

# INTEGRATING GENDER CONSIDERATIONS INTO PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICIES AND OPERATIONS

## PROMISING PRACTICES



WORLD BANK GROUP



HUMAN RIGHTS  
INCLUSION  
EMPOWERMENT





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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>CCM</b>	Consejo Consultivo de Mujeres (Women's Advisory Council)
<b>CCTV</b>	Closed-circuit televisions
<b>CMTT</b>	São Paulo Conselho Municipal de Transito e Transporte (Municipal Traffic and Transport Council)
<b>CoC</b>	Code of conduct
<b>ENR</b>	Egyptian National Railways
<b>GBV</b>	Gender Based Violence
<b>IRUMP</b>	Resilient Urban Mobility Project
<b>LAMATA</b>	Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority
<b>NGOs</b>	Nongovernmental organizations
<b>PNG</b>	Papua New Guinea
<b>PPMYEG</b>	Política Pública de Mujeres y Equidad de Género (Public Policy on Women and Gender Equity)
<b>SDM</b>	Secretaría Distrital de la Mujer (District Secretariat for Women)
<b>SLRTC</b>	Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation
<b>SMPA</b>	Seoul Metropolitan Agency
<b>SP Trans</b>	São Paulo Transporte (Transport of São Paulo)
<b>STIB</b>	Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles (Brussels Intercommunal Transport Company)
<b>TII</b>	Transport Infrastructure Ireland
<b>UCLA</b>	University of California, Los Angeles
<b>UITP</b>	International Association of Public Transport
<b>VAW</b>	Violence Against Women

## PREFACE

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This report is part of an Advisory Services and Analytics study that the World Bank undertook with funding from the Human Rights Umbrella Trust Fund. The study, *The Role of Transport in Supporting Women to Exercise Their Rights to Work, Health and Education*, was designed to understand how gender-responsive transport can help women exercise their rights to health, employment, and education. As part of this research, we developed three products:

- an analytical note that explains the role of transport in women's and girls' enjoyment of the right to health, education, and work by evaluating transport's role amid international human rights standards and the human rights-based approach.
- a systematic review and knowledge synthesis of gender and transport that identifies

mobility differences globally between women and men; outcomes of mobility barriers and opportunities to access education, employment, health, social services, and leisure and recreation services; and policy lessons for optimizing access to transport for women and other transport-disadvantaged groups.

- this technical note, which uses a case study approach to identify how municipal and national governments and public transport operators are addressing gender issues.

These three pieces explain the “what,” “why,” and “how” of operationalizing a human rights-based approach to transport, which has been largely unexplored. In collecting case evidence for this report, the World Bank collaborated with the International Association of Public Transport (UITP).

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## A rationale and key findings

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Addressing women's and girls' mobility barriers has both intrinsic and instrumental value: intrinsic value, as the ability to move around represents a basic freedom for everyone, and instrumental, as transport is essential for daily life and for helping people achieve development outcomes including accumulating human capital (for example, health and education for women and children, accessing income-generating opportunities, and exercising their agency in terms of making choices and transforming these choices into desired outcomes for themselves and the next generation). It also makes a crucial contribution to various United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals and closely resonates with the underlying principle of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda: "Leave no one behind." That said, addressing gendered mobility barriers is legitimate without framing it within further aims. However, there are many other reasons for focusing on gender equality in transport, such as:

- **Mobility has a major impact on the economic contribution of women to the economy.** Mobility barriers hinder women's access to jobs and key services, such as health and education, affecting theirs and their children's human capital accumulation. The 2017 report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) identified lack of transport as the greatest challenge to female labor force participation in developing countries, reducing the probability of women participating in the labor force by an estimated 16.5 percent. Globally, about 49 percent of women participate in the workforce, compared with 75 percent of men, with a high degree of variance across regions and countries. A report by the International Monetary Fund (Elborg-Woytek et al. 2013) concludes that countries see significant macroeconom-

ic gains when women can develop their full labor market potential. A McKinsey report (Woetzel et al. 2015) finds that in a "full potential" scenario in which women play an identical role in labor markets to that of men, as much as US\$ 28 trillion, or 26 percent, could be added to global annual GDP by 2025.

- **There is an environmental imperative for addressing gendered mobility barriers—it is critical for transport decarbonization** (Kurshitashvili et al. 2022). Globally, when women travel, they make a higher proportion of trips using public transport and walking. Men make more trips by car, motorcycle, and bicycle. Women's mobility patterns are often not a matter of preference but necessity. Care responsibilities, reduced access to a car, and less disposable income shape women's transport choices and have an unintended (albeit environmentally desirable) result of a lower carbon footprint than men. However, without positive intervention, a steady increase of women in the paid workforce could see women's travel converge with that of men's car use over time. Also, while women's lower carbon footprint may be desirable environmentally, it reduces their economic independence and participation in public and economic life. This suggests that women are primarily so-called captive transit users and highlights a strong sustainable mobility case for paying attention to their public transport use, while it also calls for investing efforts to make the transport system more attractive for people who primarily use private vehicles (often men) to promote a modal shift to cleaner modes.
- **Transport service providers could benefit from gender-responsive infrastructure and services.** Globally, transport services operate



on narrow profit margins and high levels of public subsidy. Public transport is most efficient and produces full economic benefits when operating at near capacity. High usage can be achieved if a transport service accommodates the needs of its diverse passenger base—both women and men—who tend to face different gendered mobility barriers. In this sense, gender-responsive transport services could play an important role in boosting revenues for service providers and generating funds for forward investment.

- **Addressing gendered barriers to mobility is a social imperative as it makes transport more user-centric by improving services for different cohorts of people.** This is made possible when engaging both women and men of different demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds in the design, planning and implementation of transport services and building a more nuanced understanding of customer satisfaction. This is how mobility acquires a much-needed human dimension—critical for good quality service.

**Despite these myriad benefits of addressing gendered mobility barriers for women and girls, this topic has largely remained an overlooked determinant of development in global discourse.** This is partly due to the paucity of knowledge and guidance available on how public transport stakeholders have been addressing women's mobility barriers, and what lessons can be drawn from these efforts that

would allow for scaling up and replication of good practices. Importantly, questions about what has been motivating municipal and national governments and transport operators to address women's mobility barriers have not been explored much, although they are critical for the sustainability of these efforts.

**The goal of this technical note is to help fill this knowledge gap by providing global public transport stakeholders with information on how women's mobility barriers are being addressed around the world, particularly in relation to the acute problem of sexual harassment of women and girls when using public transport and surrounding public spaces.** To do so, the World Bank and the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) identified 10 case studies showing how national and municipal authorities around the world have been integrating gender into the design, management, and operations of their systems over the last 20 years. These case studies underline some achievements in implementing gender-sensitive governance and institutional structures; gathering intelligence, for the first time in many cases, about women's travel experiences; and developing gender-based public transport strategies.

The case studies show that the decision to integrate gender into transport operations has been catalyzed by a variety of "triggers". Table 1 shows some of these triggers.

TABLE 1:

### Some of the triggers that can move the needle in the decision to integrate gender into transport operations

- Securing institutional buy-in and identifying champions in the transport sector to drive this agenda forward and make the sector more inclusive for everyone;
- Collaborating with national and local governing bodies for gender issues to ensure interinstitutional coordination and alignment with national gender plans, strategies and programs;
- Laying legal, policy and organizational building blocks to address gender equality in general and public transport in particular;
- Investing in sex-disaggregated mobility data, since what gets measured, gets done. Good data is the first step in understanding the mobility barriers women and girls face;
- Adopting a holistic approach by going beyond ad hoc interventions but making gender an integral part of transport planning instruments at municipal and national levels;
- Training and building capacity to affect behaviors of those planning and delivering transport services, especially those who are in customer-facing roles such as security and drivers;
- Effectively collaborating across multiple sectors and actors from national and municipal government to the private sector, academia, and citizens;
- Collaborating with external parties, such as international financiers who have been advocating for gender equality in the sector;
- Members of the public putting pressure on policy makers alongside active local nongovernmental organizations who can lead change;
- Implementing a range of public transport reforms (for example, formalization of informal public transport) that can bring originally unintended gender co-benefits.

The analysis derived from the cases shows a three-phase evolution in how gender concerns emerged and how they have been integrated into mainstream policy and planning processes. In Phase 1 (2000–10), the legal and institutional building blocks were established. In Phase 2 (2010–20), transport stakeholders began to implement measures to remove barriers to mobility for women and girls, mainly from a safety perspective. In Phase 3 (2020s), anecdotal evidence has suggested that the acceleration of gender-based initiatives has been slowing, highlighting the need for evidence of what works and what does not. These initiatives must be monitored, evaluated, and scaled up across the transport sector. The report highlights areas where this is needed, particularly regarding personal safety.

Although the case studies focus on addressing mobility challenges that women and girls face, doing so also makes transport more attractive for everyone using public transport, as well as people who primarily use private vehicles (mainly men). Considering gender requires transport operators to become more people centered—to think more deeply about how system performance affects different populations. The more that public transport responds to women’s concerns such as safety, affordability, and access, the more it can benefit and appeal to other current and potential users regardless of gender. Therefore, this note should be taken as a guide to incorporating a gender perspective into transport planning and operations and as part of broader efforts to make public transport more convenient, accessible, safe, affordable, clean, reliable, and financially sustainable.



