



# SIERRA LEONE INTEGRATED RESILIENT URBAN MOBILITY PROJECT



*"I fully support the project and wish it all the best during implementation."*

Julius Maada Bio, The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone



*"This operation is expected to change the face of Freetown and improve on internal transportation"*

Jacob Jusu Saffa, Minister of Finance

*"The Project objectives resonate with Government vision of strengthening and transforming urban towns into a dynamic, efficient and clean cities".*

Sahr L. Jusu, Financial Secretary



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## THE CONTEXT

Nearly 30% of the firms in Sierra Leone report transport as a major constraint to growth. It is among the bottom ten Logistics Performance economies and ranks 156 out of 160. The transport sector is the second largest generator of jobs but with 85% informal employment, the people remain vulnerable.

Sierra Leone and Western Area have been hindered by frequent impacts of climate and natural disasters. Mean annual rainfall is the second highest in Africa, peaking to more than 800 mm of rainfall monthly in July and August. The city's geography causes transport services and infrastructure to be highly exposed to climate-change risks and natural disasters, especially to flash floods and landslides. Climate change will aggravate this risk.



## A CITY UNDER PRESSURE

The City's geography causes transport services and infrastructure to be highly exposed to climate-change risks and natural disasters. Many roads are exposed to rainfall-induced landslides due to the steep, unstable slopes in the central highlands.

The population has almost doubled in the last decade imposing additional pressures on the scarce resources. Transportation, water, sanitation, electrical distribution, solid waste infrastructure and services are all dramatically under-developed. People most affected are the women and persons with disabilities because of their special needs. While half the daily person trips are walk trips, sidewalks are absent from most street network. Roads are multi-purpose, serving the needs of hawkers, pedestrians, parking and goods loading-unloading, reducing through movement.

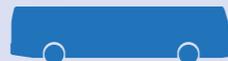


*"The Project is designed with a vision - focusing on both a quick win and long term strategic planning for an integrated and resilient city structure"*

Kabineh M. Kallon, Minister, Ministry of Transport and Aviation

*"Transforming a nation starts with moving people safely and efficiently from one point to another. This is what this project will effectively achieve at its end. Moving people seamlessly is a transformative move by our Government. This is what this project seeks to achieve"*

Sadiq Sillah, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Transport and Aviation

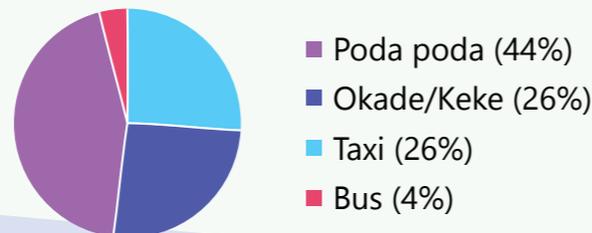


## WHAT ARE THE EXISTING TRANSPORT OPTIONS?

- 84% of people use the public transport system, which is dominated by kekehs, okadas and poda-podas.
- The public transport company, SLRTC, has gradually declined in efficiency and effectiveness due to regulated low fares, declining subsidies and low productivity.
- Congestion, pollution & high accident rates characterize the current transport system.
- The informal sector fails to meet the needs of residents in low density outlying poor areas, women, children and people with disability.
- Forced transfers add to journey time and cost, and typically provide neither for shelter nor security.
- Schooling costs the same as to/from transport cost.
- Weak enforcement, poor driver behavior, lack of management are typical problems.

Access to transport services is even more challenging for women and persons with disabilities (PWD) in Western Area due to their different transport characteristics. Safety and security constitute a major concern for women in influencing their choice of mode, time and place of travel. Available evidence suggests that around 18% of women have suffered sexual harassment in public transportation in the past. This number increases to nearly 30% for poda-poda (minibus) users. In a user survey, 50% of interviewees responded that physical violence is one of the main obstacles to using public transport, and more than 10% mentioned theft and robbery. PWD are another vulnerable group that experiences barriers to accessing opportunities. There have been limited efforts to address the specific needs of PWD, who constitute about 1.3% of the country's total population.

