

How to better integrate mass-transit within existing networks?

Mass-transit projects (metro, tram, regional express trains, BRT) are multiplying in large African cities, following similar patterns: these new infrastructures are establishing themselves as structuring modes, around which existing networks are to be reorganised, either as part of public policy or spontaneously (Tanoh & Kassi-Djodjo, 2025). This restructuring is causing significant upheaval in users' travel habits, for which they are unprepared or ill-prepared. While the modal shares of these new modes often remain limited and their financing is less and less secure, it seems important to question the possibility of a paradigm shift in the planning of African mobility systems, which would see mass-transit projects adapted to existing networks (Ninot, Baffi, Sakho & Lombard, 2026). We hypothesise that this paradigm shift could be accompanied by better coordination between the different modes of transport, which would benefit users and, in turn, enable greater "profitability" (or at least lower investment) for new mass-transit projects, whose economic models are often fragile due to limited ridership.

This paradigm shift – which would therefore involve carefully considering how to adapt metro, tram, BRT, etc. to existing bus networks, paratransit and active transport modes – would rely as much on a change in mindset on the part of decision-makers and financial partners, on the consideration of intermodality as a central component of urban mobility projects and policies, as on changes in regulatory frameworks, interoperability standards and urban models.

This session therefore proposes to consider both the modalities of more *bottom-up* planning and possible mechanisms to better coordinate mass-transit and paratransit, as well as possible developments in urban mobility governance systems to enable this paradigm shift.