# Methodology: A case study approach

Image credit: [www.flickr.com/photos/worldbank/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/worldbank/albums)

The study focused on urban public transport and local and national transport departments and ministries. A case study approach was used to discover how gender concerns have arisen and how stakeholders in major cities in 10 countries have developed promising practices to address them—from top-down national laws and codes of conduct to bottom-up initiatives from local NGOs and champions employed in public transport organizations. Case studies were developed by primary sources (three roundtable discussions) and secondary sources (desk review).

## 2.1. IDENTIFICATION OF CASE STUDIES

Case studies were gathered in three ways:

- World Bank urban transport sector clients, based on their project portfolios
- Selected members of the UITP network (e.g., transport operators)
- Internet research.

Transport entities that had experienced significant evolution in gender-sensitive transport over the last 20 years were selected as cases.

Information was obtained on:

- gender equality and diversity policies adopted
- whether any plans had been prepared to implement gender policies
- whether stakeholder organizations had any gender focal points (individual roles or teams)
- previous efforts to address gender-related mobility barriers
- whether data were available on gender-related measures that had been introduced and what the impacts were.

Cities and public transport entities that were finally selected for this study were globally diverse and located in countries in different income categories. They cover a range of business models for provision of public transport services, illustrating a variety of methods that have been adopted to embed gender considerations into various public transport operating regimes—from public companies to public-private operations and, most commonly, a central public planning agency providing concessions to competing private operators. The chosen initiatives involve all public transport modes and, in some cases, surrounding neighborhoods and public spaces. Table 2 lists the 10 entities selected, and figure 1 pins them on the continents for better visualization.



TABLE 2:

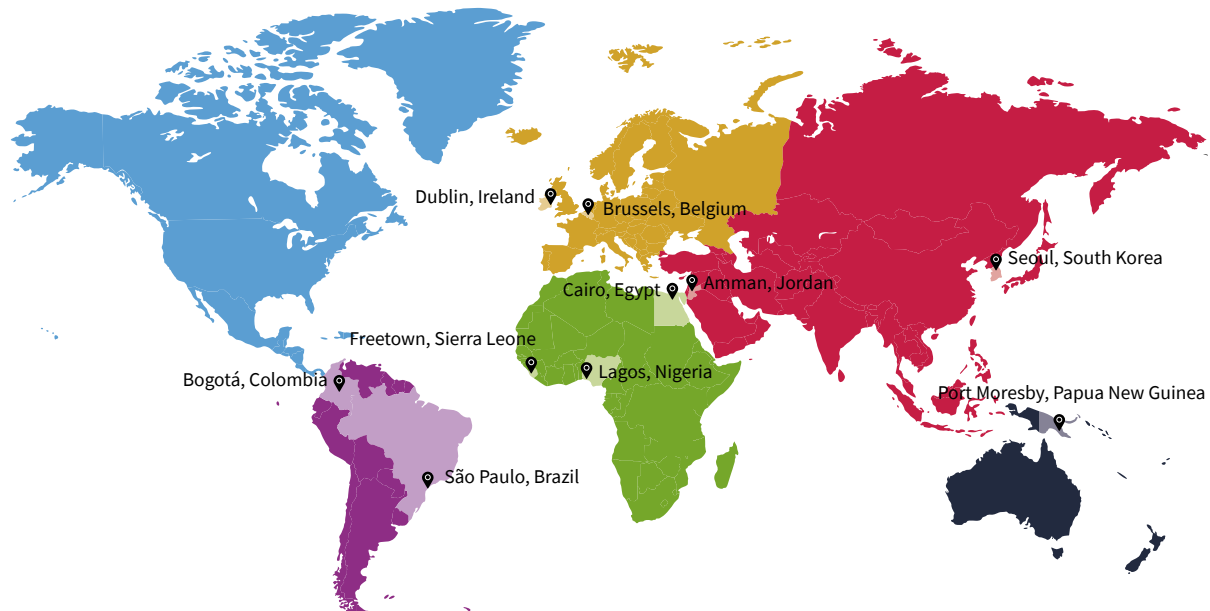
## Case Studies

	City, country	Entity	Type of entity
1	Amman, Jordan	Ministry of Transport	Federal ministry
2	Bogotá, Colombia	Metro de Bogotá	Metro rail operator
3	Brussels, Belgium	Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles	Bus, tram and metro rail operator
4	Cairo, Egypt	Egyptian National Railways	National operator
5	Dublin, Ireland	Transport Infrastructure Ireland	National authority for transport infrastructure and public transport
6	Freetown, Sierra Leone	Ministry of Transport and Aviation	Federal ministry
7	Lagos, Nigeria	Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority	Public transport authority
8	Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea	Ginigoda Foundation	Local nongovernmental organization
9	São Paulo, Brazil	São Paulo Transporte	Public transport authority
10	Seoul, South Korea	Seoul Metropolitan Agency	City administration

Note: Case studies are sorted alphabetically according to name of city.

FIGURE 1:

## Geographic coverage of case studies



## 2.2 ROUNDTABLE WORKSHOPS AND DESKTOP RESEARCH

Three roundtable workshops with a range of public transport and gender stakeholders and desktop research were undertaken between July 2021 and January 2022 to help identify the case studies. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, workshops were conducted virtually using online platforms, following the Chatham House Rule (open discussion, ability to quote opinions raised without attributing them to any participant).

These workshops and interviews took the form of qualitative, semi-structured discussions and were designed to gather subjective insights on:

- Main policy goals that shaped the formulation of the public transport gender strategy (e.g., concern about human rights or sus-

tainability, women's empowerment or their economic position)

- What participants saw as the primary drivers that led to gender-related concerns being recognized and integrated into public transport policy, strategy, and measures
- Gender-related actions planned or already implemented, timeline of initiatives undertaken or planned; for measures already undertaken, lessons being learned and impacts
- Constraints encountered or foreseen in integrating gender into policy, planning, and service operations
- Lessons learned about how to overcome barriers integration of gender equity

The initial findings from the roundtable workshops and desktop research were analyzed and distilled into a tabular format. The World Bank and UITP validated the preliminary findings, and the consultants' team created a final report under the guidance of the World Bank.



## Case Evidence

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Each case study outlines (a) the context, (b) describes the activity(ies) or a trigger for action that led to gender measures, (c) presents measures adopted to address the identified gender gaps, and (d) shares lessons learned.

## 3.1 AMMAN, JORDAN

### Developing a national code of conduct (CoC) for the transport sector to increase women's safety and access to labor markets

**Context:** The Ministry of Transport is the policy maker and coordinating body in the public transport sector in Jordan. A critical task under the second World Bank-supported Development Policy Financing program that the government of Jordan has undertaken was to increase accessibility to labor markets for women, who constituted less than 15 percent of the country's workforce, compared with 64 percent for men.<sup>1</sup> Evidence from several studies indicated that a major barrier to women's access to labor markets was lack of a safe, secure public transport system. In one study, 47 percent of women surveyed said that they turned down work opportunities because of lack of affordable, secure transport options, in particular, public transportation (Aloul, Naffa, and Mansour 2019). More than 60 percent of women responded that they had faced harassment when using public transportation.

**Trigger for action:** In 2019, with the support of the World Bank, the government developed a CoC for public transport drivers, operators, and passengers to increase the safety and security of women on public transport and enhance the overall quality of service. The CoC identified sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination as key problems.

**Measures:** Several measures are being planned or already undertaken to implement the CoC, such as:

- Development of a mobile application: The Mashreq Gender Facility<sup>2</sup>, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport and the Jordan National Commission for Women, has financed development of a mobile application<sup>3</sup> to allow users to report CoC transgressions and enabled channels for victims and observers of sexual harassment to submit feedback so that the quality of public transport can be enhanced.
- Training: Public transport stakeholders, including public transport operators and officials from the Ministry of Transport, Land Transport Regulatory Commission, Police Security Department, and Municipality of Greater Amman have been trained.
- Communication plan: After the mobile application is approved, a detailed communication plan is to be implemented to raise public awareness of efforts being made to combat sexual harassment and give greater confidence to women using or considering using public transport.

1 World Bank Gender Statistics Database. 2019. Aged 15 and above. Modelled ILO estimates <https://data.worldbank.org/topic/gender> Accessed on March 8, 2022

2 The Mashreq Gender Facility has supported CoC implementation (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/mashreq-gender-facility>).

3 At the time of the writing this note the application was being finalized for launching





Source: Maan Nasel (A crowd gathers to load on a bus amid traffic in Jordan)

Developing a national framework for gender-sensitive public transport: A local civil society organization SADAQA, along with the Ministry of Transport, UN Women, and the EU Delegation to Jordan, released a national framework for gender-sensitive public transport in 2021 to address gender concerns in public transport, including increasing representation of women workers in the transportation sector. The framework proposes the legislative reforms necessary to increase women's mobility and access to public transport. It also lays the onus on the Land Transport Regulatory Commission to ensure that efforts such as transportation planning, creation of public spaces and nonmotorized transport infrastructure, and financing of transportation begin to address gender concerns at every level (UN Women 2021).

