

Duchène, Chantal

**Working Paper**

## Gender and transport

International Transport Forum Discussion Paper, No. 2011-11

**Provided in Cooperation with:**

International Transport Forum (ITF), OECD

*Suggested Citation:* Duchène, Chantal (2011) : Gender and transport, International Transport Forum Discussion Paper, No. 2011-11, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Transport Forum, Paris,  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/5kg9mq47w59w-en>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/68812>

**Standard-Nutzungsbedingungen:**

Die Dokumente auf EconStor dürfen zu eigenen wissenschaftlichen Zwecken und zum Privatgebrauch gespeichert und kopiert werden.

Sie dürfen die Dokumente nicht für öffentliche oder kommerzielle Zwecke vervielfältigen, öffentlich ausstellen, öffentlich zugänglich machen, vertreiben oder anderweitig nutzen.

Sofern die Verfasser die Dokumente unter Open-Content-Lizenzen (insbesondere CC-Lizenzen) zur Verfügung gestellt haben sollten, gelten abweichend von diesen Nutzungsbedingungen die in der dort genannten Lizenz gewährten Nutzungsrechte.

**Terms of use:**

*Documents in EconStor may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.*

*You are not to copy documents for public or commercial purposes, to exhibit the documents publicly, to make them publicly available on the internet, or to distribute or otherwise use the documents in public.*

*If the documents have been made available under an Open Content Licence (especially Creative Commons Licences), you may exercise further usage rights as specified in the indicated licence.*

# Gender and Transport

11

**Discussion Paper 2011 • 11**

**Chantal DUCHÈNE**

ChD Mobilité Transport, France

This document was produced as background for the 2011 International Transport Forum, on 25-27 May in Leipzig, Germany, on *Transport for Society*. The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the member countries of the International Transport Forum.

Further information about the International Transport Forum is available at  
**[www.internationaltransportforum.org](http://www.internationaltransportforum.org)**

# **Gender and Transport**

**Discussion Paper No. 2011-11**

**Chantal Duchène**  
Director  
ChD Mobilité Transport, France

**April 2011**

## **INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM**

The International Transport Forum at the OECD is an intergovernmental organisation with 52 member countries. It acts as a strategic think tank with the objective of helping shape the transport policy agenda on a global level and ensuring that it contributes to economic growth, environmental protection, social inclusion and the preservation of human life and well-being. The International Transport Forum organizes an annual summit of Ministers along with leading representatives from industry, civil society and academia.

The International Transport Forum was created under a Declaration issued by the Council of Ministers of the ECMT (European Conference of Ministers of Transport) at its Ministerial Session in May 2006 under the legal authority of the Protocol of the ECMT, signed in Brussels on 17 October 1953, and legal instruments of the OECD.

The Members of the Forum are: Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, FYROM, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The International Transport Forum's Research Centre gathers statistics and conducts co-operative research programmes addressing all modes of transport. Its findings are widely disseminated and support policymaking in Member countries as well as contributing to the annual summit.

## **DISCUSSION PAPERS**

The International Transport Forum's Discussion Paper Series makes economic research, commissioned or carried out at its Research Centre, available to researchers and practitioners. The aim is to contribute to the understanding of the transport sector and to provide inputs to transport policy design. The Discussion Papers are not edited by the International Transport Forum and they reflect the author's opinions alone.

The Discussion Papers can be downloaded from:

[www.internationaltransportforum.org/jtrc/DiscussionPapers/jtrcpapers.html](http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/jtrc/DiscussionPapers/jtrcpapers.html)

The International Transport Forum's website is at: [www.internationaltransportforum.org](http://www.internationaltransportforum.org) or further information on the Discussion Papers and other JTRC activities, please email: [itf.contact@oecd.org](mailto:itf.contact@oecd.org)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	4
GENDER ON THE AGENDA .....	5
1. Introduction .....	5
OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION .....	7
2. Characteristics of women's travel practices .....	7
3. Influence of travel issues on the life of women .....	11
4. Failure to take account of women in decision-making processes .....	12
5. Women in transport-related occupations .....	12
EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES .....	13
6. Taking account of women's needs in the design of infrastructure, vehicles and services ...	13
7. Women's participation in the decision-making process .....	13
8. Employment of women .....	14
RECOMMENDATIONS .....	15
9. Statistics .....	15
10. Women's participation in planning and decision-making processes .....	15
11. Taking account of the distinctive characteristics of women's mobility .....	15
12. Employment of women in the transport sector .....	16

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

While greater account is increasingly being taken of gender in a variety of areas, little progress has been made in this respect in the transport sector. In both developed and developing countries, our societies are gendered in that women and men play different roles, notably because household chores and children are mainly the preserve of women, which reduces the time they have available for activities for which they are responsible and for the trips they need to make in order to perform these activities.

