



# From Rhetoric to Practice

*In the 5 years since Forum News last focused on the issue of gender and transport, we have seen a series of initiatives and some small research effort from the donor community seeking to integrate gender into the transport sector. We have also seen many donors seeking to mainstream gender across the different activities of their development agenda. It is, therefore, reasonable to assess the progress made towards gender 'mainstreaming' within the transport sector in particular and to identify some steps for the future. Has the cumulative effect of these initial activities built enough momentum to mainstream gender equality into the transport sector, or have these developments been too fragmented to effect mainstream change?*

Recent research funded by the World Bank helps us to examine the nature of this progress. The research carried out by IC Net, TRL and members of the IFRTD network looks at a series of donor supported projects and programmes from the transport sector that have, or should have, integrated gender within them. It reports the findings of 10 separate case study reports from 9 countries across the developing world. Seeking to broaden the micro-scale, household, and village level focus of earlier projects/research, in order to examine transport programmes and projects in the context of; the national gender and transport policies within which they operate; and the approaches and capacity of the transport institutions responsible for their implementation.

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**"How can the gender equality that is enshrined in a policy document be translated into effective practice."**

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The research revealed a substantial gap between rhetoric and practice. A strong gender-enabling environment was found at national government level in many of the case study countries. However across the transport sector this was not consistently translated into practice. Some countries incorporate general statements about the consideration of gender into their transport policy frameworks or project planning documents. Yet this use of gendered language was more likely to be the result of interaction with international donor

agencies and a need for funds than of a genuine commitment to gender. Even where the best examples of gender practice were found, for example the rural roads sector in Uganda, research revealed a gap between the national gender framework set out in the constitution, the inclusion of gender into transport policy and the consistent integration of gender into transport sector practice. Given the strength and explicitness of the commitment to gender in many of the national policy frameworks examined, its absence as a measurable aspect of transport policy can only be viewed as a deficit.

The research focused on recent projects, where donors' own gender mainstreaming procedures would require that a commitment to gender issues was demonstrated in project or programme proposals in order to secure funding. The integration of gender was more frequently manifest by the inclusion of a specific component within wider projects rather than as a gendered approach to the design of the whole project or programme. Here, the research found that once a project had been secured, the gender components of projects were often not complied with. In some cases, a lack of ownership meant that these gender components were 'lost' in the implementation of large projects over long time periods, as project targets changed. In other cases, specific gender components became difficult to implement through a lack of national technical capacity, resistance to change or a lack of monitoring indicators. There is no systematic database available on how often gender is 'lost' in this way, but it is something that requires further research.



Boat Woman

Most success in integrating gender into the transport sector was found amongst projects or programmes that focused on labour-based road construction or maintenance initiatives. Here examples were found where projects requiring equality in the number of men and women involved, had been successfully implemented. Some of these projects had overcome initial resistance and were now influencing national policies and practice. Why they were successful is something that would benefit from further research.

So how can these gaps between rhetoric and practice be bridged? How can the gender equality that is enshrined in a constitution or donor policy document be translated into effective practice in the transport sector. Auditing is necessary to ensure the integration of gender into transport sector institutions and this research has demonstrated that national and regional transport policy institutions often have no clear process to identify the gendered nature of the transport sector. For example

## In this issue:

*Continued on page 2*

**1. From Rhetoric to Practice**

**2. Feminisation of Police in Lima;  
Lessons from Lesotho**

**3. A Progressive Partnership: The  
Government of Uganda and  
DANIDA; Introducing GATNET;  
The Gender and Transport  
Research Team**

**4. Transforming Power Relations?  
The Case of Senegal's NRIP;  
Mapping Gendered Mobility and  
Access; Contact Us**



Continued from page 1

there is little understanding of transport's role in maternal mortality, water management or in household survival strategies. Similarly there are no clear examples of processes by which women's and men's needs are incorporated into project design. Auditing has cost implications and resources need to be allocated accordingly. The importance of auditing to the very lowest levels of the implementation hierarchy is clearly visible in projects which are funded on gender rationales but from which gender elements are subsequently 'lost'.

In the meantime, what are we to do with the current generation of transport sector programmes and projects? We cannot afford to leave them alone. There is a need to look seriously at retrofitting, developing methods to review, revise and improve their performance in promoting the integration of gender into transport policy and in overcoming institutional resistance to change within transport organisations.

Furthermore, externally-funded retrofitting is necessary to be able to undertake the identification of gendered transport needs, the auditing of policies and projects and the development of gender policy into transport action. The development of gender and transport auditing and the retrofitting of gender-awareness into existing projects are, therefore, the key to creating a momentum for mainstreaming gender in the transport sector and bridging the gap between rhetoric and practice.