**Lessons from Jordan:** The CoC is unique because it covers bus transport over the entire nation. The concerted efforts of international partners and donors by providing expertise and

good practices, the government by embracing the reform, and local civil society organizations by helping the government implement the commitments was critical. This initiative is yet to be implemented. As such, information is not yet available regarding the success of the measures- although many are under way.

## 3.2 BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

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The leading role of the Ministry of Women and collaboration between institutions to address women's priorities in the Bogotá metro area

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**Context:** Unlike many other cities, Bogotá has a long-established governance structure for integrating gender into public policy, including in transport. The Consejo Consultivo de Mujeres

(CCM; Women's Advisory Council) has been part of the city council since 2004. It has 41 seats representing 20 localities in the city plus representatives of each minority group (e.g., women with disabilities, caregivers, sex workers, ethnic minorities). The Secretaría Distrital de la Mujer (SDM; District Secretariat for Women) works under the mayor. Since 2011, the CCM and the SDM have set the city's agenda on gender and been proactive in developing strategies and actions in all sectors, including transport.

**Trigger for action:** The key trigger in Bogotá was the establishment of the aforementioned SDM, in 2011, with competence on gender concerns that can provide guidance, solve problems related to governance, and promote multisectoral collaboration. The Colombian government provided important legal foundations for the CCM and SDM to build on. Before the SDM was formed in 2008, the Colombian government had adopted Law 1257 enshrining the right of women to a life free of violence. Sexual violence was defined in the law to include touching, harassment, sexual intercourse, and other sexual acts against their will. Since its formation, the SDM has proactively and collaboratively created and implemented a city-level gender equality policy under the leadership of a proactive female mayor.

In 2020, working with the CCM, the city adopted the Política Pública de Mujeres y Equidad de Género (PPMYEG, Public Policy on Women and Gender Equity), which the SDM further developed in 2021. The objective of the policy, co-created with the participation of more than 5,400 women, is to recognize, guarantee, and establish women's rights inclusive of all their diversities and enjoyment of all the rights of their citizenship (Sanchez 2020). This includes an action plan with measurable indicators, expected results, responsible entities, and es-

timated resources for implementation. The PPMYEG provides a pathway for action for eight priority rights, all identified by women, that are integrated into city plans, including transport.

According to the Mobility Survey of 2017, women with paid employment in Bogotá rely heavily on public transport. They mainly travel on the bus rapid transit system Transmilenio (27.5 percent) and the Integrated Transport System (20.3 percent), although they experience violence on public transport and related spaces. Of all women (not only those with paid employment), 32 percent travel on Transmilenio—5 percentage points more than men. According to data from the SDM, in 2019 and 2020, 64 percent of female transport users experienced some form of sexual harassment (Bernal 2020).

Given this scenario, the PPMYEG, whose governing body is the SDM, included violence prevention and response in public transport and urban spaces as a priority. Among its priorities, the PPMYEG mentions monitoring and implementation of the Protocol for the Prevention of, Response to, and Sanction of Violence against Women in Transport and Public Spaces. The PPMYEG states that Transmilenio must support women's right to a life free of violence and outlines the strategies that the administration and public entities must adopt to prevent violence and sexual harassment against women in public transport, provide care and support for victims, and limit expenditures on public transport by vulnerable households to 15 percent of their monthly income.

**Measures:** The SDM, in collaboration with other stakeholders, has put into place measures to address women's priorities in transport planning and implementation:

- Capacity building in transport companies: The SDM has worked with public transport

companies across the city to develop the capacity of employees to address gender concerns and has run awareness-raising campaigns to support this work.

- Protocol on public transport safety for women: In 2019, the SDM published a protocol to prevent, respond to, and punish harassment of women in public spaces, including on public transport. The protocol was widely disseminated to the public on various media (SDM 2019) as part of a broader campaign: Me Muevo Segura (I Move Safely).
- Planning the Bogotá metro from a gender perspective: Inclusion of gender in forward planning for the Bogotá metro will be important for the city. Metro de Bogotá was established in 2016 as a joint stock company with representatives from the national and city governments to plan, implement, and maintain the metro network, with the first lines scheduled to open by 2028. They will also plan and implement urban renewal and urban development projects within the metro's sphere of influence.



Source: Bogota Metro

The Bogotá metro is a good example of how gender considerations can be incorporated into mainstream transport infrastructure schemes from the outset. The metro is being developed with the help of the World Bank, as a major financier of the scheme. The World Bank has developed a set of social standards that project borrowers must comply with to access financing:

- Gender equality and inclusion in the development process
- An environmental and social impact assessment of the project
- Greater access and fewer barriers for women
- Stakeholder participation and consultation with women
- Protection of project workers (World Bank 2016)

In this context, the World Bank established a set of project development objectives to which Metro de Bogotá committed, including addressing gender gaps (e.g., employing women in the project) and adding gender indicators for monitoring and evaluation (e.g., percentage of women who perceive that the metro service is safe for their daily commute) (World Bank 2018).

**Implementing the PPMYEG through contractual obligations:** Metro de Bogotá has implemented measures to ensure that the concessionaire supports compliance with PPMYEG and strives to prevent and respond to violence against women. Contractual obligations require the concessionaire to implement the protocol that the SDM has developed. Metro de Bogotá has also participated in the interinstitutional group that meets every 3 months to follow up on implementation of the PPMYEG and ensure that the SDM has regularly provided gender sensitization to metro personnel.

Metro de Bogotá is also helping implement the PPMYEG by promoting women's employment in the transport sector. One of the PPMYEG's objectives is to contribute to women's economic empowerment. It also recognizes employment segregation in Bogotá, where significantly fewer women than men participate

in the construction (1.4 percent) and transport sectors (3.3 percent).

To ensure that the private sector is aligned with the policy, a clause to promote women's employment has been included in the concessionaire's contract. The metro will function on a design-finance-build-operate-maintain-transfer contract. The bidding documents require that the concessionaire ensure that at least 20 percent of employees in operations and maintenance are women (World Bank 2018). The challenge is to go beyond this percentage to enable a truly gender-responsive project and ensure that women occupy leadership positions. With the support of the World Bank, Metro de Bogotá is developing a gender action plan.

**Lessons from Bogotá:** The national and municipal governments have laid important legal and organizational building blocks in the last 15 years to address gender equality in general and in public transport in particular, but secu-



rity concerns for women persist, underscoring the need for effective implementation and enforcement of policies, laws, and programs. In the metro, achieving gender goals such as employment targets in contracts with concessionaires may require monitoring mechanisms to ensure implementation, which can be based on existing contracts under the PPMYEG. The meetings are held to monitor compliance with the policy, which includes addressing violence in transport.

### 3.3 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

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#### Strategic 5-year plans to address sexual harassment and give public transport a gender-balanced public face

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**Context:** The Société des Transports Intercommunaux de Bruxelles (STIB; Brussels Intercommunal Transport Company), the public transport operator for the Brussels Capital Region, runs metro, tram, and bus services. Although STIB is a private limited company, the government of the Brussels Capital Region is the supervisory body, with the duties and obligations of public transport operators established in a public service contract.

**Trigger for action:** The government of the Brussels Capital Region has introduced several initiatives to incorporate gender into all public policy. An ordinance promulgated in 2011 decreed that gender would be integrated into all policies of the Brussels government and that the fight against gender-based violence would be a priority. The approach was an integrated

one across departments. Stakeholder dialogue with organizations such as the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men helped develop policies and strategies.

Incorporation of gender was enhanced in 2016 with introduction of gender budgeting into the functioning of the Brussels Capital Region. STIB has also undertaken gender budgeting assessments, considering the needs of women at the initial stages of planning and design and when planning to retrofit infrastructure and improve services. Several measures have been implemented as a result, such as installation of toilets at bus stations and CCTV in blind spots to reduce women's vulnerability to harassment.

STIB developed a 5-year diversity strategy (2017-21), whose main aim was to increase the share of female employees. STIB has implemented several direct measures (some before the diversity strategy was implemented) to improve its gender ratio. It reported an increase of more than 30 percent in the number of female employees since 2015, but only to 11 percent of its 9,800 employees by 2020 (STIB 2019), by adopting targeted recruitment campaigns and asking current staff members to recommend potential female employees.

**Measures:** Several measures are being planned or already undertaken to increase public awareness and ability to respond to incidents as victims or observers, such as:

- STIB launched a company-wide campaign to sensitize staff on Sexism and Sexual Harassment. The campaign consisted of videos, e-learning, posters, flyers, intranet page, etc. The concept of sexism was also integrated into other trainings to ensure consistency in messaging. The e-learning will serve as a prerequisite for training of the frontline staff on how to assist passengers when harass-

ment occurs, including how victims or witnesses can register complaints with police. This will be accompanied by an information brochure on this topic.

