

# Urban mobility governance in Greater Abidjan: the mandate of the AMUGA

CODATU Expertise

## Publication

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# Urban mobility governance in Greater Abidjan: the mandate of AMUGA

The State of Côte d'Ivoire, through Order No. 2019-99 of 30 January 2019 amending the 2014 Framework Law on Domestic Transport (LOTI), **established the Greater Abidjan Urban Mobility Authority (AMUGA)**. The establishment of this authority is part of a broader process of decentralising the governance of urban mobility and transport, which began several decades ago in countries of the Global North and, more recently, in those of the Global South, particularly in Africa. Whilst such structures are now developing across the continent, AMUGA is gradually establishing itself as a central authority in the landscape of Côte d'Ivoire, according to modalities that deserve to be highlighted and that could inspire other metropolitan areas at the international level.

## Looking back at the evolution of urban mobility in Greater Abidjan

Following the economic crisis of the 1980s in Côte d'Ivoire and the political crisis of the 2000s, the country's economic capital saw its urban transport provision characterised by the very rapid development of **paratransit services** (primarily *gbaka* minibuses and *wôrô-wôrô* shared taxis, and more recently moto-taxis and tricycles taxis in peripheral areas). This development resulted from the lack and inadequate public transport offer provided by **the regulated public transport operator SOTRA** (Société des Transports Abidjanais), which has been operating since the 1960s under a public service delegation agreement with the State<sup>1</sup>.

In response to these developments in the late 1990s and, more generally, as part of the Transport Sector Structural Adjustment Programme (CI-PAST) promoted by the World Bank, the Government decided in 1998 to undertake a reform of the land transport sector in Côte d'Ivoire, accompanied by a number of measures aimed at improving urban transport in Abidjan.

Despite the measures implemented, the city has seen a significant deterioration in travel conditions in recent years, linked to **population growth** (+34.3% in the district between 2014 and 2021<sup>2</sup>) combined with significant **urban sprawl** (revisions to models developed after 2021, as part of AMUGA projects, show substantial population increases in the suburbs of up to +80% in certain areas). This trend has resulted in increased demand for travel and consequently greater congestion across the region (with infrastructure unable to keep pace), road safety issues (with drivers trying by any means to get through traffic and congestion), and longer waiting times (due to insufficient transport offer) and air pollution. The district of Abidjan had a population of 6.3 million at the time of the latest census in 2021.

<sup>1</sup> The Ivorian government owns 60.13% of SOTRA's shares, 39.80% are held by IVECO and 0.07% by the Autonomous District of Abidjan

<sup>2</sup> 2014 Census: <https://www.ins.ci/documents/rgph/ivoirien18plus.pdf>  
General Census of Population and Housing RGPH) 2021 : <https://data.gouv.ci/datasets/recensement-de-la-population-ivoirienne>



**Abidjan in figures: the economic capital of Côte d'Ivoire represents<sup>3</sup>:**

- 60% of national GDP and 80% of formal employment.
- 40% of the national urban population and 20% of the national population (INS – 2019).
- Greater Abidjan comprises 19 municipalities, 16 of which make up the Autonomous District of Abidjan, plus 3 sub-districts.
- Around **17 million journeys are made in Greater Abidjan**, of which 7.25 million are by public transport, **with paratransit operators accounting for nearly 80% of public transport journeys in Greater Abidjan. Walking and public transport account for the lion's share**, each representing over 40% of journeys.

Mode / moyens de déplacements	Proportion par mode /jour	Nombre de déplacements /jour	Part modale déplacements motorisés	Part modale en transports publics	Part modale en transports en commun
Marche	43,57%	7 363 330			
Taxis collectifs (Worô-worô)	13,84%	2 338 510	24,52%	30,15%	32,43%
Minibus (Gbaka)	19,18%	3 241 111	33,99%	41,79%	44,95%
Bus (SOTRA)	7,55%	1 276 090	13,38%	16,45%	17,70%
Transport par autocar	1,36%	229 606	2,41%	2,96%	3,18%
Bateaux-bus (SOTRA, STL, CITRANS)	0,74%	125 109	1,31%	1,61%	1,74%
Motos	1,36%	230 680	2,42%		
Taxis compteurs	3,23%	545 752	5,72%	7,04%	
Voiture particulière	9,17%	1 549 812	16,25%		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16 900 000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

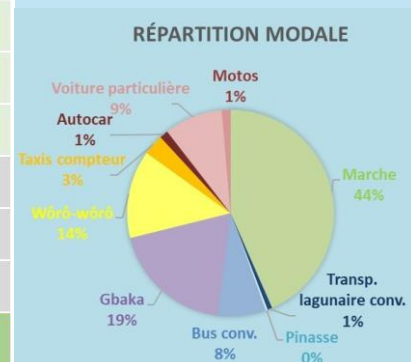


Fig 1 – Travel data for Greater Abidjan in 2020, source: AMUGA

### Establishing a local authority to address the urban transport crisis in Abidjan and planning mobility for all

Given the complexity of mobility challenges in Abidjan, the need to establish a governance framework and a transport authority became apparent at the turn of the 2000s. It was against this backdrop that, from 2000 onwards, the Government established a new institutional and regulatory framework for land transport, governed by Order No. 200-67 of 9 February 2000, setting out the fundamental principles for land transport. This new framework led, in particular, to the **creation of the Urban Transport Agency (AGETU), responsible for the**

