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Urban Mobility & COVID-19 in Africa

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OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

- Introduction
- Impacts on urban transport in African cities and initial response
- Recommendations: Strategies for the future

Introduction



➤ INTRODUCTION

- The World Bank has projected the first African recession in 25 years – economy will contract between 2.1 and 5.1% in 2020.
- Public transport has been among the hardest hit industries as a result of lockdowns, physical distancing measures and behavioral changes.

Figure. Change trips to transit. Source: Google COVID-19 Data

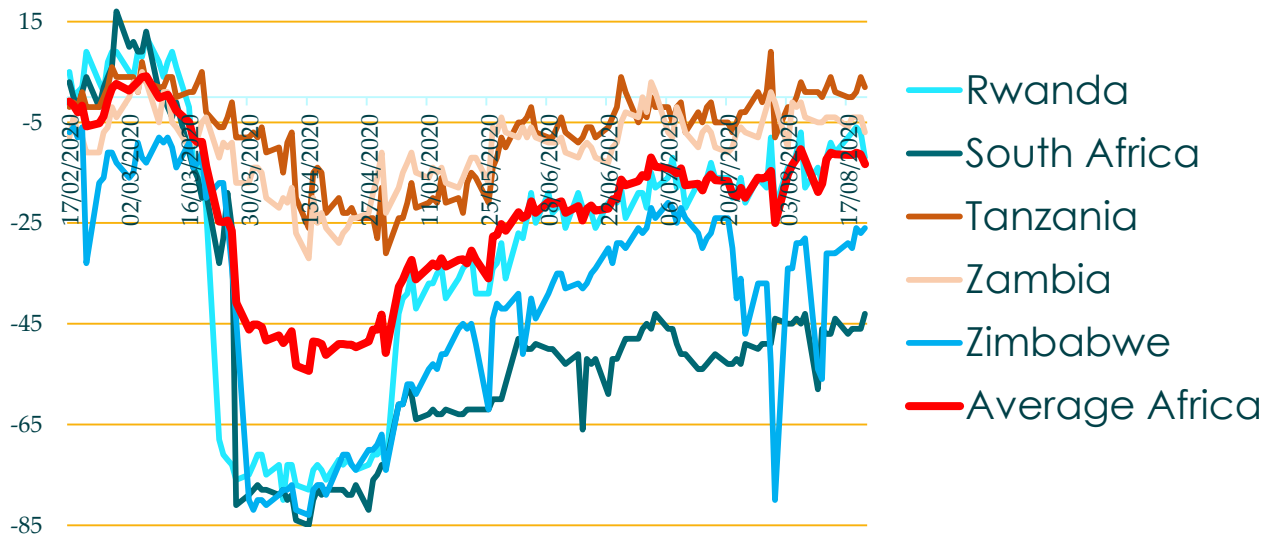
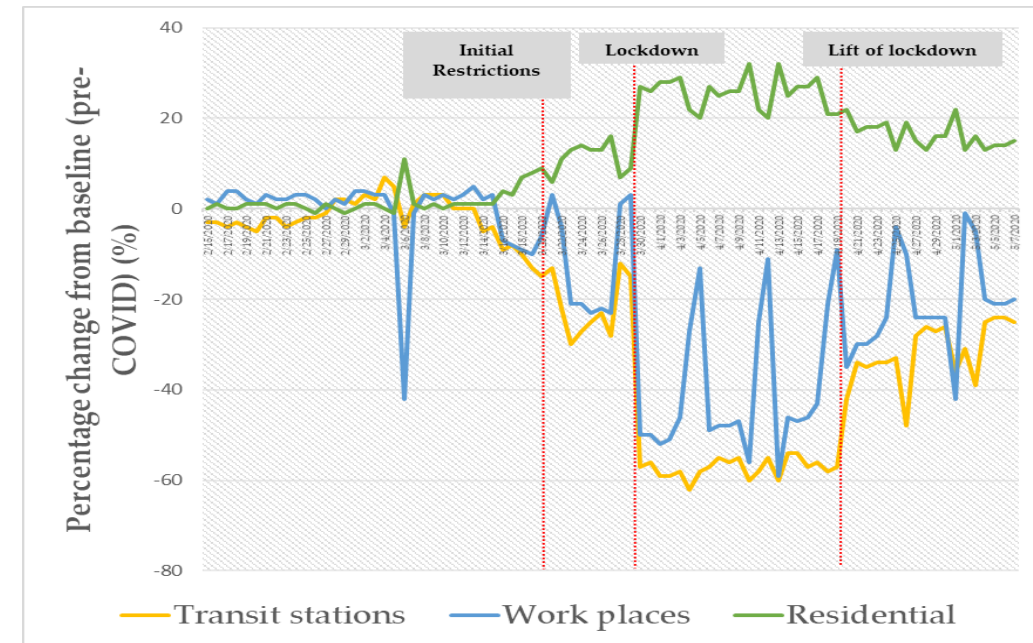


Figure. Change mobility in Ghana. Source: Google COVID-19 Data



INTRODUCTION

Surveyed 30 cities in Africa in April/May/June 2020 to do a quick assessment of the impact of COVID-19 in public transport, identify the initial response in different cities and inform recommendations towards the recovery

Guiding questions:

- I. What mechanisms could help reconcile the requirements for physical distancing and mobility restriction with the financial sustainability of public transport operators?
- II. How can Governments support the post-crisis recovery plans of the public transport sector?
- III. How will changes in mobility influence the future of urban design and transport modal shares?



