



REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP ON “GREATER CAIRO CASE STUDY ON TRENDS AND PROSPECTS OF URBAN MOBILITY”

The 9 of July 2009, Cairo University in Gizah.

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Blue Plan
Regional Activity center

Marseilles
August 2009

Report of the workshop on “Greater Cairo case study on trends and prospects of urban mobility”

The 9 of July 2009, Cairo University in Giza.

The purpose of the workshop was to present the case study on trends and prospects of urban transit in Greater Cairo and to hold discussions with local stakeholders on the items presented.

The said study was conducted by a panel of experts from DRTPC, coordinated by Dr. Ali Husayyin on behalf of Plan Bleu, with AFD support.

I- Proceedings

The workshop was organised on 9 July 2009 at the offices of DRTPC, located at Cairo University in Giza.

The workshop started at 9H30 with a word of welcome by Ali Husayyin. Then, the proceedings were opened with introductory remarks by Mrs. Mona Kamal, Director of Statistics at the Ministry for the Environment, Plan Bleu focal point in Egypt.

After which, Sylvain Houpin, “Cities” Task Manager, introduced Plan Bleu, its overall activities and its “Urban Transit” Programme, involving in 2008-2009 six case studies: cities of Istanbul, Tunis, Aleppo, Cairo, Algiers and Tangiers (in chronological order of implementation). It was pointed out that the outcomes of this programme will be discussed during a seminar which will bring together the various experts involved and due to take place in late November 2009. The topics and issues of this program were presented, and particularly illustrated with a few photos of Cairo, showing the various urban forms observed.

Following this introductory session, the DRTPC team presented the results of the study, proceeding by topic sequences. It was agreed to keep the question & answer session on the results to the afternoon. This report is not so much a record of the content of the presentations as it is an attempt to highlight a few items that received particular emphasis.

Within a first phase, the discussion was engaged directly with the floor, then Xavier Godard, Plan Bleu transport expert from CODATU, offered a wrap-up of the main stakes of the case study and the comments put forward by the attendees, before opening it up again for another round of interventions from the floor.

The workshop was concluded by Ali Husayyin and Sylvain Houpin.

II- Participation

The workshop was attended by around forty participants from various institutions concerned with transport in Cairo, in addition to a few students and teachers. Most of the participants, though, were from EEAA, a fairly recent institution. Among the Egyptian institutions attending, it is worth mentioning the following:

- EEAA (Egyptian Environment Affairs Agency),
- Ministry of Transport,
- Governorate of Cairo,
- CTA (Cairo Transit Authority),
- Traffic Police Department (Governorate of Cairo).

Also attending:

- The Economic Service of the Embassy of France,
- SYSTRA (which conducts the study of Line 3 of the Metro, Phase 3).

AFD (French Development Agency), which is actually the financing agency of this case study, had intended to attend the workshop, but sent apologies at the last moment.

Thus, the participation was good, without being excessive. The discussions proved to be useful and interesting, though perhaps limited by the length of the presentations and their academic character at times. The proactive involvement of the DRTPC teams in facilitating the workshop has led to giving precedence to a presentation of the works over an open discussion.

III- Key messages of the case study

1- Objectives and methodology, (Ali Husayyin): While Alexandria (initially identified as a case study) is a Mediterranean city, can the same be said of Cairo? What boundaries to apply to Cairo, or to Greater Cairo? Several difficulties arise from the differences between the administrative boundaries and the urban areas of transit. As regards data, it was elected to use only published data. The endeavour to homogenize the data rested on the transit surveys of 1971, 1978, 1987, 1998 and 2001. It is worth pointing out that some are home-based household surveys and others are site surveys.

2- Historical overview of the origins of Cairo (Ali Husayyin): This allows some detachment from the immediate challenges.

3- Urban evolution of Cairo (El Sherbini, team member; also scientific cooperation attaché at the Embassy of Egypt in Paris): The study focused on demographic evolution (growth rate on the decrease), as well as on jobs and students, which are transit structuring factors. It approached the evolution of density—which remains quite significant on the whole—based on a study that considers the type of quarters/areas, thus distinguishing between density-alleviation quarters and peri-central densification quarters. The policy conducted applies the following options: displace and transfer (housing, activities), replace and build (informal housing), develop and strengthen (new economic activities).

The New Cities Policy was inceptioned in the 1970s. It had to contend with several obstacles:

- Lack of services for the low-income population,
- Insufficient housing for the middle classes,
- Lack of an observatory system.