Public Transport Mode Split



**Poda-podas** are mini buses carrying 15 passengers and have proliferated by filling a void left by organized formal services. Operated by single owner-driver, the buses are over 10 years old, ill maintained, unregulated, unsafe, and create congestion on the roads. They are patronized in absence of any better options. Unmanaged competition on the roads for passengers has led to declining safety standards.

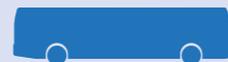
**Okadas** are two-wheeled motorcycles, which have increased exponentially over the past few years due to their low upfront costs, ability to navigate congested and unpaved roads, low barriers to entry, and high unemployment. Like other cities in Africa, they are the cause of worsening pollution, increasing congestion and security concerns.



*“The proposal under this World Bank funded project creates significant opportunity for enhancements in the city’s transport infrastructure in terms of institutional capacity, transport infrastructure improvements and enhancement to integrating transport and urban planning policy over the next 5 years. Crucial to the sustained development of Freetown is improvement in transport infrastructure that will give access to employment opportunity, safety for pedestrians and other essential services for the residents and businesses in Freetown. As a Council we are delighted with this opportunity and look forward to working collaboratively with other government departments and agencies in ensuring that the objectives of SLIRUMP are achieved.”*



Yvonne Aki-Sawyer OBE, Mayor of Freetown City



## THE CURRENT OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Lumley Circle (Aberdeen) is subjected to high volumes of demand causing significant pressure, chronic congestion and deteriorating speeds. Significant intervention is required to improve the level of service and ameliorate the negative transport experience at the junction, and contribute towards improving localized air and noise pollution.



Juba Road

The Proposed site for construction of market and Lumley transit terminal is currently being used as car-washing bay, car park, kiosks, and squatters' shacks.



The street network is badly managed, reducing capacity and creating congestion. Lack of parking policy, weak enforcement and poor coordination among multiple agencies makes a bad situation worse.



*"The Sierra Leone Integrated Resilient Urban Mobility Project after completion will have great impact on our corporate activities and will reduce congestion in the city (project specific area). This project is in the right direction as it leads to modernization of public transport in the Country"*

Dr. Richard Moigbe, Inspector General, Sierra Leone Police

*"I had a dream. I walk out of the house in the morning on to a well-designed sidewalk to the bus stop 500m away. The passenger information system tells me that my bus would be here in 5 mins. I am greeted by a well dressed professional driver, use my pre-paid card to pay for my ride and take my seat. I reach my destination in 20mins and get to work all fresh and energized to start my day. This is the future i am looking forward to with the implementation of this project."*

Brima S.T Kebbie, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Aviation



# THE INSTITUTIONAL LANDSCAPE

## KEY INSTITUTIONS

**Ministry of Transport and Aviation:** Planning and policy

**Ministry of Works and Public Assets:** Construction and maintenance of the main road network through Sierra Leone Roads Authority

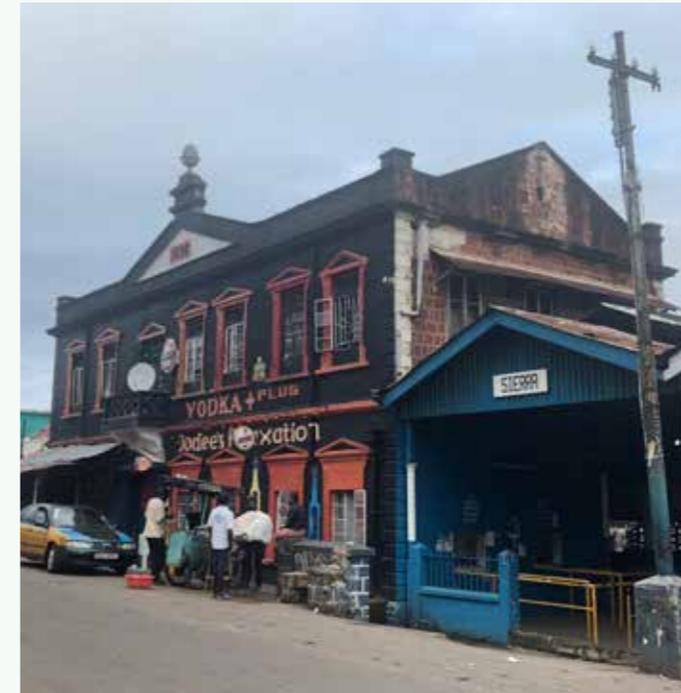
**SL Road Safety Authority:** Vehicle licensing, registration, traffic management, road safety