- A campaign was undertaken with Plan International in 2018 to highlight to the public the problem of harassment of and violence against women when they use public transport services. The campaign aimed to increase public awareness about what to do if one experienced or witnessed harassment on public transport.
- For the International Women's Day, STIB collaborated with Touche Pas a ma Pote to train staff and transport users on bystander interventions with the use of 5D's (Distract, Delegate, Document, Delay and Direct).
- In 2019, STIB extended the campaign to schools in the Brussels region to highlight the problem to boys and girls and to ensure that girls were aware of how to react when experiencing or witnessing sexual harassment (STIB 2019).
- Addressing concerns about safety in public spaces and on public transport is gaining wider public support. In 2021, the government of the Brussels Region developed a second 5-year plan to combat violence against women (equal.brussels 2021).
- A recommendation was made to create a reliable database on sexual harassment and intensify training for STIB staff to respond to incidents.



Source: STIB

**Lessons from Brussels:** Public transport is the most visible dimension of the authority's portfolio and therefore is where gender inequalities (e.g., imbalance in frontline staff, harassment of passengers using services) will be most apparent. Public-facing staff are still predominantly male. Impacts of awareness-raising measures must be monitored. Other cities could expand the campaign into schools. Here, too, there is lack of information on the impacts of these measures.

## 3.4 CAIRO, EGYPT

### Developing evidence-based policy and strategies to address sexual harassment on national and commuter rail services

**Context:** Sexual harassment of and assaults on women and girls in Egypt when they are traveling is an acute problem that was recognized a decade ago; initiatives have been ongoing since then to remedy the situation after a UN Women (2013) survey revealed a high level of insecurity among women and girls when traveling in Egypt locally and on longer journeys, with the majority of respondents reporting feeling unsafe or insecure on public transport.

Only 22 percent of Egyptian women aged 15 and older participate in the labor force, com-

pared with 71 percent of men.<sup>4</sup> The extremely low female labor force participation in absolute terms and the near 50-percentage point gender gap indicate a significant disparity in economic opportunity between women and men and illustrates the importance of addressing mobility challenges that women face in achieving self-actualization and social and economic empowerment, as well as for the country's economic growth.

**Trigger for action:** Intercity and commuter rail services in Egypt were identified as being unsafe for women, restricting not only their freedom of movement, but also their education and employment opportunities. Starting in 2016, Egyptian National Railways (ENR), supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (2016), took 18 months to assess its services and operations from a gender perspective. A survey revealed that 69 percent of women did not use the train to commute to work because of security concerns. One in five trips that women took involved a change of trains, which underscores the importance of improving the platform environment in main stations and interchanges. Risk areas for harassment were identified, such as ticket lines, and female passengers traveling in third class expressed a greater need to feel safe and secure than women in other classes since the incidence of sexual harassment was reported to be the highest in the third class.

4 Gender Data, World Bank 2019 ILO estimates: <https://data.worldbank.org/topic/gender>





Source: Salma Hany Adly Abdelfattah Ibrahim

**Measures:** Several measures have been recommended to ENR based on the survey findings, and ENR has been implementing them:

- **Service delivery measures**

- Employ additional security personnel on platforms and trains.
- Train security personnel to be more gender aware, with a focus on preventing sexual harassment in trains and stations.
- Launch a public awareness campaign on train traveler behavior.
- Distribute leaflets at stations and on trains to raise awareness of how to treat passengers with respect (giving up seats,

making less noise, not harassing).

- Introduce fines for inappropriate behavior and communicate them via message boards on trains and platforms.
- Introduce online ticket sales to reduce crowding—and associated harassment—at ticket offices.
- Introduce a telephone hotline for security alerts.

- **Infrastructure**

- Upgrade carriages, specifically windows, doors, seats, toilets, and lighting.
- Install toilets (with locks) and, when pos-



sible, make them gender segregated.

- Install surveillance cameras on trains and platforms and communicate their existence via signage.
- Increase the number of information boards showing locations of complaint offices.
- Provide Wi-Fi on new carriages to offer passengers a guaranteed means of communication.
- Introduce ticket machines at main stations to relieve crowding at ticket offices.
- Paint carriage numbers and pedestrian lane markings on the platform to improve flow of boarding and debarking passengers and manage crowds.

- **Management measures**

- Nominate a gender equality champion within ENR to help implement recommendations and monitor progress and to develop and implement a comprehensive gender training program for employees.
- Promote equality to improve career opportunities for female employees within ENR, particularly via university engineering courses.

- **Measures in trains and stations**

- Design carriages so that seats face each other, aisles are wide, emergency buttons are installed next to doors, and closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) are installed. This is particularly important in driverless trains. A different option is segregated carriages and waiting areas on platforms.
- Design stations with clearly marked customer information centers, help points,

and cameras (that can produce identifiable images). Avoid dead-ends and alcoves.

- Install proper lighting to discourage criminality. Security personnel should be visible, and staff should be trained on gender-related aspects of health and safety to help them identify, prevent, and combat sexual harassment more effectively.
- Provide effective wayfinding through signage, staff, tactile and audible information, announcements, and maps to reduce crowding at decision points, enhance safety, and prevent harassment.

As part of a recent World Bank-supported lending project (World Bank 2021a), ENR committed to a range of actions to improve gender balance in its workforce by improving its human resources policies and practices to enhance women's employment, retention, and career advancement, with a focus on increasing the number of women in technical roles. Through another lending project of the World Bank (2021b), the Ministry of Transport adopted a Code of Conduct (CoC), similar to the one being implemented in Jordan (see case study on Jordan) for promoting safe transport in the railway and metro sub-sectors with an implementation mechanism and a timebound strategy for scaling up to other transport sub-sectors, establishing an institutional setup to support the implementation of the code.

**Lessons from Egypt:** Progress so far achieved highlights the value of good data in building the necessary evidence-base to develop strategies at all levels and provide an approach to addressing sexual harassment “from the boardroom to the platform;” the importance of an external party, in this case international financiers; and engagement of ENR from the start in

ownership of the process. It remains to be seen to what extent these measures will encourage women as users of rail and employees in the rail industry; to that end, a routine quantitative and qualitative data collection and monitoring program to track the impact and respond to the results would be needed.

### 3.5 DUBLIN, IRELAND

#### Champion-led development of gender-based research, strategies, and measures in a national transport organization

**Context:** Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), established in 2015 through the merger of the National Roads Authority of Ireland and the Railway Procurement Agency, is a public authority responsible for providing and managing the national roads and motorway network of Ireland, the Luas Light Rail Transit network in Dublin<sup>5</sup> and Cork, and Metrolink in Dublin. TII is an equal opportunity employer offering flexible working hours. TII's has an accessibility policy and an accessibility officer, and its office buildings are fully accessible. Inclusivity is ensured through parental and sick leave policies. An internal health and safety function supports employees, and the workplace supports the needs of new mothers, but there is no formal focus on gender-specific activities.

**Trigger for action:** TII's sustainable mobility champion was a senior manager who drove the inclusive mobility and equality agenda forward. Having attended a session on gender and transport at the annual International Trans-

port Forum Summit in Leipzig in 2019, she was in a position to share her recently acquired knowledge regarding the data gap in transport planning and design. She raised awareness regarding the importance of collecting sex-disaggregated data and focused activities based on gender-related international transport research promoted by organizations such as the International Transport Forum and UITP. She obtained support from TII's CEO and Executive Director (both male colleagues) from the beginning.

Concurrently, in 2019, the Irish government published Ireland's Climate Action Plan focusing on decarbonizing transport and achieving a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport. Additionally, the government launched a campaign to foster innovation within the Irish public sector. These two initiatives provided the TII champion with a mandate to advance the 'Travelling in a Woman's Shoes' project as it tied in with both decarbonization and innovation. The project initiated a study that included a survey of more than 1,000 respondents (50% female, 50% male) and 21 in-depth interviews with women to identify the travel behavior and concerns of women in Ireland. The study focused on safety, accessibility, reliability, comfort, convenience, and the impact of transport on women's economic opportunities, social life and engagement, and health and well-being (TII 2020). The sustainable mobility champion gained huge support and interest from many colleagues across TII from the early stages and throughout the life of the project and was able to build on the extensive experience of her colleagues who had been promoting universal design principals for public transport projects for years before the merger establishing TII as an organization.

5 An international private operator (Transdev) operates the network under a gross cost contract model.



Source: Transport Infrastructure Ireland

The results of the study mirrored findings from other countries e.g., how women's role as caregivers determined their travel patterns and that personal safety and security were paramount and influenced their choice of mode of transport. Lack of sufficient public transport outside of the Capital Dublin has led to most women depending on private cars. TII concluded that gender-inclusive mobility was critical for increasing women's use of public transport. The action of the champion and the resulting study have had an important impact and placed gender firmly in the TII sustainability portfolio.

**Measures:** The research highlighted basic concerns about safety, access, reliability, comfort, and higher-order concerns related to inclusion, belonging, and ownership. These concerns

reflected those of many other countries and cities. TII study provides guidance and conclusions on several key aspects including:

- Using sympathetic infrastructure design for women, girls, and all vulnerable mobility groups, such as children of both sexes, individuals with disabilities (temporary and permanent), and older people with increasing frailty. This includes real-time information systems to reduce uncertainty.
- Performing gender audits of transport infrastructure and services to ensure safety and security and regularly evaluating the impacts of any measures taken (see gender lens checklist described below in this case study).

