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**BUS RAPID TRANSIT NEARLY QUADRUPLES OVER TEN YEARS AS CITIES DISCOVER BENEFITS, COST EFFECTIVENESS OF BRT, EXPERTS SEE A TREND TOWARDS BRT GLOBALLY**

***ITDP Releases New Data on BRT System Growth and Scoring of Gold, Silver, Bronze Corridors, Comprehensive List of BRT Systems Globally***

**New York, NY (November 18, 2014)—**Bus rapid transit has grown by 383 percent in the last ten years, with hundreds of systems in dozens of countries qualifying as true BRT, according to new data released today by the [Institute for Transportation and Development Policy](http://www.itdp.org), and endorsed by Rockefeller Foundation, Barr Foundation, ClimateWorks Foundation, GIZ, ICCT, UNEP, and UN Habitat. Seventy-five percent of all kilometers of BRT in the world were built in the last ten years, primarily in rapidly urbanizing parts of the world such as China, Brazil, and Indonesia, and there has also been substantial growth in the United States and France. While costs vary across nations, BRT capital costs are generally less than ten percent of the cost of metro, and 30-60 percent of the cost of light rail. BRT can also be implemented much more quickly that rail-based transit, allowing systems to be created and expanded quickly to meet ever growing needs.

“Cities around the world are seeing their populations surge, and existing transportation systems are struggling to keep up, resulting in unprecedented congestion and pollution. For developing cities to compete globally, they urgently need high quality public transportation,” says Jacob Mason, Transport Research and Evaluation Manager for ITDP, “Fortunately, governments around the world are increasingly turning to BRT as a cost-effective solution that can be implemented quickly. We’re seeing that when it’s done well, BRT attracts large ridership and can provide similar levels of speed, capacity, and comfort as metro and light rail transit options.”

China is the global leader in BRT, having added 538 kilometers of BRT in the last ten years, dramatically up from only one system of 14 km in 2004. Brazil, spurred the World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, has built 206 kilometers, with nearly the same amount currently in planning. Mexico has built seven high quality BRT corridors in and around Mexico City as well as systems in six other cities, for 222 kilometers of BRT in ten years. Other countries that have seen major growth in BRT include Colombia, whose TransMilenio system inspired new BRT systems around the world. Adding nearly 131 kilometers, Colombia has tripled its amount of BRT in the past ten years. Indonesia opened Transjakarta in 2004, and has since expanded it to be the longest BRT system in the world, at 210 km. Ecuador, India, South Africa, and France have also made major BRT investments, adding 75 km, 95 km, 70 km, and 68 km, respectively, in the last decade.

Even the United States, which has been slow to embrace BRT, added 81 km in six new systems in the last ten years. Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Las Vegas, Eugene, Los Angeles, and San Bernadino all have silver or bronze-standard quality systems, and Chicago, San Francisco, Boston, and Albuquerque have BRT systems in planning.

“As fast as BRT has grown in the last ten years, we fully expect this trend to continue over the next ten years, as more and more cities and countries discover the benefits of BRT, ” says Mason, “China, India, and Central and Southeast Asia all have multiple new systems in development, and we’re really excited about the potential of Africa, the most rapidly urbanizing continent, where work on BRT systems is progressing in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, and Egypt.”

BRT, which was first implemented in Curitiba, Brazil in 1974, has long suffered from poor-quality imitators who call their systems BRT but actually provide fairly simple bus improvements, which are far less likely to produce the quality and service that passengers expect from rapid transit. To more clearly define what is true BRT, in 2012 ITDP released *The BRT Standard*, an evaluation tool based on international best practice, which functions as both a scoring system and a planning tool and provides a framework for system designers, decision makers, and the transport community to identify and implement top-quality BRT systems

Similar to the LEED designation for green buildings, BRT corridors may achieve a basic BRT, bronze, silver or gold designation. A committee of the world’s foremost experts in bus rapid transit design has worked together to fully score 98 corridors in 62 cities using *The BRT Standard*. Of these, 15 are classified as gold, 28 as silver, 41 as bronze, and 6 as “basic” BRT, indicating a minimum of BRT features, but not quite qualifying as best practice. In addition, ITDP has identified 200 additional corridors that preliminarily meet the BRT basics. *The BRT Standard* scores more than 30 elements of BRT corridor design, with points awarded for elements that most significantly improve operational performance. They include:

* **BRT Basics**, e.g. median-aligned busways, dedicated right of way, platform-level boarding, off-board fare collection, and intersection treatments that allow buses to travel more freely through intersections in order to improve speed of transit.
* **Service Planning**, e.g. multiple routes running on the corridor and longer hours of operation to expand access to BRT as an effective mode of transit.
* **Infrastructure**, e.g. passing lanes at stations to increase capacity, high-quality pavement to improve comfort, and minimized bus emissions to reduce environmental impacts.
* **Station Design**, e.g. wide, weather-protected stations that are more attractive and comfortable to commuters, and multiple doors on buses for faster boarding.
* **Quality of Information**, e.g. cohesive branding and real-time passenger information to enhance BRT system recognition and ease of use.
* **Integration and Access**, e.g. disability access, integration with other public transport, and bicycle-sharing integration to increase overall usability.

For complete scorecards and a breakdown of categories, visit [brtstandard.org](http://www.brtstandard.org/).

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The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) is a global nonprofit that helps cities design and implement high-quality transit systems to make communities more livable, competitive and sustainable. ITDP works with cities worldwide to bring about transport solutions that cut greenhouse gas emissions, reduce poverty, and improve the quality of urban life. Please visit [www.itdp.org](http://www.itdp.org) for more information.