

# Maximise project success with data-driven decisions



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## Introduction

# Boosting project performance with accurate mobility and location data

Understanding the status quo is crucial when implementing change. Launching something new involves risk, and grounding decisions in up-to-date, accurate facts ensures due diligence and the best possible project start. In emerging markets in particular, risks are multiplied when stakeholders are unable to make informed decisions. These risks include damage to reputation, financial losses and increased costs, missed opportunities, and poor overall business results. Without a central source of mobility and location data, any available data is often incomplete, unreliable, and inaccurate. As such, many projects are planned with missing information. As Yohnny Raich, Head of Data Strategy, WhereIsMyTransport emphasises, “when you’re only looking at 10–15% of the network, you’re only able to plan and make decisions with 10–15% of the information.”

There are many sectors in emerging markets that have a significant impact on the dynamics of a city, where data is either lacking or entirely unavailable.

The ability to analyse data from these critical sectors improves operations and strategy, helping organisations looking to conduct analysis and plan projects that require the full picture. WhereIsMyTransport helps fill critical data gaps in emerging markets, where anything from 30% to 90% of transport network data, and up to 90% of Point of Interest (POI) data is missing from other providers. Additionally, over 60% of our Real-Time Alerts relate to informal public transport, which most other providers don’t offer data for.

High-quality mobility and location data can ensure this fundamental basis for projects, helping organisations to identify and advance opportunities, empowering those making decisions with precise insights, and helping to deliver better results.

# Three ways mobility and location data can augment your projects





## 1.Understand the existing situation

In emerging economies, public transport runs differently to developed countries. Formal public transport is 10-15% of the public transport network in most emerging markets, the remaining 85% is informal transport. Before WhereIsMyTransport, complete, high-quality data for both formal and informal transport networks was not available from a single source. When armed with a complete data set, complete mobility data that comprises both formal and informal public transport, organisations can understand much more.

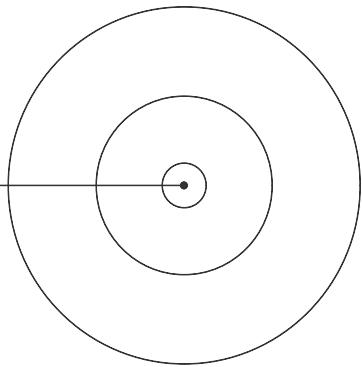
The full picture shows how people get to and from work, what transport modes they use, and which groups have greater limitations that affect their daily routine. In turn, this information can be used to understand public transport accessibility, or how people access different services across the city, for instance. The evaluations and insights gained from the data can help determine action plans. Information on fares—including fares on

informal transport modes—can inform evaluations to better understand the cost of travelling to certain areas, or analyse how a new service could compare to those already available.

Transit Data can also help to understand the impact of past or future projects. [In Sarajevo, for example, WSP used WhereIsMyTransport's Transit Data to inform a cost-benefit analysis](#), which supported an evaluation of how to improve the city's public transport in a cost-effective way. With data that shows just how people navigate public transport, organisations can understand how new modes of transport would impact a city.

**"The better the information we have about how the system operates, the better the risk profile that we can construct for a potential investor."**

Errol Tan, WSP



Yet a city is more than its nodes and POI Data can provide organisations with a better understanding of urban dynamics, of areas of commercial and human activity. Using data from a city's community hubs, organisations learn how people access services, they can examine the levels of activity in different areas and define the underrepresented economic areas. How can this help? [MIT researchers](#) found that in China, restaurant data can be used in combination with other available data to predict the socioeconomic attributes of neighbourhoods, such as daytime or nighttime populations, and

neighbourhood demographics. Using POI data to understand economic indicators on a large scale can help foster business decisions, such as selecting business locations.

Finally, Real-Time Alerts allow organisations to identify trends: do disruptions tend to happen at certain times of the day/week/year? Do we have a solution? The analysis of comprehensive, up-to-date data assets is fuel for innovations of the future.

Formal public transport is 10-15% of the public transport network in most emerging markets, the remaining 85% is informal transport.



## 2. Develop projects that make an impact

With an accurate understanding of the ground truth of a city, you can plan effective project strategies that harness genuine opportunities. An improved understanding of current conditions informed by high-quality data helps shape urban and transport planning projects. One example of how our mobility data is helping bridge the data gap in cities that lacked complete mobility data before is our [partnership with the Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative \(TUMI\)](#). Together, we have launched a pioneering data collection project to decode women's mobility experience across Nairobi, Lagos, and Gauteng. The data collected will feed into the TUMI Mobility Hub, an initiative that aims to provide access to quantitative and qualitative mobility data for all cities across the globe and bridge the gender data gap.

Another example of how Transit Data has shaped urban planning is the [case of SDI](#), a network of community-based organisations in 32 countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. With WhereIsMyTransport's mobility data integrated into their OpenReblock platform, the data helped show connectivity between communities and cities, and helped integrate these informal neighbourhoods into urban infrastructure.

