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Unlocking Gender Differences: Designing inclusive and safe public transport systems



*A guidance brief based on the 'Toolkit for
Enabling Gender Responsive Urban Mobility
and Public Spaces'*

India

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This document is an adaptation from the toolkit - Enabling Gender Responsive Urban Mobility and Public Spaces

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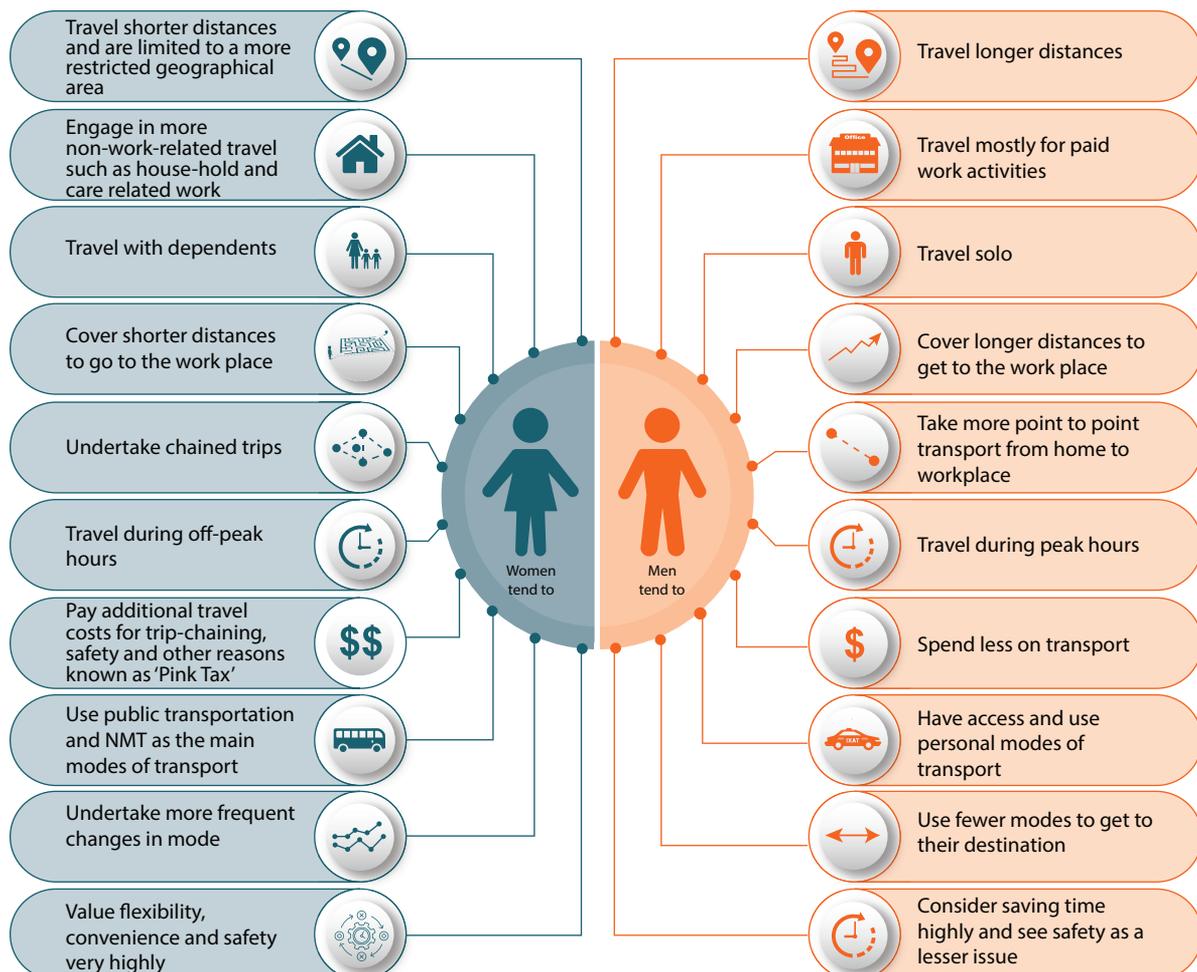


