When we understand that women’s household responsibilities mean that she is taking several consecutive single bus trips as part of “trip-chaining”, then we have a deeper understanding of how women move, when, and why

Kathryn Travers, WICI
The discussion highlighted the need for more dialogue around the potential role of the information and communications technology sector (ICT) in correcting gender inequalities and facilitating women’s mobility. For instance, Kathryn Travers mentioned the idea of using ICTs as accountability and monitoring mechanisms to generate updated data on safety.

2. Women’s and girls’ security and their perceptions of fear when traveling in urban settings

Participants in the discussion agreed that public transportation must be perceived by women and girls as secure to ensure their equal access. However as participants noted, research has shown that sexual harassment towards women is a persistent issue on urban transport in both developing and developed countries. Céline Monnier from ICPC shared the results of a study by the French Ministry of Sustainable Development which found that only 48% of French women report always feeling safe in public transport, in comparison with 62% of men (MEDD, 2015). These safety issues strongly influence women and girls’ travel patterns: as Hilary Murphy stated, fear is a “major contributing factor to how women and girls negotiate and make trade-offs regarding their commute”.

Kalpana Viswanath from Safetipin argued that one of the key factors restricting women’s mobility is the lack of good last-mile connectivity. She pointed out that making sure public transportation is safe for women is not enough if the road to go from one’s home to the nearest subway station or bus stop is not perceived as safe. Public policy must therefore focus on transforming cities as a whole into safe environments.

Women-only spaces in urban transportation were evoked as a possible solution to respond to women’s and girls’ safety concerns. Participants cited examples of several municipalities that have introduced such spaces, including Tokyo, Mexico and Cairo. However, they stressed that these should be seen as a temporary solution to protect women, as other measures are needed to address the underlying causes of their insecurity.

Multiple participants put forward the idea that urban planning efforts must go hand in hand with a social norms approach. This includes initiatives that encourage bystanders not to be passive when they witness sexual harassment. They also discussed how to engage men and boys in the debate: Kathryn Travers from WICI recalled that gender-sensitive training of male drivers and transit authorities has produced positive results (See Tools and initiatives shared below).
3. Difficulties in measuring women’s and girls’ urban mobility

There remain numerous data gaps in the area of urban mobility due in part to the difficulty of measuring gender-based crime and perceptions of safety. Céline Monnier from ICPC reminded the discussion that women and men do not experience crime or the fear of crime in public transport the same way, making sex-disaggregated data in this area a necessity. However, she pointed out that the data on crime in public transportation is often of poor quality, mainly because surveys lack a clear definition of what can constitute a crime such as sexist comments or verbal harassment. Heather Allen, from the FIA Foundation, added that women tend not to report when they are victims of crimes or incidents in public settings, either due to lack of time, feelings of personal guilt, and/or low confidence in the authorities’ ability to deal with the matter.

Despite these difficulties, participants described new initiatives to generate relevant data on women’s urban mobility for local policymaking. For example, UN Habitat’s Safer Cities programme undertakes safety audits to capture women’s sense of safety and inform local urban policy. The ICPC is working to generate sex-disaggregated data on crime and perceptions of safety through an array of alternative tools, such as exploratory walks, focus groups and victimisation surveys. New technologies have also facilitated the data collection process: Kalpana Viswanath shared her experience working on Safetipin, a mobile app that collects data about the key parameters that make an urban area safe, according to women and girls.

The next step is ensuring that these new data sources are successfully integrated into local policymaking. Emphasis needs to be placed on informing and convincing policymakers of the necessity to make use of it: as Heather Allen from the FIA foundation points out, “much of the data is there but not used or not accessible as it is not considered to be of interest or use in travel planning”.

Moving forward: the SDGs and Habitat III

As mentioned by the participants, this discussion on gender and mobility occurs within a context of strong international momentum to mainstream gender into urban planning. Indeed, the UN Summit on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III, which took place from 17 to 20 October, offered an important platform for gender advocates and policymakers to push for gender mainstreaming in urban planning. Combined with the 2030 Agenda, with the Sustainable Development Goals 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), Habitat III’s New Urban Agenda is a global call to action for gender and women’s rights actors, urban policymakers, and the development community to pave the way for inclusive urban mobility that “leaves no one behind”.

