

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ELECTRIC PUBLIC TAXIS FOR KAMPALA

A concept proposal for privately operated, publicly regulated electric 14-seater taxis, with a rider app and a fleet data platform.



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eTaxi is a concept for electric 14-seater taxis in Kampala, privately financed and operated under public regulation. Nothing is operating, no company is registered and no funding has been raised. All figures are indicative and this is not an offer of securities.

The problem

Kampala moves mainly on privately owned 14-seater taxis with no fixed routes, timetables or published fares. On 24 August 2026 the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Uganda Police Traffic Directorate began a 100-day crackdown on taxis in dangerous mechanical condition. By 2 October 477 had been seized, 69 repaired and passed the fitness test, and 408 were still grounded.^[1] By 15 October, 423 of the 531 taxis tested at the government centres had failed.^[2] The test is condition, not age: no age cap or 14-seater ban was found.^[3] Fares rose, for example from UGX 1,000 to UGX 2,000 from Kasubi to the city.^[4] Operators say replacements are dear and affordable renewal is unavailable;^[5] the research behind this proposal found no scrappage or fleet-renewal loan scheme. Kampala's 2025 fine-particle level, 44.2 micrograms per cubic metre, was far above the World Health Organization guideline of 5.^[6]

The proposal

An operating company, in which existing taxi owners and associations can hold shares or lease vehicles, would run electric 14-seaters on fixed routes from existing stages. The fare would be shown before boarding, payment would be by mobile money, and riders would press a stop-request button called Masaawo. A rider app would show live arrival times. The word privatisation here means structured private delivery under public regulation, since the sector is already privately owned but informal. State-backed electric buses, which began service in May 2026, serve trunk corridors;^[7] eTaxis would serve feeder and cross-town routes and give condemned 14-seaters a renewal path. Franchises would be awarded by the regulator for fixed terms, with fare bands and service standards. Drivers and conductors of surrendered vehicles would get priority for training and roles, and associations would sit on a consultation board. Pay-as-you-drive leasing would let owners join without paying the full vehicle price upfront.

Why now

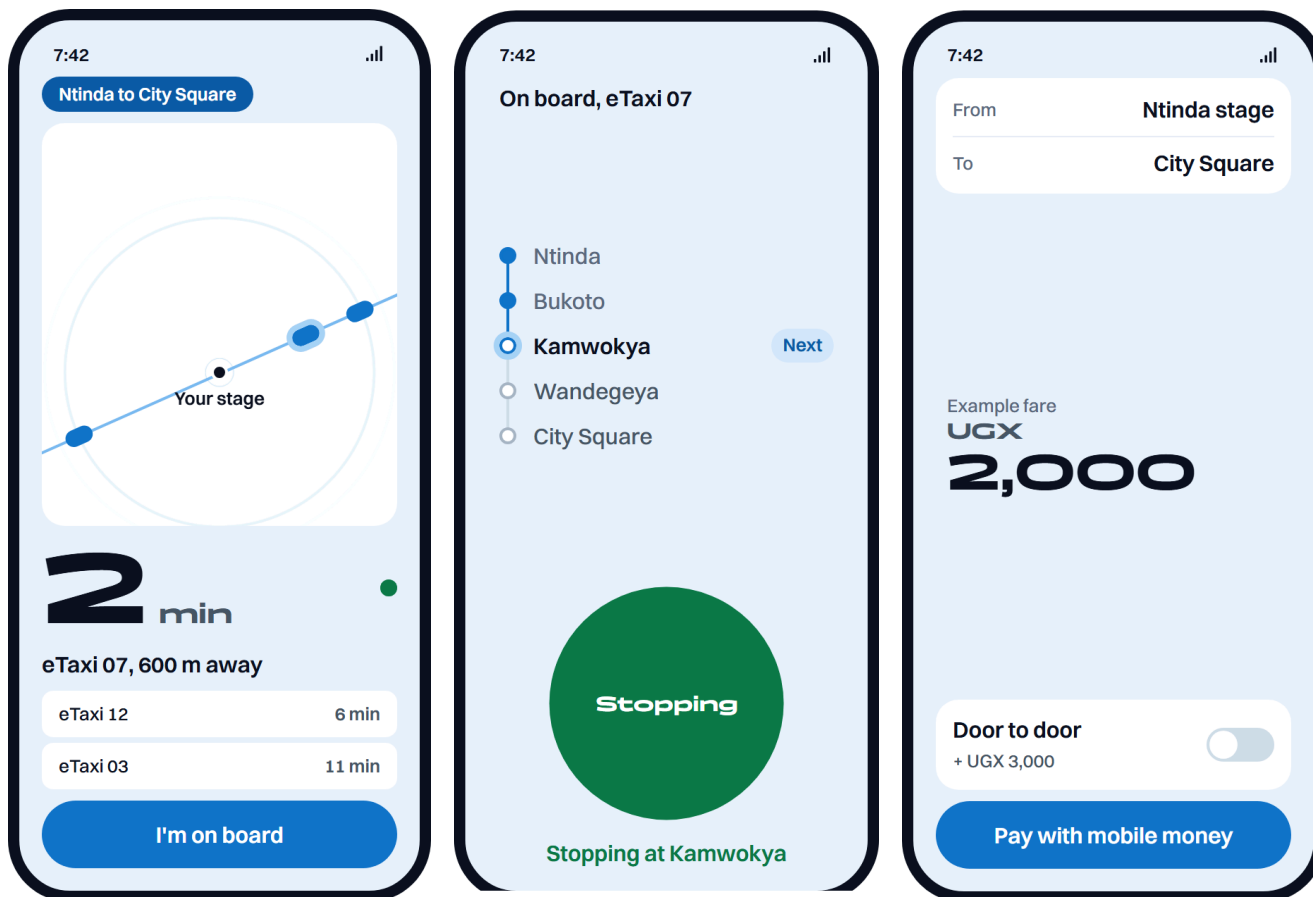
The crackdown has created urgency and a window of attention. Taxi owners are themselves looking at electric vehicles: an alliance said on 13 August that first electric taxis could run before the end of 2026 if battery-swap stations come first.^[8] National policy aims to electrify public transport.^[9] Petrol cost UGX 5,090 to UGX 5,599 a litre in 2026 surveys, with a reported high of UGX 6,499 in June.^[10]

