

ITDP at COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye

ITDP
Institute for Transportation & Development Policy



Heather Thompson
ITDP Chief Executive Officer

Heather Thompson has been with ITDP for more than a dozen years, first serving on its Board of Directors and now as CEO. She has two decades of experience in the environmental non-profit sector, designing and carrying out strategies with large-scale impact. She co-founded and served as VP of Programs at ClimateWorks Foundation, a leading global philanthropy focused on mitigating climate change. Prior to that, Ms. Thompson was a Principal at California Environmental Associates where she led the firm's work in philanthropic strategy, covering energy and climate change, marine resource management, biodiversity protection, and land conservation. She has worked with clients such as the Asian Development Bank, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and Environmental Defense Fund. She holds a Master of Science in Environmental Economics from the University of York and has worked abroad in China, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. Ms. Thompson believes bold progress needs to be made toward more sustainable and resilient transport systems. ITDP's work in making cities more equitable, livable and environmentally conscious changes everything for the better – for people and the planet.

Areas of expertise:
• Climate and energy agenda alignment, leadership, and goal setting • National and sub-national policymaking • Sustainable development mechanisms and partnerships • Multilateral development bank partnerships • Scaling local and international public transport and urban infrastructure finance • Public-private-partnerships for new business models and financing



Claire Birungi
ITDP Africa, Program Director

Claire Birungi is the Regional Director of ITDP Africa. She leads regional strategy as well as program delivery and partnerships. A civil engineer and transport specialist, she has more than 12 years' experience in transport planning and infrastructure and project delivery across Africa. Claire joined ITDP in 2019 as Transport Systems Manager for Africa and became Regional Director in 2025. In her earlier role, she led technical studies, project preparation, planning, and design for BRT initiatives in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Abidjan, Johannesburg, Kumasi, and Addis Ababa. Her wider portfolio also includes public transport reform, urban road design and transport master planning. She has also led regional e-mobility roadmaps, e-bus deployment and charging plans for Kigali and Kampala and helped shape business and financing models to expand electric public transport in Ethiopia.

Before joining ITDP, Claire worked as a civil engineer at Koleko Engineering in Johannesburg on urban transport, road design and freeway operations, and trained with the Uganda National Roads Authority. She holds an MBA in Strategy from Heriot-Watt University's Edinburgh Business School, an MSc in Civil Engineering (Transport Planning and Engineering) from the University of Cape Town. She is an Associate Member of the South African Institution of Civil Engineering.

Areas of expertise in East Africa:
• E-public transport: financing and scaling • National and subnational policy and scaling • Multilateral alignment and collaboration



Gonggomtua Sitanggang
ITDP Indonesia, Southeast Asia Director

Gonggom is the Southeast Asia Director at the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), bringing over 13 years of expertise in transport planning, engineering, and project delivery. Appointed to lead ITDP Indonesia operations in 2024, he drives key initiatives to advance the planning, integration, and implementation of sustainable urban transportation across Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

Prior to joining ITDP in 2022, Gonggom spent more than eight years working with the Government of Qatar on major public transport implementation projects including national public transport network revamp and electric bus implementation. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) and a Master's degree in Transport Engineering and Planning from the University of Leeds. Gonggom specializes in operations optimization, data-driven mobility innovations, and strategic stakeholder management across the region.

Areas of expertise in Southeast Asia:
• Public transport integration • Air quality and emissions reductions • National and subnational policy and scaling • Urban data and zero-emissions public transport



Gashaw Aberra
ITDP Africa, Active Mobility Manageer

Gashaw is currently working at ITDP Africa as a Manager for Public Transport and Electrification, having joined in August 2018. He serves as Manager for Active Mobility and as the country representative for Ethiopia, contributing to sustainable urban mobility projects across different African countries. His work includes the development of a national urban street design manual, the formulation of non-motorized transport strategies, bikeshare studies, support to cities on street improvement projects, and support for business models for eBRT projects. Before joining ITDP, Gashaw served as Team Leader for Transport and Road Network Planning under the Addis Ababa City Master Plan Project Office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for six years. In this role, he was responsible for planning the city's road network, mass transport plan, parking and terminal provisions, and coordinating with relevant stakeholders. He has also worked with three consulting firms (part-time) and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Addis Ababa University and a Master's Degree in Urban Administration and Planning from the University of Seoul in Korea.

Areas of expertise in East Africa:
• Public Transport Electrification planning and implementation • Active mobility integration • National and subnational policy and scaling



To learn more about ITDP and for speaker invitations, please reach out to us at mobility@itdp.org

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