Development, employment and even health policies must take account of the issue of travel. And to do this successfully, it is essential to seek ways in which to incorporate the issue of gender into policies relating to mobility and transport.

At present, it is no longer women's non-governmental organisations that stress this point, but the community as a whole. It is for this reasons that this theme is now being examined in greater depth by the International Transport Forum which commissioned this report.

The report begins with an overview of the situation, and then presents good practices and a set of recommendations. It addresses both developed and developing countries, urban and rural areas, and infrastructure and services.

## **GENDER ON THE AGENDA**

### **1. Introduction**

Gender refers to the social construct which determines the social relations between men and women. Integrating gender consists in taking account of the determinants of masculinity and femininity, as well as gender-related obligations and needs. The concept of gender equality refers to the aim of reducing inequalities of access and opportunity between men and women.

The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man recognises the equality of men and women: “Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.”

The United Nations is working to raise awareness of inequalities between men and women, to combat these inequalities, and for women’s rights at the international level.

The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the most comprehensive international agreement on the fundamental rights of women.

The Convention states that “States parties to take “all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.”

Equality is achieved not only at the social level, but also from an economic standpoint: the UN and the United Nations Commission for Europe stress the fact that equality is an integral part of a modern strategy towards growth.

At the 1992 world summit in Rio de Janeiro, women’s NGOs presented the “Women’s Agenda 21”, the outcome of two years of intense work by an international collective. A lucid portrayal of maldevelopment, this document analysed the interconnections and linkages that exist between inequalities of access to resources and wealth, the lack of a sense of responsibility towards future generations among the main decision-makers, the war economy, etc. It proposed a new model of society and laid particular emphasis on better integrating the distinctive characteristics of women into all UN programmes and strategies. The official Agenda 21 incorporated some of the recommendations made in this document and stated that women had to receive greater recognition and play a greater part in the design and implementation of environmental policy.

At the major international conferences which followed, women’s NGOs continued to demonstrate their commitment to fairer development that shows greater respect for future generations. They asserted their resolve to campaign on all fronts for equal rights to participate in decision-making processes and to ensure that account is taken of the specific experiences and interests of all those who find themselves in a situation of heavy dependence. For these women’s NGOs, the themes of parity and sustainability are inseparable.

This is borne out by data from the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) published by the OECD Development Centre which shows that countries that strongly discriminate women usually have poorer results in the implementation of several Millennium Development Goals.

The issue of taking account of gender in transport is a fairly recent one. Since the statistics do not differentiate between men and women, it is hard to understand the differences in reasons for making trips, trip frequency, distances travelled, mobility-related problems in gaining access to health services, employment, etc.

In the United States, where the feminist movement was extremely strong in the 1970s and 1980s, the issue was mainly addressed in the research sector, particularly under the auspices of Dr. Sandra Rosenbloom who has published numerous papers on this topic since 1975. Research has also been carried out in Canada (Quebec) in the 2000s. The Transport Research Board has organised several conferences on this topic, the latest being in October 2009.

In Europe, this issue first emerged in the 1990s, notably in France (with the founding of the *Femmes en mouvement, les transports au féminin association*), and in Sweden and Scotland with the creation of several associations of elected and/or professional women working in the transport sector. The European Commission helped these associations to federate into a body (the EQUIP network) with which it could deal directly. Unfortunately, the EQUIP network was unable to have a regular activity over time. The issue of women and transport was also discussed at a colloquy entitled: "The challenges facing European society with the approach of the year 2000: role and representation of women in urban and regional planning aiming at sustainable development", organised by the Council of Europe Ornskoldsvik (Sweden) in March 1994.

The World Bank decided to address the issue of gender in the late 1990s by analysing the reasons for the failure of a number of development projects. It published its gender strategy action plan in 2000, under which gender was to be integrated into all World Bank development projects. The notion of gender equality refers to the aim of reducing inequalities of access and opportunities between men and women. In order to improve its policy strategy in the transport sector, the Gender and Transport Thematic Group (GTTG) was set up in 2001 and the Bank, in partnership with other sponsors, funded ten case studies of the integration of gender into transport projects. In 2004, the GTTG was wound up and integrated into the larger Transport and Social Responsibility Thematic Group (TSR).

At present, many projects in developing countries aim to encourage access for women to services and means of transport, and to improve the participation of women in transport-related jobs. The account taken of gender in this way is justified by the fact that it enhances the effectiveness of actions in the transport sector and therefore has an increased impact on poverty reduction. The development agencies are supporting a varied range of efforts to take account of gender issues in transport and to develop tools that can be used by transport planners, policy makers and practitioners. The participation of women in working and discussion groups on transport system planning is particularly encouraging.

## OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION

### 2. Characteristics of women's travel practices

The lack of gendered statistics constitutes a major inhibitor in gaining an understanding of travel practices differentiated by gender and therefore on the introduction of solutions. The overview presented below is therefore based on a limited number of disparate data.

