The political economy of an urban megaproject: Bus Rapid Transit in Tanzania
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Transport chaos and BRT as the solution
BRTs: Background and definition

• Their growth:
  2007: 40 BRT in the world
  2014: 180

• What is a BRT?
  “Think rail, (speed, reliability & mass ridership)
  see bus!” (flexibility, much lower costs)

• BRT as the PPP in public transport
BRT and investment in infrastructure
Questioning “win-win” narratives on BRTs

1. How a plan reflecting particular interest is packaged as “the common good”
   • Vested interested behind this narrative

2. Distortion of policy goals: BRT silence on employment impact and domestic ownership

3. How DART is met and resisted by local interests in Dar es Salaam
Political economy of BRT, and threats/opportunities for pre-existing actors?

- Context matters

- RESEARCH QUESTIONS
  - Who captures its long-term (guaranteed) revenue?
  - Who are the actors?
  - On what power do they draw?
  - Pre-existing institutions
  - Political status quo
  - Impact of BRT on political status quo
The BRT evangelical society

- The World Bank
  - International finance
- ITDP/Embarq
  - International finance
- Volvo
- “Propaganda like” evidence base behind BRT promotion
  - Bogota as a win-win story
The rationale and ideology (and silences) of DART

• Selling a “package” as the only (trouble free) solution

• Silences:
  – Fares tend to increase considerably
  – Quality levels not always up
  – Ownership of new bus companies tends to become concentrated in few hands
    • Foreign vs domestic ownership
  – Job losses and anti-union practices by BRT operators
  – Balance of power between private service provider and public regulator unbalanced
  – BRT = Public debt for private profit?
    • Two/three private companies to operate public transport with “invisible” subsidy from the public sector
  – Are there other solutions to public transport problems?
What causes DSM transport chaos?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Number of vehicles</th>
<th>Average Distance Travelled</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of person-trips per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dala Dalas</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>10 km</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking (&gt;500m)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 km</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>1,250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger Cars</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>15 km</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>5 km</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycles</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>10 km</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>337,000</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LOGIT Study for DART, 2006; updated by Schelling (2010)
The traffic jam is caused mainly by the 120,000 (and rapidly increasing) passenger cars which actually satisfy only 10% of transport demand.
The politics of BRT in Dar es Salaam, 2002-2015

- Political economy of slow implementation of DART
  - 2002 Projected completion of phase I: 2005
  - Then in 2008, then in 2010, 2012, end of 2015?
How BRT came to Dar

- 2002 – The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) drafts a bus rapid transit proposal with the Dar es Salaam City Council, predicting it will be Africa’s first bus rapid transit system
- Key features
  - 290m+ from World Bank
  - Phasing minibuses out of public transport
  - State of the art 150 seater bendy buses in
Causes of delay with BRT implementation

1. Proximate causes

2. Deeper causes
Proximate causes of delay with BRT implementation

The politics of urban land

2004-5: DART moved from CITY council to PMO.

Implications:

1. The battle for UBUNGO station and its revenue

2. Resistance over expropriation/compensation
   1. Delays in demolitions

• Silent boycott of public administration towards BRT
Deeper cause of delay with BRT

• All the previous constraints could be solved with high-level support/Political Will
• Deeper roots behind lack of support by the government
  – DART lack of attention to
    – Employment
    – Tanzanian transport investors (minibus owners)
• Tanzania president’s
  – Public concerns about employment
  – Proximity to bus owners?
  – National vs foreign politics in Tanzania
BRT “made in Tanzania”

• DART lack of thoughts on local investors
  Bus owners’ request for public support to access finance
  vs
  WB’s opposition to the idea

• The ‘re-birth’ of the UDA (formerly the urban public transport company) ...
  ... and its contribution/challenge to DART

• Stailmate April 2015: 90 percent of the construction ready and no DART buses ordered
BRT “made in Tanzania”

• A senior official in the Prime Minister’s office:
  – DART is “contending with two forces: one preferring foreign operators and another rooting for local transporters”.

• Interim compromise
  – Minibus owners to subcontract from UDA as BRT operators
CONCLUSION

1. How a plan reflecting particular interest is packaged as “the common good”
   – Learning from a context
2. Distortion of policy goals: BRT silence on employment and domestic ownership of public transport
   – Domestic politics of BRT
     • Nationalism vs foreign interests
3. How DART is met and resisted by a range of local actors
4. BRT as an opportunity?

The political economy of an urban megaproject: The Bus RapidTransport Project in Tanzania’, African Affairs, 2015,
• http://afraf.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2014/12/22/afraf.adu084.full.pdf +html