<sup>3</sup> Sources: Note on the professionalisation of small-scale transport / Study on the restructuring of the GA network / MMGA / SDUGA 2016 Model / Climate Chance–Ivory Coast Ministry of Transport Diagnostic Report, 2019



**management and organisation of urban transport within the Abidjan Urban Transport Perimeter (PTU)**, established for this purpose, and whose extended perimeter extends to the surrounding municipalities of Anyama to the north, Bingerville and Grand-Bassam to the east, and Dabou, Songon and Jacquville to the west.

In terms of urban transport governance in Abidjan, **AGETU rapidly faced challenges from the local authorities**. Indeed, although they had initially welcomed the proposal to create AGETU and endorsed its objectives, the municipalities of Abidjan showed a certain hostility, considering that it took over too much of their authority in the field of urban transport. Following this crisis, the dissolution of AGETU was formalised on 6 August 2014. Another argument put forward to better understand the decision to dissolve this institution concerns the lack of financial resources enabling AGETU to function effectively. Although the legislation (ordinance and decree) had specified the available sources of funding, the institutional changes and political instability of the period (the overthrow of Henri Konan Bédié in 1999 by Robert Guéï, and subsequently of the latter by Laurent Gbagbo in 2000), and, on the other hand, resistance from local authorities, for whom the transfer of resources to AGETU resulted in a shortfall in revenue, explain the difficulties in raising the necessary funds. Consequently, during AGETU's brief existence, it was only able to survive precariously thanks to State subsidies, whereas it was expected to be financially autonomous from its creation.

At the same time, **the city's metropolitan governance evolves**: until then, the dominant entity had been the **City of Abidjan and its associated municipalities**, organised under traditional municipal structures. Law No. 2003-208 of 7 July 2003 on the transfer and allocation of powers from the State to local authorities established the principle that local authorities automatically exercise the powers transferred to them by the State, particularly in the areas of spatial planning, town planning, roads and, subject to conditions, transport<sup>4</sup> : creation, management and maintenance of transport routes, and the issuing of transport permits within their own jurisdiction. In practice, although some of the responsibilities relating to infrastructure have been transferred to the municipalities as part of the decentralisation process, the State retains project management responsibility for major structural projects. In practice, the municipalities are mainly involved in smaller-scale operations: routine road maintenance, local improvements, and minor drainage or rehabilitation works. **These various stages and transfers led to the creation of the Autonomous District of Abidjan (DAA) in 2011** by Decree No. 2011-263 of 28 September 2011 on the organisation of the national territory into districts and regions<sup>5</sup>, and finally by Law No. 2014-453 of 5 August 2014<sup>6</sup>. The Autonomous District of Abidjan is established as a special local authority with legal personality and financial autonomy. This status grants broader powers: environmental protection, waste management, the promotion of economic, social and cultural development, the fight against insecurity, spatial planning and the efforts to mitigate the harmful effects of urbanisation. Although the law does not explicitly mention the "transport" competence, may it be by delegation or through administrative practice, the District nevertheless plays an operational role through the management specific services related to urban mobility that fall under its urban planning and management mandate :

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<sup>4</sup><https://dcf.ci/dcf.ci/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/LOI-N%C2%B02003-208portant-transfert-de-compe%CC%81tences.pdf?utm>

<sup>5</sup><https://dcf.ci/dcf.ci/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Decret-n%C2%B02011-263-du-28-09-2011-portant-organisation-du-territoire-national-en-Districts-et-en-Re%CC%81gions.pdf?utm>

<sup>6</sup><https://loidici.biz/2024/02/22/le-statut-du-district-autonome-dabidjan/lois-article-par-article/plus-de-textes-de-lois/49768/naty/?utm>



the management and authorisation of inter-municipal informal transport (minibuses *gbaka* and shared taxis operating between municipalities within the District), the construction, operation and regulation of inter-municipal bus stations, the management of on-street parking in the metropolitan area, and the management of vehicle impound lots and vehicle towing. Although these responsibilities were not established by the 2014 Act, they are based on municipal by-laws and joint decisions with the Ministry of Transport, and reflect the District's growing role.

**Regarding road infrastructure**, alongside the establishment of mobility governance with AGETU, **the State established the Road Management Agency (AGEROUTE)** by Decree No. 2001-592 of 19 September 2001, to take charge of the planning, maintenance, supervision and management of the national and inter-city road network, as part of the reform resulting from the CI-PAST. AGEROUTE is placed under the technical supervision of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Road Maintenance and the financial supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

Finally, the **BNETD (National Office for Technical Studies and Development) remained throughout this period a key cross-cutting player in planning and technical management**. Established by Decree No. 98-25 of 28 January 1998 as an evolution of the Directorate-General for Major Works (DGTx), which had been in operation since 1978, the BNETD is the State's expert advisory body. It supports the Ivorian government in the design, implementation and monitoring of major development projects and acts as a link for inter-institutional coordination between ministries, local authorities and donors. It conducts numerous studies to prepare for the reorganisation of the transport system and changes in governance.