As increasingly sombre IPCC reports demonstrate, decarbonisation is an urgent task for all sectors. The transport sector is under increasing pressure to reduce its carbon footprint, and mobility and location data can be used to inform decarbonisation plans. Using mobility data, organisations can inform GHG emissions models to better understand public transport emissions, and the potential impact of retrofitting or electrifying current informal networks. The data can also be used to manage project feasibility, and what resources would be required. Simulation can help define this feasibility, supported by accurate data that shows the current state of affairs

Lastly, location data helps understand centres of activity across communities. With this information, it is possible to prioritise infrastructure improvements, such as installing electric charging stations in the most impactful locations.

In short, a clearer understanding of the local economy can help unveil opportunities in communities, whatever your project entails. In turn, this means informed location investments and maximised impact, powered by high-quality data.

"Mobility data from WhereIsMyTransport contributes to our argument for in-situ upgrading as an alternative to evictions and relocation, and provides a key dimension to the planning process that we could not have sourced from anywhere else, especially so quickly and easily."

Anni Beukes, Data Programme Officer, SDI



### 3. Plan for the future





Modelling helps reduce uncertainty, offering an improved understanding of the potential and opportunities available in high-growth regions. Simulation modelling helps solve real-world challenges in a safe and efficient manner—the chances of success are much higher if tested in advance.

A constant flow of Real-Time Alerts, supported with historical disruption data, provides insights into disruption and incident trends across areas of a city, and can subsequently inform projects that could be affected by them. Global initiative Sustainable Mobility For All (SuM4All)'s 2021 report '[Sustainable Mobility: Policy Making for Data Sharing](#)' confirmed that smartphone penetration in emerging economies offers brand new opportunities. Data from these devices can be used to map both formal and informal transport services in real time, which can be used to help solve urban challenges.

A combination of transit data and a flow of disruption data can be used to understand which areas are frequently affected by specific incidents, making

it possible to prioritise infrastructure improvements in these areas. In Kenya, for instance, [SuM4All used machine learning algorithms to bring real-time data to life](#), helping to prioritise investments that aimed to improve road safety. Generating high-frequency, real-time data on road accidents in Nairobi, the team conducted a series of experiments to test different types of interventions to better understand safety in the Kenyan capital.

The potential impact and use cases of mobility and location data go far beyond transport. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, [researchers developed a Climate Resiliency Dashboard](#), laying flooding data over a campus map of MIT. The ability to understand flood risk has meant that the dashboard informs on building design too, with new buildings designed to be resilient to future weather developments.

While these tools contain a certain level of uncertainty, robustness can be enhanced through continuous modelling and ongoing data collation.

## Case study

# How the World Bank evaluates access to the informal economy in African cities using WhereIsMyTransport's Transit Data





**"Our task teams are able to use [data from WhereIsMyTransport] to provide insights into otherwise opaque markets."**

Steven Rubinyi, World Bank

In several African countries, WhereIsMyTransport's Transit Data is helping the World Bank to inform project evaluations, helping to develop an improved understanding of how people move and access economic opportunities. In Maputo, Mozambique, our mobility data helped inform transport planning evaluations and fuel price subsidy decisions. In Douala and Zanzibar, it helped governments in planning financially viable urban developments, and decisions were made based on an accurate understanding of citizen movement.

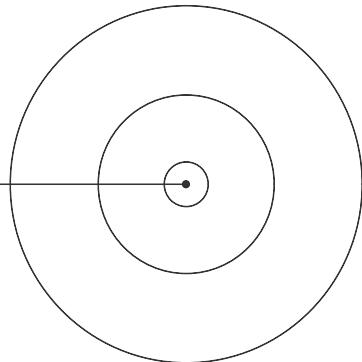
WhereIsMyTransport's mobility data also supported a World Bank report that examined access to job opportunities via public transport. Grounded in data, these measures provide a better understanding of the on-the-ground situation, helping decision-makers to make a positive impact where it is needed the most.

[Visit our website to find out more.](#)

## Conclusion

# The past, the present, and the future





When making the most of data, we analyse and learn from the past, we understand the present, and we confidently predict the future. Historical data helps us to identify trends and repeated incidents, allowing us to positively transform urban areas to benefit citizens. Real-time data and service alerts give us an accurate picture of the current situation, rather than basing the status quo on suppositions. And a holistic data set can be used for modelling, allowing us to forecast the future with relative confidence.

Mobility and location data can be used for a range of solutions, from informing evaluations to urban planning that drives a positive change. When using outdated or incomplete data, organisations risk basing their entire strategies on unfounded truths and assumptions. Strategies based on data insights are more likely to succeed, delivering performance gains and yielding long-term better results.

# About WherelsMyTransport

WherelsMyTransport is an industry-leading technology company and central source of mobility and location data for emerging markets. We produce and maintain an unrivalled Transit Data, Point of Interest (POI) Data, and Real-Time Alerts offering, working in-field in Africa, Latin America, Southeast Europe, and South and Southeast Asia. Our data assets help clients develop new business in high-growth markets.

Contact our experts to learn more about how our data offering can help you deliver impactful projects.

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