



PANEL 1: IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE ORGANIZATION OF URBAN TRANSPORTATION

Facilitator : Yves CABANNES

Panelists :

- **Mr. Bouba-Dalambaye**, Municipal Councillor, Vice President of the Transport Commission of Cocody Municipality and member of the strategic council of the Urban Mobility Authority in Greater Abidjan (AMUGA);
- **Mrs. Assemian Blanche Auxence**, General Manager of Labell Transport ;
- **Mr. Ibrahima Amadou Niangue**, from the Mauritanian Association of Southern Municipalities, National Coordinator and Project Manager ;
- **Mr. Diaby Ibrahim**, Director General of the High Council of the Board of Road Transport Companies of Côte d'Ivoire.

After the presentations of the panellists, the facilitator outlined the main topics to be discussed, divided into two discussions points.

- ✓ Impact of the COVID pandemic
- ✓ Covid and Reorganization of urban transportation and soft mobility

After presenting the related discussions points, the floor was given to the different panelists.

The first intervention was that of Bouba-Dalambaye who recalled the negative impact of the pandemic on the inter-communal transport sector through the restrictions measures adopted. These measures have reduced the availability of transportation means and resulted in job losses.

In the second presentation, Mr. Diaby Ibrahim recalled the reforms initiated by the Ivorian government in response to the health crisis. These include the distancing measures in public transport vehicles, the isolation of the city of Abidjan from other localities and the immobilization of the fleet for four months. This resulted in a loss of earnings economically.

During her presentation, Mrs. Assemian Blanche Auxcence pointed out the various negative impacts of the health crisis on the functioning of her transportation company. These impacts are related to the reduction of her income linked to the limitation of the number of passengers in buses, to the purchase of equipment to fight against the Covid pandemic and to ensure payment of her obligatory commitments. This situation led to additional expenses related to the deterioration of the rolling stock due to their downtime period causing partial unemployment to some workers.

The last speaker, Ibrahima Niangue, shared the opinions of the preceding speakers on the negative impacts of Covid-19 in Mauritania. He also noted that over time, the closure of borders and state restrictions led to the development of a parallel transport business. This is due to the numerous harassments in the verification of compliance with barrier measures.

The second round of discussions focused on the impact of Covid-19 in the transportation of goods.

All the panelists acknowledged that the supply of foodstuffs to urban markets has also been affected by the health crisis. This resulted in an increase in the cost of foodstuffs. On the other hand, restaurants have been closed and oil marketing network has been disrupted.

Mr Niangue also stressed that the health crisis has triggered an awareness from the Mauritanian authorities to consider food self-sufficiency in urban projects.

These interventions led to discussions with participants while paving the way for some recommendations including ;

- 1- Development of a strategic plan that integrates all transportation means, including trains and vessels;
- 2- Development of soft mobility by promoting the use of bicycles through the construction and creation of bicycle lanes ;
- 3- Development of water transportation in order to limit greenhouse gas emissions caused by traffic jams;
- 4- Fight against the circulation of cars polluting the atmosphere;
- 5- Enhancement of the "green belt", development of urban agriculture for the populations food self-sufficiency;
- 6- Promotion of tele-working as a means of reducing CO2 production.