The first meaning of mobility is undertaking a trip in order to do something; it can be evaluated in terms of the number of modes of travel, the distances travelled and the location of the spaces frequented. It is a fact that the area of investment for women still remains relatively limited. In many cases fewer women than men have their own private car, public transport networks remain inadequate, and certain districts are unsafe, particularly at night.

It is interesting to note that there are a lot of similarities in the characteristics of trips made by women not only between developed and developing countries, but also between urban and rural areas. In all locations women have programmes of activity that are far more complex than those of men due to their double working day, in that usually women not only have to take care of domestic chores, children, elderly relatives and the sick, but also participate in productive activity. Women frequently need to make trips outside rush hours and to destinations different to those of men, for example to go shopping or to accompany children to school, health centres, etc. The time lost in travelling is therefore far more penalising for women. Furthermore, in all countries there are far fewer women working in transport-related jobs, which are seen as being "men's work". Nevertheless, the conditions that apply to mobility obviously vary substantially and in most cases are more penalising for women in developing countries.

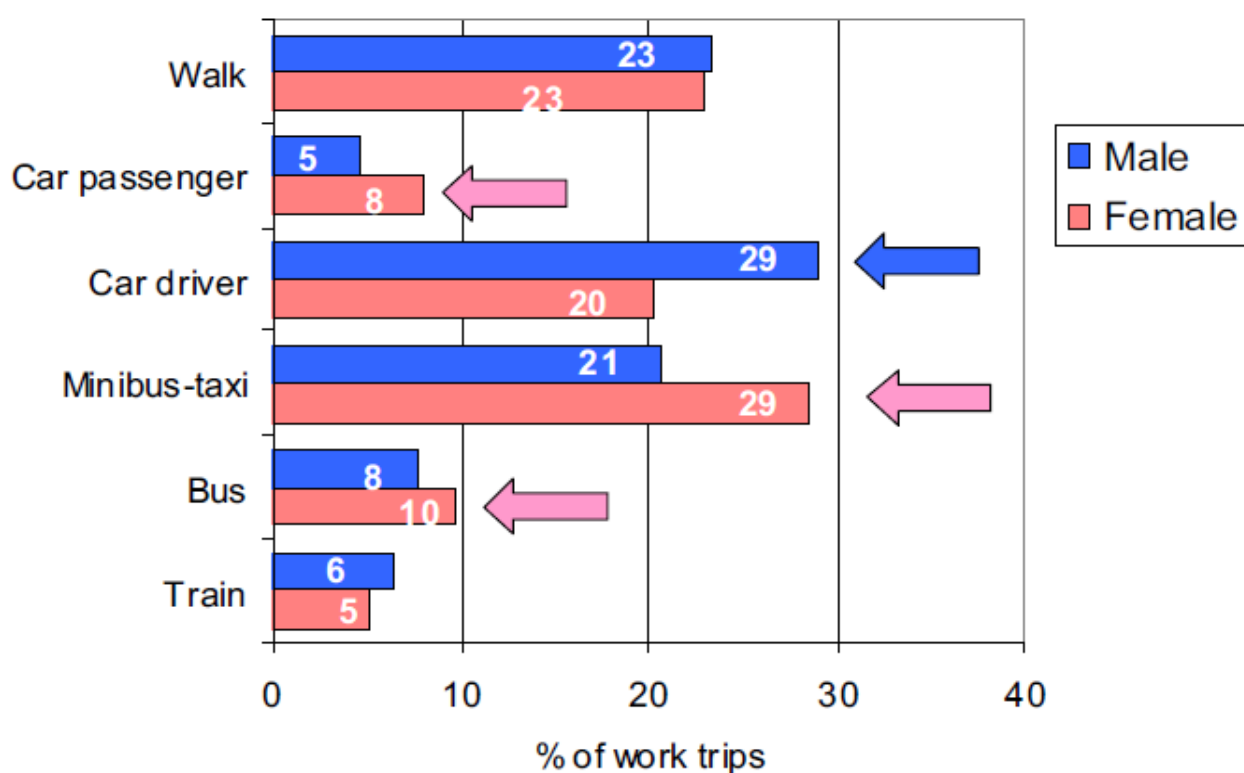
In developed countries, comparative travel studies of men and women tend to show converging patterns of behaviour, notably with regard to possession of a driver's licence. However, differences still remain due to the fact that women have far more complex programmes of activity. In both North America and Europe, for example, women make more trips, and in chains that are more complex, than those made by men, notably due to the fact that they undertake more non work-related trips. At the same time, their journey-to-work trips are shorter as their area of access to jobs is often smaller due to time constraints and their lesser degree of access to a private car. Because of the complexity of their travel chains and the fact that they have more trips to make, they are more dependent on the car. However, when they have the time, they make greater use of public transport and walking than men for equivalent trips.

