

Making transport policy sustainable requires paying attention to the constraints and needs of both women and men

Transport & Gender Equality

GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT
BRIEFING NOTES



GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP, THE WORLD BANK, JULY 2002

Why are gender equality issues important in the transport sector?

Development of a transport infrastructure was previously assumed to be gender neutral, with both sexes benefiting equally from well-designed projects. We now recognize, however, that men and women have varying transport needs and constraints and are affected differently by transport interventions:

- **Rural Transport Projects** that build roads for motorized transport often do not benefit rural women, who mainly work in and around the village and travel on foot.
- **Urban Transport Systems** that transport people to and from employment centers are sometimes inadequate for women, who must combine income-generating activities with household and familial activities, such as taking children to school and health centers and visiting the market.

Poor women, who balance productive, social, and reproductive roles in societies, often have higher demands on their time than poor men. Gender-responsive infrastructure interventions can free up women's time, thereby increasing girls enrollment in schools and facilitating women's participation in income-generation and decision-making activities.

The World Bank Gender and Transport Thematic Group

Although transport projects represent 15 percent of the World Bank's total lending, until recently, very little attention was given to the needs of women in this sector. Making transport policy more gender-responsive required establishing an

Examples of World Bank gender-responsive interventions in the transport sector

- **Dhaka Urban Transport Project:** increased women's use of public transport through "gender-friendly" bus service.
- **Peru Rural Roads Project:** increased women's access to employment, markets, and public services.
- **Senegal, Guinea, and Peru:** increased women's mobility through bicycles.
- **Wheels of Change:** study of transport needs of poor self-employed women in India.

appropriate policy framework and a structured approach to understanding the needs of women as well as men, identifying interventions to address those needs, and evaluating and disseminating the lessons learned.

The Gender and Transport Thematic Group promotes the integration of gender into transport policies and projects by supporting gender-related research and pilot activities; disseminating good practices; and promoting dialogue with governments, NGOs and international agencies.

The thematic group, which has about 100 members, has become a forum for the exchange of ideas about mainstreaming gender in Bank-financed transport projects, obtaining resources for gender components in transport projects, collecting best practices, and linking with other international agencies working in this area.

Gender and Transport Thematic Group Activities

In the last two years, the Thematic Group has approved twenty grants for work in various countries, including, Bangladesh, China, Ecuador, Ghana, Guinea, India, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Niger, Peru, Senegal, Tanzania, and Yemen, for planning studies, pilot projects, and evaluations that help integrate gender into transport projects and policies. In addition, it has supported:

- **Gender capacity building in African transport programs:** The Group helped launch, and is working closely with, the *Africa Gender and Rural Transport Initiative*, operating in 13 countries.
- **Integrating gender into Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP):** The Gender Chapter of the PRSP Sourcebook and the gender and transport website provide guidelines for integrating gender into PRSP-supported rural transport components.
- **Production of a video:** "Riding out of Poverty" on a bicycle project for women in South Africa.
- **Online Toolkits:** To integrate gender-inclusive bicycle components and intermediate means of transport into transport projects.

Gender & Transport Thematic
Group:
[http://www.worldbank.org/
gender/transport/](http://www.worldbank.org/gender/transport/)