

## African Railway Thursdays Webinar

### *Catering for Passengers with Reduced Mobility in the rail ecosystem: issues and challenges*

#### CONCEPT NOTE

On Tuesday 27 May 2025, the International Union of Railways (UIC) - Africa Region is organising a webinar on the theme: 'Catering for People with Reduced Mobility (PRM) in the railway ecosystem: issues and challenges', in partnership with the Office National des Chemins de Fer du Maroc (ONCF).

The aim of this webinar is to provide a platform for discussion and reflection on the challenges, issues and possible solutions for ensuring better accessibility for PRMs in the rail sector worldwide, and particularly in Africa.

The transport sector has long been undergoing a process of transformation in terms of inclusion, with a particular focus on the accessibility of infrastructure for PRMs. While progress has been made in some regions, challenges remain in implementing appropriate solutions, particularly in developing countries. Indeed, PRMs represent a proportion of the world's population, whose specific needs must be fully taken into account to guarantee accessible and inclusive mobility for all.

Accessibility in the rail sector, both in terms of infrastructure (stations, trains) and services (information, assistance, fares, etc.), must be considered a central element in the development of a sustainable and equitable transport system. This theme, which encompasses legislative, technical and social issues, is of key importance in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 10, which aims to reduce inequalities, and SDG 11, which promotes sustainable and inclusive cities and communities.

Objectives of the webinar:

1. **Analysing accessibility issues for PRMs in the rail ecosystem:** an overview of current challenges, particularly in the context of existing infrastructure and new construction.
2. **To share best practices and the experiences of the various rail players,** through success stories and innovative initiatives implemented around the world.
3. **To explore public policies and institutional initiatives** aimed at promoting accessibility for PRMs in the rail sector worldwide and in Africa.
4. **Discuss practical solutions and emerging technologies** adapted to improving accessibility in the rail sector, particularly in terms of train and station design, as well as digital innovations.

This webinar will take place at a time when the need to bring rail infrastructure into line with accessibility standards is greater than ever. It is essential to take into account the local specificities of PRMs, particularly in a continent like Africa, where the challenges in terms of infrastructure and development are manifold. However, it is also a continent with great potential for transformation, thanks to the implementation of innovative projects tailored to the needs of local populations.

Among the key issues that will be addressed at this meeting, through presentations of concrete experiences by specialist speakers, are the following:

- What are the current **public policies and strategies** for improving accessibility on the railways?
- How can the rail sector better **integrate the needs of PRMs**, while ensuring operational and economic efficiency?
- What are the challenges involved in **modernising existing infrastructure** to meet the needs of PRMs?
- **What partnerships are needed** between the private sector, public institutions and associations defending the rights of PRMs to make rail accessibility more inclusive?

We are counting on the active participation of all the players in the rail sector, institutional leaders, experts and PRM associations to enrich the discussions and propose concrete solutions that will be applicable in the near future.

We look forward to seeing you at this event to help make the rail sector a model of accessible and inclusive mobility.