Transforming Urban Transport – The Role of Political Leadership
TUT-POL Sub-Saharan Africa

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Case: Accra, Ghana

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ACCRA, GHANA

A. Development Backdrop

Since the late 20th century, Ghana – and by extension Accra – have undergone and continue to experience dramatic economic and demographic transitions. During this period, Ghana experienced increasing political stability, deepening democracy and economic transition from a low-income to lower-middle income country status as ranked by the World Bank (WB). Ghana's urban areas currently contribute close to 70 percent of Gross National Product (GNP), signifying their importance and potential for contributing further to economic growth. Ghana's experience with rapid urbanization began in the mid-1980s until the present, reaching a 50 percent urbanization rate in 2010. The population of Ghana is estimated at 28 million inhabitants, with the urbanization rate projected to increase to 72 percent by 2035 (AfDB, 2016). Greater Accra, which has the smallest land size of the country's ten regions, is projected to have one of the highest urban populations and maintains the highest population density of 1,235.8 persons per square kilometer. At an urban population growth rate of 3.3 percent, Accra and Kumasi metropolitan regions have both grown to over four million inhabitants. With these levels of urban population growth and expansion, there are many challenges facing Accra – the administrative and economic capital of Ghana – including: uncontrolled urban sprawl, slums and squatter settlements, poor sanitation and service provision, as well as inadequate infrastructure and transportation. The urban transport system in Ghana is characterized by the congested central areas of cities, poor quality of service from public transport operators, high exposure to road accidents, and poor environmental standards (Kwakye and Fouracre, 1998). The Government of Ghana (GoG) and its development partners are supporting various interventions in Ghana's urban areas, particularly in the Greater Accra region, to ensure integrated and sustainable spatial development, coordination, and planning.

Transport and Development

In 2008, Ghana developed its National Urban Transport Policy, set within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Ghana's Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS), to guide the sector. The vision of the Policy is to develop an affordable, safe, and efficient urban transportation system that supports the overall development and competitiveness of Ghana's urban areas.

National Urban Transport Policy Goals:

a. Establish Ghana as a Transportation Hub for the West African Sub-Region.
b. Create a sustainable, affordable, and efficient Transport system that meets customer needs.
c. Integrate Land-Use Transport Planning, Development Planning, and Service Provision.
d. Create vibrant investment and performance-based management that benefits for public and private sector investors
e. Develop and implement comprehensive and integrated Policy, governance, and Institutional Frameworks.
f. Ensure Sustainable Development in the Transport Sector.
g. Develop adequate Human Resources and apply new technology.

(Source: National Urban Transport Policy; Government of Ghana, 2008).

In relation to the transportation policy, Ghana formulated a comprehensive National Urban Policy (NUP) in 2012 to promote a sustainable, spatially integrated, and orderly development of urban settlements to support rapid socio-economic development of Ghana (GoG, 2012). The NUP seeks to address some of the fundamental problems associated with urban development, including weak urban transportation planning and traffic management as well as land use disorder and urban sprawl.[1] The policy indicates that inefficient transportation and mobility in Ghana's urban centers are economically and socially costly. These costs make Ghanaian cities, especially Accra and Kumasi, less competitive while hindering mobility and access for urban residents and Ghanaian citizens.