There are also significant differences between men and women with regard to the means of transport that they use. In all European countries, fewer women than men own or use a car. In Sweden, 70% of cars on the road are owned by men. In France, 60% of men living outside the Paris region only travel by car. With traditionally men working in transport sector, it is therefore not surprising that transport policies have generally favoured car use over public transport, cycling and walking. Decisions regarding transport policy are generally taken by "mature" men, precisely the age group that mainly travels by car.

In Europe, women are more dependent than men on public transport networks, of which they make greater use. In France, for example, men only use public transport for 10% of their trips, and two thirds of passengers on public transport networks are women. In Sweden, we find the same proportion of women using public transport. However, it is worth noting that passenger numbers on high-speed public transport networks (suburban trains, underground trains, trams) are equally divided between men and women.

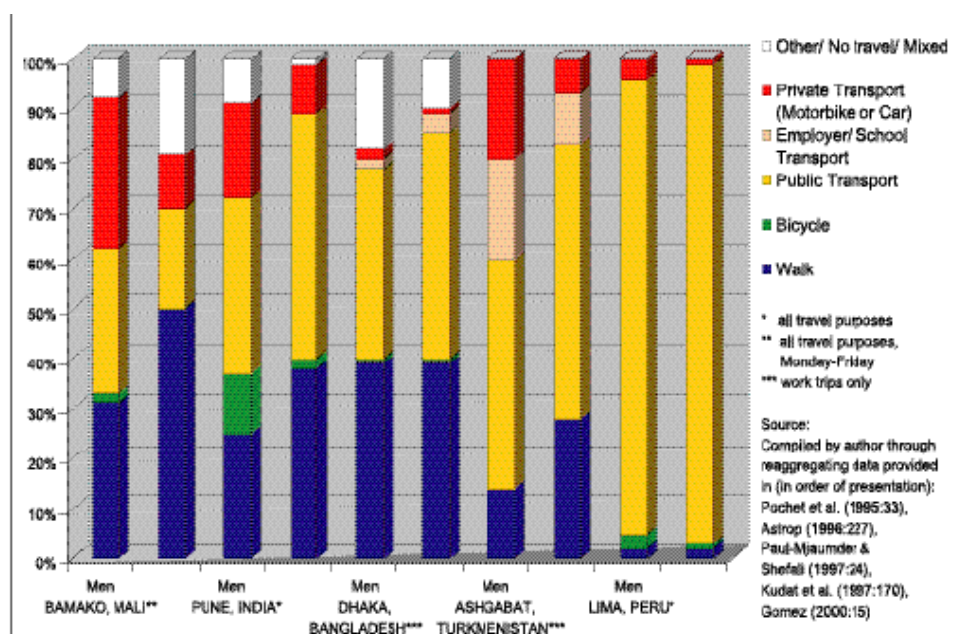
In developing countries, it is interesting to see similarities in the comparative behaviour of men and women: the double working day is key to understanding the differences in the travel behaviour of men and women. Thus in developing countries, as in developed countries, we find women making more trips than men, with a greater variety of routes, but within a more restricted geographical area. Furthermore, women generally use less expensive modes of transport than men.

Figure 1. **Gendered Breakdown of Trips**



Source: World Bank Gendered breakdown of trips in South Africa, 2003.

Figure 2. Unequal Travel: Gendered Mode Choice in 5 Southern Cities



Source: World Bank after Peters, 2001.

The issue of the safety of trips by women also arises in all countries and particularly for trips on foot or by public transport. For trips by car, all studies show that, both in developed countries and in developing countries, women drivers are more attentive to other road users and the road rules and therefore have fewer accidents than men.

Lastly, it is important to stress that women, in their choices of modes of travel, are far more sensitive than men to environmental issues (climate change, air pollution, etc).

## 2.1 Influence of the environment (urban, suburban, rural) on travel practices

Whether it be in developed countries or in developing countries, there are major differences in the behavioural patterns of trips by women according to the environment in which they live. The differences can be linked in particular to the modes of transport at their disposal.

In developed countries, public transport is well developed in cities but far less so in rural areas. Furthermore, public transport networks in rural areas, where such transport exists, are primarily based on a radial model (both lines and schedules) designed to provide links to cities. The same problem arises with regard to trips in suburban areas where public transport is usually designed (lines, schedules and in many cases prices) to provide links to the city centre, making trips within residential and peripheral areas far more problematic. Accordingly, dependency on cars for transport is far greater in rural and suburban areas than in city centres. Walking, which is also a mode of transport used more often by women than by men, is also more commonly used in urban areas than in rural areas, due to the length of trips. It should be noted that in suburban and peripheral areas around towns women are often forced to travel on foot due to having no access to private cars, or poor public transport services.