4- Evolution of the transport system (Ali Husayyin): The survey data must be used with care, as the objectives set for each survey were of a different nature, and so were the methodological options (zoning, period of the day, typology of modes . . .). One notices an increase in transit, together with a drop in bus modal share, coupled with a sharp rise of minibuses (shared taxis). The metro holds a significant share, estimated as 17% of the total transit in 2001. Walking remains significant, often neglected, by town planners. The absence of cycling is due to several factors, of which a negative social image.

In the final assessment, a few positive elements must be highlighted. Besides the metro, it is worth mentioning the road infrastructures (raised fast lanes) and other various developments which have eased car traffic, without however reducing congestion. In relation to the latter aspect, there is a paucity of data to qualify this congestion. The modal share of the private car has risen in line with changing policies, especially those of liberalisation of imports and development of Egyptian car industry (18 car manufacturers at present!).

5- Impacts on energy and the environment (Salem Hindawi): Cairo data are reported in relation to the indicators of energy and fuel consumption, as well as GHG emissions, on national level (country-wide). Total emissions per capita are of 2.1 T CO₂/year on average, which is low on global scale. Greater Cairo accounts for 55% of the emissions of the Egyptian transport sector. The calculations were based on a typology of vehicles, modal split, annual mileage and emission factors, which still need to be fine-tuned in actual conditions. It is particularly noted that the metro accounts for as little as 4% of the energy consumed by Cairo transport, while it accounts for 17% of the total transit (in 2001). The Cairo transport CO₂ emissions are estimated as 7.2 MT/year in 2001, that is, around 0.64 T/inhabitant.

6- Impact of the metro (Ali Husayyin): The rationale for a metro depends on the size of a city. While it may not be a priority in a million-strong city, it appears as a necessity in such a megalopolis as Cairo, with environmental impacts being a core component of their rationale. This is an opportunity to put forward the magic equation, an adaptation of the, by now, classic figures presenting the area and the number of vehicles necessary for the transport of 1000 people: one train, 50 (mini)buses, 1000 cars . . . Comparisons of the performance of the metro with that of the other modes are eloquent in terms of energy consumption or of CO₂ emissions per passenger-km. Besides, a comparison of fuel costs with the subsidies granted to the metro would highlight the usefulness of the latter for the community.

7- GHG emissions reduction policies and Bottomline on policy orientations: Stick to a solution that works! (Ali Husayyin): A table sums up the evolution of the key indicators for the five baseline years:

- Population,
- Transit rate,
- Fuel consumption,
- CO₂ emissions,
- Local pollution.

Policy orientations must distinguish long term actions (area planning) from medium term actions (transfer of activities, transport actions). A few recommendations have a bearing on this:

- pursue the planned decentralisation of activities and of housing,
- prevent the expansion of informal housing,
- step up awareness-building among the players and enlist the contribution of NGOs,
- improve the services provided in the new cities, while making them accessible to all social groups,
- be patient with new cities in a society whose mindset is still rural,
- urge the government to strongly engage in metro extension,
- promote modal shift from the car to the metro,
- boost the contracting of bus operators,
- pursue the rejuvenation of the vehicle fleet (extending the programmes to private cars),
- Conversion of taxis to CNG, with awareness-raising actions.

In fine, it is advisable to promote South-South or South-North-South exchange of experience and cooperation, where the North countries can play a catalyst role. Besides, it is important to boost research (particularly in adapted modelling), while recalling that transport is but an intermediary item in urban systems.

IV- Question & answer

The discussion following these presentations addressed the following issues:

- This work is presented as a research activity, less constraining than consultant work. However, is it not important to be operational instead of doing theoretical research? Actually, the applied dimensions are there, but the study objective was not to propose actions.
- The transit survey of 2009 will offer an updating of the transit data, but it must be observed that it is not a household survey per se and that its objective is focused on the design of Line 3 of the metro.
- The new cities were initially intended to be designed in such a way as to foster walking and cycling. This is still far from being the case.
- A major action was initiated by EEAA, concerning renewal of the taxi fleet, the latter being quite aged: after a positive pilot phase, the project was extended, with transfer of the management to the Ministry of Finance with support by banks.
- The planning of the new cities has to contend with the housing/jobs balance. Huge industrial zones have been set up, but the employees cannot live on site and have to commute from home to work over long distances.