The link between transportation infrastructure and economic development has always occupied a significant place in the development plans of less developed countries (LDCs).[2] As such, Ghana's vision is to provide an efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable transportation system that is responsive to the needs of society, supports growth and poverty reduction, and establishes Ghana as a transportation hub in the West Africa sub-region. Several projects have been developed to achieve these goals. The Ghana Urban Transport Project, developed in conjunction with the World Bank, was implemented between 2008-2014 and will be discussed in greater detail below. The Accra Urban Transport Project (AUTP), developed in 2016, seeks to contribute towards integrated transport and urban development solutions in Accra. The AUTP focuses on building infrastructure to improve accessibility, to reduce traffic delays in the project area, to promote efficient movement of goods and people, to boost trade and industrialization, to promote affordable transport services, and to improve livelihoods through job creation. Ghana is also developing a 40-year, long-term development plan that includes a national infrastructure plan and a spatial development framework to transform where Ghanaians live and work. The plan is expected to enhance the Accra and Kumasi city regions and other urban clusters through improvements in the transport network that integrate towns and cities. According to the Ghana Transport Sector Medium Term Development Plan, roads are the principal means of transportation in Ghana and expected to play a critical role in socio-economic development and integration of the urban area. Additionally, the AfDB is supporting the expansion of the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor, which connects five coastal economic capitals from Ivory Coast to Nigeria with the largest portion of road located in Ghana (AfDB, 2016). As recognized in these broader development strategies, answering the urban transportation and mobility puzzle has become one of the major challenges facing Accra, where rapid urbanization and spatial expansion requires urgent action.

B. Urban Transport Context

Urban Transport in Historical Perspective

It is useful to provide some context regarding the urban transport sector in Ghana to understand the historical legacies that led to the dominance of paratransit and foreshadowed present-day challenges for urban transport and mobility. The origins of urban passenger transport in Accra date back to 1927 with the introduction of ten Dennis buses by British colonial authorities of the Gold Coast (Okoye et al., 2010). As motorization increased towards the end of the colonial period, the Road Traffic Ordinance of 1952 was enacted to establish a licensing authority to register and license drivers, vehicles

[1] Transportation and land use are closely linked elements of urban development. Urban transportation systems impact growth patterns, economic activity, the environment, and quality of life.

[2] The incorporation of transportation in the development plans of these countries dates back to the colonial era. Investment in transportation was deemed an indispensable element in imperial schemes designed to evacuate natural resources from colonial territories (Njoh, 2000).

and manage traffic related to motor vehicle usage in the colony. This ordinance was replaced in the post-independence period by the Ghana Local Government Act of 1961, which led to the establishment of the Omnibus Service Authority (OSA) to develop infrastructural facilities such as bus terminals, buses, and rolling stocks for the movement of freight and passengers in Ghana's urban centers.

British colonial policy also laid out the city development and road infrastructure that shapes Accra. In the coastal cities of British territories, the road network typically consisted of a major trunk road from the central business district (CBD), leading out of the city to the provinces, spurring development in the industrial and port areas (Banjo and Dimitriou, 1983). Economic motivations led to the radial and concentric road network structure of Ghanaian cities, with a concentration of high-density activity at the hub, but limited road space. With emphasis on the city center, there is a deficit of east-west corridors, limiting mobility between residential and commercial areas (Addo, 2002).

Accra Central is bounded by Accra Ring Road and remains the most diversified economic area in terms of the concentration of industries, administration, marketing finance insurance, transportation, and tourism firms. These activities attract high levels of traffic, with an estimated one million passenger trips made daily in and out of Accra Central. These trips are dominated by the informal paratransit services known as trotro. Long commute distances between GAMA's peri-urban localities and Accra Central result in a relatively high use of motorized transport modes (98.5 percent), compared to non-motorized transport modes at 1.5 percent (Agyemang, 2017).

Kaneshie Market, Central Accra.

Regarding passenger transport services, there were three state-owned enterprises that operated bus services under the Ministry of Transport and Communication, which was responsible for their programs and operating budgets (Fouracre et al., 1994). These include the State Transport Corporation (STC), the City Express Service (CES) and the aforementioned OSA. The STC and CES provided mostly inter-urban service between regional capitals and other large urban centers or

