

# Douala, Cameroon

Partner city

Status of the project: Completed Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan



## Basic Information

Urban area: 923 km<sup>2</sup>

Population: 3,663,227 | Growth rate: 3.6%

Region capital city

GDP per capita: USD 2,952

Modal Share:

Minibuses (paratransit): 1%

Walking: 35%

Private cars: 5%

Private motorbikes or 2-wheelers: 4%

Taxis (paratransit): 12%

Moto taxis (paratransit): 40%

Other: 3%

National GHG emissions per capita: 0.4 (tCO<sub>2</sub>eq)

Exposure to climate change: HIGH

## Context

The port city of Douala, the main economic hub of Cameroon, lies on a low coastal plateau, with many natural drains and flood-prone valleys. With a population of more than 3.6 million inhabitants, which is anticipated to increase to 4 million by 2023, Douala is a dynamic, fast-growing city. Douala's rapid growth is particularly pronounced on the outskirts, where access to formal public transport services is very low or non-existent. Urban sprawl is forcing people to travel further distances to access jobs, markets, health, and education. The low quality and inadequacy of infrastructure for walking and cycling add to the low provision of public transport services.

This combination of factors pushes travellers to rely on informal motorcycle taxis and mini-bus services, instead of more sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and higher capacity public transport. Informal transport services have taken an increasingly large modal share in outlying areas but also in the city centre. This entails threats to the citizen health, safety, and comfort, as the precariousness of working conditions and high competitiveness of paratransit services are associated with a higher risk of traffic accidents and sexual harassment toward women. Aging or badly maintained vehicles also lead to a significant increase in air and water pollution, and in greenhouse gas emissions.

Regulating and supervising urban development are major challenges for the public authorities, as a large percentage of the urban territory is subject to unsanctioned land use, associated with the isolation of working-class neighbourhoods, the lack of tertiary roads, saturation of industrial zones and growing informal settlements on often unsuitable land.

In addition to this, the lack of dialogue between the land-use planning, on the one hand, and mobility planning authorities, on the other, exacerbates the urban transport problem. Above all, it is necessary to create the conditions for viable integration between urban and transport planning. This diagnosis has led to the recognition of the need to initiate a planning approach that is more operational than those previously at work, in order to be able to respond to the challenges resulting from the rapid development of the metropolitan areas.