- Introducing procedures to make reporting of sexual harassment and gender-based violence against female staff and passengers easier.
- Providing training to raise the awareness of employees about women's mobility concerns.

In July 2021, TII published a gender lens checklist to inform future public transport projects that will serve as an evaluation framework for all future public transport projects that TII undertakes, including the upcoming Metrolink project in Dublin (TII 2021). The checklist is being piloted in one of TII's light rail projects, Luas Finglas. Consideration of gender as part of project development is being normalized, as has been done with health and safety, and sustainability. The engineering designer is developing gender metrics to facilitate definition and measurement of progress and success.

**Lessons from Ireland:** The Irish case demonstrates how a national transport agency can adopt a gender perspective in all areas of its operation within a few years. The initiative highlights the influence that champions within organizations can have to raise awareness of gender and to ensure that gender becomes part of the policy portfolio and ongoing planning and service operations. There is a need to disseminate knowledge into organizations and to use it, particularly to empower women, to show them how to raise the corporate gender profile and achieve results that have been achieved elsewhere. TII has implemented a range of very positive initiatives, although there is no evidence of their performance and impact to date.

## 3.6 FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

### Formalizing public transport design and service operations as a way to incorporate gender considerations

**Context:** The Ministry of Transport and Aviation is responsible for policy development and planning of urban transport. The state-run Sierra Leone Road Transport Corporation (SLRTC) handles day-to-day regulation and operation of public transport services, although the formalized buses cater for less than 20 percent of the transport demand with the remainder being informal paratransit services (Seery 2020). Since 2019, the government of Sierra Leone has implemented the Integrated and Resilient Urban Mobility Project (IRUMP) with the support of the World Bank to improve the overall condition of urban mobility in Sierra Leone, particularly the capital of Freetown, and increase the resilience of the city's transport network to climate risks. This project was implemented to address multiple existing urban mobility challenges in Freetown, including vulnerability of the road network to climate change, traffic congestion, weak regulatory and institutional framework, weak governance structures, and limited human capacity to address these challenges. Moreover, there was limited understanding of various user's needs in terms of their origins and destinations, mobility patterns, and specific constraints on their mobility. The project's goals are to modernize and professionalize public transport services; promote strategic, resilient mobility investments that can overcome obstacles to normal function brought for





Source: Integrated Transport Planning

instance by extreme weather conditions; and build human capital and institutional capacity.

**Trigger for action:** There was limited understanding of the challenges that women and girls face in using transportation and accessing better economic opportunities and services. As part of the IRUMP, a study was undertaken in 2019/20 to collect data on the mobility needs and requirements of the residents of Freetown. The data collected were disaggregated according to gender and other social dimensions and revealed that the priorities and requirements of vulnerable groups, especially women and girls, did not receive much attention within the informal transport system. Half of all those interviewed indicated that physical violence was the main barrier to using public transport. Nearly 18 percent of all female respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment in public

transport: 4 percent on formal public transport services and as high as 30 percent on informal public transport. Women were more likely to travel with dependents and to value personal safety and fare levels than male respondents. Women paid on average 8 percent more, given fees they had to pay to carry their goods to market. Women felt less safe in informal modes of transport than in formal modes. This perception of lack of safety is linked to the nature of informal services operating at the discretion of the owner or operator and in response to demand, with unreliable schedules and in overcrowded vehicles, often having to fight for space; drivers who work long hours and often take substances to cope with difficult working conditions; rude behaviors of workers; frequent theft; unsafe and uncomfortable vehicles; and often unpredictable fares. It also makes it difficult to implement practices such as training the operators

or implementing Protocols to respond to sexual harassment in buses.

**Measures:** If the objectives of the IRUMP project were to be achieved, it was necessary to incorporate the study findings into measures to formalize public transport in Freetown and nationally and to introduce gender-sensitive public transport designs and service operations.

- Design specifications, planning, and operations of buses and bus systems and pedestrian infrastructure: The government has consulted with stakeholders to ensure that women's mobility needs and requirements were incorporated into design, planning, and operations of buses and bus systems. These considerations were included in the bus specifications that the government released for bidding, such as wide seats and assigned spaces for bags and large packages, which will be of particular benefit for women bringing goods to market. Women will also benefit from other design features, including improved bus stops (lighting, visibility, openness, appropriate shelter, benches).
- Paratransit services to incorporate women's priorities: A key element of the IRUMP is formalization of existing informal public transport in Freetown. Because such services provide 96 percent of public transport trips, it is important for the government to integrate them into a formal structure. This would also ensure that problems such as unreliability of routes, scheduling, and fares; overcrowding; and poor overall service quality would be addressed.

- Training on gender equity and bystander interventions<sup>6</sup> actions: Service agreements with informal operators give the government an opportunity to mandate that operators complete gender sensitization training. Training will focus on appropriate response to sexual harassment, and measures will be implemented to address gender-based violence, mainly sexual harassment, on their services through design and implementation of response protocols based on a survivor-centered approach.

**Lessons from Sierra Leone:** Formalization of private sector operators will increase women's safety and mobility by institutionalizing measures in concession agreements such as capacity building and trainings for bus operators on the appropriate response to sexual harassment, referrals to Gender Based Violence (GBV) service providers<sup>7</sup>, and incorporation of a code of conduct that would identify the behavior expected of operator staff and users. This process will also increase women's mobility by designing bus stops, sidewalks, and services that consider mobility patterns linked to their caring responsibilities, personal security, and use of public space through technical design features incorporated into bidding documents. Finally, formalization will facilitate women's mobility by establishing reliable schedules and predictable transport fares plus an integrated ticketing system that make travel easier. All these measures will benefit the population as a whole but will disproportionately benefit women, given their time poverty and the impact on their daily routines of unreliable, unsafe public transport services.

6 Bystander intervention is the act of feeling empowered and equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively assist in the prevention of sexual violence.

7 These are the organizations suitably trained and mandated to respond to GBV cases. They usually include criminal justice agencies, health services, counselling services, NGOs working specifically on GBV, men's groups and other specialist community-based organisations.

## 3.7 LAGOS, NIGERIA

### Collecting evidence to develop a strategy to address sexual harassment of women and girls on public transport

**Context:** Lagos is the most populated city in sub-Saharan Africa, with more than 10 percent of Nigeria's population. It is projected that it will become one of the five largest cities in the world by 2032. Demand for transport in the Lagos metropolitan area by all modes is 22 million passengers per day. With a poorly structured public transportation system, road congestion is inevitable. Public transportation in Lagos State was chaotic and unregulated. Congestion and traffic delays, especially during peak periods, slowed traffic. Inadequate road infrastructure and absence of standard bus terminals and depots increased road congestion. Lack of a regulated public transport system led to frequent changes in fare levels, poor driving habits, and disregard for traffic regulations. These challenges required a drastic change that would bring a safe, sustainable, integrated public transport system to Lagos.

In 2000, the Lagos State government responded to the growing transport problems by defining a sector policy to improve transport services, particularly for low-income public transport users, and developing a strategy to establish institutional mechanisms to manage the public transport sector. The Lagos State government established the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA) in 2002. LAMATA is a semiautonomous corporate body involved in transport planning, transport policy formulation, public transport infrastructure,

and implementation and coordination of operational and investment decisions in transport. Its objective is to ensure that transportation in Lagos is safe, efficient, and convenient.

One of LAMATA's outstanding achievements has been preparation of a strategic long-term plan for the transport sector, the Strategic Transport Master Plan, which is a blueprint for developing urban public transportation in Lagos as it strives to manage rising travel demand of a rapidly growing population. It also identifies traffic management measures, transport infrastructure, and services needed to meet the travel needs of residents and businesses over the next two decades.

**Trigger for action:** In 2020, LAMATA engaged in the EMPOWER consortium, which is a Transport Research Programme funded by UK Aid Direct. The goal was to determine the level of sexual harassment in public transport systems in Africa, with Lagos being a primary case study. Study findings were used to guide decision makers, policy makers, and transport professionals in deterring sexual harassment by understanding the effects it had on travel plans and recommending actions to prevent sexual harassment in public transport and connected spaces.

Data were collected over 6 days in March 2021 from 1,000 people using a survey distributed in 11 city districts, with strict adherence to COVID-19 prevention guidelines. An important part of the survey was to assess the best ways to ask questions about harassment (e.g., question style, most appropriate location). Two models were used to test the comfort of each gender when questioned on sexual harassment by a man or a woman: with male enumerators interviewing men only and female enumerators interviewing women only and with male



Source: LAMATA

and female enumerators interviewing men and women.

Eighty percent of respondents who had experienced or witnessed sexual harassment had not changed their travel patterns. A few respondents changed their routes or departure time, and others now traveled with a friend or relative. All affected respondents still used public transport. Most respondents who changed their

travel patterns because of sexual harassment were women aged 19 to 45. A post-survey focus group discussion was conducted in 2021 in collaboration with relevant Lagos State stakeholders, specifically from the Nigerian Police, the Lagos State Ministry of Justice, and the Domestic Sexual and Violence Response Team, to discuss and reflect on the survey findings and recommend actions to prevent and address sexual harassment on public transport.



