



“Bridging the Urban Transport Divide”

Summary Report of the Urban
Researchers Roundtable,
held at the
Fifth Session of the World Urban
Forum
“The Right to the City: Bridging the
Urban Divide”
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1. Background:

Contemporary global challenges of urban mobility

Effective transportation networks are fundamental to the functioning of cities and towns across the globe and a precondition for economic prosperity and the well-being of their residents. At the same time, the economic and social benefits of mobility are frequently accompanied by negative side effects such as congestion, social exclusion, accidents, air pollution and energy consumption.

Since the mid-20th century, the negative side effects of urban transportation have particularly become apparent in the metropolitan areas of developed countries. Rising car traffic volumes and congestion are increasingly causing lost economic productivity, environmental degradation and affect overall quality of life in cities. With the documented contribution of the urban transport sector to global greenhouse gas emissions, there is a heightened level of urgency to apply new approaches and technologies for mobility in urban areas of developed countries.

Developing countries are increasingly facing similar challenges due to rapid urbanization and motorization in recent decades, in combination with insufficient investment in transport infrastructure, often accompanied by urban poverty and social exclusion. While vehicle ownership rates in most developing nations are still low in comparison to developed countries, motorization is rising rapidly and is creating major challenges in the expanding “megacities” of the South. Although only 10 to 20 percent of urban residents own a private automobile, cities in developing countries are already facing stifling traffic congestion and worsening air pollution. The annual increase in the motorization rate of many developing countries has approached 10 percent, which is substantially higher than ever experienced in industrialized countries. As a result, energy use by the transportation sector in developing countries has been increasing at over four percent annually in the past 20 years, far exceeding the global 2.7 percent rate of increase.

Consequently, a major challenge for cities all over the world in the 21st century is to meet the mobility needs of their residents in a socially inclusive, economically efficient and environmentally sustainable manner. The provision of adequate, efficient and safe transport infrastructure and services in urban areas is frequently constrained by a complex set of financial, institutional, environmental and political factors. The barriers are not only financial or technical in nature, but arise from political, social and institutional factors preventing progress towards sustainability in the urban transport field.

As a result, severe disadvantages can be observed in terms of the accessibility and affordability of transport infrastructure and services for different societal groups and ultimately in terms of urban mobility. Unequal access to mobility opportunities and therefore employment opportunities, housing and basic services represents ‘the urban transport divide’.

The urban transport divide is conceptualised in terms of the following three pillars of sustainability:

- The social divide: the unequal access to mobility for different groups and locations in urban areas;
- The environmental divide: the uneven distribution of the environmental and health impacts of urban transport within the context of cities;
- The economic divide: the uneven spatial and social distribution of the benefits of efficient transportation systems for employment opportunities and poverty reduction.

The urban transport divide in the world’s cities was the focus of the Urban Researchers Roundtable, held in the context of the Fifth Session of the World Urban Forum, which had “*The Right to the City: Bridging the Urban Divide*” as its overall theme.

The following partners collaborated in organizing the Roundtable:

- Associação Nacional dos Transportes Públicos/ National Association of Public Transportation - Brazil (ANTP);
- The International Association of Public Transport (UITP);
- Associação Nacional de Pós-graduação e Pesquisa em Planejamento Urbano e Regional/Brazilian Association of

Postgraduate Programmes and Research in Urban and Regional Planning (ANPUR);

- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).

The intention of the Roundtable was to explore and discuss models and approaches that have successfully overcome the urban transport divide and that can be transferred and applied widely. Another purpose of the Roundtable was to inform UN-HABITAT's ongoing work in urban transport and the preparation of the 2013 Global Report on Human Settlements, which will focus on '*Sustainable Urban Transport*' (www.unhabitat.org/grhs). The discussion and outcomes of the Roundtable are highlighted in this summary report.