“It is crucial that, when discussing how crime affects women in public transport, we do not only consider crime statistics, but also how their behaviours are modified because of fear of crime”

Céline Monnier, ICPC
Tools and initiatives shared

**Targeting women’s safety needs through a female driver service:** In Kenya, the mobile app Little Cabs allows users to easily order a cab on their phone. The company recently launched Ladybug, a service specifically targeted to women: after 6pm, Ladybug’s female drivers only accept female passengers with the objective of making them feel safer.

**Providing transport personnel with gender-sensitive training:** In New Delhi, the Manas Foundation provides taxi and bus drivers with training on gender issues, with a focus on sexual harassment. Drivers who have completed the training carry a special sticker on their vehicle to signal their involvement and raise awareness around sexual harassment.

**Campaigning to end harassment in public spaces:** Hollaback! is a non-profit that works to raise awareness on harassment in public spaces. In 2014, Hollaback! partnered with Cornell University to conduct a multi-country study of street harassment, which provided key insights into the scale of this phenomenon. With over 16,600 respondents overall, this survey constitutes the largest analysis of street harassment to date. The results showed that in the 22 countries studied, over 50% of women reported being fondled or groped. 71% of respondents also reported being followed.

**Promoting gender mainstreaming in infrastructure projects:** In Kazakhstan, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) worked with Almaty’s public transport operator to develop strategies encouraging women to become bus drivers: for instance, facilities for women were improved, and new job ads clearly stated that females were invited to apply. The programme resulted in the hiring of the first-ever female bus driver.

**Promoting the representation of women in the transport sector:** In India, “Women on Wheels” provides poor women with training to become taxi drivers, a profession in which females are still under-represented. The programme aims to empower women drivers while making passengers feel safer.
Key resources

- **Women and the City** (ActionAid, 2011)
- **Planning and design for sustainable urban mobility** (UN-Habitat, 2013)
- **Poverty and Sustainable Transport** (UN Habitat, 2014)
- **Sustainable Mobility in African Cities** (UN Habitat, 2011)
- **Gender and Transport** (International Transport Forum, 2011)
- **The Safer cities programme** (UN-Habitat)
- **Adolescent Girls’ Views of Safety in the City** (Plan International, WICI and UN Habitat)
- **Tackling Gender Exclusion** (WICI)
- **Smart choices for cities Gender equality and mobility: mind the gap! Policy note** (Civitas, 2014)
- **The Safe and Sound report: international research on women’s personal safety on public transport** (Fia Foundation, 2016)
- **Fact Sheet: Women’s mobility and personal security** (Fia Foundation, 2016)
- **Gender Tool Kit: Transport, Maximizing the Benefits of Improved mobility for all** (Asian Development Bank, 2013)
- **Promoting Safe and Secure Movement and Mobility of Women in Dhaka, Bangladesh: ADB’s Bus Rapid Transit Project** (Asian Development Bank, 2014)
- **Gender and Sustainable Urban Mobility: Thematic study prepared for Global Report on Human Settlements 2013** (Deike Peters, 2013)
- **Gender and Transport Resource Guide** (World Bank, 2006)
- **Gender and Urban Transport. Sustainable Transport: A Sourcebook for Policy Makers in Developing Cities** (Kunieda, M. A. Gauthier, 2007)
- **More dangerous transport systems for women** (Thomson Reuters Foundation, 2014)
- **Safe Mobility for Women - Case of Guwahati** (Mahadevia, D., 2016)
- **International Survey on Street Harassment** (Hollaback! and Cornell University, 2014)
- **Les violences faites aux femmes dans les transports collectifs terrestres** (Ministère de l’Écologie, du Développement Durable et de l’Énergie, 2015)