between cities in neighboring countries. The OSA, constituted in 1969 under the Ministry of Local Government, offered services previously offered by the municipalities in its major cities: Accra, Kumasi, Cape Coast, and Takoradi. These bus services provided frequent, safe, and comfortable intra and inter-urban transport services. However, the companies were also characterized by financial losses, mismanagement, and increasing competition from the private sector. A large public sector and poor management, coupled with rising economic crises in the developing world during the late 1970s and 1980s, led to questioning the state's ability to direct development. Donor partners including the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), critical of state practices recommended structural adjustment programs seeking to reduce the role of the government and encouraged privatization. Conditional access to loans in the 1980s required divesting state-owned enterprises including the OSA (Kwakye and Fouracre, 1998).[3] With the decline of these service providers, the informal or paratransit sector entered to provide *private* transport services in a gap-filling function. The GoG, at that time under the leadership of Jerry Rawlings, encouraged unionization of the paratransit sector and turned the operation of lorry parks or terminals over to the largest paratransit trotro union the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU),[4] which secured a dominant position.[5] This decision further removed authority and revenue from local governments.[6] Thus, public transport transitioned to a privately-operated transport system that was empowered to contest public urban transport interventions.

Urbanization and Challenges for Urban Transport

The process of rapid urbanization that began in the mid-1980s contributed to urban expansion in Ghana's most prominent cities. While cities in developing countries typically have higher densities, urban expansion has led to the flattening of urban density, mimicking the sprawling pattern of developed cities (Cervero, 2013). Urban expansion in Accra is dramatic and seemingly uninterrupted, as the city absorbs peri-urban and rural land for mostly residential use. In Accra, sprawl is rendered more complex due to poor infrastructure and inadequate land use and transportation planning. Unplanned physical development is a major issue, including encroachment on public spaces such as roads and limited walkways, contributing to congestion and limiting mobility. As urban residents move further into peripheral areas, they increasingly require access to transportation options to facilitate their mobility into the city center in order to access economic opportunities and social amenities. Economic and political activity is concentrated in Accra's CBD, as the primary location of major companies and government offices (Agyemang, 2017). The CBD is also home to Accra's largest market and hosts a significant amount of formal and informal trade. The informal sector of the economy supports 70 percent to 80 percent of Ghana's labor force, suggesting that a significant amount of the population heads into the CBD daily to engage in economic activity. Urban sprawl has increased overall trip distances, pushing up the price of transport that implies an increasing cost

[3] Due to fiscal mismanagement and the pressure for structural adjustment, the GoG divested itself of its public investment in bus operations through the Economic Recovery Programme.

[4] Ownership of the terminals rests with the municipal assemblies, who have statutory power to establish, maintain and control parks and terminal facilities. However, the management was assigned to unions and bus companies leading them to compete for terminals rather than routes. Following this, a circular on the administration and use of lorry parks from the Ministry of Local Government (addressed to the Metropolitan and District Secretaries in 1989) recognized the GPRTU as the sole organization to control, regulate the movement and operation of all vehicles at lorry parks.

[5] The source of the unions' power stems from control of the terminals as the base for service operation, which was derived their power through government patronage (Fouracre et al., 1994).

[6] With unions collecting tax on 'behalf' of the GoG, the authority of the metropolitan and municipal governments was undermined by the recognition of the GPRTU and their role as terminal operators (Fouracre et al., 1994).

burden, particularly for low-income populations who are most dependent on the paratransit sector for mobility and access to these economic activities.

Rising Congestion in Accra.

The combination of a sprawling city with economic activity still concentrated in the CBD has resulted in severe congestion and intensified environmental degradation. Daily commutes have become increasingly difficult, with rising costs in terms of time lost,[7] trip connections, and fuel. NMT, primarily walking, is a low-cost, environmentally friendly option. However, the ability to rely on NMT is dependent on where urban residents live and where they access economic opportunity. On the supply side, there is very little attention paid to providing appropriate infrastructure to facilitate or encourage NMT. Regarding motorized transit, the primary modes of transport have both been private. First, the informal or paratransit system, in which approximately 70 percent of the population use trotros to move within the metropolitan area, is the largest modal share,. Trotros provide a relatively inexpensive service and are generally poor quality. A typical commute from peri-urban areas can include taking two or three trotros to arrive into the city center, with significant wait times as trotros do not move until they are filled with passengers. The second mode of private transport is the use of individual vehicles, which approximately 30 percent of urban and peri-urban residents utilize. As the middle class rises in Ghana, the desire to own cars is increasingly realized, demonstrating the status and behavior attributed to this progression in economic status.