2. Case study presentations

Corresponding to the overall theme of the Forum - "*bridging the urban divide*" - the Urban Researchers Roundtable centered on a discussion of strategies to bridge the urban transport divide. The event was preceded by an electronic dialogue among prospective participants in late 2009 with several contributors highlighting the importance of bridging the "urban transport divide" in the world's cities.

The Roundtable was facilitated by Mr. Jerome Pourbaix of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP). Following a brief opening movie that outlined the key issues, Prof. Oyebanji Oyeyinka of UN-HABITAT outlined the overall setting of the session within the dialogues of the Forum and stressed its importance for preparing UN-HABITAT's 2013 Global Report on Human Settlements, which will focus on the subject of sustainable urban transport.

To set the stage for the Roundtable discussion, five leading researchers from different regions presented case studies on the urban transport divide and related policy responses (see Appendix 1).

In her opening remarks, Ms. Leila Christina Dias outlined the work of her organization, the Brazilian Association of Postgraduate Programmes and Research in Urban and Regional Planning. She pointed to the transport challenges in mega-cities such as

São Paulo, Brazil and cited the application of restrictive travel demand measures in European cities as a potentially replicable policy response.

In the first case study presentation, Mr. Eduardo Vasconcellos focused on integrated transport systems and his understanding of the "mobility divide". He placed particular emphasis on the inequalities in consumption patterns and access to mobility between low-income residents and higher income groups in Brazil, as well as potential alleviating policy measures.

Mr. Michael Replogle presented the challenges of sustainable urban transport in North America and Europe. Taking the Atlanta metropolitan area as a case study, he explained the multiple disparities and disadvantages faced by low-income households that are unable to afford a car in the United States.

Mr. Peter Wilkinson gave a presentation on informal public transport operations in Cape Town, South Africa. He stressed the need for detailed analysis and caution when designing alternative transport policy solutions, particularly in terms of affordability and political feasibility.

In her presentation on non-motorized transport operations in Jakarta, Indonesia, Ms. Maria Renny Herdanti cited the example of restrictive policies towards tricycle rickshaws (*becak*) to emphasize the need for transport solutions that take the specific needs of low-income communities into account.

Mr. Xavier Godard's presentation focused on the lessons and experiences of urban mobility and poverty in West Africa. He elaborated on the high share of transport costs for low-income households and examined the potential of non-motorized and public transport to respond to this challenge.

The presentations were followed by a discussion of the key challenges, innovative practices and policies to move towards sustainable urban transport and mobility. In particular, it was stressed that urban mobility is about moving people, not vehicles. This statement, although apparently so obvious, but frequently forgotten, formed the basis of discussions during the Roundtable. Highlights of this discourse will be outlined in the next chapter.

In his closing comments, Mr. Raphael Bostic emphasized that the economic, social and

environmental divide should be considered in tandem rather than separately. He further stressed the importance of urban planning for solving transport problems.

Summarizing the event, Mr. Naison Mutizwa-Mangiza of UN-HABITAT emphasized that the Roundtable's outcomes will inform UN-HABITAT's ongoing urban transport work and the 2013 Global Report on Human Settlements.

3. Highlights of the discussion and emerging issues

The Roundtable discussion focused on the current state of the urban transport divide in both developing and developed countries and effective practices and policies to bridge this gap.

Overall, it was felt that the event provided an important opportunity for urban researchers to share experiences and innovative solutions for addressing the policy challenges related to bridging the urban transport divide in the world's cities. The roundtable was highly successful in communicating a wide range of perspectives for enabling practitioners and policy makers to learn about how to implement sustainable urban transport policies and practices.

Participants focused on the following key issues in terms of implementing solutions for pro-poor urban mobility:

- participants underscored the need to introduce new concepts and transformative practices in urban transport policy;
- participants called for the consideration of the needs of the poor and women in transport policy embodied by the shift in emphasis from "transport" to "mobility";
- participants stressed the need for integrated and interdisciplinary approaches that involve a wide range of institutions which deal with urban mobility;
- participants raised their concern about equity in public transport and the need to address underlying governance challenges.

