

# Rural Transport Training Materials

## Module 5:

### Social and Environmental Issues

## Women and rural in transport in Africa and Asia: case studies

### Session 5.2

## Part 2

Presentation 5.2b



# 1. Introduction

## Learning Objectives

This session enables participants to:

- ③ Analyse the factors affecting the adoption and use of IMTs - the bicycle in particular - by women
- ③ Reflect on the lessons learnt from the case studies and consider how these may be applied to other countries.

# Session Overview

- © Background to Ghana case study
- © Results of the Ghana case study
- © Background to Tamil Nadu case study
- © Results of the Tamil Nadu case study
- © Reflections on key lessons learnt

# The case studies ...

- © The case studies were extracted from case study summaries of the *Balancing the Load* research programme funded by DFID.
- © The programme began in 1996
  - commissioned 40 case studies in Asia and Africa
  - to establish how gender relations affect women and men's access to goods and services and influence the provision of transport infrastructure and services

## 2. Background to Ghana case study: women traders in Gamoia, coastal Ghana

- © **Women** are responsible for **marketing**
- © Women face **difficulties** getting goods to market
  - particularly from off-paved road locations

# Transport problems

- ③ Feeder roads and tracks **deteriorate** rapidly in the rainy season
  - settlements a few miles from a tarred road become inaccessible
  - traders don't visit such villages so prices are depressed
  - women have to headload produce to the nearest motorable road to obtain reasonable prices

# The study asks five research questions

1. What is the **current organisation** and cost pattern of transport services in off-road areas (links to main market centres)
2. What are the particular **needs and difficulties** of women traders in a small number of selected off-road settlements (to what extent are they transport related?)
3. Most transport is owned by men. Is there **potential to develop women run/owned transport services?**

# The study asks five research questions

4. What potential is there for various types of **intermediate transport use** in the specific local cultural context and what would be the implications of its use for women's trading activities?
5. Could **electronic communications** (e.g. mobile phones) play a role in improving market information? Would this have transport implications?



# Transport system in Goma

## © Reasonable road network compared to northern Ghana

- but the condition of roads is frequently very poor
- majority of roads are classed as 'gravel'
- ... yet indistinguishable from earth tracks
- topography of Gomoa means the gravel surface is rapidly lost and cracks appear

# 3. Results of the Ghana case study

Lack of capital to expand trading

Defaulting Creditors

Late arrival of transport drives

Low IMT use

Access to market information

Access to motorised transport

## Lack of capital to expand trading

### ⊙ Lack of money for transport fares

- poorer women for visiting local markets
- better-off women to visit larger, more distant markets

### ⊙ Although women are the principal produce marketers

- usually less able to afford transport than their husbands
- who generally have larger areas of land to farm.

# Defaulting Creditors

## ⊙ Defaulting creditors and long delays in repayment of credit

- affects those with both large and small businesses
- both roadside and off-road residents alike
- but is not specifically transport related

# Late arrival of transport drives

- © Drivers of *tro-tros* **arrived late** on market day to pick up the traders and their goods
  - loss of sales occasioned by such delays
  - market may be well-advanced by the time they arrive - so it is not possible to sell all the produce they have
- © Failure of transport to arrive at all - common in the **wet season**
  - drivers were unwilling to venture along difficult stretches of road
  - spoilage and losses of produce

## Low IMT use

- ◎ IMT use was relatively low in Ghana
- ◎ Photographs of 5 IMTs were shown to women of varying age and economic status in 4 villages
  - the 'kencart' (a large mesh container on wheels)
  - tricycle cart
  - wheel barrow
  - bicycle with rear carrier
  - shoulder pole
- ◎ Women were asked their preferences

## Low IMT use

### ☉ Kencart

- most popular option with women from all villages - exception Lome - ranked bicycle first

### ☉ Cart

- valuable means of transporting crops from field to village and to local markets
- potential difficulties in getting the cart along village paths - could be parked on the nearest junction with the broad track

### ☉ Tricycle cart

- second choice overall - older women
- good potential for both farm to village and village to market transport