**Measures:** After the survey and focus group discussions, LAMATA began developing measures from the evidence gathered to be implemented alongside the Lagos Strategic Transport Master Plan:

- Ensure the presence of law enforcement officers trained to mitigate sexual harassment along bus routes and in terminals and stations to deter sexual misconduct by commuters
- Use a team model including all relevant agencies to establish a 24-hour-a-day helpline for men and women affected by domestic or sexual violence, with trained advisers answering the helpline
- Implement a statewide awareness campaign against sexual harassment in public transport on all advertising vehicles that will focus on helplines to raise awareness of and report sexual harassment on public transport
- Develop a communication protocol to feed data into the SHE-CAN tool (a decision-making tool derived from the EMPOWER research, forthcoming late 2022), which will integrate with LAMATA's Intelligent Transport System
- Install CCTV cameras in all public areas, particularly bus terminals, bus stops, and buses, to monitor or prevent sexual harassment in public transport.

**Lessons from Lagos:** The Lagos case demonstrates a steady evolution of policy and strategy toward gender-sensitive public transport planning. Establishment of LAMATA was a major step in the process, as was the resulting transport master plan into which gender measures are being incorporated and development of evidence based on gender. An important objective of data collection for EMPOWER was to un-

derstand the best ways to conduct a survey on harassment. This is something not addressed before, with many surveys asking similar, quite general questions. The hope was that, by focusing on and testing different survey strategies and question formats, important gaps in knowledge might emerge. In this way, the LAMATA case and the EMPOWER project can be exemplars from which to learn the best ways to conduct surveys about sexual harassment on public transport.

## 3.8 PORT MORESBY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

### Effectiveness of a local NGO in developing bottom-up solutions to address sexual harassment on public transport

**Context:** In a global review, International Human Rights Watch (2017) found that PNG is one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a woman, with most experiencing rape or assault in their lifetime and facing systemic discrimination. Public transport is no exception. A 2014 scoping study conducted by UN Women found that more than 90 per cent of women and girls experienced some form of violence when accessing public transport and broadly using public space (UN Women 2019). Women-only public transport has been controversial globally, but for cities where sexual harassment has become acute, such services have been welcomed as a short to medium term measure.

**Trigger for action:** Reacting to the worsening situation for women and girls in Port Moresby, in 2014, a local NGO, Ginigoad (Stand Strong),



Source: UN Women

asked the government to release one old bus for a trial of a free public transport service for women (Christy 2019). The Port Moresby local authority National Capital District Commission (NCDC) released five old buses, from which one roadworthy vehicle was assembled; the local UN Women office provided initial funding. It was initially envisaged as a short-term trial to prove the value of the service as a commercial arrangement but has been operating now for 7 years. After the initial launch in Port Moresby, the program was expanded to Lae, the second-largest city in PNG, in 2019. The women-only transport program began exclusively as a free service called Meri Seif (Woman Safe) and, in 2017, added a pay-to-ride service called M-Buses.

From 2014 to the middle of 2019, in Port Moresby, the number of buses increased from one

to 11, the number of routes from one to six, and the number of female passengers from 21,000 to more than 600,000. Since 2019, signs point to continued growth with the government and donors (UN Women, and private car rental and bus companies) donating some buses (Christy 2019).

**Measures:** The initial trial has developed into a regular network of services. The evolution and maintenance of the Meri Seif free buses and the M-buses has been an excellent example of a multi-agency effort. The services have had several positive additional elements.

- Using services to raise awareness of women's rights and support services: A group of teen volunteers called Sanap Wantaim (Stand Together) has assisted the program with on-bus awareness raising of passengers on women's

rights and where they can obtain assistance if they are harassed or witness harassment, augmenting the UN Women Safe City Free of Violence against Women and Girls Initiative. Local women's agencies see the buses as a visual expression of women's rights across the city, giving women a voice and changing the attitudes of men. The arrival of the Meri Seif buses was seen as a lifeline for women and girls.

- **Training men in customer front-facing roles:** In 2017, through a partnership with the Public Motor Vehicles association, the municipal Gender Desk and UN Women trained 500 male drivers, crew and bus operators on gender equality, human rights, and different forms of Violence Against Women (VAW). The sessions included the definition of sexual harassment and existing reporting mechanisms.
- **Generating transport jobs for women:** An unexpected benefit of the program has been the training and hiring of 10 female drivers by the Ginigoda foundation and UN Women with funds from the Canadian government. By the end of 2021, almost 50 women had been trained (Christy 2019, UN Women 2019).

**Lessons from Port Moresby, PNG:** The Port Moresby Safe City initiative has had significant impacts, such as greater capacity of public transport authorities and operators to address sexual harassment, greater awareness of female commuters of their rights and how to identify and report sexual harassment, and greater cohesion and shared values of equality and mutual respect of drivers and bus operators. At the same time, despite the success of the women-only bus services, the situation in PNG remains critical. Safe travel around Port Moresby remains elusive. Long-term financial sustainability for women-only buses is also a challenge. The case provides many lessons, in-

cluding that sex segregation alone on public transport does not address the root causes of the problem. It does not always stop harassment, which can happen anywhere in public, so the solution is a two-pronged strategy—short-term measures (e.g., women-only buses) that address the problem for today and medium- and long-term measures (e.g., behavioral change campaign) to address deep-rooted gender norms and stereotypes for tomorrow.

## 3.9 SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

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How a national government initiative on public transport fare levels evolved into a municipal mechanism to address gender discrimination on public transport services

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**Context:** The central government in Brazil has developed gender policies and strategies for individual cities and regions to implement—a top-down effort, albeit in response to strong bottom-up pressure from civil society. São Paulo Transporte (SP Trans) is the primary public transport organization in São Paulo. It was established in 1995 as a registered company in which the Municipality of São Paulo is the majority shareholder and is responsible for planning, managing, and monitoring bus operations across the city. In Brazil, most transport policies are defined by the municipality; the Federal government sometimes provides guidelines but without interfering. Private bus companies run bus services on contract to SP Trans using a combined fleet of 11,800 buses. Before COVID, daily ridership was 9 million passengers.

**Trigger for action:** Public concern about sexual harassment on public transport services in the city was given visibility and a voice through an institution established in 2013: the São Paulo Conselho Municipal de Transito e Transporte (CMTT; Municipal Traffic and Transport Council), which, for the case of this city, was established in response to the local pressure triggered by the recurring increases of the bus fares that private bus operators were charging, fueled by the Free Fare Movement (Movimento Passe Livre). CMTTs in Brazil resulted from a recommendation of the Federal Government as an intermediary between citizens (experts representing civil society) and other transport stakeholders responsible for transport planning and service provision. These CMTTs enable to bring a voice to different stakeholders as they are either advisory bodies or deliberative. São Paulo was one of the last cities in Brazil to establish a CMTT. Even if the original trigger for their conformation was the increase in fares, it opened the door to advise on other topics, for instance, public concern about sexual harassment on the city's public transport arose through the CMTT initiative.

Now established, the São Paulo CMTT has an equal membership of government departments, public transport operators, and experts from civil society. A gender working group that cuts across the existing five working groups that focus on specific modes of transport (bicycles, pedestrians, school buses, taxis, motorcycles) has been established in response to concerns about sexual harassment. The working group also has representatives from the Municipal Department of Transport and Mobility, SP Trans, CMTT, and the police.

**Measures:** In response to working group discussions, in 2021, SP Trans implemented a four-

pronged action to address sexual harassment on bus services in the city.

- **Awareness campaigns:** In 2021, SP Trans organized a 3-month campaign called *Ponto Final Ao Abuso Sexual Nos Onibus* (The Final Stop for Sexual Abuse on Buses) to encourage victims and observers to report sexual harassment and to warn off potential offenders. The key message was displayed boldly on the outside of the bus. Pamphlets and brochures, distributed inside buses, showed people how to respond if they experienced or witnessed harassment on the buses. The campaign was also highlighted on popular morning TV shows and social media channels (SP Trans 2021a; 2021b).
- **Dedicated victim or observer phone helpline to report sexual harassment:** The standard toll-free helpline number 156 was extended such that a woman experiencing harassment or an observer wishing to report harassment could add a 0 (1560) to receive assistance. The person would then be put in touch with a female operator trained to handle harassment and violence against women. During the 3-month campaign period in 2021, 26 complaints were reported (SP Trans 2021a).
- **Victim or observer reporting kiosks:** Safe Kiosks, safe spaces where women can report harassment after disembarking from a bus, was opened at two bus stations on International Women's Day in March 2021. These kiosks had sufficient space and privacy to ensure that women felt safe to report (SP Trans 2021b). If the trial kiosks are successful, more kiosks could be opened. The short-term impact of the kiosks was surprising; no one used them to report sexual harassment, but women used them to report domestic abuse and violence.