For the debate on the socio-economic divide, particularly the inputs by Eduardo Vasconcellos, Michael Replogle and Xavier

Godard proved to be important catalysts. The presentations showed for contexts as different as Brazil, Western Africa and United States how poverty is intrinsically related to the lack of affordable transportation. Several speakers stressed that it is important not to take an effect as a cause: transport is not a primary cause of the socio-economic divide, but its inefficiency, poor quality and complete inexistence in some contexts, are mostly the consequences of car-oriented urban plans.

Despite this conceptual conundrum, there is no doubt that the lack of safe and affordable transport options forbids many urban residents to access facilities and basic services such as education, public health, and jobs. Furthermore, without access to urban mobility services, social and economic networks on which particularly the urban poor people depend are impaired.

Poor urban planning was identified as a key factor underlying the current crisis of urban transport. Participants of the Roundtable pointed out that mobility challenges are best addressed within the context of inclusive land policies, participatory processes, supportive political framework and legal basis to enforce change.

Participants also noted the importance of a context specific approach to implementing mobility solutions. For instance, Peter Wilkinson highlighted how the BRT "model" of Bogotá, in Colombia, a world class project, initially failed in Cape Town due to resistance by existing operators. In addition, Maria Herdanti showed how the *becak*, a popular tricycle facing government restrictions, served as a vital form of transport that could be integrated into formal transportation systems.

Finally, despite the huge socio-economic divide related to (the lack of) urban transport, it was emphasized that there are several other "divides" in the urban sphere that must be taken into account: the adults vs. children/elderly divide, the able vs. disabled people, and other social divides. Therefore, it was concluded that it is impossible to think of an inclusive urban agenda without thinking of inclusive urban mobility.

Emerging Issues

The following emerging issues for discussion and action were identified by the Roundtable:

- transport is regarded as an important dimension of the urban divide that affects

access to housing, jobs, and urban services;

- there is a need for inclusive urban transport policies that address the needs of the poor and disadvantaged groups, including women;
- bridging the urban transport divide requires reduction of personal automobile use and greater provision of public transport and non-motorized transport;
- in addressing the urban transport divide, emphasis should be placed on mobility of people rather than on transport modes, and on linking transport planning with other dimensions of urban planning.

4. Benefits for UN-HABITAT's ongoing work

Beyond the fruitful discussions among participants, the Researchers Roundtable on the Urban Transport Divide also provided useful inputs for UN-HABITAT's ongoing work towards promoting sustainable urban mobility worldwide. Outcomes of the discussion and new partnerships established will benefit both normative and operational engagements in this field.

First, the Roundtable resulted in deeper insights into the specific social dimensions of urban mobility and the relationship to urban development as a whole. This knowledge is particularly relevant for promoting inclusive urban transport policies that address the needs of the poor and disadvantaged groups, including women and children. Identified as an emerging issue in the context of the Roundtable, there was consensus that planning for sustainable mobility has to include the needs of marginalized groups in the planning process, particularly by linking lower income residential areas with work places and other urban services.

In this respect, the Roundtable discussion will be highly beneficial for implementing UN-HABITAT's new initiative "Promoting Sustainable Transport Solutions for East African Cities". Launched by UN-HABITAT's Urban Transport Section through support by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the project will support government agencies in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda in the process of introducing improved public transport services and infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists in the three capitals Addis Ababa, Kampala and Nairobi.

Roundtable presentations and discussions on strengthening non-motorized modes of transport proved to be highly complementary to UN-HABITAT's work in this area, especially in terms of the contribution to the Velo-city conference series, which is a premier international event for exchanging experiences for planning and policies for improved infrastructure for bicyclists.