# Low IMT use

## 🌀 Bicycle

- much debate - long carrier admired
- only one village ranked bicycle above the kencart or tricycle
- bicycle perceived to have restricted load carrying capacity
- unsuited to the unevenness of farm paths
- women did not anticipate any opposition from men if they rode bicycles
- but many were uncertain if they would be able to learn to ride bicycles
- bicycles could be commandeered by men



## Low IMT use

### ⊙ Wheelbarrow

- less interest than either the kencart or tricycle cart

### ⊙ Carrying pole

- rejected everywhere
- looked uncomfortable
- too heavy
- impossible to carry a baby on their back while transporting goods using the pole

## Low IMT use

- ◎ Only one woman in all villages was a transport owner - this is exceptional
- ◎ Most women in Gomoa
  - have little likelihood of getting funds to purchase even a modest IMT
- ◎ Group ownership ought to be an option
  - but concern among the women that groups would have difficulty amicably sharing vehicles
  - everyone would want to use it at once
  - poorer villages - group purchase beyond women's means

## Low IMT use

### ⊙ Poverty or lack of experience with group enterprises

- may inhibit women-owned/run motorised transport and IMTs
- substantial groundwork needed to ensure the success of such projects

# Access to market information

## © The potential for improving access to market information through the use of **mobile phones**

- most women were not interested in hearing about prices obtainable in more distant markets
- they prefer to deal in their own, local market
- ... where they are known and less risk of being cheated
- women said they did not have the funds to visit more distant markets

# Access to motorised transport

- ⊙ Motorised transport services from and to off-road villages
  - very restricted
  - more costly than comparable distances over paved roads
- ⊙ Traders regularly disappointed by the late or non-arrival of vehicles on market day
  - particularly in the rainy season when roads become impassable
  - the women may lose money as a result

# World Bank project

- ③ “Village infrastructure project” (VIP)
  - could help with IMT acquisition
  - but villagers were unaware of it
- ③ The project aims to provide investment to user groups
  - women in these villages need to consider ways they can come together to take advantage of this potential source of finance

# 4. Background to Tamil Nadu case study

- ⊙ Introduction of bicycles & bicycle riding skills
  - part of a literacy campaign in the early 1990s
- ⊙ Initial campaign
  - men taught women how to cycle
  - loans for women to buy bicycles - those with a regular income (e.g. NGO workers) quickly took them up
- ⊙ As more women were seen cycling
  - opposition and 'male jokes died away'
  - became acceptable - the sense of being a *widespread movement*

# Key informant interviews, focus group discussion, village survey. **Questions:**

1. Though cycles were introduced from the perspective of empowering women rather than meeting their transport needs, have they been **able to meet transport needs ...**
  - ... for their productive and reproductive activities?
  - Are women able to access bicycles to meet those needs?
2. What had been the impact of women's increased mobility on their **self-esteem** and **confidence**, on **gender relations** in the community?



# Key informant interviews, focus group discussion, village survey. **Questions:**

3. Has providing bicycles to women been a **sustainable intervention?**
  - Has women's investment in cycles continued?
  - Do they have control over the use of these cycles?

# 49 women interviewed in 12 villages

## ☉ Most were Backward caste women

- ½ barely literate - others educated up to middle school
- earned a living through their labour
- mostly aged 20-30 years
- most had children and families to care for
- in addition to their income earning activities
- ... so their workload was heavy

# 5. Results of the Tamil Nadu case study

Bicycle use

Ownership

Social benefits

Access vs Control

Social restrictions

Private enterprise

Impact on women's lives

# Bicycle use

- ◎ Of the 49 women interviewed
  - only 3 did not know how to ride a bicycle
- ◎ Activity and time profile with 8 couples
  - men & women spent 6-8 hours/day on paid work
  - women spent 6-8 hours again on household maintenance and childcare tasks
  - men spent less than 2 hours on these
- ◎ Women's working day = **12-18 hours**

## Bicycle use

- ③ Women with access to bicycles - their own, or husband's, father's, brother's
  - used them to fetch water from the well/tank, take paddy to the rice mill, collect fuel and fodder, go to the hospital, go to school (younger girls)
- ③ A few use the cycle for their productive work
  - selling flowers in the market, purchasing and selling gems, maintenance of plants in a government nursery