The evolution of mobility planning in Abidjan since the early 2000s reflects an ambition to move from a 'state-centred' approach towards an 'integrated metropolitan' model: following Ordinance 2000-67 and the creation of AGETU (even though it was subsequently dissolved), the emergence of the Autonomous District of Abidjan and the rise of AGEROUTE illustrate this shift. This strategy aims to integrate public transport, urban traffic, active modes of transport and peripheral areas within a coherent institutional framework.

### **Urban mobility governance in Abidjan: strengthening the role of a metropolitan-level authority**

In December 2013, a number of reforms marked a shift in strategy regarding transport regulation in Côte d'Ivoire. Consequently, **a new regulatory framework was established under the Framework Law on Domestic Transport (LOTI)**<sup>7</sup>, which now governs the transport sector in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Ivorian government's strategy for transport governance is accompanied by the definition and implementation of a new transport system. **The Greater Abidjan Urban Master Plan (SDUGA)**<sup>8</sup>, developed between 2013 and 2015 with the support of JICA and

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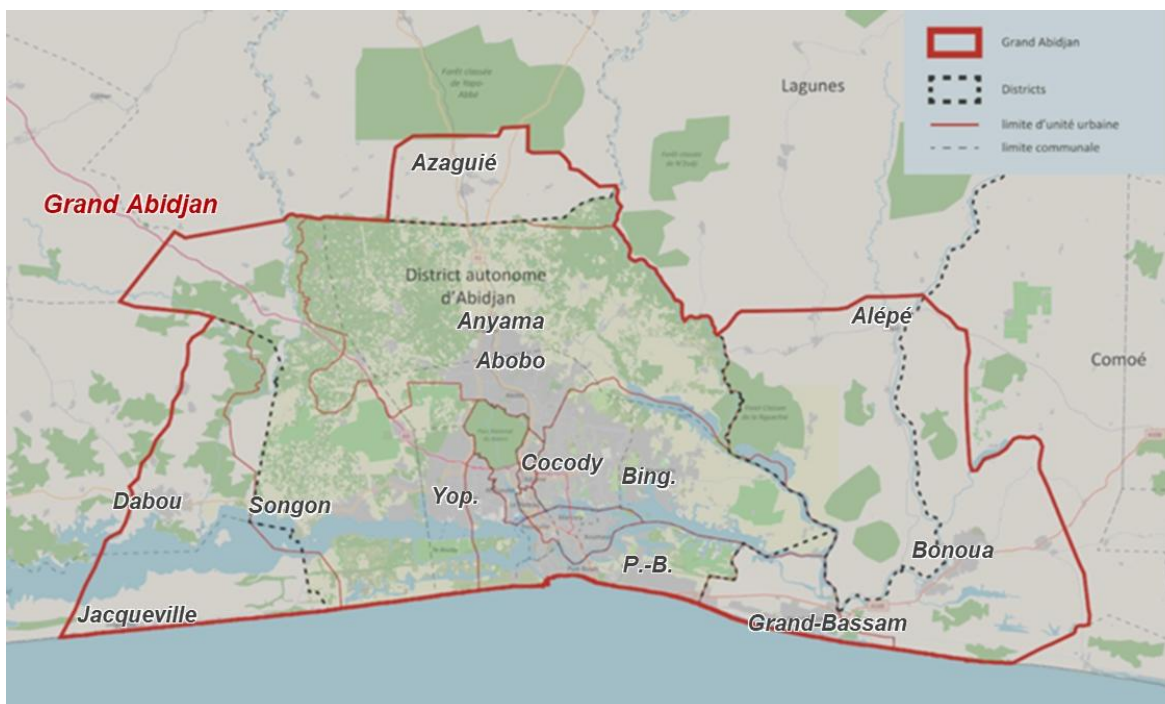
<sup>7</sup> Law No. 2014-812 of 16 December 2014 on Domestic Transport Policy (LOTI), amended in 2018 and 2019 (Ordinances No. 2018-09 of 10 January 2018 and No. 2019-99 of 30 January 2019) with the creation of AMUGA and ARTI. It is quite similar to the LOTI law adopted in France in 1982.

<sup>8</sup> Phase 1 of the 2015 SDUGA was carried out using data collected in 2013. A Phase 2 implementation The implementation and review of Phase 1 is currently underway, carried out by RECS and Urbaplan with funding JICA: <https://news.abidjan.net/articles/707511/cote-divoire-la-2e-phase-de-loperationalisation-du-schema-directeur-du-grand-abidjan-dans-sa-phase-active-ministere>



approved in 2016, covers the wider conurbation (13 municipalities in the Autonomous District and 6 outlying municipalities) and explicitly incorporates transport planning as a strategic dimension via a Master Plan for Urban Transport in Greater Abidjan. In addition to supporting discussions on the expansion of public transport (particularly mass transit), reducing dependence on private vehicles, improving interchange facilities and incorporating considerations regarding active modes of transport, the SDUGA also establishes the link between urban planning and public transport planning, within an expanded scope of action: Greater Abidjan (13 municipalities in the District + 6 outlying municipalities).

