

January 2025

Quarterly Boda Report



lubyanza (n); a boda rider without a stage.

More than 30 years have passed of motorcycle boda bodas in Kampala. With this, our 11th edition, we take a peek at the other side of the bench seat to understand the passenger perspective. We also take a look at an upcoming way to experience the anarchy, joy and utility that is boda bodas - the Boda Boda Board Game 🎲.



65%
of police
stops involve
money



90%
of payments
to police are
untraceable



38%
of trips in
Kampala are by
boda boda

How Riders Get Drivers Licenses

Around 15% of riders have licenses, and four out of five riders have never gotten one.

Our View: The process is complex and costly, usually taking several weeks and over 400,000 - yet they are only taking home around 10 - 20k a day. Kampala could learn from Bangkok on this.

	Kampala	Bangkok
Three-year license	\$35.4	\$4.6
Daily earnings	\$3-5	\$5.7
Workdays to pay for license	6-10	<1
% with license	15%	85%



The Boda Boda Board Game

After two years in development, the word is out! We're making The Boda Boda Board Game.

In the Boda Boda Board Game, you look to succeed in life by building a home, getting married, and visiting landmarks around the city. Along the way, you make money, avoid (or get into) accidents, get arrested, deal with crackdowns, and much more.

Join the waitlist [here!](#)

The Passenger Perspective: A Special Report

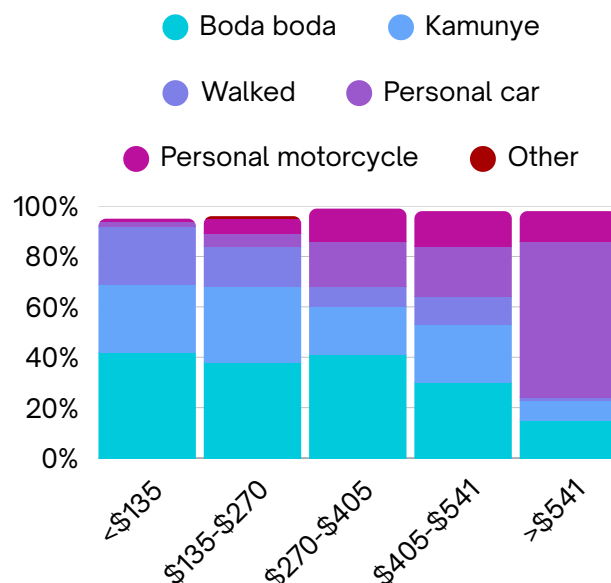
With generous support from VREF and WRI through the Lee Schipper Memorial Scholarship, we carried out a survey on passenger perspectives: how and why they use boda bodas.

How BanaKampala Use Bodas

Boda bodas are now the most popular mode of transport in Kampala, making up **38% of trips** in Kampala. Kamunyes (minibuses) and walking take up 25% and 16% of trips respectively.

As people get wealthier, they move to cars - very quickly. Most trips by people earning over 2 M (\$541) are by car.

Our view: People take bodas for their speed, to avoid the jam of kamunyes. But when they get money, they want to get in a car, to enjoy the comfort even if it takes two hours, and be seen to have made it.



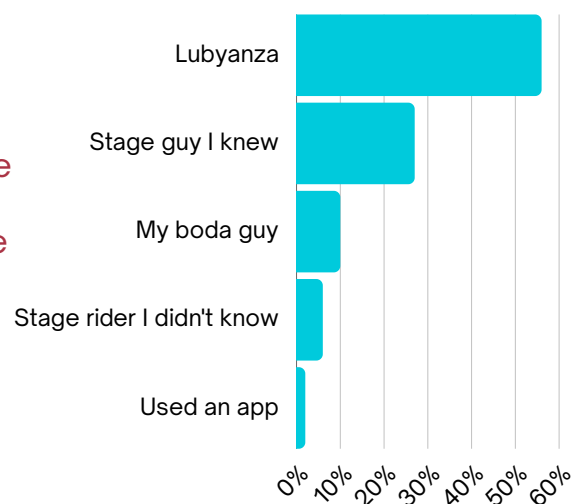
Modal share (transportation type) across monthly earnings in Kampala.

How People Take Bodas

Stages are often hailed as the lifeblood of the boda boda sector. Boda riders were beaten or arrested if they didn't have stages. Stageless *lubyanzas* are called thieves and criminals, and are told they are holding the industry back.

But - passengers are picking *lubyanzas* for more than half of their trips. During the evening peak, it's as high as two-thirds of trips. Only during the night do passengers prefer taking stage guys. Wealthier passengers and women are more likely to use their boda guy than low-income residents and men, but still prefer *lubyanzas*.

Our view: This data - which couldn't be found for any other city globally - seems to indicate a very high preference for convenience, and the desire to save money.





Saying Goodbye

Kalungi James

I joined the boda industry in 2018, but I gained a much deeper understanding through Lubyanza. The research opened my eyes to the harsh realities of the job - the risks of accidents, low earnings, and other challenges. But it also showed me the resilience and determination of the drivers and stakeholders I worked with.

This newfound understanding sparked a desire in me to upgrade to the next level and explore better opportunities. That's when I transitioned into the special hire business in April last year. It's been a challenging but rewarding journey, and I owe a significant part of my success to the skills and confidence I developed while working with Lubyanza. As I bid farewell to Lubyanza, I want to express my deepest gratitude to the team for the opportunity to be part of this incredible group. Thank you for being part of my journey.



Drivers Licenses Still Too Expensive

Geoffrey Ndhogezi

Boda riders defy the requirement to get the Class A driving license. Those who have ever got the license rarely renew. Many of those who have valid driving licenses take illegitimate procedures to acquire the licenses, and have not been trained. And there are those who chose to get the Class B driving license which is for cars, yet they continue to be boda riders. The most common argument among boda riders is that the Class A driving license is unnecessarily expensive (140k / \$38 for both learners permit and one year license in the most recent rates) and the process is complicated. While this is cheaper than the 195k / \$52 it was before being recently reduced, it's still ten times more than in Bangkok, where over three-quarters of boda bodas have their licenses.



5,600

Bodas
observed



336

Riders
interviewed



8

Divisions of
the GKMA

The report was designed by Tom Courtright with input from Kalungi James, Geoffrey Ndhogezi, Dr. Paul Mukwaya, and Peter Kasaija. It was carried out from January 1-28 by Geoffrey and Kalungi. You can download all past reports [here](#).

Interested in sponsoring a report? Reach out to tomrcourtright@gmail.com.