As emphasized during the event, a main function of the Researchers Roundtable has also been to gather substantive inputs to the preparation of UN-HABITAT's 2013 Global Report on Human Settlements, which will focus on '*Sustainable Urban Transport*'. The report will review key trends, practices and policies on sustainable urban mobility and transportation patterns from cities around the world. Further, the report will assemble models on how to cater for the mobility needs of urban populations in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable manner. Experiences, innovations and ways to address policy challenges in regard to bridging the urban transport divide that were shared during the Researchers Roundtable will enrich the contents of the upcoming Global Report.

Overall, the Roundtable also presented a rare occasion to link perspectives from developed and developing countries on urban mobility. These unified views on urban transport across the globe have been particularly relevant for UN-HABITAT's participation at the 18th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in 2010 and the upcoming 19th session in 2011.

Finally, the discussion will also inform urban transport-related deliberations at UN-HABITAT's 23rd Governing Council in April 2011 and the dialogue between governments and Habitat Agenda partners. The aspects identified as emerging issues will particularly be relevant for discussing past resolutions on improved access to basic infrastructure and services and for advocating models to promote livable cities world wide. Overall, the well-attended event provided a significant opportunity for UN-HABITAT to reach out to new audiences and establish new partnerships, which can be particularly useful for expanding the agency's Global Network on Energy in Urban Settlements (GENUS).

Appendix 1: Overview on Speakers and Panellists

Chair: Mr. Jerome Pourbaix, Manager, The International Association of Public Transport (UITP).

Panellists

Mr. Oyebanji Oyeyinka, Director, Monitoring and Research Division, UN-HABITAT;

Ms. Leila Christina Dias, President, Association of Postgraduate Programmes and Research in Urban and Regional Planning, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil;

Mr. Naison Mutizwa-Mangiza, Chief, Policy Analysis Branch, UN-HABITAT;

Mr. Eduardo Vasconcellos, Technical Advisor, National Association of Public Transportation, Brazil;

Mr. Michael Replogle, Global Policy Director and Founder, Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, United States;

Mr. Peter Wilkinson, School of Architecture and Planning, University of Cape Town, South Africa;

Ms. Maria Renny Herdanti, Policy Analyst, Institute for Transportation Studies, Indonesia;

Mr. Xavier Godard, Advisor, Cooperation for Urban Mobility in the Developing World (CODATU), France;

Mr. Raphael Bostic, Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, Department of Housing and Economic Development, U.S.

Rapporteur

Mr. Fabio Duarte, Catholic Pontifical University of Curitiba, Brazil.

Appendix 2: Speakers & Paper Abstracts

Professor Oyebanji Oyeyinka

Prof Oyeyinka is the Director, Monitoring and Research Division, UN-HABITAT; a Professorial Fellow, Innovation and Development, United Nations University- MERIT, Maastricht, The Netherlands; and a Visiting Professor, Innovation Policy and Development at The Open University, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom. He obtained his PhD in Technology Management and Industrialization Policy, SPRU from the University of Sussex, U.K. Prof. Oyeyinka has a longstanding experience in the management of Science, Technology, Development Economics and Innovation policy institutions. He is widely published with over 100 publications in various fields. His latest books include: *Latecomer Development: Innovation and Knowledge for Economic Growth*, 2009, Routledge, UK and *Uneven Paths of Development: Innovation and Learning in Asia and Africa* (with Rajah Rasiah), Edward Elgar Publishers, UK.



Professor Leila Christina Dias

Leila Christina Dias is a Professor in the Department of Geography at the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. She is the President of the Brazilian Association of Postgraduate Programmes and Research in Urban and Regional Planning (ANPUR). She has a PhD degree in Geography from the University of Paris IV and has published work in the field of network analysis.