RATIONALE: NEED FOR DESIGNING GENDER-RESPONSIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR INCLUSIVITY AND SAFETY

Urban mobility systems are often not designed to account for gender-based differences in mobility patterns. Women are amongst the biggest users of public transport across Indian cities. Public transport usage is even higher amongst women from lower income groups, who typically have lower discretionary income. A meta-analysis of literature and surveys globally and in India shows some clear patterns of public transport usage for women and men (figure below). Women tend to travel shorter distances within a

limited geographical radius, are more likely to travel with dependents, during off-peak hours for unpaid care work, often referred to as *mobility of care*. Moreover, given the need to balance household and work responsibilities, women typically combine multiple tasks necessitating several short trips, i.e., trip chaining, rather than taking a unimodal, long trip from origin to destination. Consequently, they end up paying higher fares for frequently changing direction, modes of transport, and breaking their journey.

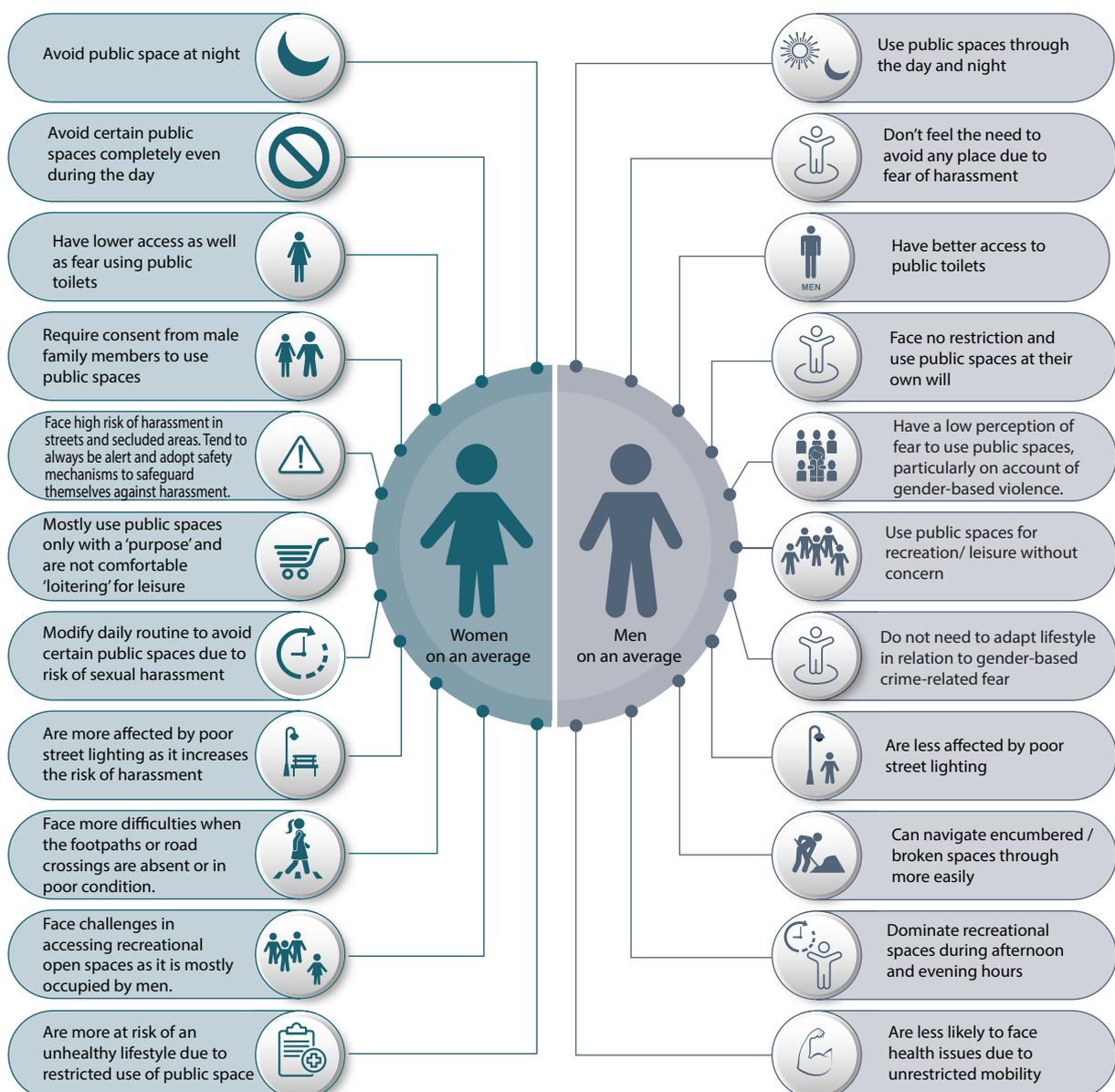
Observed differences in mobility patterns: What do women and men do more on average?