Rising motorization and congestion,[8] coupled with poor inter-city and intra-city connectivity led to the introduction of Metro Mass Transit (MMT). Metro Mass Transit Limited was established in 2001 by John Kufuor, former President of Ghana, who directed the re-introduction of public transport in

[7] Morning and evening commutes often take a minimum of 2-3 hours, with congestion continuing throughout the day, reducing overall productivity.
[8] Motorization in Accra metropolitan area was high by African standards at 90 vehicles per 1,000 population as compared to 20-30 for Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Addis Ababa (World Bank, 2007).

the metropolitan and municipal areas to ensure safe, affordable, efficient, and reliable movement of Ghanaians. Since then, the Government has been actively promoting public transportation. Metro Mass Transit Limited was officially incorporated and launched in 2003. In 2008 it had a fleet of 1,063 buses and was a major employer in the country. The MMT initiative was meant to reintroduce scheduled bus service into Ghana's most congested metropolitan areas, including Accra and Kumasi. However, as will be described below, this project became politicized in a struggle between powerful actors in the paratransit sector and the administration associated with this initiative. Following this attempt at reviving scheduled bus service, the GoG began the process of formulating the National Urban Transport Policy to serve as a framework for improving urban transport and mobility within and between Ghana's urban centers.

C. Urban Transport Reform

Stemming from the National Urban Transport Policy, the GoG in collaboration with the World Bank, the French Development Agency, and the Global Environment Facility launched the Ghana Urban Transport Project (GUTP). The GUTP sought to address institutional, management and regulatory issues to improve mass transit services and mobility in Ghanaian cities, with an initial focus on the two major metropolitan areas of Accra and Kumasi.

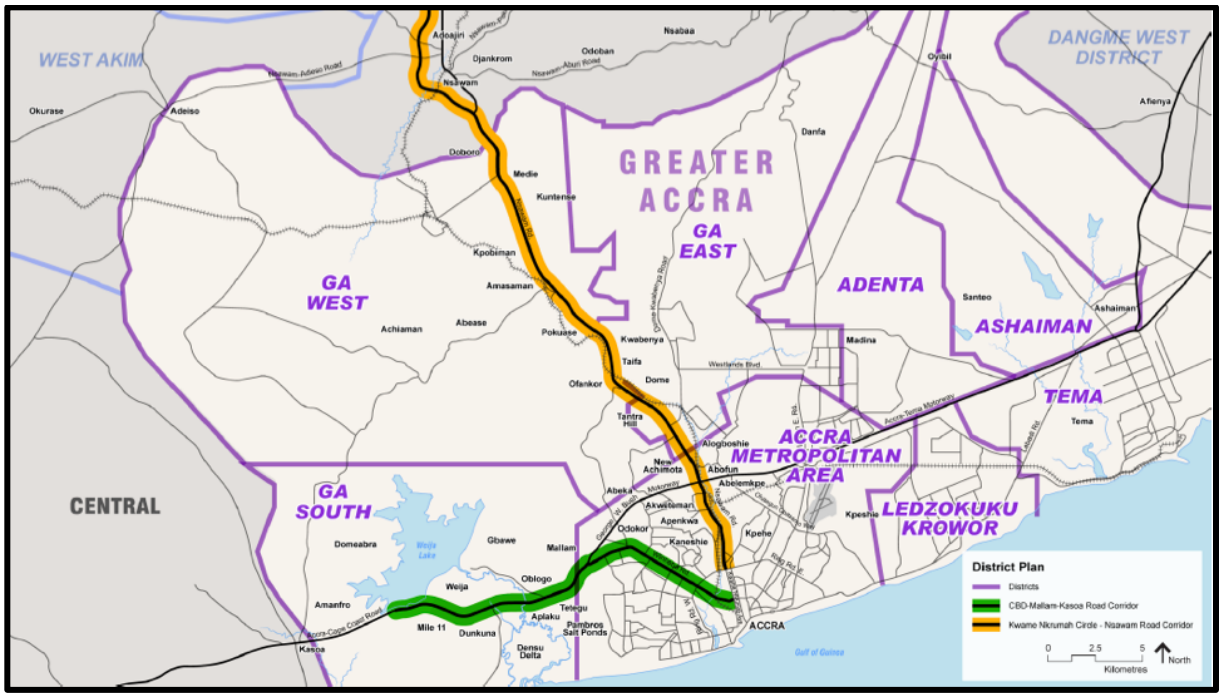
The **Ghana Urban Transport Project** was comprised of five components:

- *Component 1:* Institutional Development USD$13.6 million;
- *Component 2:* Traffic Engineering, Management and Safety USD$26.9 million;
- *Component 3:* Development of a Bus Rapid Transit System USD$46 million;
- *Component 4:* Integration of Urban Development and Transport Planning for Better Environmental Management USD$2 million;
- *Component 5:* Project Outcome Monitoring USD$1.5 million.

Among these components, the two most relevant for this research are the institutional component and the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The project sought to improve the institutional and regulatory framework that supports urban transport services. Proposed institutional arrangements included the establishment of the Greater Accra Passenger Transport Executive (GAPTE) to address cross-jurisdictional issues of regulation, development, and organization of urban passenger transport. The executive incorporated local government representation from metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs). The GAPTE also has permanent staff to carry out functions including regulation, permit issuance, co-ordination of travel demand analysis, transport planning, and coordination of fares. A Center for Urban Transport was also proposed to stand as a center for both research and dissemination of information on sustainable transport practices as well as training and capacity building for specialists in the urban transport sector. In addition, an inter-ministerial transport committee was proposed to bring together all interested agencies in the development of urban transport in the country.

The BRT component of the project received the majority of attention and resources (Respondent, 2019). The selection of BRT was based on several factors, with the two most significant being the cost of BRT versus metro or rail interventions and the influence of policy diffusion through best practices. To facilitate the implementation of the BRT component, a scoping study was conducted to determine the main routes into the CBD experiencing extreme congestion. Five routes into the city from the

periphery were identified. The Kasoa line into the CBD was chosen for the initial pilot of the BRT, along Winneba and Graphic Roads. It is one of the most heavily burdened routes into the Accra metropolitan area. However, the projected costs were too high, and progress was halted in developing the infrastructure. [9] In 2012, the WB reviewed the GUTP project, deemed it unsatisfactory due to a lack of progress and cost overruns, and prepared to close the project. However, due to interest from the paratransit sector to participate as critical stakeholders in support of a multi-modal system inclusive of the BRT and trotros, the project was extended.



BRT Corridors as envisioned in the GUTP project.

The GoG and the World Bank agreed to move forward with the pilot, selecting a different corridor that runs from Amasaman to Achimota into the CBD. Some relabeled this pilot as a quality bus service, to acknowledge that the intervention was down-scaled due to the inability to secure the political and financial support to implement dedicated bus lanes. The Aayalolo bus service, (loosely translated as "let's go" or "together we go"), was launched in September of 2016. At the height of its functionality, the bus service carried 11,000 passengers daily. The buses used smartcards that could be pre-charged, were accessible for the disabled, and had features such as air-conditioning and USB chargers. However, in addition to the lack of a dedicated lane for the entirety of the corridor, there was limited infrastructure for stations, along with encroachment into existing infrastructure. The Aayalolo bus service was grounded in October 2018.

