages was reported to be 75%. <https://oda.co.za/project/sa-minibus-taxi-industry-toc-formation/>
50. ILO 2021. Meeting Report. Technical meeting on the future of decent and sustainable work in urban transport services. ILO Sectoral Policies Department, Geneva, 2021
51. See World Bank. 2016. World Bank Environmental and Social Framework. <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/environmental-and-social-framework/brief/environmental-and-social-standards>
52. Behrens R et al. 2023. Informal Public Transport Passenger Satisfaction in Selected West and Southern African Cities. July 2023 Conference: 41st Southern African Transport Conference. [https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/92511/2B\\_05.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/92511/2B_05.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)



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