Data and machine learning

Every vehicle would report position, battery state, boardings and charging. The first uses are arrival prediction, demand forecasting and fleet maintenance. Later uses are anonymised origin and destination data for city planners, road condition mapping, carbon measurement and labelled African road scenes for driver assistance. In the proposal's view, driverless operation should not be planned before 2040, since one consultancy expects robotaxis to reach emerging markets perhaps only after that date.^[11] Data would be handled under Uganda's Data Protection and Privacy Act 2019, with consent, short retention and no sale of individual data.^[12]

The app, proposed

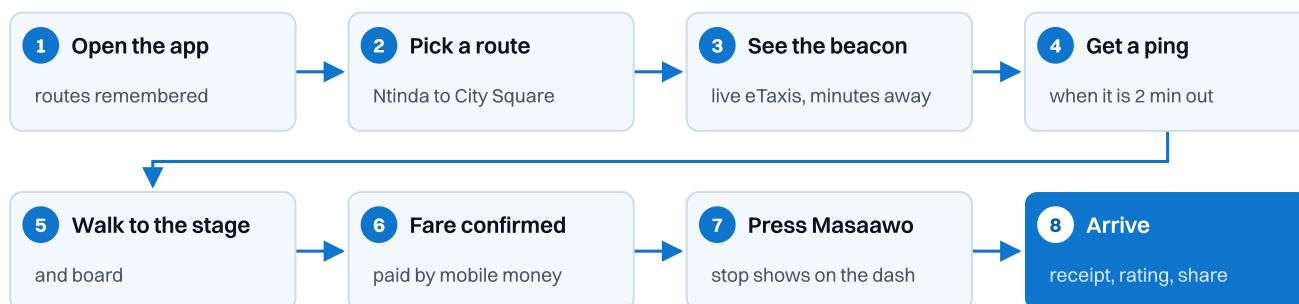
Pilot features: route search, a live beacon with arrival times, find-me-an-eTaxi alerts that ping when the chosen eTaxi is close and stop once the rider boards, the fare shown before boarding, mobile money, the Masaawo stop request, and trip sharing with an alert button. Door-to-door pickup, a low-data and USSD mode, smart charging and an open data feed follow in the rollout phase. The full feature table and three user flows are in Section 5 of the proposal. **PROPOSED**



Beacon: live eTaxis and arrival time

Masaawo pressed: stop requested

Fare shown first (example fare)



Rider flow. Catching an eTaxi from a stage. Proposed.

The numbers

These are energy costs only, not a business plan. Fuel use is driver-reported, electricity is priced at the Q4 2026 tariffs,^[13] and the present values use average Ugandan lending rates of 18.26% (shilling) and 7.09% (foreign currency).^[14] The price of an electric 14-seater in Uganda and the number of taxis in Greater Kampala are not known; the pilot would establish both.

82,347

UGX saved per vehicle per day, base case

INDICATIVE

77.0%

lower energy cost than petrol, base case

12.5 t

CO2 avoided per vehicle per year, base case

25,000 t

CO2 avoided a year at 2,000 vehicles

PER VEHICLE	CONSERVATIVE	BASE	FAVOURABLE
Petrol cost per day (UGX)	101,800	106,900	153,972
Electricity cost per day (UGX)	43,322	24,553	25,137
Saving per day (UGX)	58,478	82,347	128,835
Present value of 8 years, shilling rate (UGX)	73,799,762	103,924,138	162,592,381
Present value of 8 years, foreign-currency rate (UGX)	108,567,265	152,883,413	239,190,611

The plan in three phases

Pilot PROPOSED

30 vehicles, 420 seats, months 0 to 12. About 375 tonnes of CO2 avoided a year. Tests energy use, price, service and data rules.

Corridor PROPOSED

300 vehicles, 4,200 seats, years 2 to 3. About 3,750 tonnes of CO2 avoided a year. Franchise awarded on the evidence.

Network PROPOSED

2,000 vehicles, 28,000 seats, years 4 to 6. About 25,000 tonnes of CO2 avoided a year. Open data for planners.

A gate sits between phases, with thresholds agreed in advance. Phase sizes are planning targets, not forecasts.

Main risks

The main risks are operator resistance, since the taxi sector has forced a pause before;^[15] foreign exchange, since vehicles are priced in dollars and fares in shillings; financing at a high average shilling lending rate; and vehicle supply and price, which are not yet known. The full proposal lists risks with mitigations and owners.

What we ask

- **Government:** a pilot licence for up to 30 electric 14-seaters on one corridor, access to gazetted stages, a ruling on duty and VAT, an interim depot charging tariff and data guidance.
- **Operators and associations:** a working group, co-selection of the corridor and a statement of interest in shares or leases.
- **Financiers:** pilot and feasibility funding, and a view on vehicle and depot debt in local currency. The amount needed is not yet costed.
- **Technology and research partners:** vehicle quotations, mobile money integration and an independent evaluation.

The first 90 days would confirm policy alignment, request the tax ruling, choose a corridor, tender for vehicles and draft the data protection assessment. The full proposal sets out the evidence, risks and method.

Sources

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