In developing countries, there are significant differences according to whether trips are made in towns or in rural areas, depending in particular on whether there are roads and, if so, on the condition of such roads. Walking nonetheless remains the most common mode of transport for women. The World Bank, for example, in the introduction to its *Strategy for Integration*

*Gender into the World Bank's Work*, stated that: "If the average distance to the moon is 384 400 km, South African women walk a distance equivalent to the moon and back 16 times a day just to fetch water ...". In rural areas, existing roads, whether or not they are paved, are designed to ensure links to cities; in contrast, for travel within rural areas, either there are no roads at all or those that do exist are in poor condition. This prevents women from making use of intermediate modes of transport (rickshaws, bicycles, mopeds, etc.) and forces them to travel on foot, often carrying very heavy loads (goods and/or child), which is not generally the case for men travelling on foot. In cities, and particularly in suburban areas, walking is also the most commonly used mode of transport by women (in Africa, for example, 57% in Bamako, 69% in Niamey and 73% in Dakar). The lack of sidewalks and/or stabilised hard shoulders separated from road pavements, makes such forms of transport difficult and unsafe. It should also be noted that when women use public transport in cities they make more use than men of informal modes of transport (shared taxis, minibuses, etc.). Broadly, men's use of public transport is influenced by the type of trip and its cost. In public transport, both formal and informal, women often encounter problems with sexual harassment in overcrowded minibuses or buses.

## **2.2 *Other factors (age, geography and culture, etc.) influence travel practices***

### **2.2.1 *The issue of age***

Most elderly people are women, and the limited number of mobility studies of elderly people do not discuss the issue of gender.

Nonetheless in developed countries, where a small number of papers addressing this issue have been published (see in particular Sandra Rosenbloom in the United States), differences can be seen between the mobility of elderly men women in terms of their behaviour and trips, notably in terms of whether they have a driver's licence and access to a car. The differences in access to a car are more apparent in generations where fewer women had access to a car than at present, with the result that in most cases women who used a car did so as a passenger. When they no longer had a man at their side to drive a car, they were in most cases deprived of use of a car; the outcome is increased isolation of women, particularly in rural and suburban areas. Since walking becomes more difficult due to the physical problems that increase with age, and public transport is poorly adapted to persons with reduced mobility, and consequently access to urban amenities is restricted.

### **2.2.2 *Geographical and cultural issues***

Whereas in developed countries, the gender issue is generally addressed in comparable terms, the same is not true in developing countries.

The patriarchal system is generally stronger in developing countries, which prevents women from gaining access to intermediate transport systems (rickshaws, handcarts, carts pulled by animals, bicycles, mopeds) and formal public transport.

The problems women face in making trips are increased even further in some countries such as, for example, Bangladesh where, in the city of Dhaka, very few women use bicycles because women's clothing is unsuitable for this form of transport, and buses have long been inaccessible to women because they are unable to board a bus without being touched by other passengers.

### 3. Influence of travel issues on the life of women

The difficulties faced by women with regard to their mobility are a form of social exclusion which affects all aspects of their lives and in particular hinders the economic output and health of women.

All these factors restrict women's mobility and often make the difference between women and men in the job market.

In developed countries, and notably in Europe where this issue is better documented, the employment catchment area to which women have access is more restricted than that of men due to both the mode of transport used (less access to a car that they can drive, greater use of buses and walking) and complex programmes of activity relating to the double working day.

Furthermore, women are more commonly employed part-time (particularly in shops) and have longer or unsociable working hours (supermarkets, hospitals, housework, etc.).

If women wish to find work and combine a professional life with housework, they must overcome innumerable obstacles and in particular:

- non-proximity between the place of residence, workplace and shops;
- insufficient public transport, particularly in suburbs and outside rush hours;
- public transport schedules aimed primarily at journey-to-work trips;
- opening hours of service centres which operate on the principle that users and customers are free during working hours;
- scarcity of and lack of access to child care.

Lastly, the failure to take into consideration women's safety sometimes encourages them to use a car rather than public transport.

The same type of problem is found in developing countries. Women play several roles at the same time, notably as actors in economic output, in reproductive activities and in their contribution to the community (voluntary, political and social activities). They have the most burdensome and time-consuming tasks, but have less access to the easiest means of travelling. Trips by women account for 65% of the hours spent travelling in sub-Saharan Africa, that is to say between 15 and 30 hours a week.

Furthermore, women are responsible for carrying water, wood and harvested crops on their heads, while often carrying a child on their backs at the same time. The consequences of such chores in terms of health and economic productivity are considerable, particularly in view of the fact that girls can be taken out of school to help with such tasks.

Most of the population in Africa lives in rural areas, whereas most of the funding is directed towards the cities. Furthermore, infrastructure and services, where there are any, tend to be located near to roads in rural services centres. People who live at a distance from a road are therefore even more isolated than other rural populations. In Morocco, for example, villages close to roads have twice as much access to health services as more isolated villages.