**SL Road Transport Corporation:** Public transport regulation and bus operations

**Freetown City Council:** Urban planning and management, parking, enforcement, street management

**Traffic police:** Traffic management and enforcement, controls

**Transport Owners Association and Drivers' Union/Okada Union. Kekeh Union.** Manage & operate informal buses (poda podas), kekeh, okadas.



## KEY ISSUES

- a) overlapping mandates;
- b) lack of clarity in functions;
- c) insufficient human capacity;
- d) weak coordination.

Capacity for strategic planning, land-use planning, inter-modal integration, regulation and enforcement, right-of-way management, traffic enforcement is non-existent or very weak.



*"The Project will provide premium quality, economic, user oriented bus transport system that will improve the quality of life for all, including poor, women, school children, and provide an efficient alternative to informal and personalized transport services. This project will bring back dignity into the use of public transport in the city"*

Hindolo M. Shiaka, Director, Transport Infrastructure and Development Unit (TIDU), Ministry of Transport and Aviation

*"Urban Mobility is a massive challenge in all cities in Sierra Leone, but particularly so in Freetown. Freetown is overpopulated with an approximate population of 1.2 million inhabitants and there has not been any major infrastructural development to improve on the narrow streets within the city that link both the west and the central business district. It is the Sierra Leone Road Transport Cooperation's view that the current state of affairs vis-a-vis public transport is not sustainable and therefore requires a complete overhaul of the public transport sector. Simply put, a modernization of public transport."*