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## Feminisation of Police in Lima

Latin America is a region of inequity and contrasting ethnic, gender and social characteristics. Women are still excluded from much of the labour market in urban and rural areas. They are linked primarily to service sectors which pay less and because of their domestic roles, prefer part time jobs or evening jobs. Cultural stereotypes strengthen negative behaviour and attitudes that exclude women, and also men, from access to opportunities, decision-making spheres and development.

The National Police of Peru, through its Division of Traffic, supervises standards and regulations for traffic and provides security to pedestrians and operators. Previously this was a corrupt male dominated unit, which was the focus of much public discontent. A drastic change of attitude was needed and women were seen as the perfect solution to reconstruct the image of the traffic police and regain credibility and confidence.

Since December 1999, the Division has employed female police personnel who have demonstrated ability, keenness and the capacity to stimulate and promote citizen's participation. In the first year after finishing training at the School of Police, 1,500 sub-official females entered the service, specially assigned to traffic control in streets. This led to a change in residents' opinion of the police. Road users began to feel more secure and the truckers began to respect the traffic regulations.

This drastic but positive decision had internal effects on institutional relations. Women's presence challenged male stereotypes and the

machismo present at all levels. Behaviour of male police in their daily routine also had to change. The police had to provide physical facilities such as female toilets and places for the care of children. Regulations and internal standards had to be adjusted to take into account the needs of pregnant women and nursing mothers on the force. Women police officers also have certain opportunities for education and for promotion within the service that women in other institutions do not have. But more effort still needs to be made to accept women as real empowered members of the institution, with the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes.

The female police entered service in circumstances where corruption was almost institutionalised, and it was extremely difficult to try to apply new moral values where all have to comply with the law. Transport operators and conductors are mostly men and did not agree to women assuming command, leading to situations of violence against female police officers. They were attacked, hurt and one of them died. Unfortunately, this violence persists and to minimise it, education and sensitisation programs addressed to drivers are required. There is also the question of whether the moral standards of female police will survive or whether the corrupt system will recruit them as well?

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## Lessons from Lesotho

In Lesotho the Ireland Aid **Rural Access Program** has been cooperating with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (formerly Ministry of Works) since 1994 to improve access through the construction of gravel roads, structures and footbridges. These interventions are expected to contribute to relieving women of certain culturally defined gender-based roles and enable them to have spare time that could be gainfully invested in economic activities other than household chores. However, like many other development projects, the Rural Access Program has only solved some of the problems and has at the same time created new ones.

In Lesotho, international and regional instruments emphasising the inclusion of women in development projects have led to an institutional awareness of gender and forced commitment on the part of the government. This has been reinforced by agreements between the government and the donor community. For example in the road sector a World Bank funded review of the employment of women in road construction and maintenance has influenced the Department of Rural Roads to become more gender sensitive.

In response to these pressures, the newly created Department of Rural Roads (DRR) has prioritised gender inclusion in implementing the Rural Access Program. All construction within the programme aims to be pro-poor, using labour-based methods to provide much needed employment in the countryside. The programme trained and employed both men and women small-scale contractors and established conditions

to meet the recruitment quota of women. Contractors in the programme are required to write gender-disaggregated reports reflecting the gender composition of the labour force on projects. The project adopts a continuum/posterity principle ensuring wives of the contractors are trained, so that if a husband dies the wife can keep the company going.

There are discernable mismatches between policy and practice, and not all impacts have been positive. The DRR's concentration on compliance has been at the expense of working conditions at the worksites and rigid working hours have impacted negatively on women who must still perform domestic roles to meet practical needs. The high HIV/AIDS incidence in project areas has added to women's responsibilities for looking after the sick. Certain socially prescribed gender roles continue to limit women's participation in employment opportunities. Public gatherings (pitsa) remain dominated by men, and even though women attend these meetings they are not always able to voice their priorities and problems. Women emphasised the need to focus on meeting their practical rather than their strategic needs.

Although not addressing all the issues, the enforced requirement of a quota for women, the transparency of recruitment processes and the gender-sensitive training of small-scale contractors, are all practices that can be adopted by other agencies elsewhere.

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# A Progressive Partnership: The Government of Uganda and DANIDA

The government of Uganda (GoU) has put in place legal, operational and institutional mechanisms to ensure that gender is explicitly addressed in all national, sectoral and local government policies, plans and programs. In the transport sector, the *White Paper on Sustainable Maintenance of District, Urban and Community Access Roads* is a watershed in an otherwise male-dominated sector. The gender and women specific provisions in the Paper will ensure that women participate in and benefit from district, urban and community roads.