[9] One major concern was the economic cost on local commercial activity during the construction phase and once the BRT became operational. This area hosts Kaneshie market, the most vibrant commercial area in the CBD for formal and informal trade (Okoye et al., 2010).

Aayalolo Buses parked at Achimota Terminal.

D. Governance and Politics of Urban Transport

Mapping the Actors

As suggested, the governance and institutional arrangements guiding the BRT intervention are complex puzzles that can enable their success or lead to their failure. This section analyzes the actors involved, with emphasis on their ability to coordinate and negotiate the contested space of urban transport provision. The research revealed a high number of state agencies held diffused responsibility in implementing the BRT component of the GUTP project, suggesting significant institutional fragmentation. At the national level, there are a number of actors within the state including: The Ministry of Transportation – responsible for road transport; Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment – responsible for implementing decentralized public transport; Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning – with taxation authority; and the Ministry of the Interior – responsible for motor traffic and transport.

Still within the state, but beyond the ministerial level are the local assemblies: Accra Metropolitan Assembly; Tema Metropolitan Assembly; Ga East District Assembly; and Ga West District Assembly. At the start of the project there were only these four local assemblies in the Greater Accra area. However, over time, the state has continued to decentralize authority, splitting these assemblies into ten and ultimately 21 municipal jurisdictions, further fragmenting political and fiscal authority. These assemblies pass by-laws and issue permits for operators in the paratransit sector. The Town and Country Planning departments within the assemblies are responsible for land use planning and support the management of the terminals. In addition, there are environmental planning agencies that support considerations relating to the environment. The list of actors is extensive and continues to grow as

institutions are further split and recombined in new institutional arrangements. GAPTE,[10] as previously mentioned, is the parastatal formed to support the operation of the bus service.

Beyond the state, the key stakeholders driving urban transport in Accra are a heterogeneous array of actors and organizations in the paratransit sector. These actors can be segmented into three categories – owners, drivers, and unions or associations. Trotros are owned by an indeterminate number of individuals and families that use the paratransit sector as a secondary income strategy. Families save, or use remittances from family members abroad, to buy a vehicle and hire a driver. The middle class and civil servants including bureaucrats, military, and the police are all engaged in this practice. The drivers are usually lower income and hired by these middle-class families to operate the vehicles. However, the main stakeholders in the negotiations regarding urban transport are the paratransit unions of drivers and associations. These organizations are interest-based actors in society, self-organized, and setting and enforcing their own rules.

The major unions and associations include the:

- Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU), a national union reported to have up to 90 percent of the trotro and shared taxi business with regional clusters and local branches that organize routes;
- Ghana Cooperative Transport Association (GCTA), a national association organized along similar lines of the GPRTU with significantly less market share;
- Progressive Transport Owners Association (PROTOA), the only organization dedicated to the interests of owners; and
- Ghana Road Transport Coordination Council (GRTCC), an umbrella body of all transport operators in Ghana that represents the interests of road transport operators in negotiating with the GoG for transport tariffs and vehicle acquisition.

Among them, the GPRTU is the most dominate, and there are contentious politics between union members protecting their turf. The GRTCC is dependent on the willingness of the GPRTU to cooperate; otherwise, their ability to negotiate is severely undermined. Key concerns for these stakeholders include: the negative impact of the BRT on their operations due to dedicated lanes; being relegated to feeder routes that are particularly poor quality; and financing to secure higher quality vehicles to operate along all routes. As the GUTP progressed, the GPRTU and PROTOA were invited to form limited liability companies (LLCs) that are stakeholders in the Aayalolo bus company. This has created further fissures with other unions and associations that perceive themselves left out of this arrangement.