The difficulties of rural transport also affect the national economies of African countries. Agricultural output is restricted by the time lost in long trips, as well as by the reorganisation of markets.

#### **4. Failure to take account of women in decision-making processes**

Women's place in society, both in developed and developing countries, means that they are less involved in decision-making processes than men. This is particularly true in the mobility and transport sector, traditionally seen as a male sector, whether it be in terms of the design of infrastructure, equipment or services.

In France, the *Femmes en mouvement, les transports au féminin* association was created in 1993 at a conference organised by the *Groupe des Autorités Responsables de Transport* (GART), an association of elected officials in charge of public transport in French cities and regions, on the theme "Who decides?". Obviously it was not the intention of the organisers of this conference to discuss the role of women in the decision-making process (the GART bureau did not have a single female member!), but rather the relations between public authorities which finance public transport and transport operators. Nevertheless, the few women (elected officials and business women) attending this conference responded to the theme and decided to form themselves into an association in order to ensure that better account was taken of the needs of women (two thirds of passengers in public transport) and to participate in the decision-making process. With regard to such participation, the first battle waged by the association was to have a woman elected to the GART bureau.

In developing countries, the International Forum for Rural Transport and Development notes that gender always falls under the responsibility of women or a special unit/division. "Engineers and economists (in most cases men) continue with the "real work", namely that of increasing productivity, without thinking that the gender dimension would have an impact on increasing economic productivity." It cites the example of Africa, where over the past 40 years agricultural productivity has fallen in relation to population growth, against a background in which women are the main agricultural producers and the main carriers. Once all the work of fetching water and collecting firewood, subsistence farming and healthcare has been completed, rural African women have neither the time nor the energy to increase cash crops. In this context, this institution suggests that reducing the transport burden on women becomes not just a women's issue, but a key issue for food security. Research conducted in Asia also shows how poor access to transport limits women's capacity to extend their economic enterprises, thereby reducing household income and overall national productivity.

#### **5. Women in transport-related occupations**

In all countries women have limited access to transport-related occupations, whether in terms of road maintenance or access to the profession of bus or truck driver.

In Europe, for example, only 10% of bus drivers are women. This lack of women bus drivers is all the more remarkable in that, at present, one of the main qualities that bus drivers are expected to demonstrate in developed countries is good relations with customers. And yet women are supposed to enjoy better customer relations, and several studies have shown that in difficult neighbourhoods there is less conflict in their relations with customers, particularly young customers, as is also the case in the transport of school children. Research into this subject in France (L. Scheller: *Do buses have a sex?* 1996) even showed that the hiring tests carried at the RATP, the main public transport provider in Paris, were geared towards specifically male aptitudes.

One of the obstacles held up to explain the lack of women drivers is the question of working hours. However, this problem also exists in other professions (notably hospital work) in which large numbers of women are nonetheless employed.

There are also very few women lorry drivers.

Social norms in developing countries often prevent women from working in the transport sector. This is all the more true in the case of long distance freight haulage. This sector provides many jobs from which women are barred. At the same time, freight transport creates jobs for women. The sale of food alongside motorways for lorry drivers is an income-generating activity for women living in (non-isolated) rural areas, and this service is much appreciated by drivers who need to stop all along their route. Studies have also shown, however, that prostitution also develops alongside roads, and prostitution helps to spread AIDS.

## EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES

### 6. Taking account of women's needs in the design of infrastructure, vehicles and services

As part of an Asian Development Bank managed project focused on small towns and rural areas in Bangladesh, aims to improve a number of infrastructure facilities – approaches to minor roads, bridges, landing stages – and transport vehicles. This project has taken account taken of the specific needs of women (toilets, separate market stalls, lower steps in buses, etc.) and allowed 15% of the small business located along the roads under construction to be reserved for women. Business locations were decided after consulting women also.

In France, rolling stock manufacturers pledge to follow a charter proposed by the *Femmes en mouvement, les transports au féminin association* which meant the association would be during the design of new vehicles. Consultation was in relation to safety, accessibility, internal configuration and respect for the environment, in order to adapt rolling stock to the needs and expectations of women and the persons they accompany, notably children and elderly people.

In a number of countries (Japan, Brazil, Egypt, Mexico, India, Belarus, Philippines), vehicles reserved for “women only” have been introduced to combat the sexual harassment. In the light underground railway in Manila, for example, the first two carriages are reserved exclusively for women and children; in Mexico, buses and metro carriages reserved specially for women have been added during rush hours, with the Police responsible for ensuring that the separation of men from women is properly respected.

There are also taxis reserved for women in the United Kingdom, Mexico, Russia, India, Dubai and Iran.

Even though these measures are not a cure-all, they do make it possible to ensure that women are safe.