DANIDA's policy for development co-operation, and its transport sector policies indicate that promotion of women's participation in development is a cross-cutting concern. Specifically stating that gender analysis should be undertaken for all interventions, to facilitate the identification and integration of women's and men's specific transport needs and priorities.

The commitment of the Ugandan and Danish governments to gender-responsive development is reflected in the conceptualisation, formulation and implementation of **Road Sector Program Support (RSPS)**. RSPS was designed to assist implementation of the GoU's *Ten-Year Road Sector Development Programme 1996/97-2005/06 (RSDP)*. To strengthen RSPS' objective of reducing poverty through improved access to social and economic services, the Community Travel and Transport Programme (CTTP) was formulated in 2000.

DANIDA was keen to mainstream gender into the RSPS from the beginning. A study was commissioned in 1998 that elaborated the gender concerns in the programme and served as an input into respective programme documents. It confirmed that road construction, rehabilitation and maintenance in Uganda were predominantly male-biased and recommended building the capacities of all stakeholders to ensure that gender is routinely addressed by all institutions, systems and structures engaged in the roads sub sector. The program was implemented within existing national and local government systems and structures, working in close collaboration with local government community services departments, all of which have a gender officer.

The RSPS's principle of equality of opportunity for women and men has led to conscious choices in design and implementation that have led to visible gender outcomes. By actively promoting labour-based methods, the programme enhanced women's opportunities to benefit directly from road improvements through, earning cash income for payment of school fees for their children, gaining access to health facilities and consumer goods, and investing in productive assets such as land. The project increased women's access to employment both as workers and contractors and to training opportunities in labour-based road construction. The CTTP involves the promotion of intermediate means of transport which has the potential to improve women's (relative to men's) opportunities to afford and own transport equipment.

Investment in district and community access roads strengthened women's access to; markets, trading opportunities, farm inputs and consumer goods. The socio-economic component of the trunk road

rehabilitation maximised the gender outcomes accruing from investment in physical infrastructure through complementary improvements in health facilities, water supplies, market structures, school facilities, and the rehabilitation of several community access roads. Furthermore, training seminars focusing on HIV/AIDS and road safety have promoted personal security.

The implementation of RSPS' first phase in a largely male dominated environment with unequal gender relations has constrained attainment of the planned outcomes. Some policies, programmes and guidelines (e.g. the transport sector policy and the RSDP) were insensitive to gender. There was inadequate gender disaggregated data to inform policy and practice, and both central and local governments had insufficient gender capacity and technical and financial resources to mainstream gender. The gender function was often assigned to individuals without training, and engineers on the programme typically had quantitative rather than qualitative competencies. Gender focal points in line ministries either had other 'mainstream' sectoral responsibilities, were too high up in the hierarchy to devote time to gender, or too low down to be heard. An absence of statutory gender requirements and dedicated budgets, combined with the late recruitment of gender advisors, all exacerbated the inadequate translation of gender responsiveness into practice.

However the gender management plan of RSPS' second phase strengthens the outcomes of phase one and has the potential to transform the gender terrain in the country's transport sector. It has a dedicated gender fund to ensure successful execution of the plan and to increase the likelihood of achieving the intended gender outcomes. The sustainability of these outcomes beyond the program's life is expected to be achieved through institutionalisation of the good practices in both national and local government policies and plans, and through implementing and monitoring procedures.

Lessons learned from the RSPS indicate that mainstreaming gender requires sustained efforts from stakeholders at all levels. RSPS aimed to bring about change in attitudes to gender and to increase women's participation in road works. To ensure ownership and sustainability, it adopted a participatory process involving stakeholders at all levels, giving voice to otherwise voiceless women and men. Although the nature of participation has improved, challenges still remain with respect to decision-making and benefits from the outcomes of road interventions.

The case of RSPS demonstrates the feasibility and added value of addressing gender in transport programs. With political commitment, the potential for replicating Uganda's gender integration strategies in other national transport sector programs and in other countries is high.

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## Introducing GATNET

The team that worked on the project *Integrating Gender into World Bank Financed Transport Programs* has formed a community of practice with strength in, and commitment to, issues of gender mainstreaming in general, and gender mainstreaming into the transport sector in particular. They agreed that they would like to sustain their interaction beyond the life of the project, and to open the forum to other people working on gender and on transport issues.

Together they have created GATNET, an email discussion group dedicated to sharing information and stimulating discussion on gender and transport issues. You are invited to join GATNET. Joining is very simple, just send a blank email to [join-GATNET@dgroups.org](mailto:join-GATNET@dgroups.org).