The Politics of Paratransit

Knowing the stakeholders is perhaps the first element of understanding the governance of urban transportation. However, a deeper level of understanding is necessary if transforming the urban transport system is the objective. Governance and decision-making over infrastructure and urban

[10] GAPTE was meant to work with the LLC and provide data collection and analysis to support the operation of the bus service, as well as negotiate with unions regarding management of the terminals. The Ministry of Transport and the MMDAs provide oversight are meant to facilitate coordination across districts. However, political will and capacity regarding urban transport and the Aayalolo service are not consistent due to inadequate training and electoral turnover.

transport systems is a contested space, where political struggle enters and stakeholders vie to attain their interests.

In this case, there is a strong political thread that shapes the evolution of urban transport in Ghana. Improving urban transport in Ghana was a priority for former President John Kufuor.[11] In 2003, he introduced MMT, the scheduled big bus service. This intervention was viewed by the GPRTU as competition and members of the union labeled them Kufuor buses, even going as far as insulting those who rode the buses, a form of social shaming (Agyemang, 2015). Following this intervention, the National Transport Policy and the GUTP were both signed under Kufuor's tenure, in an attempt to reassert public transportation service. Kufuor also undertook the first attempt at establishing BRT pilot under Metro Mass Transit in 2005 with a pilot line running from Adenta to Kimba in the city center. However, after two years of running the service diminished and his transport agenda was cut short after losing the 2008 election.[12] The National Democratic Congress (NDC) came to power under John Atta Mills the following year. This signaled a politically salient moment as the NDC was perceived to be more favorable to the paratransit sector, with its progenitor Rawlings who pushed unionization of the paratransit sector and turned over the terminals to the GPRTU. This political shift happened just as the GUTP and its BRT component entered the initial project implementation phase. With a sympathetic political party in power, the paratransit unions and associations sought to renegotiate their position under more favorable political circumstances, stalling implementation of the project.

As the 2016 election approached, the NDC administration under John Mahama sought to project demonstrable wins to the public, i.e. relieving rising congestion, reducing commutes, and facilitating economic growth. They pushed the process to procure 240 high quality buses from Scania, a Swedish company, at a cost of USD$61.6 million and were able to launch the Aayalolo in September 2016. Despite deploying the Aayalolo bus service, alternately called Mahama buses, the NDC lost the election. Under the current administration of Nana Addo Akufo-Addo and the NPP, the buses operated until October 2018, when the buses were grounded due a number of factors including financial insolvency of the system, lack of ownership due to institutional fragmentation and lack of political will. The NPP administration continues to politicize the bus system, using it as a tool to highlight potential graft under the previous government. In addition, they are hesitant to engage with Aayalolo or Mahama buses as it would be seen as building on the work of a political opponent. One of our respondents lamented, *"Just as we took off the NDC lost power. Whenever there is a change in government, the new government wants to do some 'editing' of previous projects,"* (Respondent Paratransit Association, 2019). Indeed, the NPP government is currently questioning decisions and investigating the procurement process supporting the Aayalolo bus service. Thus, the Aayalolo is caught in the political crossfire and urban residents who once benefited from the service have returned to private vehicles and trotros to address their mobility needs.

[11] Kufuor is a member of the National Patriotic Party (NPP), which was perceived to advocate the formalization of informal service provision.

[12] The pilot BRT enjoyed initial success characterized by high ridership. However, compliance with the right of way provision was rarely enforced, leading to downgrading the BRT (Agyemang, 2015). In this capacity, the buses were permitted to collect passengers in between stations, like trotros operators, further diminishing the efficiency of the service.