In general, cities work better for heterosexual, able-bodied, cisgender men than they do for women, girls, sexual and gender minorities, and people with disabilities. Key aspects of the built urban environment – related to access, mobility, safety and freedom from violence, health and hygiene, climate resilience, and security of tenure – create disproportionate burdens for women, girls, and sexual and

gender minorities of all ages and abilities, thus exacerbating and reinforcing existing gender inequities. Faced with challenges ranging from transportation services that prioritize commuting over caregiving, to the lack of lighting and toilets in public spaces, many women feel inconvenienced, ill-at-ease, and unsafe in the urban environment

Observed differences in use of public space: What do women and men do more on average?



Implementing agencies could rely on gender disaggregated data to drive decision making for creating gender-responsive public transport systems.

Despite women forming a significant user group, public transport infrastructure and services are typically designed for a “neutral” user. Thus, there is a need for

increased gender disaggregated data collection to analyze mobility patterns, as well as utilization of public spaces, to design tailored urban mobility solutions that suit the differential needs of women and persons of minority genders.



Photo Source: istockphoto

What can be done to create data-driven, gender-responsive public transport systems?

Infrastructure, services, and pricing are the three key levers of gender-responsive public transport design. After forming an understanding of gender disaggregated mobility patterns at city level, urban local bodies, public transport agencies and other implementing agencies can deploy interventions across these three key levers to enhance safety and gender-inclusivity on public transport systems.

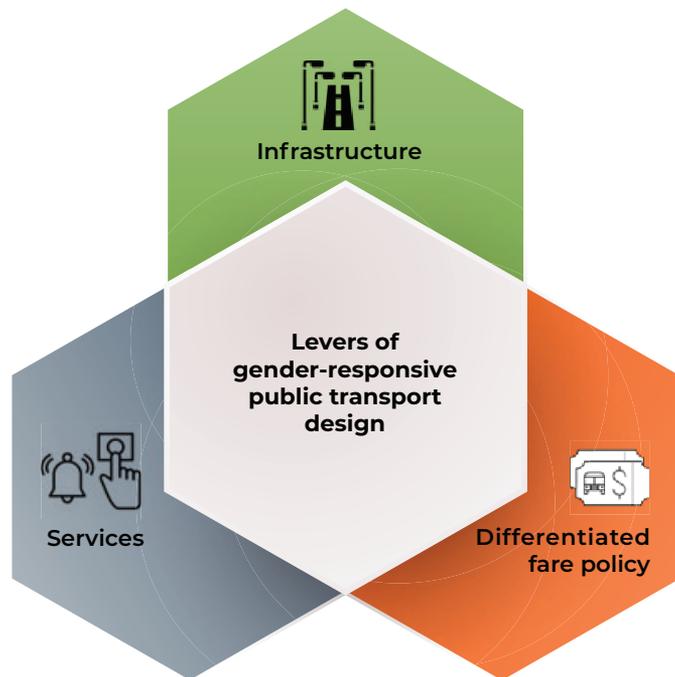
What are the main elements of gender-responsive public transport infrastructure?