- First-response training for bus conductors and drivers: Training focused on teaching conductors and drivers how to react to sexual harassment as first responders—reassuring victims of their full support—was seen as a vital part of the overall strategy against sexual harassment on buses. Staff were given the freedom to decide how to proceed with the complaint. Training began in early 2020, before the coronavirus pandemic.

**Lessons from São Paulo:** São Paulo now has a mechanism for addressing gender harassment on public transport. The four measures implemented in São Paulo show the commitment of the city authority and SP Trans to address sexual harassment and abuse of women on buses. The São Paulo case study is relatively recent, and the coronavirus pandemic has slowed the progress of the measures, so evidence of their impact is limited. SP Trans must ensure a robust monitoring program to track the impact and respond to the results.

One thing that the case study highlighted is that women used kiosks to report harassment and abuse they experience at home (and at work) rather than on public transport. The focus of the working group could be extended to all forms of mobility, and a cross-sector effort should be developed to ensure that the marketing, contents and location of the kiosks keeps survivors' confidentiality and links with adequate services to promote survivors with care.

The other lesson from the São Paulo experience is that there is a need to be proactive in developing engagement channels to highlight problems such as sexual harassment on public transport. More generally, although the national government can require cities and regions to address gender inequalities in transport, such as the CMTT in Brazil, city authorities should be empowered to take the initiative. To do this, they need guidance on how to start the process—robust evidence and intelligence that helps them turn concerns raised over sexual harassment into action.



Source: SPTrans

## 3.10 SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA<sup>8</sup>

An evidence-based approach combining national government action and local community engagement to address sexual harassment of women

**Context:** The government of South Korea has developed gender policies and strategies from the top down, responding to strong bottom-up pressure from civil society. There was a radical shift to address the acute and growing problem of sexual assault on women in South Korea from 2010 to 2013. The Korean Ministry for Economic Development was looking for ways to greatly increase the number of women involved in economic activity in the country. It was increasingly clear that sexual harassment on transport and in public spaces was strongly influencing women's job and education choices. In 2013, a woman was sexually assaulted every 23 minutes, and only approximately 1 percent of assaults were reported. Laws providing increasingly stronger punishments against the perpetrators of sex crimes, were having little impact on the fundamental roots of the problem.

**Trigger for action:** There was a strong civil society reaction to these sexual assaults. Combined with a policy commitment of the national government to address the problem, a proactive strategy was developed and implemented in cities and regions. The strategy was preventative and community-driven.

The Seoul administration combined with women's organizations, citizens, and experts to develop this new policy and strategy, which was research based and led to a three-part prevention effort:

- Raise community awareness of human rights and the rights of victims, aiming for a long-term, sustainable impact, through community campaigning and educational programs for all ages
- Design transport, environmental, and human networks to make the city a safer place
- Establish a one-stop system for victims to report crimes and receive protection.

Detailed data on the nature and patterns of sexual assaults in the city were analyzed through the Seoul Metropolitan Agency (SMPA), working with four support centers for victims of sex crimes and the Seoul Women's University. In 2013, the SMPA established a task force in partnership with the police to develop a quick-response strategy.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design was adopted as the basis for urban design to reduce violence and sex crimes, particularly in the more marginalized areas of the city. In addition, a complementary program to establish human networks for women's safety was launched: the Safer Neighbourhoods for Women program. Seoul was the first Korean city to launch such a scheme, in which organizations and citizens are directly involved; people effectively become guardians of safety for their neighbors. This has reduced violence against women more than could have been achieved using surveillance cameras. Each neighborhood develops local measures that the

<sup>8</sup> For more details about this case, please visit the Seoul City Government's policy archive in English: <https://www.seoulsolution.kr/en/content/fighting-violence-against-women-making-seoul-safer-city-women-project>

city council funds and supports—grassroots local policy making. A safe company service has been implemented whereby women returning home late at night can have a person charged with ensuring women's and girl's safety accompany them. By 2014, the scheme was employing 800 women from marginalized groups and low-income households to escort women home late at night and patrol neighborhoods. This was a strong link between city government and grassroots citizen action.

In March 2013, a cross-departmental initiative, presided over by the city's first vice-mayor, led to establishment of the Comprehensive Plan for the Prevention of Sexual Violence—a public-private partnership to develop public awareness campaigns, city-wide security networks, and a one-stop reporting and support system with local citizens and NGOs. The Gender Equality Committee (a body of 36 women representatives) and gender governance meetings, which Seoul city organizes with citizens and NGOs, monitor progress. Monitoring includes interviews with victims of sexual assault, which has revealed many flaws in the reporting and redress procedures that needed to be addressed. As a result, and under the leadership of the mayor, the Sexual Violence Crisis Intervention Team and legal and medical advisory groups consisting of police officers, council members, and medical and legal practitioners were established.

**Measures:** The city of Seoul had a clear understanding that violence against women must be addressed not only in public transport but also in public spaces to improve women's accessibility. For this purpose, a multistakeholder approach that included the community, the private sector and public officials was put into place. Some of the activities included:

- Targeting low-income neighborhoods, the city convinced the private sector to invest in the initiative. ADT Caps, a private security company, installed CCTV cameras, infrared sensors, and window shields.
- Six hundred fifty-six 24-hour convenience stores across the city were designated as women's safety patrol houses, safe havens from harassment and sexual attacks. Store staff can alert the authorities via a wireless alarm linked to the police, decreasing response time. Three thousand women were trained in how to keep women safe in the stores.
- More than 1,000 citizen volunteers were enlisted to accompany women home late at night, more than 2,000 were registered as volunteers for patrols under the Safer Neighbourhoods for Women program, and more than 1,000 delivery men from franchise restaurants have been trained to spot violence and how to respond.
- Sexual violence prevention classes were provided to more than 50,000 people of all ages and backgrounds each year (puppet shows, self-defense classes).
- Gender awareness training is mandatory for all public officials. A team of 24 public officials reviews the progress of the women's policy regularly and recommends changes when necessary.
- The city council and the SMPA conducted research that identified 600 areas that warranted special control and monitoring for sexual violence. In addition to special Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design support, specially trained officers are assigned to patrol these areas.



*Photo: Safe Company Service, Seoul*

- In support of these special measures, the city's general helpline number provides first response and follow-up support to victims. By 2014, 65,000 women had used the service, with a satisfaction rate of 85 percent.

Safer Neighbourhoods for Women has been a success because of the active involvement of residents. For example, older women living in neighborhoods where children play in the evenings have formed volunteer monitoring groups.

**Lessons from Seoul:** Establishment of Crime Prevention Through Environmental De-

sign and the Comprehensive Plan for the Prevention of Sexual Violence was a critical stage in addressing sexual harassment in the city and developing a truly preventative approach. A key element was the close partnerships established with citizens. Collaboration with the Seoul Women's University and the private sector, combined with extensive data collection and database set-up was another key reason for success. Added to the feedback from citizens on the ground, this multifaceted assessment and monitoring has proved essential.





## Concluding Remarks

Image credit: [www.flickr.com/photos/worldbank/albums](http://www.flickr.com/photos/worldbank/albums)

**Global coverage:** The 10 cases described in Chapter 3 provide an overview of selected globally relevant practices of how public transport agencies and operators have been addressing gender concerns, responding to national laws and guidance, and developing home-grown initiatives or adopting good practices from elsewhere. It has been important to take an evolutionary perspective in each case, charting how public transport agencies were able to develop top-level gender policies, how these policies were translated into the strategic planning process, and how these plans have been implemented as innovative measures. Pathways to success are as important as benefits from individual measures.

**Range of public transport contexts:** The cases cover not only diverse regions, but also the range of public transport and public space environments. Most transport authorities have developed gender-based measures for formal bus networks, where public or arms-length agencies contract private bus operators (e.g., São Paulo). In two cases, most women are transported on informal, unregulated services (Freetown, Port Moresby). In some cities, private limited companies operate public transport, but a public body is the major shareholder and overall transport supervisory body (e.g., Brussels). Rail-based modes are also included in the cases, from national authorities (e.g., Egypt, Ireland) to urban light rail and metro systems

(e.g., Bogotá, Dublin). The case studies include cities that have addressed the wider security of public spaces within which public transport services operate (e.g., Seoul).

**A wealth of initiatives:** By the nature of the study, evidence of gender measures may be partial, although many lessons can be taken from this report that other public transport agencies can use to develop their own gender strategies, fine-tuning each measure to fit best in the local context. Promising practices on gender measures need not be borrowed only from the region where the country is located. Many of the measures that have been implemented are globally relevant and transferable.