### 7. Women's participation in the decision-making process

In Peru, as part of a project to improve road infrastructure, development of special training in the construction and management of monitoring indicators considered the expectation of women, as well as the participation of women in project committees, the tendering process, and in the micro-enterprises which took part in the road work. At least 10% of the employees of micro-enterprises had to be women, and, for example, recognition of women's qualifications as managers of their own households was considered as part of the personnel recruitment process. Moreover, at least 30% of those who benefit from projects must be women. The final outcome of

conducting the project in this way was a reduction of about half an hour in travel time for both men and women, a reduction in transport costs for both passengers and freight, and increased availability and enhanced quality of transport services. In this way cheaper and faster transport services have improved access to health services and schools, and provided better access to markets where products can be sold. Furthermore, the micro-enterprises have created around 4 700 permanent jobs and 32 300 seasonal jobs in road and track maintenance. The micro-enterprises have subsequently diversified their activities in the transport sector.

In China, as part of an urban transport project in Liaoning province, women were integrated into the various phases of the project. The project specification was established with the participation of the population through separate male and female working groups to allow women to take part. This made it possible to identify the number of trips made on a daily basis, which prompted priority to be given to the issue of road pavements, road drainage, hard shoulders and their separation from the carriageway used by motor vehicles, lighting and signing. Women were also able to express the problems, notably the lack of security, that they encountered in using buses: poor lighting, long waiting times due to infrequent services, lack of paths and pedestrian crossings to access bus stops. The problems expressed by women led to changes being made to the initial project in order to step up improvements to secondary roads, traffic management, the creation of pathways and pedestrian crossings, the installation of public lighting and improved frequency of bus services.

In Uganda, in 2006, with aid from the World Bank, a plan to take account of gender, together with a communication and evaluation strategy, was introduced at the Transport Ministry to ensure that road projects took account of the specific needs of women.

In France, the action by the *Femmes en mouvement, les transports au féminin association* prompted transport operators and equipment manufacturers to employ more women on their payroll to ensure that the expectations of women, who comprise the majority of passengers, are properly taken into account. At present women occupy around 25% of decision-making posts in these companies.

## 8. Employment of women

To promote the employment of women in transport-related jobs, the *Femmes en mouvement, les transports au féminin association*, in collaboration with the secretariat of women's rights, produced a video entitled "Public transport, a job for women!" which was used by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Employment to raise young women's awareness of transport-related jobs (driving, inspection as well as maintenance).

In Africa, the public bus company (owned by the State of Congo Kinshasa), City Train, decided to start hiring women again (as it had done in the late 1970s): the company now has five female ticket inspectors and one female driver, and others are currently being trained. This is a decision based on the constitutional law on parity between men and women, which runs counter to the behaviour of the many private carriers who consider that it is not a suitable occupation for women.

In Mali, as part of the Urban Taxi Project developed by the National Employment Agency (ANPE) and the Regional Bank for Solidarity (BRS), the Chairman of the taxi drivers co-operative wanted women to benefit from the advantages of the new project. Twenty-seven applications were received from women and the problem which then arose was how to cover the cost of providing the instruction they needed to follow in order to obtain their driver's licence. As the Ministry for the promotion of women, children and the family did not respond to a request for

funding, it was thanks to the sponsorship provided by a carrier that 13 women were able to receive instruction. In all, two women were given access to a taxi and, as far as the co-operative is concerned, they are both giving full satisfaction in terms of both revenue and vehicle maintenance.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **9. Statistics**

As in other areas, in order to evaluate the issue of gender in relation to transport and mobility issues, it must first be possible to measure it.

The World Bank has identified four fields in which statistics on the interactions between gender and transport would be useful to planners: 1) access to different modes of transport, 2) the cost of transport, 3) trip characteristics (modes, frequency, length of trips, reasons for trips), and 4) transport quality.

The International Transport Forum could make recommendations to States to ensure that comparable statistics are available to the community.

### **10. Women's participation in planning and decision-making processes**

Taking account of women's needs presupposes that they can express those needs. It is therefore essential to involve them in consultations, project planning and the decision-making process. As this is generally not the case, it is therefore necessary that this issue be addressed in the relevant procedures, notably those applicable to projects funded by development banks, including making allowance for cases where it is not possible to organise meetings where the views of men and women can be heard at the same time.

### **11. Taking account of the distinctive characteristics of women's mobility**

In both developed and developing countries, the ability to travel is essential in order to gain access to facilities and markets and to establish social ties.

For women, having choices that will provide easier and fairer conditions of access to all the possibilities afforded by cities is an essential issue. Being able to put an end to confinement and/or isolation is a major step towards the personal fulfilment of women.

#### **11.1 *Transport infrastructure***

In both developed and developing countries, women walk more than men. The existence of paths alongside roads and sidewalks in cities, as well as safe pedestrian crossings, is therefore very important for both safety and comfort. Crossings over waterways for pedestrians also allow trips on foot to be shortened. Moreover, the routes of paths and crossings must be thought out from the standpoint of those travelling on foot to ensure that they are as short as possible.