This involves incorporating gender-responsive elements in fixed and movable public transport assets, such as buses, metro trains, bus stops, and stations, among others. Examples include low floor buses, adequate storage space in public transport vehicles for strollers / bags / wheelchairs, and lower handlebars / sidebars for women.

Adequate lighting, openness, and visibility on streets, public spaces, at stations and in public transport vehicles are some important infrastructure tools to improve safety.

How can public transport services be designed to be gender-responsive?

This involves leveraging gender disaggregated analysis of mobility patterns to provide services for women and persons of minority genders. Examples include expanding bus routes to places frequently visited by women, increasing bus services during “off-peak” times, introducing



request bus-stop programs and providing emergency services for women in distress.

What kind of differentiated pricing policies help women users of public transport?

Differentiated fare policies, ranging from reduced fares during off-peak hours, subsidising specific routes with higher ridership of women, travel cards which do not penalise mode change, to free public transportation, aim to reduce the cost of travel for women. This can help, both in terms of reducing cost-related barriers for women’s travel, as well as to assuage the impact of the ‘pink tax.’

Gender-based differences in mobility patterns and levers for public transport system design

Gender based mobility patterns			Design and policy priorities for PTAs		
Parameter	Women tend to	Men tend to	Infrastructure	Services	Pricing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance travelled & trip duration (average) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typically travel shorter distances, and are limited within a more restricted geographical area Women are more likely to cover shorter distances to go to work / place of business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel longer distances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize walking infrastructure – wide, obstruction-free footpaths, street-lighting and clear signages Build dedicated bicycle lanes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce short, circuitous bus routes to meet the needs of women commuters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the cost of short-distance travel and transfers
Travel patterns	Undertake chained trips	Follow more point-to-point transport from home to workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for multimodal terminals, with dedicated space to interchange to IPT such as autos, taxis, and rickshaws as well as parking space for bicycles and private vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rollout mobile application to integrate IPT with public transport and create combined trip options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish flat pricing across public transport modes based on distance rather than travel mode Impose no penalty / additional charges for mode changes or transfers
Purpose of travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in more unpaid work-related travel, such as household or care related work, that is, mobility of care Travel with dependents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel mostly for paid work activities Travel solo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure sufficient seating for women, children, and elderly at stations and in vehicles Ensure sufficient storage space in vehicles for small bags Ensure ease of entry / exit on vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional services / stops near markets, schools, and hospitals away from the city center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer discounted travel for children and elderly people

Gender based mobility patterns			Design and policy priorities for PTAs		
Parameter	Women tend to	Men tend to	Infrastructure	Services	Pricing
Timings	Travel during off-peak hours Preference for travelling during the daytime	Travel during peak hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure sufficient shade / cover at stations / waiting areas to protect from rain and sun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase services during off-peak hours leveraging on data platforms • Partner with intermediate public transport (IPT) service providers to enable coverage during off-peak hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate resources to bus operators to ensure more services during off-peak hours
Preferred modes	Use public transport and non-motorized transport (NMT) as their preferred modes of transport	Use private modes of transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve seating for women and persons of minority genders • Ensure provision of safety infrastructure (for example, CCTVs) in vehicles and stations • Ensure sufficient provision of restrooms for women and persons of minority genders at stations • Consider introducing gender-neutral restrooms in addition to existing gender-segregated restrooms for the safety and comfort of transgender, non-binary individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer phone/ WhatsApp based safety helplines for women and persons of minority genders to tackle street harassment • Introduce 'request stop' services on buses during late evening hours • Increase presence of emergency response personnel / marshals in vehicles / stations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer discounted cards / special fares for women and persons of minority genders