Subsequently, a general scoping study was commissioned by the Ivorian government in 2018 to analyse and define the institutional, operational and financial arrangements for establishing an Urban Mobility Authority in Greater Abidjan. The Framework Law on Domestic Transport (LOTI) was thus amended by Order No. 2019-99 of 30 January 2019, establishing a new governance framework for urban mobility. Article 9 bis of **the amended LOTI establishes both AMUGA – Greater Abidjan Urban Mobility Authority – and ARTI – Domestic Transport Regulatory Authority.**



*Boundaries of Greater Abidjan, source: based on a map by the Espelia consultancy, June 2021*

In this context, the SDUGA establishes the scope of action and jurisdiction of the new Greater Abidjan Urban Mobility Authority (AMUGA), including the Autonomous District of Abidjan comprising 13 municipalities, and the six outlying municipalities of Alépé, Azaguié, Dabou, Grand-Bassam, Bonoua and Jacquenville. This scope therefore enables AMUGA to operate on a metropolitan scale and within a territory defined not so much defined by administrative boundaries than by functional dynamics, taking full account of the daily travel patterns of Abidjan's residents.



**The State of Côte d'Ivoire has therefore established**, by means of Order No. 2019-99 of 30 January 2019 amending the Framework Law on Domestic Transport (LOTI) No. 2014-812 of 16 December 2014, as supplemented by all subsequent legislation, **the Greater Abidjan Urban Mobility Authority (AMUGA)**. Established as an Independent Administrative Authority (AAI) with legal personality and financial autonomy, AMUGA is granted with greater latitude than its predecessor, AGETU. Its main missions are to organise and coordinate the various modes of transport and to establish 'sustainable mobility for all' in Greater Abidjan. AMUGA carries out this mandate across the nineteen (19) municipalities comprising the Greater Abidjan transport area.

AMUGA, thus established, has been operating since 2020 with the aim of promoting the development of active modes of transport (walking and cycling) under safer conditions and in conjunction with public transport, ensuring the development and organisation of urban transport in Abidjan and its outskirts, with the ambition of increasing the market share of mass public transport compared to paratransit modes, and to improve urban mobility in Greater Abidjan in anticipation of the commissioning of Metro Line 1 (L1MA) and the East-West BRT.

### **AMUGA's challenges regarding the new transport services in Abidjan**

Following the experience of AGETU and against a backdrop of fragmented responsibilities for urban mobility, the implementation of numerous urban transport projects presents a significant challenge for AMUGA.

Indeed, several high-capacity transport modes are currently being planned, namely Abidjan Metro Line 1 (L1MA), which is scheduled to enter service by 2028 and is expected to carry around 500,000 passengers per day<sup>9</sup>; the east-west BRT line, scheduled for 2028, which is expected to carry between 300,000 and 500,000 passengers per day<sup>10</sup>. A restructuring of the transport network must be implemented around these capacity-building projects, planning for further BRT lines and, above all, the integration of existing transport networks, notably the bus services operated by SOTRA (currently carrying nearly one million passengers per day<sup>11</sup>), lagoon transport (around 100,000 passengers per day today, including both informal and licensed services) and paratransit services, with associated professionalisation and modernisation (over 5 million passengers per day according to 2020 estimates<sup>12</sup>), whilst developing a strategy for non-motorised modes of transport (active modes: walking and cycling).

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<sup>9</sup> Source: Abidjan Metro, <https://www.lemetrodabidjan.ci/>