Dr. Naison Mutizwa-Mangiza

Naison Mutizwa-Mangiza is Chief of the Policy Analysis Branch of UN-HABITAT. The Branch is responsible for preparing the Global Report on Human Settlements, of which Naison is the Chief Editor. The report is published every two years and is the UN's most authoritative global assessment of human settlements conditions and trends. The 2011 issue of the report, currently under preparation, will be on "Cities and Climate Change". A Zimbabwean national, Naison holds a PhD in Land Economy from the University of Cambridge, UK. Before joining UN-HABITAT in 1991, he was a professor in the Department of Rural and Urban Planning at the University of Zimbabwe and was the founding chairman of the department. He was also Chairman of Zimbabwe's Urban Development Corporation (UDCORP) from 1989 to 1991.



Dr. Raphael Bostic

Dr. Raphael Bostic is Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research (PD&R) at the US Department for Housing and Economic Development (HUD). As a key member of HUD's senior leadership, Dr. Bostic is the principal advisor to the Secretary on overall Departmental policy, program evaluations, demonstrations, and research. An expert on housing and homeownership, Dr. Bostic has also served as a professor in the University of Southern California's School of Policy, Planning, and Development where he examined how credit markets, financing, and policy enhance household access to economic and social amenities. Prior to that, he worked at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, where he was recognized and received the Special Achievement Award for his performance associated with a review of the Community Reinvestment Act. He earned his Ph.D. in Economics from Stanford University and his BA from Harvard University.



Mr. Jerome Pourbaix, FACILITADOR

Jerome Pourbaix is currently Senior Manager in charge of transport economics and statistics at the International Association of Public Transport (UITP). He studied Sociology (Universities of Louvain, Essex and Brunel) and specialized in the analysis of the use of technology and innovation. Jerome gradually focused on public transport and mobility through his work at the European Commission and the city network Polis. He joined UITP in 2003 where he carried out the Mobility in Cities Database project. At UITP, Jerome has also coordinated a number of initiatives aiming to strengthen the links between public transport and other urban policies (social inclusion, urban planning, etc.)

**Professor Fabio Duarte, RAPORTEUR**

Fábio DUARTE is the director of the Post Graduate Program of Urban Management at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica of Paraná, Curitiba, Brazil which is also associated with Brazilian Association of Postgraduate Programmes and Research in Urban and Regional Planning (ANPUR). He has coordinated the consultant team for the Mobility Plan of Curitiba (2008), and has been working and lecturing about urban mobility worldwide.

**SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS****Professor Eduardo Alcântara Vasconcellos**

Eduardo Vasconcellos is a Civil Engineer and Sociologist with a PhD in public policy (transport policy). He conducted his post-doctoral research on transport planning in developing countries at Cornell University, USA. He is currently working as a technical advisor for the Brazilian Public Transport Association (ANTP) and is a Director of the Instituto Movimento in São Paulo.

**Integrated transport systems and the mobility divide**

The main problems that generate the mobility divide in developing countries are out of the range of transport policies per se (income disparities, urban growth) and it is unrealistic to expect major changes in the short or middle time ranges. Possible ways of minimizing the divide are: to emphasize the environmental and social benefits of good public transport systems; to demonstrate that subsidies to public transport systems that serve the poor are investments that will benefit society as a whole; to explore opportunities for an integrated bus system in middle sized cities.

Mr. Michael Replogle

Michael is Global Policy Director and Founder of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, promoting sustainable and equitable transportation systems worldwide. He advises the Asian Development Bank and United National Environmental Programme on transportation carbon footprinting. He has managed the bus rapid transit operational study for Mexico City. In addition, he has served as Transportation Director for Environmental Defense Fund (1992-2009) and as Transportation Coordinator for Montgomery County, Maryland, (1983-92) responsible for comprehensive planning, travel forecasting, and growth management. He has an M.S.E. and undergraduate honors degrees in Civil and Urban Engineering and Sociology, from the University of Pennsylvania.