CASE STUDY

Women Friendly City Project - Seoul

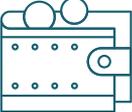


<p>Overview</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Women Friendly City project aimed at integrating perspectives of women into city planning policies to minimize the inconvenience and insecurity experienced during their daily lives
<p>Gender-informed infrastructure</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seoul has had a differentiated fare system in place since 2004 Women-friendly parking lots, walkways, parks, and restrooms were built, characteristics of which included wider spaces, brighter lights and CCTV cameras Parking lots were demarcated using pink lines for exclusive use by women Lowered heights of the sidewalk ledge, hump-type crosswalks, and resting areas separate from pedestrian walkways were introduced to improve the commute safety and experience The stabilizing handles in buses and subways that were previously adjusted to an average male's height were changed to allow women to hold on to them easily
<p>Gender-informed services</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childcare centers, breast-feeding rooms, day-care centers were installed in public places like subway stations Ticket gates for baby carriages in subway stations were installed Call-taxi system and Safe-Return-Home service to send passenger information to the individuals' parents or guardian while they are in taxis were started
<p>Integrated Fare System</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Integrated fare system was introduced with the aim of reducing the costs of multi-transfer journeys by ensuring that the integrated fare is lower than the sum of the basic fares for all modes used T-Money - Seoul's proprietary public transport payment card – has been used to facilitate the Integrated Fare System It uses distance-based rates and charges passengers based on the combined distance travelled on any modes of public transport The system has decreased the average public transportation fare by 30%.

CASE STUDY

Transport for London



<p>Overview</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport for London (TfL) is a local government body responsible for most of the transport network in London • TfL has implemented several gender-responsive initiatives like Action for Equality Plan to increase women's representation in urban design planning
<p>Gender-informed infrastructure</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses have low floors which reduces the height difference between the curb and bus floor • Most trains and tubes have multipurpose areas suitable for strollers and wheelchairs • Clearly marked priority seats are available for pregnant women, the disabled, and anyone who needs preferential seating • Ramps are installed on every bus for easy wheelchair access • TfL has an extensive CCTV network across stations, buses and trains
<p>Gender-informed services</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special night tubes are run over weekends at an off-peak time fare along with an extensive network of night buses to and from night tube stations • Bus routes are designed to include routes to key amenities such as shopping centers and hospitals • Extra buses are deployed during busy times such as morning and evening peaks, school runs and weekends • Mothers-to-be can avail for a free of charge 'Baby on Board' badge to let other passengers know to offer them a seat
<p>Differentiated Fare system</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport fares are capped limiting the fare a commuter pays for all their journeys in one day or week irrespective of the mode of public transport used • One can make as many journeys as possible and when all the fares add up to a certain amount, they are not charged further for additional journey taken by them • This is done through the contactless Oyster payment card which follows a touch in and touch out method

For more information: The World Bank Gender and Urban Mobility Toolkit

Please refer to the World Bank Gender and Urban Mobility Toolkit for more detailed information on the guidelines to be followed to address gender concerns in public transportation and public spaces on safety standards. The toolkit also includes sample terms of references and survey questions in its annexures, which are intended to serve as a point of reference for public transportation authorities and implementing agencies to follow in order to ensure gender-responsive urban mobility planning.

This toolkit is meant to act as a guidance note for government agencies, groups and institutions that develop programs for safer and more inclusive transport for women in cities. It presents a four-pillar framework for designing gender-responsive urban

mobility programs and public spaces. Inclusion and safety in public transport and public spaces in cities are the two central themes discussed in this toolkit.

The toolkit is divided into two volumes, with the first volume focused on high-level guidance for policymakers, while the second provides a “How-to” guide including practical tools for implementing agencies, including guidelines on how to plan, design and implement a participatory, inclusive urban mobility program.



To understand more about **what needs to be done** to tread towards gender-inclusive urban mobility click here for Volume I of the toolkit - Enabling Gender Responsive Urban Mobility and Public Spaces

To understand **how to plan**, design and implement a participatory, inclusive urban mobility program refer to the Volume II of the toolkit