Bus stops and the paths leading to bus stops must also take account of women's needs and in particular their safety, the issue of lighting being especially important in this respect.

The question of safety also arises with regard to the design of car parks in areas where women have access to a private car.

## **11.2 Transport facilities**

### **11.2.1 Public transport**

The design of transport facilities is very important. Women often have children with them, either in a pushchair or on their back. They are also often loaded down with packets. Access to buses and underground trains must be facilitated, by providing sufficiently wide doors and by avoiding steps; stairs and turnstiles are often difficult to negotiate for somebody accompanied by children and carrying packages.

The issue of women's safety must also be taken into account by providing for a high level of visibility throughout all underground and train carriages and by ensuring that, wherever possible and particularly in developing countries, men and women can travel separately. In developed countries, failure to take account of women's safety sometimes prompts the latter to prefer private car use to public transport.

### **11.2.2 Individual transport**

In developing countries, intermediate modes such as bicycles, mopeds, rickshaws, etc., must also take account of the specific constraints on women.

## **11.3 Transport services**

Whereas public transport services (public or private public transport, as well as taxis, etc.) are in most cases designed to travel towards the city centre during rush hours, women also need transport services in their local neighbourhood outside rush hours which will allow them to make short, but linked trips.

The decentralised organisation of transport, to move services closer to where they are needed, can often help to improve services and thereby improve women's access to markets, public facilities (schools, health centres, etc.) and jobs.

Fares must be set at a level that allows women to access public transport at an affordable price, notably by taking account of the fact that they make series of trips which in most cases call for the use of several tickets. Furthermore, season tickets are usually designed to meet the needs of full-time workers whereas many women work part-time.

To take account of safety problems, women should be allowed greater scope to alight closer to their final destination, outside the normal bus stops, in the evening and at night. Awareness campaigns aimed at both bus drivers and passengers should also be promoted to improve women's safety.

## **12. Employment of women in the transport sector**

The transport sector offers many job opportunities to which women must have access.

To increase the number of women in such jobs, contractors can include specific clauses on a required percentage of women employees, both for road maintenance and for jobs in public transport systems.

Efforts must also be made to inform women of the possibilities open to them and provision made for appropriate training. Lastly, in many cases account will have to be taken of the organisation of work and the specific constraints on women, notably childcare.

## REFERENCES

- Women's Travel Issues, proceedings from the Second National Conference, October 1996, US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, Office of Highway Information Management, HPM-40.
- European Charter for Women in the City, 1997.
- Charte des transports au féminin, France, October 1998.
- Les femmes, moyen de transport rural dans le nord Togo, Tantoa Midanga, 1999.
- Gender Perspectives for Earth Summit 2002 – Energy, Transport, Information for Decision-Making, Berlin, January 2001.
- Marie-Hélène Vandersmissen et al., “Mobilité et accessibilité : leurs effets sur l'insertion professionnelle des femmes”, *L'Espace géographique* 4/2001 (tome 30), pp. 289-305.
- Breadwinners, Homemakers and Beasts of burden: a gender perspective on transport and Mobility, Deike Peters, Institute For City and Regional Planning (ISR), Berlin, Germany, 2002.
- Mainstreaming du genre et mobilité, City and shelter asbl, Belgian Ministry of Mobility and Transport, March 2002.
- Gender and Rural Development, International Forum for Rural Transport and Development, 2003.
- Cynthia Howson, L'intégration du genre dans les politiques publiques de la banque mondiale : Exemple des politiques de transport au Sénégal, Institut d'études politiques de Bordeaux, France, 2005.
- World Bank, Transport Sector Board, Maternal and Child Mortality Development Goals, Julie Babinard, Peter Roberts, 2006.
- TRB's 4th International Conference on Women's Issues in Transportation, October 27–30, 2009.
- What do existing household surveys tell us about gender and transportation in developing countries? Julie Babinard, Energy, Transport and Water Department, World Bank, Washington, D.C., USA, and Kinnon Scott, Development Research Group, World Bank, Washington, D.C., USA, 2009.
- Les taxiwomen de Bamako, Doussou Djiré, L'essor, January 2010.
- World Bank, Transport Sector Board, Mainstreaming Gender in Road transport, Operational Guidance for World Bank Staff, March 2010.
- Femmes chauffeuses et contrôleuses à Kinshasa, Daniel Ntoto, Site panafricain, July 2010.
- Making rural roads work for both women and men: the example of Peru's rural roads program, Lucia Fort and Aurelio Menendez, World Bank (2004).

**International Transport Forum**

2 rue André Pascal

75775 Paris Cedex 16

[itf.contact@oecd.org](mailto:itf.contact@oecd.org)

[www.internationaltransportforum.org](http://www.internationaltransportforum.org)