View the archive at:

<http://www.dgroups.org/groups/worldbank/gatnet>

## The Gender and Transport Research Team

Unfortunately there is not space in this issue to share information from all of the case studies that composed the project *Integrating Gender into World Bank Financed Transport Programs*. For more information about issues arising from the studies please contact any of the research team as listed below:

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# Transforming Power Relations? The Case of Senegal's NRIP

The National Rural Infrastructure Project (NRIP) is one component of the rural poverty alleviation strategies implemented by the Senegalese government since the 1990s. The program concentrates its efforts building the capacities of communities to provide services and developing their ability to plan and manage their own development programs, and collection of funds. The NRIP includes in its first phase a component on rural community roads.

The reality of NRIP indicates an 'integration of women into development' vision rather than a gender approach aimed at enabling women to control resources and impact on decision making within the home and community. It is too early in the life of the project to gain insights into how it has affected the daily lives of women. However an analysis of intended project impacts on male and female beneficiaries, indicates that NRIP is unlikely to transform power relations within the family and the community, which would be the essence of a gender approach.

There are a number of reasons for this observation:

- Firstly the **inadequate representation of women** at all levels. The Ministry of Family, Social Affairs and National Solidarity (the government institution responsible for the promotion of women) is not present among the ministries involved in the NRIP. The national level co-ordination body of the NRIP, comprises no women in its direction, and at regional level only 2 out of 9 Regional Coordinators are women. At community level women have a weak presence in decision making structures. They are mostly nominated in committees dealing with social issues eg. income generating activities or micro projects, and are left out of committees relating to mainstream issues such as tendering. This means that committees might not properly address their needs, and may not be in a position to push women's enterprises in tendering procedures.
- Among the NRIP management there is **a limited understanding of gender as an approach** to analyse, understand and transform power

relations within society. Examination of women's needs in NRIP will largely be confined to those relating to their domestic and reproductive roles. This is already evident in the infrastructures implemented such as rehabilitation of health units, establishment of maternity wards, small local markets and public taps. These infrastructures will reduce women's domestic burden and give access to some resources, but if NRIP is to address gender inequality within the communities, it should take other actions to empower women for more control over resources.

- A closer look at the **training opportunities** provided by NRIP reveals several gender issues may impair expected benefits. Women are rarely encouraged to attend trainings on technical issues such as tendering, project planning and management. They are more likely to receive trainings in keeping with their traditional role that do not empower them to gain knowledge to meet their strategic needs and be more present in decision making structures. The selection of women's group leaders or board members to attend training, and the use of French language training materials, means that only a limited number of women have the opportunity to gain from training.
- NRIP's documents about the rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure are almost mute over the **involvement of women**. Will they be involved and if so how, and will they receive additional training to improve their skills (particularly technical), or be allocated equipment needed to carry out the tasks, or credit to purchase them?
- Finally, none of the available **budgets** in the World Bank and NRIP documents, the Local Development Plans or the Annual Investment Plans are disaggregated. This makes it impossible to foresee how much money will be invested in interventions aimed at women. In addition there is no special budget to provide training to women or vulnerable groups, nor is special credit made available.

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## Mapping Gendered Mobility and Access

Policy makers in developing countries need basic information about access and mobility in an accessible form that enables them to understand the range, dimensions and spatial diversity of the problems their country faces. In many cases, India and Nepal for example, this data has already been collected. Yet it is rarely used because linkages between data sets are absent and the data is not available in an easily comprehensible format. This was discussed at the *Asia Regional Workshop on Improving Mobility for the Rural Poor*, organised by IFRTD in collaboration with the World Bank and DFID's Transport and Rural Infrastructure Learning and Sharing Project (TRISP) in India in September 2002.

A group of participants from the workshop proposed an **Atlas Series on Gendered Mobility and Access**. Initially to be piloted in India and Nepal, this will involve developing a small desk atlas (with accompanying notes) providing policymakers at central state and regional level with a visual presentation of data, and informing them of the social and community cost benefits of transport interventions and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in enhancing access to services. Problems of physical access to services as well as the importance of virtual mobility - access to knowledge and information through ICTs - are becoming increasingly recognised, and the analysis in the atlas series will provide information necessary to mainstream gender into interventions that address these issues.

The atlases to be produced for India and Nepal, have the potential to significantly enhance the potential for mainstreaming gender into improving access and mobility at local and national level, and the methodology used can then be adapted to analyse issues of gendered access and mobility in other countries and develop appropriate intervention strategies.

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## The Next Issue

Issue 11.4 of *Forum News* will focus on Transport and HIV/AIDS with a special report from the IFRTD networks in East and Southern Africa. In the last issue (11.2) we introduced the IFRTD Poverty Watch programme with a review of activities in Asia and East and Southern Africa. In 11.4 we will catch up with the programme in Latin America and West and Central Africa along with more news from across the IFRTD network.

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