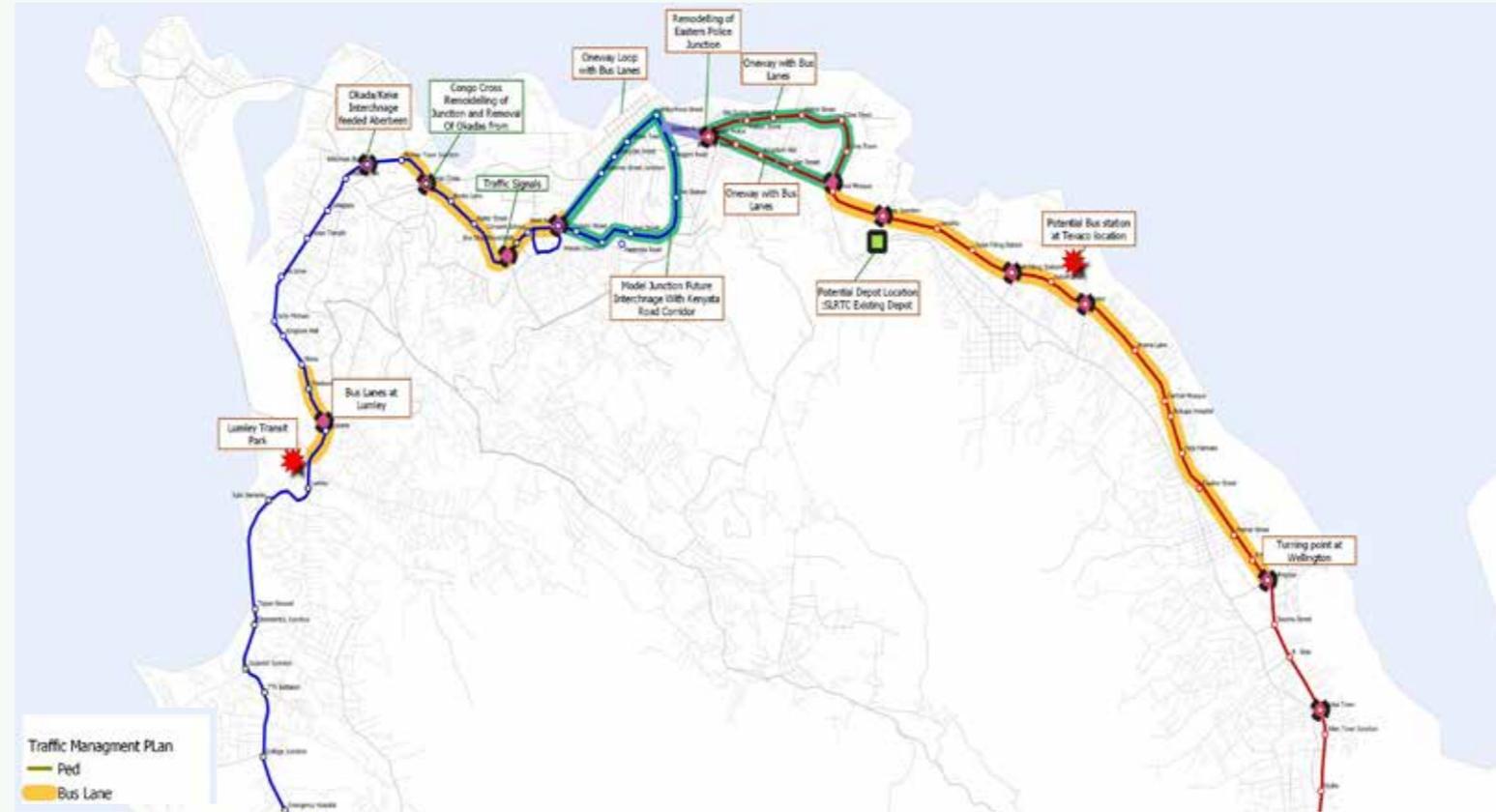
Ken Greene, General Manager, Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation



# THE PROJECT

## OBJECTIVE

Transform Freetown from a congested vehicle-oriented city to a resilient, people-oriented city to improve the quality of life for all.



Bus improvement Pilot Corridors with supporting infrastructure

# THE FOCUS

**Integrated Corridor Management:** Building an integrated and comprehensive program of improvements in main corridors while modernizing public transport.

## What is Integrated Corridor Management?

Strengthen public transport service and quality:

- Transforming SLRTC as a regulator and planner rather than an operator
- Restructuring private bus operations as formal, regulated cooperatives, with a collective responsibility to provide good quality services
- Eliminate competition "on" the route
- Renewal of bus fleet along project corridors
- Improve financial basis of bus operations and reduce dependence on the budget
- Redefining the operations of okadas and kekeh

*"This Project has the Road Safety Authority highly involved at all stages so far, catering for the safety of road users"*

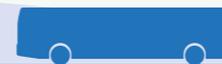
Mr David Panda Noah,  
SLRSA Executive Director



*"It is wonderful to have such a timely transport project that can contribute to decongesting the streets of Freetown and provide sustainable transport for passengers and commuters."*

*We the drivers, other transport workers and members of the union welcome this project."*

Alpha Amadu Bah, President, Motor Drivers and General Transport Workers Union



### Resilient Investments

The communities' resilience will be enhanced through project interventions on the selected corridors by providing a more robust mobility system during rain and flood events. Civil works will focus on improving road conditions, drainage capacity and slope stability.

### Building human capital and institutional capacity

The project focuses on building human capital in government and knowledge institutions, and in the informal sector, in areas such as planning, resilience, private-sector formalization, women's empowerment, and actions against gender-based violence (GBV).



