



Gender Sensitive Mini-Bus Services & Transport Infrastructure for African Cities: A Practical Toolkit

Based on a Mobility of Care Study & Gender Equity
Assessment of Nairobi's Minibus Transport Network



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Foreword



Sustainable urbanization and attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals depends crucially upon the increased participation of women in economic and social activities. Nevertheless, several constraints combined, limit such participation. One such constraint is the challenge that women face when commuting in cities, whether to places of work, educational institutions, health care facilities or to places that provide opportunities for social interactions or recreation.

Research has shown that women have different travel patterns from men, due to their additional responsibilities of caring for children, the elderly and people with disabilities. Research also shows that women are often victims of sexual harassment in the streets or on public transport.

Based on practical examples, UN-Habitat and the Fione Initiative have worked together to develop this Toolkit that can guide public transport operators in improving their services for women. In Africa, public transport tends to be operated informally, with fleets comprised of smaller vehicles such as minivans. The recommendations in this Toolkit are also relevant for local and national government authorities making efforts to improve public transport for their citizens through improving the regulatory framework or introducing modern forms of public transport such as a Bus Rapid Transit system.

Users of the Toolkit will observe that the recommendations aim at improving public transport for women, and if adopted, will improve public transport for all including the elderly, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

While it draws on examples from Nairobi, I believe that this Toolkit will contribute to improving public transport across cities in Africa. I hope that public transport operators, city managers and regulatory and road safety authorities will find the *Toolkit on Gender Sensitive Mini Bus Services and Transport Infrastructure for African Cities* useful.

Maimunah Mohd. Sharif

United Nations Under-Secretary-General and
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Abbreviations

GEA	Gender Equity Assessment
ILO	International Labor Organization
ITDP	Institute for Transportation and Development Policy
KBS	Kenya Bus Service
Matatu	Minibuses, minivans, vans and buses used in road public transport
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
PWD	People with Disabilities
SACCO	Saving and Credit Co-Operative Societies
UN	United Nations
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls

Executive Summary

This Toolkit provides minibus transport organizations, policy makers and civil society actors with practical and concrete tools for creating safer public transport systems for African women and other vulnerable commuters. The tools and recommendations herein are derived from intensive case studies conducted with Nairobi-based transport workers and commuters.

The main recommendations for public minibus transport providers include:

01 Develop customer feedback tools that align with the organization's customer service charter which provide commuters with clear reporting mechanisms.

02 Develop and implement policies of zero-tolerance to sexual harassment that address the concerns of both workers and commuters.

03 Make modifications to minibuses that support specific needs of commuters traveling with children, those carrying large packages and those living with both visible and invisible disabilities.

04 Adopt family-friendly organizational human resource policies such as maternity and paternity leave.

The Toolkit recommends ways for policy makers to develop gender sensitive legislation which create safer, more accessible public transportation systems for all. It also proposes how civil society can support these initiatives.

This is the first version of a Toolkit which will guide a multi-year project to be executed by Fione Initiative. The project supports transport organizations to adopt its recommendations. This Toolkit will be adapted and amended based on user feedback, impact and lessons learnt.

Introduction

The *Gender Sensitive Mini-Bus Services and Transport Infrastructure for African Cities Toolkit* provides minimum standard guidelines and practical tools for creating safer and more accessible public transportation systems for women in African cities. The Toolkit specifically provides vital information on improving existing management policies and practices.

Over the years, there have been rampant cases of violence against women and girls (VAWG) on public transport in Africa and other developing regions. On 17 November 2014, Kenya caught the world's attention with the **#MyDressMyChoice** campaign in which thousands of people went to the streets to protest sexual violence against women in the public transport industry following a spate of stripping incidences which were filmed and posted online. This protest sparked off a movement to challenge gender norms and systems that allow this kind of violence and fundamentally limit women's freedom of movement and access to public space.

How was this Toolkit developed?

This Toolkit is a synthesis of primary and secondary information from two case studies conducted in Nairobi, Kenya, and a literature review to identify best practices on gender and urban transport applied in cities around the world, with a focus on developing cities. Kenyan minibus services (locally referred to as *matatus*) are organized into informal saving and credit cooperatives societies or SACCOs. These public minibus transport services are the most common mode of transport for middle and low-income commuters, the majority of whom are

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