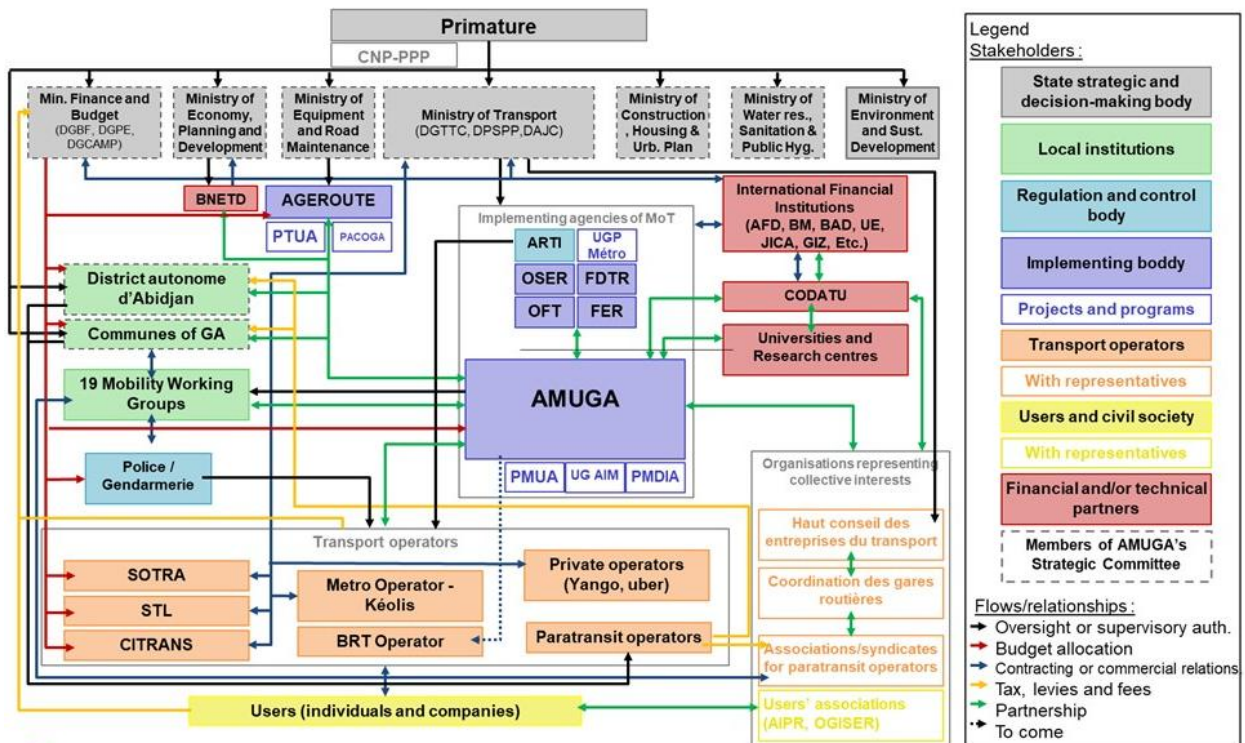
<sup>10</sup> AMUGA, <https://bilan.gouv.ci/actualite/18072?> / PMUA, <https://www.pmua.ci/brt/>

<sup>11</sup><https://amuga.ci/services-de-transport/>

<sup>12</sup> AMUGA, <https://amuga.ci/mobilite-en-chiffres/>



## Institutional governance for transport and urban mobility in the Greater Abidjan



 Codatu

*Diagnosis of mobility and transport governance in Greater Abidjan, CODATU 2025.*

Shortly after its creation, AMUGA therefore has a dual mission: to address the main daily mobility challenges in Abidjan, with a view to improving people's mobility immediately, and to plan for the medium and long term, ensuring the coordination of capacity-building projects and integration with existing services.



### **Focus: Technical assistance to support the structuring of AMUGA from the outset**

With a view to supporting AMUGA in establishing effective governance of urban mobility, in order to ensure the sustainable planning, organisation and coordination of the various modes of transport, the French Development Agency (AFD) mobilised support from the Technical Expertise and Exchange Fund (FEXTE) in 2021, funded by the French Treasury and managed by CODATU.



*Study visit to France in January 2025, CODATU*

#### **Introduction to CODATU**

**CODATU** (Cooperation for the Development and Improvement of Urban and Suburban Transport) is a French association that promotes sustainable urban mobility policies in cities in the Global South. It brings together experts from local authorities, public agencies, universities and businesses to support local authorities in institutional structuring, planning and professionalisation in the field of sustainable mobility and urban transport.

#### **The CODATU–AMUGA–AFD technical cooperation**

An initial technical cooperation initiative (2021–2023) helped to support capacity building and the organisational development of AMUGA, as well as strengthening its position within the Ivorian institutional landscape. This programme gave rise to numerous activities: capacity building (workshops and training courses), peer-to-peer exchanges, study tours, methodological and technical support, and the launch of studies under the AFD framework agreement.

In order to consolidate the achievements of FEXTE 1 for the urban transport system in Greater Abidjan, a second programme (FEXTE 2) was launched by AFD in 2024 for a period of three years (2024–2027). This second programme continues to support AMUGA across three main areas:

- **Institutional and organisational strengthening** of AMUGA, drawing on CODATU’s expertise and network;
- **Capacity building** for the Authority’s staff through technical and managerial training and thematic workshops;
- **Technical assistance focused** on several strategic issues for the functioning of the transport system, notably **governance, monitoring of contracted operators** and the **professionalisation of informal transport**.

The success of this programme highlights the value of technical assistance for young Mobility Organising Authorities and other public institutions engaged in the implementation of ambitious projects. This support enables a faster and more effective grasp of operational challenges, whilst accelerating skills development. It thus helps to strengthen the authority’s capacity to manage its projects under better conditions, to the benefit of donors, partner institutions and local authorities, but above all users.



## AMUGA's first major projects

Since its creation, AMUGA has gradually established itself as a key player in transport within Greater Abidjan, undertaking several major projects aimed at defining and implementing the metropolitan area's multimodal strategy.