*"The Union strongly believes that this project is in the right direction and will reduce traffic congestion and thereby increase our turnaround time"*

Umaru Talie Bah, President, Sierra Leone Commercial Motor Bike Riders Union

### WHY: THE IMPACT

This transformative project's direct beneficiaries are Western Area's daily public ridership – over 75,000 people, with nearly 40% women – and the 50,000 people who benefit from more resilient roads. This project also supports capacity building within government and of Sierra Leonean younger generation by funding the exchange of local Universities and multiple innovative activities to boost innovation in the transport sector.

### WHAT: APPROACH AND KEY FEATURES

#### Analytical approaches

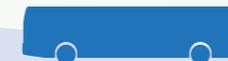
Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, an appreciation of the existing traffic conditions together with the views and opinions of a number of social groups, a detailed diagnostic assessment of the city

transport was developed. The identification and prioritization of investments use results of the state-of-the art city wide spatial analysis to integrate sectoral (education, health, agriculture, tourism), climate change impacts (flooding and landslides) and socio-economic data (poverty, gender, other excluded groups) to identify investments that will boost social and economic inclusion, climate resilience, and the city's competitiveness.

Improvements to the public transport system were appraised through evaluation of formal (SLRTC) and informal (poda-podas, okadas, kekeh) systems. Specific focus was on estimating the likely modal shift from private vehicles to public transport and its impact on reducing congestion as well as greenhouse gas emissions.

*"Decongestion of Freetown is a major boost to our tricycle operations. Movement will be fast, safe and effective than the way it is where pedestrians (vulnerable road users) compete with vehicular traffic a potential for traffic injury."*

Bonor Samba Kamara, President, Sierra Leone Commercial Tricycle Association (SLTCA)



**Key features:**

- **Transit market and terminal at Lumley.** The market component comprises a contemporary market, storage spaces, surface car parking area, and public places of convenience, whilst the terminal component consists of space provisions for vehicles and sheds for passengers, passenger and drivers' rest-stop and a maintenance and car washing bay unit.
- **Pedestrian footbridges.** Busy crossing points along sections of the corridor may require footbridges to move large volumes of pedestrians without signalized crossing.
- **Formalized Okada/Keke stops.** To integrate Okada and Kekeh with the corridor formalized parking areas located at stops will be identified for last mile connectivity.



- **Bus stops.** Enhanced bus stops within laybys to reduce road side friction of boarding and alighting along corridor.
- **Bus only streets.** For very slow section of the corridor with narrow road widths (especially in the city center) public transport only road may be recommended.
- **Modern buses.** Providing an enhanced travel experience.
- **Resilient investments.** Climate resilient roads and drainage.
- **Innovation** in collaboration with the Directorate of Science Technology and Innovation of the Office of the President.



*"Construction of a new market for traders is a laudable venture as it will complement the effort of government. The project will reduce congestion and thereby increase turnaround time for our business"*

Mariama Koroma, Deputy Secretary General, Sierra Leone Traders Union

*"I am very happy for the project as it will ease traffic congestion and also facilitate trade."*

Abibatu Sesay, Petty Trader, Lumley Market



## HOW: WHAT WILL IT TAKE

- Support for reforms at the highest political level
- A technical well incentivized team of professionals
- A formal institutionalized basis to coordinate across multiple agencies
- Willingness on part of private sector bus associations/operators/drivers to be a part of the reform program
- Ability to transform SLRTC into a planner-regulator
- Effective land use controls and management of road space

*"Urban mobility has become a severe challenge over decades in the city of Freetown, significantly increasing journey time. This challenge has been attributed to poor urban planning, limited road space, unregulated utilization of road space, poor road system and significant proportion of low occupancy vehicles in urban transport."*

*The implementation of SLIRUMP will focus on initiatives that will contribute to addressing the challenge with the objective of improving urban mobility in selected pilot corridors. One ultimately looks forward to an efficient robust modernized public transport system that would attract more users and limit the use of private vehicles in the city."*

Ing. Akindele Beckley, Head of Technical Support Unit for IRUMP



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