Impacts on urban transport in African cities and initial response





INITIAL RESPONSE TO COVID-19 IN AFRICAN CITIES

African cities: acted promptly to protect people from the spread of COVID-19

- Most cities made the use of face masks in paratransit mandatory. Other preventive measures range from: limiting the maximum number of passengers per vehicle, cleaning stations and vehicles, enforcing hand cleaning, encouraging commuters to reduce talking in public transport, and board vehicles from terminals in order to have access to hand washing kits.
- Some African cities have gone the extra mile when it comes to protecting the staff of service providers (Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Mombasa).
- Experience in ebola-affected countries
- Implementation: formal vs informal



➤ IMPACT ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS

Impact in operators:

- Serious financial stress. Some cities estimate revenue losses varying from **50 to 70 percent**.
- **Fare renegotiation:** Addis Ababa, Dakar, Kumasi, Nairobi, Ouagadougou, Kampala, Accra and Lusaka.
- Few cases of cities mobilized **financial support** for operators (Maputo, Dakar)

Informal :

- COVID-19 has exacerbated the vulnerability of transport sector workers: especially drivers, conductors.
- Apart from the financial impact on these vulnerable groups, their health is also at risk – often without health insurance coverage

Formal operators:

- Fixed costs, less flexibility than minibus owners of minibuses to adapt to changes in demand. In Freetown, the decline in bus demand led to the suspension of its public bus services.





RESPONSE TO COVID-19 FOR SECTOR RECOVERY

Although prompt ST emergency response – most African countries are lagging behind in setting up MT/LT measures for the transport sector –

- **Missing opportunity?**

Some exceptions:

- Few cases of cities mobilizing **financial support** for operators.
- Few cases of **enhanced non-motorized transport**
- Few cases of accelerated use of **digital applications** for formal and informal public transport across African cities (Kenya, South Africa, Freetown, Harare).





RESPONSE TO COVID-19 FOR SECTOR RECOVERY

Informality of the public transport challenge the response:

- the atomization of the informal public transport sector makes it hard to reach owners, drivers, mechanics, and all people that depend on its revenues for survival.
- lack of political will to create a subsidy mechanism for the informal sector
- the instruments necessary for transferring subsidies to informal operators are yet to be established.



Recommendations: Strategies for the future



Protecting lives

- Recovery measures and immediate aftermath recommendations



Protecting livelihoods

- Medium-term recommendations



Protecting the future

- Long-term recommendations and prospects

➤ RECOVERY MEASURES AND IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH RECOMMENDATIONS



Protecting lives

- Recovery measures and immediate aftermath recommendations



Protecting livelihoods

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Protecting the future

- Long-term recommendations and prospects

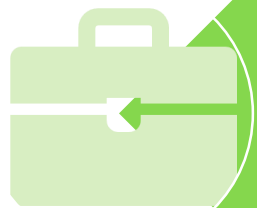
- Support public transport operations with **health protocols and protecting staff and passengers.**
- Immediate financial support to public transport companies, with a focus on informal operators-These measures can be leveraged to **support and deepen sector reforms.**
- Actions to restore user **confidence in public transport** modes, mitigate risks of further social exclusion.

MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS



Protecting lives

- Recovery measures and immediate aftermath recommendations



Protecting livelihoods

- Medium-term recommendations



Protecting the future

- Long-term recommendations and prospects

The medium-term recommendations aim to **guarantee the sustainability of the public transport sector in the recovery phase:**

- Define **sustainable funding schemes** to compensate for the loss of revenues resulting from physical distancing and new mobility protocols
- **Consolidate, formalize and structure the informal** sector to increase resilience
- Implement **public transport priority measures and transport demand management (TDM)** medium-term measures
- Facilitate the implementation of physical distancing measures at transit stops, including through the use **digital technology**



➤ LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROSPECTS



Protecting lives

- Recovery measures and immediate aftermath recommendations



Protecting livelihoods

- Medium-term recommendations



Protecting the future

- Long-term recommendations and prospects

The long-term recommendations aim to foster the necessary conditions for ensuring the financial viability and sustainability of public transport:

- Improve governance, funding and build capacity
- Support for non-motorized transport (NMT) and active modes (i.e. pedestrianization, bikes)
- Improve existing public transport systems and support the modal shift from private vehicles to high capacity transport systems



ANY COMMENT/QUESTION?



THANK YOU!

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