- Some people call for a metro service to the new “City of 6 October”. Is this cost-effective?
- The traffic (15 000 passengers/hour, instead of 60 000!) would not justify it; besides, there are other investment priorities, knowing that we are in a context of scarce resources. With hindsight, should not the experience of Heliopolis be enlightening as to the usefulness of such public transport services accompanying the development of new urban areas?
- This point has offered the opportunity to highlight broader issues related to the relations of interdependence between Greater Cairo, the new cities and the whole range of more recent operations developing in the remaining recesses, as well as to the relevance of the study zone selected for issues of technical feasibility (availability of data).
- The portion of shared taxis was pointed out with a view to underscoring their significance, as well as the tendency to underestimate them. From the standpoint of the Traffic Police, the policy is to sustain this essential transport type, while keeping control over its operation, so as to ensure that the behaviour of the drivers be compliant with safety and public transport rules.

The intervention of Xavier Godard helped focus on the following aspects:

- Role of small-scale transport (shared taxis): The contribution of this type of transport, though often overlooked, is significant in several cities, not only in the Mediterranean region but also in other regions of the world. The issue in hand is to seek out the means likely to coach this sector towards maximizing its efficiency (and its service quality), as well as minimize its nuisances.
- Growth of the use of the private car: Though its modal share is still being evaluated in Cairo, it tends to be on the increase due to city-dweller aspiration. Is there awareness in the Cairo society about the limitations of the car, such as to develop mechanisms of control over its use?
- Nature of transit data: There is sometimes confusion between routes and transit in the data we are handling; especially with regard to modal split (the share of the metro is lower if we consider the routes). Besides, there is a need to have data on the transit distances, which is important when considering energy consumption. Bus service (employees, students . . .) seems to be significant, though scarcely addressed in the discussions.
- Need to have recent data: The latest data used in the study date back to 2001. This may be justified by a concern for rigorous handling of indicators, but isn't it paradoxical not to have a more recent picture, knowing that, in eight years, the situation has significantly changed?
- Success of the metro but slow implementation: Without questioning the discourse in favour of the metro, isn't there reason enough to qualify it in view of the quite lengthy time period of its development (urbanisation fares faster than the pace of opening up new metro lines)?
- Are the new cities sustainable? While the option to spare farmland by urbanizing new areas reclaimed from the desert is quite in line with sustainable development, one may question the transit plans implied by the urbanization of new cities which seem to induce the use of the car and lengthen the transit distances: schemes not in line with sustainable transit?
- Need for transit monitoring processes: How to support an observatory mechanism seeking to compile and update the various data on the transport supply and on transit?

- Intervention mechanism within the framework of GEF and FFEM (FGEF): It is worth mentioning two major programmes which are set to address to a large extent such issues of sustainable transit: namely the sustainable transport programme in Egypt, financed by GEF (Global Environment Facility) due to be implemented, and the sustainable urban transport programme in Cairo, whose financing has recently been decided by FFEM (French Global Environment Facility).

V- Conclusions

Besides the conclusions already made by A. Husayyin at the end of his presentation, Sylvain Houpin restated some of the items raised during the discussions:

➤ **Town planning**

S. Houpin noted a basic difference of approach between operational practices in Europe (though with several local specificities) and in Egypt:

- There is, on the one hand, a tendency to grant priority to public areas structuring the spatial planning (concept of street, multi-functional public space, by contrast with a mere mono-functional street. The construction belongs in an outline established from a public space perspective);
- While, on the other hand, there is a tendency to grant priority to a functional distribution of the areas to be constructed according to a plot logic, thus granting priority to the operational rationale of planners and developers to the detriment of public spaces and community utilities. (The street must service a constructed area. It is defined mainly in terms of its size to service an expected flow.)

This may well be one of the elements explaining the difficulty of addressing such soft transit modes as cycling or walking in town planning, or even envisioning bus stops that do not block the traffic . . .

➤ **Financing the transport supply**

Emphasis was placed on the challenge of a quantitative evaluation of the impacts of the transport sector particularly in terms of GHG emissions and, more broadly, of an environmental impact assessment of public policies. The financing mechanisms provided under carbon emissions markets may offer new opportunities with regard to the financing of projects.

In this respect, the works presented have actually underscored the need to refine knowledge about congestion (average speed, travel time . . .) and other environmental costs of transport systems. They have also highlighted the necessity to conduct exchange of views among experts in relation to these issues, and more particularly on methodological aspects.

➤ **The cross-cutting nature of the study methodology selected**

The proceedings highlighted a real satisfaction among the participants as to the cross-cutting nature of the works presented and the discussions held: joint approach by transport/ town planning/ energy experts, as well as diversity of the attendees. Several participants expressed the wish to see this experience pursued in coming works.

The seminar scheduled by Plan Bleu for November 2009 should help pursue these reflections and the cross-cutting exchanges, while broadening the scope of discussions based on the six case studies.

The workshop was concluded at 16H30 by A. Husayyin and S Houpin.

5 - List of participants

See attached document.