**The challenges of sustainable urban transport in North America and Europe**

Transportation policies that favor car-oriented development have exacerbated social, economic

and health disparities in much of North American and some regions of Europe by ignoring the needs of vulnerable communities living near highways and those with limited access to cars. Unsafe walking and cycling environments and poor linkages to transit limit access to opportunities for low-income and minority communities. Experience in North America and Europe also shows this urban transport divide can be bridged by reallocating street space to favor walking, cycling, and public transport, by travel demand management and pricing policies that improve equity of access, and by focused investment favoring public transport and compact, mixed-use, transit-oriented development.

Professor Peter Wilkinson

Peter Wilkinson is an Associate Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics at the University of Cape Town and teaches in the City and Regional Planning and Transport Studies Programmes. He is a former Director of the Urban Problems Research Unit and a founder member of the Centre for Transport Studies. He has published work in the fields of housing and transport policy analysis, planning history, contemporary urban development processes and the emergence of integrated land use-transport planning frameworks, among others.



Incorporating informal operations in public transport system transformation: the case of Cape Town, South Africa

Efforts in Cape Town to bring about a fundamental transformation of the existing fragmented and relatively dysfunctional public transport system to a comprehensively planned 'integrated rapid transit' system, which includes the introduction of bus rapid transit services as a key component, have encountered certain institutionally embedded obstacles. This paper briefly outlines the nature of these problems, focusing in particular on the difficulties experienced in engaging with, and effectively incorporating, informal minibus-taxi operations which serve a significant segment of the city's public transport passenger market. It seeks to draw out the main policy implications, as well as lessons which might be taken up elsewhere in related initiatives to address the differentiated mobilities and travel patterns which characterize the 'urban transport divide' in many cities of the 'global South'.

Ms. Maria Renny Hernandti

Maria Renny is a Policy Analyst for the Institute for Transportation Study (INSTRAN). Mainly dealing with transportation sector, she is also now working for an AusAID-funded Indonesia Infrastructure Initiative as a Transport Program Officer. Her area of expertise is in metropolitan transport and urban planning. Maria earned a Masters of Urban and Regional Planning degree from the University of Sydney. She received a Mirvac Prize Award for excellence in urban design and development control study during her academic year.



Revisiting the Policy toward Non-Motorized Transport Operation in Jakarta

By focusing on the case of Jakarta, the paper argues that Asian megacities should reassess their current policy responses toward non-motorized transport and elevate the role of non-motorized transport in urban transport policy. It investigates illegal *becak* operations in Penjaringan Sub-District of North Jakarta. The paper provides a brief historical background to the emergence of *becak* as a form of transportation in Jakarta and then identifies the driving factors behind its illegal operation in the sub-district. It aims to highlight the lessons learnt with regards to informal non-motorized transport operations in a megacity. The paper recommends the incorporation of non-motorized transport policies in urban transport policy as a strategy to improve the current urban transport conditions.

Mr. Xavier Godard

Xavier Godard was for 15 years the Director of Research at the French Research Institute for Transport and Road Safety (Inrets), in charge of the developing countries programme. He was also, for many years, the Scientific Adviser of Codatu (Cooperation for urban mobility in the developing world). He has conducted research on urban mobility systems in Sub-Saharan Africa, in Maghreb and in France. After retirement from Inrets in 2009, he has been involved in a programme in the Mediterranean Region, as a Codatu Adviser.

**Urban mobility and poverty: Lessons from the Western Africa experience**

It is important to consider the mobility needs of the urban poor as they need to move around easily if they are to access to basic urban services, jobs and social networks and ultimately escape from the vicious cycle of poverty. Specific surveys in different cities in Western Africa, particularly in Conakry and Douala (2004) focused on key mobility variables (walking, public transport, expenses, travel times) that revealed the travel conditions of the urban poor. Low cost means of transport and public transport productivity have to be favored through a multimodal system combining various modes, including mass transit companies and small size operators (minibuses, shared taxis).

Power Point Presentations presented by the speakers during the Urban Researchers Roundtable are available under the following link <http://www.unhabitat.org/list.asp?typeid=54&catid=639>.