World Port Sustainability Program

Centralized access: Zongo Parking and Zongo Hangar

1. General information

Seaport	Port Autonome de Cotonou
Country	Benin
Project title	Centralized access: Zongo Parking and Zongo Hangar
Responsible department	Direction des Infrastructures
WPSP theme	Community building

2. Introduction

For several years, trucks travelling to and from the Port of Cotonou have congested the city's main roads and the port's immediate surroundings. Long queues placed pressure on urban mobility, contributed to air pollution, created road-safety risks and left drivers waiting for hours, and sometimes days, without suitable rest areas or basic services. As the main maritime gateway of Benin and a critical node for regional logistics, the Port Autonome de Cotonou recognized that a structural infrastructure solution was needed to improve port access, optimize truck flows, reduce pressure on the city and enhance the working conditions of truck drivers.

The Centralized Access, Zongo Parking and Zongo Hangar Project responds to this challenge through an integrated solution. It separates port-related truck flows from urban traffic, creates a dedicated buffer parking facility, introduces digital flow management and provides a dignified service area for drivers. The project reflects a simple but powerful vision: a high-performing port is also a human-centered port.

3. Description of the project

The project is designed as a coherent system combining infrastructure, digitalization and social support. Rather than treating truck parking as an isolated operational issue, the Port of Cotonou has developed an integrated port-city interface that improves logistics efficiency while directly addressing the needs of the people who keep the supply chain moving.

Component	Role	Key features
Centralized access	Creates a single, secure and controlled entry point to the port.	Dedicated roadway separating urban traffic from port traffic; automation and digitalized access management.
Zongo Parking	Provides truck holding capacity outside the congested urban-port interface.	13-hectare buffer parking facility with capacity for 750 trucks; up to 2,500 trucks/day through three rotations, representing approximately 5,000 users/day.
Hangar Zongo	Provides the social and human-centered component of the system.	1-hectare service facility for up to 750 users, offering rest areas, catering, sanitary facilities, real-time information screens, a first-aid infirmary and green spaces.

Digitalization and operational management

Digitalization is a core enabler of the project. The main process, referred to as “Centralized Access Management to the Port”, is structured around three operational sub-processes: obtaining the truck PassPort, managing appointments, and controlling access while monitoring trucks. This framework is intended to improve transparency, reduce operational bottlenecks and provide better real-time management of logistics flows.

Several systems are already operational, including AccessPlus for selected access sub-processes, GUCE, TOS, SyGFr, PGOP, Customs Webb, the BESC management application and MMTE. SIGOP, PMS and GOS are being implemented and are expected to integrate with the wider digital ecosystem by the end of 2026. This phased approach allows the project to deliver early operational benefits while continuing to strengthen the full digital architecture.

Original and innovative character of the project

The project is innovative because it transforms a recurring port access and urban congestion problem into an integrated infrastructure solution combining centralized access, buffer parking, digital flow management and driver facilities. It combines a logistics modernization project with a social infrastructure project and a digital truck-flow management system. This makes the Zongo initiative a practical example of how port infrastructure can be designed around both operational efficiency and human dignity.

- It links infrastructure, digitalization and driver well-being in one integrated solution.
- It transforms truck waiting time into a managed, safer and more dignified experience for drivers.
- It improves the port-city interface by moving truck queues away from urban arteries and separating port traffic from city traffic.
- It introduces real-time information and transparent digital processes to support more predictable logistics operations.

4. Vision and leadership deployed by the port’s management

The project demonstrates the leadership of the Port Autonome de Cotonou in aligning major infrastructure modernization with social responsibility. It forms part of the wider modernization works of the port and illustrates the port authority’s ability to address operational, social and urban challenges through a single strategic response.

By positioning Hangar Zongo as the social component of the centralized access and buffer parking system, the PAC shows that logistics performance and the well-being of port users are mutually reinforcing. The project also reflects the values of the PAC’s sustainability approach, particularly responsibility, cooperation, innovation and respect for the people working in and around the port ecosystem.

5. Contribution to sustainability and the UN SDGs

The project contributes directly to several Sustainable Development Goals:

- **SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being:** First-aid infirmary, improved sanitary conditions, safer waiting areas, and better overall conditions for truck drivers, including access to free meals for trucks entering the parking facility, with catering services offering both traditional and modern food options.
- **SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth:** Improved working and waiting conditions for drivers and support for more efficient port logistics, including on-site services such as catering, fuel supply and mechanical support, helping drivers save time and reduce unnecessary movements outside the parking area.
- **SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:** Modernized port access, 13-hectare buffer parking infrastructure and digitalized truck-flow management.
- **SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Reduction of truck congestion in the city, better separation of urban and port traffic, and an improved city-port interface. By providing key services directly within the parking area, the project also helps reduce truck movements towards urban fuel stations and service points.
- **SDG 13 - Climate Action:** Expected reduction of emissions linked to truck queues, idling and unnecessary urban detours, supported by more fluid and better organized truck movements.

6. Engagement of societal and commercial stakeholders

The project was developed with attention to the needs of the logistics community and, in particular, truck drivers and transport operators. The initiative responds to long-standing concerns regarding waiting conditions, access to basic services and the lack of appropriate rest facilities.

Stakeholder engagement has included the environmental and social impact assessment process and meetings with transporters to present the project. The initiative also benefits from the involvement of the City Council of Cotonou, which recognizes the project's contribution to improved traffic circulation and a more constructive city-port relationship.

Relevant stakeholders include truck drivers, transport operators, port operators, the Port Infrastructure Department, the Port Information System Department, the City Council of Cotonou, customs and logistics stakeholders, ANaTT, Benin Control and the wider port community.

7. Results

The project has already moved beyond the concept stage. The Zongo Parking Facility is completed, Hangar Zongo is approximately 80% completed and has started operations, and the centralized access component is being implemented.

Early operational feedback already indicates a visible improvement in truck organization around the port. The main road is reported to be significantly less congested by trucks, around 600 trucks are already being accommodated in direct parking, and initial feedback from truck drivers is positive.

At this stage, the key results and expected impacts include:

- Creation of a 13-hectare Zongo Parking Facility with capacity for 750 trucks.
- Current use of the parking facility by around 600 trucks in direct parking.
- Ability to manage up to approximately 2,500 trucks per day through rotations, corresponding to around 5,000 users per day.
- Creation of a 1-hectare Hangar Zongo facility with capacity for up to 750 users.
- Improved access to rest, catering, sanitation, information and first-aid services for truck drivers.
- Visible reduction of truck presence on the main roadway and improved organization of waiting areas.
- Improved coordination of truck flows through centralized access and digital processes.
- Positive feedback from truck drivers and transport operators, who recognize that their concerns have been taken into account.
- Expected reduction of road-safety risks, air pollution and nuisance related to unmanaged truck queues and waiting areas.

Environmental measures

Environmental performance has been integrated into the design of the facility. Hangar Zongo includes a wastewater treatment plant, enabling treated water to be reused for the maintenance of green spaces. The project also supports vegetation, waste-management measures and the expected reduction of emissions associated with long truck queues and idling. These features strengthen the environmental dimension of an infrastructure project designed to improve both port performance and the city-port interface.

8. Contact information

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