### Transport planning

One of the first major initiatives concerned the planning of the public transport network. To this end, AMUGA led a study to restructure the public transport network around mass transit projects and is currently implementing it. This initiative marks a shift towards an integrated approach to mobility, in which AMUGA assumes the role of strategic planner, coordinating all aspects of mobility, to transition from a legacy network shaped by urbanisation and comprising several modes operating without real coordination, to a structured, hierarchical, multi-operator network across the metropolitan area that serves the user.

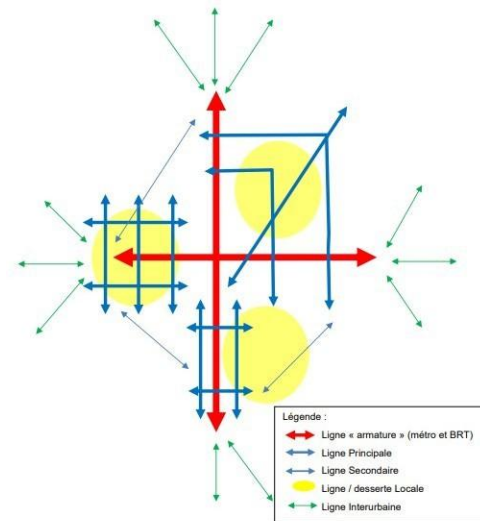


Figure 55 | Concept général d'organisation / de hiérarchisation du réseau TC d'Abidjan

*Concept for the restructuring of the public transport network, network restructuring study, June 2022 – TRANSITEC – SETEC*

In this context, AMUGA has also initiated discussions centred on four pillars essential to the feasibility of a functional network:

- **Intermodality:** analysis of user journeys and the design of multimodal transport hubs, notably including the implementation of the Abidjan Intermodality AIM project (a project funded by AFD, which provides for the creation of 32 transport hubs and 180 stops), the design and construction of stops and parking terminals for paratransit services, and participation in the construction of BRT infrastructure and future lagoon stations.
- **Integrated and sustainable fare policy:** defining mechanisms to ensure fair social pricing and a sustainable economic model combining fare revenue and targeted public subsidies. The aim is to establish an accessible, transparent and functional system across all modes of transport. The next step is to implement this policy through clear political decisions and collaborative work with operators.
- **High-performing and regulated operators:** consideration of effective and regular performance monitoring and coordination of operators to guarantee service quality.
- **System interoperability:** a prerequisite for ensuring network coherence, including ticketing interoperability, real-time passenger information and shared tools for performance monitoring.

AMUGA is also involved in the interaction between transport and urban development (SDUGA 2, Transport-Oriented Development), as well as targeted discussions on specific modes of



travel (Greater Abidjan traffic plan, GA soft mobility plan, and urban logistics).

*The integration of informal transport and its professionalisation*

At the same time, the Authority has taken charge of the issue of paratransit services, making it a priority area of action.

The Authority began by setting up **Mobility Working Groups (MWGs)** in each of the municipalities of Greater Abidjan, bringing together representatives of trade unions and cooperatives as well as local stakeholders. The aim of these groups is to create a **dedicated forum for dialogue**, enabling both the collection of opinions and feedback from local stakeholders and raising their awareness of planned developments in the sector. This initiative aims to support the integration of paratransit operators into the future Greater Abidjan public transport network and to promote their professionalisation.

In practical terms, this process has resulted in the development of infrastructure tailored to the needs of paratransit operators. AMUGA has thus identified and developed **bus stops, drop-off points and parking bays**, in partnership with the local authorities, in order to improve the flow of traffic for wôrô-wôrôs and gbakas. AMUGA's work on the paratransit sector can be considered exemplary, as these services are, in theory, regulated at local level by the municipalities and the District (unlike major capacity-building projects), and do not rely on external funding. This allows for greater flexibility in the actions to be taken and is consistent with AMUGA's mandate.

*Bus stop for local transport, Boulevard de Bel Air in Yopougon,*

*CODATU, October 2025*



*Fire brigade depot in Yopougon, CODATU, October*



The **professionalisation and integration of paratransit services** are essential prerequisites for the success of capacity-building transport projects and the establishment of effective intermodality

at the metropolitan level. With this in mind, AMUGA, as part of its technical cooperation with CODATU and AFD, is drawing up **an operational roadmap designed to guide the integration and professionalisation of the sector**. This roadmap will enable the mapping of stakeholders, the definition of a viable economic model for their professionalisation, and the structuring of the integration of paratransit services into the future multimodal network, taking into account ongoing initiatives such as fleet renewal and stakeholder training. This roadmap will provide AMUGA with an action plan starting today for the integration of all or part of the paratransit sector by the time major projects come into service<sup>13</sup>.

### **Focus: AMUGA's Mobility Working Groups (MWG)**

#### *Creation and establishment*

**AMUGA launched the MWG initiative in 2022** with a presentation of the approach to the municipalities (vision and typical composition of the MWGs), followed by gradual implementation in each municipality via municipal decree, to formalise the MWGs and identify participants. The first to be established was that of Abobo in June 2022; today, all municipalities have one.

#### *Strategic objectives*

**The MWGs aim to make mobility governance more inclusive and local, by providing an operational link in each municipality.** Where more strategic bodies also exist (High Council of Road Transport Companies of Côte d'Ivoire), the MWG provide a local presence and direct interaction with paratransit operators.