E. Findings and Policy Implications

From this discussion, what do the attempts at BRT, as the primary urban transport intervention in Ghana, tell us about transforming urban transport and mobility? The Accra case illustrates complex and compounded challenges. One aspect, specific to this case, is the relative strength of the paratransit unions and associations. These organizations, and the GPRTU in particular, exemplify contestation between the state and societal actors – otherwise framed as the public and private sectors. As private-sector service provision filled the space left from early scheduled bus services provided by state-owned enterprises, their position became entrenched economically and culturally. On the economic side, the GPRTU gained control of terminals or lorry parks, which shifted revenue away from local authorities into the coffers of the union. Administratively, this diminished the power of local governments to provide oversight to the paratransit sector, ceding public transport to private service provision. Culturally, urban residents became accustomed to trotros as their primary mode of mobility. The flexibility of these services allows commuters to board and disembark where needed, and importantly for those going to markets – specifically market women, there is the ability to transport goods. Introducing urban transport interventions in this context is thus perceived as a challenge to the dominance of the paratransit sector and a repudiation of a culturally and economically appropriate mechanism. The unions and associations primarily represent the interests of drivers; however, the owners of trotros are also directly affected. As stated, trotro ownership is often a significant element of livelihood strategies for the middle class. Thus, any urban transport intervention that disrupts this strategy will be challenged. There is general consensus to reframe the transformation of urban transport: rather than moving from informal to formal services, there is broad recognition of the potential for multi-modal urban transport. However, the question is how to reach this objective. In addition to the modalities themselves, i.e. mini-buses and big bus service, there is also the question of hybrid ownership. Thus, a significant finding of this research is the importance of institutional arrangements. How does one integrate public and private urban transport ownership of service provision?

The Accra case also demonstrates significant and pernicious challenges with implementation. Ownership of the GUTP project and the BRT element was complicated by high levels of institutional fragmentation. Administratively, as illustrated in the section that outlines the public-sector actors, there were a multitude of national and local level agencies engaged in the project. While such an intervention does require integration of various elements of the state, there was a clear lack of ownership and coordination. An inter-ministerial committee was suggested but was not operational for the full life of the project. A center for urban transport to produce research and guidance for appropriate policies was also proposed, but never enacted. Politically, ownership and guidance of the GUTP project and the BRT intervention were closely aligned with political party priorities. Despite the historical commitment of the NPP to improving urban transport, the current NPP administration seems less interested in taking up the Aayalolo project, which is viewed as a win for the political opposition. Political will is necessary for any intervention to achieve success, but whether the political will is tied to a short-term project or a larger, long-term vision will determine whether it is sustainable. In this case, the short-term politicization and focus on electoral victories is undermining the reorganization and revival of the Aayalolo bus service. In addition to the questions of institutional arrangements, are those of institutional practice. This case also demonstrates the poor regulatory environment, weakened overtime as local government authority was ceded to paratransit unions; and the severe lack of enforcement. This is evidenced in the inability to maintain right-of-way in the initial

BRT pilot from 2005,[13] and the inability to negotiate a dedicated bus lane for the Aayalolo corridor. The project also struggled with the technical and financial elements including: how to structure the bus service operation in terms of timing and connecting feeder routes; financing in terms of fees; and the need for subsidies to maintain the service. These latter elements are not addressed in great detail in this research but are significant factors that contributed to the grounding of the Aayalolo bus intervention.

[13] One respondent suggested that the lack of political will and enforcement for the dedicated buses lanes is partially due to the reality that traffic officers themselves often own trotros – suggesting a disincentive to reduce their mobility in favor of the Aayalolo bus service.

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Acronyms

African Development Bank (AfDB)
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
central business district (CBD)
City Express Service (CES)
Ghana Cooperative Transport Association (GCTA)
Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU)
Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU)
Ghana Road Transport Coordination Council (GRTCC)
Ghana Urban Transport Project (GUTP)
Ghana's Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS)
Government of Ghana (GoG)
Greater Accra Passenger Transport Executive (GAPTE)
Gross National Product (GNP)
International Finance Corporation (IFC)
less developed countries (LDCs)
limited liability companies (LLCs)
Metro Mass Transit (MMT)
metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs)
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
National Democratic Congress (NDC)
National Patriotic Party (NPP)
National Urban Policy (NUP)
Omnibus Service Authority (OSA)
Progressive Transport Owners Association (PROTOA)
State Transport Corporation (STC)
The Accra Urban Transport Project (AUTP)
World Bank (WB)