# Ownership

- ⊙ Door to door survey of 50 households
  - 32 women (64%) owned a cycle
  - 83 out of 91 men knew how to cycle
  - ... and 34 out of 100 women
- ⊙ Four of the sample 49 women owned a bicycle
- ⊙ Women willing to hire cycles
  - 30-50% of people hiring cycles were women
  - emergencies, and in paid work
  - to do several household tasks together
  - but hiring every day was too expensive
  - ... so borrowed from neighbours/another household member
  - hire shop was also too far away

# Ownership

- ◎ Cycling viewed as a cheap and efficient means of transport
  - definitely contributes to meeting the transport needs of women
  - particularly those in 'low access' villages (distant from essential services)
- ◎ Better provision of services can reduce women's transport burden and needs
  - drinking water, food shops, health, education facilities

# Ownership

- ◎ Bicycles designed for women - rarely be found in the shops
- ◎ Women got used to riding bicycles with a cross bar
  - gives them better balance when carrying loads
  - riding in a sari does not bother them any more
  - ... the convenience of the mode of transport outweighed all other considerations



# Social benefits

## ⊙ Since learning to cycle

- women have become **more involved** with social, development and community tasks
- ... can confidently and independently cycle from village to village

## ⊙ Helped enhance the **status** of a woman

- who is now a major decision maker in her household

## ⊙ Taking a sick relative or child to hospital themselves on the bicycle

- gave a feeling of **independence** and usefulness

## Access vs Control

- © “Access” to cycles for women was widespread
  - but “control” was an issue
- © Most women were **dependent** on the cycles of others
  - ... so had to adjust their work according to the needs of the owners (male householders)
  - 12 of the 49 women had *easy* access to cycles
  - 10 *usually* had access to a bicycle when they needed it

# Social restrictions

- ⊙ Social restrictions prevent some women from cycling
  - men worry their wives or daughters will be injured
  - but mainly - women's work not a priority for men
- ⊙ Cycles greatly reduce the time and labour inputs for women in drudgery-ridden tasks essential for household maintenance
  - but these are unpaid and have no cash value
  - men do not see cycles as critical for women in the performance of their tasks

## Social restrictions

- © Cycling for women did not seem to change gender relations (for  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the sample)
  - major decision making still vested in men

# Private enterprise

- ◎ Profitability of bicycle shops increased their numbers
  - due to greater acceptance of cycling
- ◎ A cycle shop should be available in villages
- ◎ Mobility and transportation = integral parts of people's lives
  - changes in employment patterns and lifestyles
  - large numbers of girls cycling to school every day
  - indicative of even higher bicycle use in the next generation

# Impact on women's lives

## 🌀 Women's perception of **independence** in the household and community

- **40%** of the women reported that their **workloads** actually **increased**
- tasks traditionally undertaken by the men (marketing, taking children to school, tasks which involved travelling long distances) all shifted to women

## 🌀 Bicycles

- helped women complete their jobs **faster**, more **easily**
- provide **more leisure time** despite increased work

# Reflections on the Ghana & Tami Nadu experiences



## Case study

- A. *To what extent are IMTs especially bicycles used by women in other countries?*
- B. *What factors would encourage and hinder the adoption of IMTs by women?*
- C. *What potential changes that could be brought about in the social and productive (work) spheres through the adoption of IMTs and bicycles by women?*

# Concluding Remarks

## Ghana

- © Women were responsible for marketing
- © The use of IMTs could help transport crops from farm to market
- © Women were very interested in IMTs
  - but had little opportunity to obtain IMTs due to lack of funds



# Concluding Remarks

## Tamil Nadu

- ◎ Cycling may be an effective strategy for empowering women
- ◎ Gender relations were apparently unaffected
  - “control” over bicycle use was an issue
- ◎ Women found the bicycle
  - an efficient, cheap and easy way of meeting their transport needs
  - a sustained and sustainable phenomenon that was an integral part of their lives