#### *Composition and operation*

Each MWG brings together the relevant municipality (town hall), representatives of transport unions and cooperatives, operators (owners and drivers, with one representative for each mode), managers of paratransit terminals, paratransit assistants, law enforcement agencies, and a representative of the High Council of Road Transport Companies of Côte d'Ivoire. It is led by a chairperson (representing the town hall), a vice-chairperson and a Secretary General (representing the main transport operators).

#### *GTM activities:*

- Conduct the census of all municipal stakeholders of the paratransit sector (owners, drivers, assistants, etc.)
- To issue opinions on AMUGA projects with a view to enhancing them and incorporating relevant proposals from local stakeholders;
- To make proposals for improving the local transport system;
- Raise the issues faced by local transport operators in a constructive manner with a view to their resolution by AMUGA;

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<sup>13</sup> Operational Roadmap for the professionalisation and integration of informal transport into the Greater Abidjan Integrated Multimodal Transport System (SMIT), produced by the TRANSITEC-GLI consortium on behalf of AMUGA, funded by AFD via FEXTE, CODATU-AFD-AMUGA cooperation.



- To act as a channel for raising awareness and communicating about the activities of AMUGA and the Ministry of Transport;
- To ensure, in collaboration with AMUGA, the promotion and supervision of municipal capacity-building activities for stakeholders, particularly regarding the acquisition of the Certificate of Competence for Road Drivers (CACR) and the Certificate of Professional Competence (ACP);
- Act as an interface, in close collaboration with umbrella organisations, between AMUGA and urban transport stakeholders in the municipality.

#### *Next developments*

To take this a step further, one approach could be to provide the GTMs with a dedicated budget allocation to enable them to organise local awareness-raising, training and communication activities. This would strengthen their operational role and the commitment of stakeholders.

Through the GTM initiative, AMUGA can involve local stakeholders, whilst providing a specific platform for informal transport operators to have their say. Whilst many Urban Mobility Organising Authorities in the Global South struggle to establish themselves at the local level, this initiative represents a useful lever for involving local stakeholders in AMUGA's activities.



*Gare de la Vie, Abidjan, CODATU*

#### *Regulated public transport operators*

AMUGA has also become involved in the regulation of licensed operators by leading a review of concession agreements. The Authority has thus taken charge of revising the **concession agreement of the Société des Transports Abidjanais (SOTRA)**, which was tacitly renewed in 2013 following its extension in 1998 for a period of fifteen years, and for which an amendment was signed in 2025.

AMUGA is also overseeing the **review of the agreements with the lagoon transport operators, CITRANS and STL**, signed in 2016 for a period of 25 years, in order to adapt them to operating conditions and the new challenges associated with the revitalisation of lagoon transport. At the same time, the Authority is contributing to the revitalisation of lagoon transport by exploring new financing and management models for lagoon stations.

**As part of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, AMUGA is participating in the selection process for the future operator** and is progressively implementing the conditions for performance monitoring of



all its operators, in order to guarantee quality of service for users.

#### *Infrastructure projects and construction sites*

Finally, since its creation, AMUGA has taken charge of several key infrastructure and mobility projects. It acts as the project owner for the BRT stations as well as for the Abobo-Doumé and Plateau lagoon stations. At the same time, the Authority is leading the development of multimodal transport hubs and stop centres through the AIM project for some of them, and the development of lagoon stations for others.

Significant work is underway on the lagoon network to provide Abidjan with a fully-fledged network across the lagoon, through the development of 25 lagoon hubs, the modernisation and expansion of fleets, and the professionalisation of the sector. The aim is to increase daily passenger numbers from 120,000 today to 530,000 in the long term<sup>14</sup>.

At the same time, a central control centre is being set up to enable real-time management of traffic and mobility, in coordination with the District and the State's technical services.

These various initiatives reflect the growing influence of an institution which, having initially focused on monitoring studies and projects, is now entering an implementation phase in which it is developing its own tools for analysis and action. Most of these projects are to be implemented (almost simultaneously) on the ground, which is sometimes made difficult by a lack of resources and institutional governance that presents areas of uncertainty.

#### **Institutional overlaps constraining AMUGA's action**

Despite the significant progress made by AMUGA since its creation in 2019, the institution, being in its infancy, faces a complex institutional landscape, where responsibilities for transport and mobility remain largely shared among multiple long-standing stakeholders, such as AGEROUTE, BNETD, the Autonomous District of Abidjan and the local authorities.

**On the infrastructure front**, although the decree establishing AMUGA grants it project management responsibility for public transport-related developments (bus lanes, stations, platforms, car parks, etc.), AGEROUTE remains the main operational project manager. In practice, AMUGA often acts as a planner or specifier, relying on AGEROUTE's expertise for the construction of infrastructure. Although this situation is pragmatic in the short term, it creates ambiguities regarding the division of responsibilities and limits AMUGA's ability to directly manage complex projects. It would be appropriate for AMUGA to delegate certain technical tasks to AGEROUTE whilst consolidating its role as strategic project manager.