**Gender sensitization of transport globally in three phases:** Despite the diversity of cases and small sample size, it is possible to identify a global trend in the transport concerns of women and girls. The beginning and ending of these phases might not be the same globally, and there might be some differences in timeline between cities depending on context, capacity, and cultural and historical factors that trigger change. Nevertheless, there are many similarities in the types of initiatives implemented: institutional; governance related; or related to public transport and public space management, design, and operations. We can identify distinct timeframes of the three phases, which is summarized in figure 2 followed by the detailed explanation of each phase

FIGURE 2:

### The three phases of incorporation of gender considerations into planning and operations: 2000-2020s.

Evolution of the three phases		
Phase 1 Building foundations	Phase 2 Developing a gender lens	Phase 3 Making a difference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cornerstone legislation adopted</b> on gender equality, social inclusion, and antidiscrimination</li> <li>• <b>Key public transport organizations established</b> that would be responsible for gender-sensitive transport planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governance structures put in place</b> to address gender disparities in the sector</li> <li>• <b>Strategies developed and adopted</b> to make public transport gender-sensitive</li> <li>• <b>Actions taken to operationalize them</b> (from better infrastructure design to training and communication campaigns)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Remaining challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A holistic approach:</b> Addressing deep-rooted negative gender norms vs adopting measures for “today”</li> <li>• <b>Data collection and analysis, and impact evaluations</b> to underpin evidence-based interventions</li> <li>• <b>Communication and dissemination.</b> Understanding and reporting what has worked, what has not, and why, to allow for learning and replication</li> <li>• <b>Knowing the beneficiaries of gender-responsive transport service</b> to advocate for gender equality more effectively and convincingly</li> </ul>

#### Phase 1, 2000–10: Building foundations

There are two primary characteristics of this period across the cases:

- **Cornerstone legislation:** Key pieces of national legislation on gender equality, social inclusion, and antidiscrimination are the cornerstones from which to develop institutions and governance structures in the next phase that would address gender-sensitive public transport and urban space planning in general (e.g., Law 1257 in Colombia).
- **Key institutions:** Key public transport organizations were established that would be responsible for strategic public transport planning and operations and, in Phase 2, gender-sensitive planning (e.g., São Paulo, Lagos).

#### Phase 2, 2010–20: Developing a gender lens

In this phase, high-level national laws and regulations on gender equality and social inclusion were developed into institutions and channels of working governance. The four stages are:

- **Governance:** National, regional, or municipal agencies were established to ensure that gender concerns are identified, awareness raised, and capacity built to address the concerns (e.g., Amman, Bogotá, Brussels, Dublin, São Paulo).
- **Intelligence:** Many of the institutions established to address gender started by undertaking important baseline projects to identify mobility needs of women and girls including statistical surveys and qualitative discussions, engaging with women travelers,

and understanding women's mobility requirements and key issues (e.g., Bogotá, Cairo, Dublin, Freetown, Lagos, Seoul).

- **Strategy:** Based on evidence gathered from key projects, the next stage was development and formal approval of strategies to make public transport gender-sensitive (e.g., Amman, Bogotá, Brussels, São Paulo, Seoul).
- **Action:** The final stage in the sequence is putting strategies into practice, with implementation of some of the measures specified in the strategies. The range of actions undertaken are discussed below.

**Measures achieved in Phase 2:** A variety of measures were identified in the case studies to fill gaps in public transport provision. They are as follows:

- **Design:** Better, safer vehicles and carriages, stops and stations, lighting, visibility, openness, shelter and waiting seats, pavements, station platform management, ticket purchasing areas, crowd-avoidance strategies on platforms and plaza areas, and pick-up and drop-off areas; policing of quiet times; gender-separated toilets; avoidance of dead-ends and alcoves; visible security; effective wayfinding systems; online ticket sales; train seats facing each other; wider aisles; wider seats or storage for market goods; emergency buttons next to doors; segregated platforms and carriages; alert systems and channels for reporting; safety kiosks with signage; Wi-Fi on carriages; use of women for voice and video announcements and advice to passengers
- **Security and deterrents:** Greater safety for last-mile trips through public spaces, safe interchanges for multi-stage trips, safety nets for women and girls traveling at night or in remote areas, guardians to allow wom-

en and girls to enjoy public spaces in low-income neighborhoods protection points (e.g., Seoul), emergency call facilities, education and self-defense training, plain-clothes and high-visibility (armed) police and security officers, better trained staff at all levels and back-office and front-line responders, use of a range of deterrents to punish inappropriate behavior.

- **Training and recruitment:** Removing glass ceilings, recruiting female drivers and conductors.
- **Public awareness campaigns:** Campaigns sensitive to the large proportion of women unable to read or write in some countries, raising awareness of sexual harassment in schools.

**Differences in approach:** There were two primary approaches followed across the case studies in Phase 2—a conventional public transport planning approach and a wider approach that was more socially embedded in issues of women's rights. The former approach was the more common one: surveying women's mobility patterns and identifying their specific needs for infrastructure and services, plus a new range of actions to address sexual harassment. The second approach originated from a human rights approach. For example, the strategy in Seoul was to exploit community networks and build local cohesion around the harassment issue. The PPMYEG in Bogota underlined the objective of women being able to exercise their right to a life free of violence in both public and private spaces. In Sierra Leone, emphasis was placed on the development of a more caring society, and in Papua New Guinea, women traveling on the women-only services were given verbal information about their right to free movement.



### Phase 3, the 2020s: Making a difference

Phase 3 addresses the agenda for the 2020s. Although much progress has been made in the last decade in governance, intelligence gathering, strategy development, and implementation of measures, there is concern that the progress has reached a plateau and the - impetus to address women's concerns in public transport is in danger of weakening. This picture may not necessarily be that gloomy, but it could be due to the fact that many good practices are not being documented and importantly shared widely preventing learning, scaling up and replication elsewhere. Phase 3 will need to aim to implement policies to move from gender sensitive to gender transformative, but organizations have a long way to go to develop the capacity, resources, and willingness to transform inequitable gender norms and relations to promote equality.

#### Challenges for Phase 3

- **A holistic approach:** The approaches taken have been mainly what might be considered reactive and piecemeal approaches to women's mobility barriers. For example:
  - **Sexual harassment:** The approach in the 2020s must be to address the problem at its roots and implement measures that can prevent it. For example, sex segregation alone in public transport does not address the root causes of the problem; it does not always stop harassment, which can happen anywhere in public space, such as while walking, transferring from one transport mode to the other, or waiting for transport. Hence a two-pronged solution is required—one that addresses the problem with measures today and one that changes deep-rooted negative gender norms for tomorrow.
  - **Beyond the transport fleet:** Much attention has been focused on the travel experience within public transport and immediate points of access and egress because women's mobility challenges are often mistakenly understood to stem only from the design and operations of public transport service, but they also involve the broader public space. The journey from door to door—including the pedestrian environment, interchanges within and between transport modes, accessibility to hard aspects (e.g., stations) and soft aspects (e.g., information) are equally important and must be considered.
  - **Network design:** Similarly, even if the journey from door to door involving hard and soft aspects addresses women's mobility concerns, the very design of networks must be reconsidered to cater to women's complex travel needs in terms of where they actually need to go. It often goes beyond the regular Monday to Friday business-hour commute from a suburb to city-center which most networks have been designed around. The availability of transport options—and in particular whether those options have adequate first- and last-mile connectivity and at times that support women's trip chaining patterns—affect women and girls' mobility more than that of men and boys.
  - **Gender norms:** Some studies (Domínguez et al. 2020) have revealed that embedded gender norms within the household constrain women's time, as they have to juggle between household responsibilities and remunerated work, and therefore the

possibility of traveling longer distances to access better jobs. The complexity and relevance of this topic should naturally lead to interinstitutional collaboration to push for agendas related to, for example, locating childcare facilities close or within transport hubs or working with men through community mobilization strategies to change behaviors and encourage couples to share domestic chores.

- **Data collection and analysis, and evaluation of measures:** Although the need for data has been acknowledged, there is still a dearth of sex-disaggregated mobility data collected and analyzed systematically across transport networks which does not consider different times of the day and geographical locations and that would underpin gender-responsive interventions. Monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of interventions is another critical part still largely missing that are needed to improve and expand interventions across the sector.
- **Communication and Dissemination:** Reporting what has worked, what has not, and

why to allow for cross-country and region learning, replication and scaling up: The challenge is to ensure that public transport stakeholders continue with current strategies and measures and collect and share information on what has been working, what has not, and why. For example, it would be useful to replicate and adapt the most effective clauses in concession contracts, the best elements in awareness raising, and training courses for staff.

- **Correct messaging/knowing the beneficiaries of gender-responsive transport service:** In most cases, problems have been treated as ‘women’s’ concerns, although as research shows, addressing gender gaps in mobility has wider societal benefits and facilitates human rights, economic growth, and environmental sustainability and it could also impact the transport service providers’ bottom line. It is important that these cases be seen as part of broader efforts to make public transport more convenient, accessible, safe, affordable, clean, reliable, and financially sustainable without losing of sight the priorities of different groups.

## ENDNOTE

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This report is a snapshot of how public transport stakeholders at 10 entities around the world have been integrating gender into design, management, and operations. Particular attention has been paid to the critical problem of sexual harassment of women and girls when they travel. This remains one of the greatest transport challenges in the world yet one in-

visible to a majority of professionally trained transport planners. The case studies show how much public transport stakeholders have achieved, but this progress has only highlighted the challenges that must be overcome to make transport systems fully gender-sensitive, sustainable, and safe for all.

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1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433  
Telephone: 202-473-1000; Internet: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

