INTRODUCTION

Cities of today are traffic-choked, road crashes kill a total of 3,287 people a day, and transport-related emissions are on the rise[1]. This makes urban mobility which is a factor of sustainable development challenging. The world needs to move towards safe, affordable, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport systems as stated in target 11.2 of SDG11. Cameroon being a signatory of agenda 2030 will be asked how far they have gone with the achievement of its goals. It becomes therefore important to study "The challenges of sustainable urban mobility in Cameroon" so as to understand it and enable the public authorities to face it.

After this brief introduction, I will be clarifying key concepts used in the theme so that we get to understand what these concepts are all about.

I. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The concepts include: urban mobility, sustainability, sustainable urban mobility and challenges.

A. Urban Mobility

Urban mobility is defined as *'All of the movement of both people and goods that occur in a city via public or private transportation'* [2]It is a factor of sustainable development and linked to target 11.2 of SDG11.

B. Sustainability

The sourcebook, education for sustainable development in action published by the UNESCO education sector explains sustainability as *"a paradigm for thinking about a future in which environmental, social and economic considerations are balanced in the pursuit of development and an improved quality of life."*

C. Sustainable Urban Mobility

According to the World Bank Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) 2001, sustainable urban mobility is *"The ability to meet the needs of society to move freely, gain*

[1] https://unhabitat.org/topic/mobility-and-transport, accessed on the 20th of September 2023 at 4:35 am.
[2] https://www.ferrovial.com, accessed on the 17th of September 2023 at 1;00 am..

access, communicate, trade, and establish relationships without sacrificing other essential human or ecological values today or in the future"[3]

D. Challenges

Challenges have several definitions but in this context it can be referred to as *"Problems that can be solved using science concepts and principles, inquiry and technology";*[4]

Haven clarified these concepts; we will look at the state of affairs of urban mobility in Cameroon, using the city of Yaounde as a case study.

II. URBAN MOBILITY IN CAMEROON: CASE OF YAOUNDE CITY

A. THE STATE OF URBAN MOBILITY IN YAOUNDE CITY

The transport system in Yaoundé, while being relatively fluid, is accident prone, uncomfortable, polluting, and expensive for the population. There are about 8 million of trips travelled every day, from which one third are short distance trips travelled by walking or by moto-taxis. For longer trips, taxis, motorbikes, and cars are the main modes of transport. Official bus service and informal minibuses currently only play a minor role.[5] All these modes of transport use the same poorly maintained road network and pose challenges for a sustainable urban planning with the view to better urban mobility. These challenges need to be examined.

B. THE CHALLENGES

In terms of safety, mobility in Yaoundé is unsafe. Accidents cause around 1,000 deaths and 5,000 serious injuries per year. There also exists the risk of assault in taxis. The vehicle fleet is very old (20% of vehicles are over 20 years old)[6] and is very polluting, emitting large amounts of greenhouse gases and air pollutants.

Regarding affordability, mobility is costly in Yaounde. After housing and food, transport is the third largest item of expenditure for Yaoundé residents and accounts for more than 11% of household spending. The high cost of transport is attributed to the low efficiency of minibuses,

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[3] P. Kayal, R. Singh and M. Kumar: Defining Sustainable Urban Mobility, The energy and resource institute, TERI-NFA Working paper No. 11, India, March 2014, p. 8.
[4] http://www.geocities.com/science withpalmer/Author, accessed on the 21st of September 2023 at 9:00 am.
[5] SUMP: SUMP SUMMARY: Yaounde Cameroon, 2020, p.2.
[6] Id.

taxis, and motor taxis, linked with a poor road network, and the weakness of public transport offer.

Talking of accessibility, transport infrastructure is unavailable in many neighborhoods in Yaounde and most of those available are in bad state. The transport system does not take into consideration the path way for walking by pedestrians, the two-wheel drive mode of transport, the elderly persons and children as well as people with disabilities. There is also the difficulty of finding available taxis in some areas and people have to wait for long in hot or rainy environments to find one.

Furthermore, transport and land use policies are not integrated reason why people's homes are being broken and they are forced to relocate. Also, there is the aspect of the lack of resources. The financial resources allocated to the construction and maintenance of roads is nearly 40 M€ per year and it is in line with expectations based on the economic status of the city and country.[7] However, the YUC has an insufficient share of these resources in perspective of its mandate.[8] .

Finally, as the government build transport infrastructures for the well being of its citizens, the citizens are not aware of these efforts. They miss use these infrastructure and even go to the extern of destroying then.

These challenges need to be addressed for a sustainable urban mobility in Cameroon.

III. PERSPECTIVES FOR A SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY IN CAMEROON

The perspectives are classified into three categories namely political, economic and social perspectives.

A. POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

- Increase of financing resources for urban mobility by getting more partners and funding bodies, so as to increases the financial resources of transport organizing authorities and sponsor pilot projects.

[7] Id. p.3.
[8] Id.

- When drafting the ToRs, clearly state the role of the responsible local authorities in project ownership and ensure their capacity to monitor the process.

B. ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES

- Integrate transport and land use policies. This will reduce the cost of transport to work and businesses of people who are forcefully relocated as a result of poor construction of houses.
- Better use of state-of-the-art technology such as modern bicycles and electric cars for transport. This will reduce cost from fuel related cars since fuel is expensive and even more costly in traffic.

C. SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES

- Restructuration and modernization of public transport taking into consideration parking spaces and non-motorized modes of transport such as walking and cycling. This will encourage people to use these modes since it is accident free and will equally reduce congestion.
- Implement the policy of ESD whose end point is to transform the mindset of citizens into sustainable citizenship as once said by Nelson Mandela during the South African Apatheid revolutionary that *"Education is the most greatest weapon which can be used to change the world"*[9] This will solve the problem of the misuse of transport infrastructures by city dwellers because they will understand the notion of sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Urban mobility in Cameroon is unsustainable with transport systems being accident prone, uncomfortable, polluting, and expensive for the population. This makes sustainable urban planning challenging and need to be addressed. With the bid to address these challenges, the Yaounde Urban Community adopted a SUMP in 2020, implemented by transitec within the framework of the program dubbed "Yaounde Coeur de Ville" with the objective of improving the mobility conditions of Yaounde city dwellers. It is not just enough to build public

[9] B. Bertrand and N. Florence: The challenge of urban sustainability in Yaounde: stakes, actors and strategies, Chelkh Anta Diop, Taounde, 2022, p.148.

infrastructures but these infrastructures have to be accompanied with policies of proper use. This presentation therefore proposes amongst others, the implementation of the policy of ESD whose end point is the transformation of the mindset of citizens into sustainable citizenship