Similarly, traffic planning and urban development overlap with the mandate of the BNETD and AGEROUTE regarding junction design or traffic light management, whilst the municipalities and the District retain responsibility for parking management and the issuing of permits for private hire vehicles. This impacts **traffic management**, which currently relies on reactive measures with the support of the police and AMUGA traffic wardens to regulate traffic. A more functional approach would require to

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<sup>14</sup> AMUGA data



define a traffic management strategy for the area and implement it through traffic plans, time-of-day-adapted traffic light programmes, junction redesigns, etc. However, to do this, the responsibilities of the various institutions in this area must be clearly defined to enable collaboration. It will then be possible to recruit expert staff to implement the strategy, in partnership with other stakeholders, starting immediately and even before the plans for central traffic control centres are finalised. Finally, at the local level, the **municipalities** and the **District** retain responsibility for parking management and the issuing of licences for private hire vehicles, areas where the AMUGA still struggles to have its authority recognised. These overlaps can fuel financial tensions (particularly regarding the collection of parking fees and transport licences) and delay the establishment of a unified regulatory framework.

Thus, AMUGA operates within an institutional framework where shared responsibilities and inherited practices sometimes limit its capacity for action. Clarifying roles, establishing technical coordination mechanisms with AGEROUTE and the District, and consolidating its regulatory power appear necessary to firmly establish its metropolitan authority. In the context of decentralisation and the consolidation of urban mobility governance in Côte d'Ivoire, defining a clear mandate for the Authority and determining which actions AMUGA should prioritise are essential.

### Outlook and future projects for AMUGA

Faced with these constraints, AMUGA is looking ahead to the **implementation of a restructured, multimodal and interoperable network**. Key upcoming projects include: the completion of the BRT and lagoon stations, the development of multimodal interchange points and transport hubs, and the professionalisation of paratransit services, as well as the establishment of centralised control centres for real-time traffic and mobility management. The Authority also plans to enhance the interoperability of systems, ensure **economically viable and socially equitable pricing**, and professionalise operators in the paratransit sector through training and the renewal of the vehicle fleet. The establishment of a **Mobility Observatory** will enable the collection and analysis of data to evaluate and adjust public policies, strengthen intermodality and improve the integration of different modes.

These initiatives aim to build a coherent, inclusive and efficient mobility system across the Greater Abidjan area. In the short term, the Authority is focusing on implementing the restructuring, managing public transport services, monitoring construction sites, and completing the first BRT hubs and infrastructure.

### Conclusion

The establishment of the Greater Abidjan Urban Mobility Authority (AMUGA) is part of a process that is now well-established internationally and, more recently, in Sub-Saharan Africa. It illustrates the growing importance of Transport Authorities as key stakeholders for structuring and modernising urban transport systems, whilst taking into account the actual practices of city dwellers and local challenges. AMUGA's experience highlights numerous 'best practices' and innovative approaches that could inspire other cities: strong political backing, the definition of a relevant metropolitan area, the integration of local authorities into governance to strengthen the institution's authority



and local legitimacy of the institution, and the establishment of structured partnerships with transport operators to facilitate operational dialogue.

After only a few years, AMUGA has initiated the transformation of mobility in Greater Abidjan: restructuring of the public transport network, development of intermodality and interoperability, professionalisation of paratransit services, and implementation of infrastructure projects such as the BRT, lagoon stations and multimodal interchange points. However, its growth may be hampered by institutional overlaps. Clarifying roles, consolidating regulatory authority and ensuring technical coordination with other institutional and local stakeholders are essential to establishing its work on a sustainable footing.

Thus, AMUGA's experience demonstrates that the creation of institutions to organise mobility requires a gradual, integrated and collaborative approach, taking into account local institutional, financial and operational realities. With the support of technical partners such as CODATU and external funding from organisations such as AFD, AMUGA has the means to consolidate a coherent, inclusive and sustainable mobility system capable of serving as a model for other African cities.

Beyond Greater Abidjan, urban mobility in Côte d'Ivoire presents a highly varied picture. In secondary cities, governance is poorly structured, centred mainly at the level of local authorities which, however, have very limited financial, human and technical resources, and the provision of public transport remains weak, often dominated by informal transport. In this context, ARTI (Ivory Coast Transport Regulatory Authority) was established at the same time as AMUGA to act as a regulator in these areas. However, its activities often remain focused on fare regulation and safety. It is not a technical agency, but a regulatory one. There are therefore no specific resources to steer the development of public transport, intermodal integration and urban planning. SOTRA, as the incumbent operator, is gradually extending its network beyond Greater Abidjan, offering wider service coverage, but is also facing challenges related to the integration of services and the professionalisation of paratransit services. In this context, AMUGA's experience in institutional structuring and capacity building serves as a valuable model, one that needs to be adapted and rolled out in inland cities, whether through the creation of local or regional organising authorities, or through technical, institutional and financial strengthening of existing teams – an essential prerequisite for implementing a functional mobility system across the entire territory.

