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Palestinian Authority

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

ENHANCING WOMEN MOBILITY IN WEST BANK, NORTHERN WEST
BANK AS A CASE STUDY

FINAL REPORT

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This report has been prepared by Ms. Shuaa Marar, a Researcher contracted by the World Bank. In this section, she writes:

“We present our thanks and appreciation to the Palestinian Ministry of Transport for their interest in studying gender and transport despite the challenges and difficulties facing Palestinian society. This is considered a pioneering step in the Arab region, and we do hope that the study results contribute towards the process of developing and regulating the transport sector within the current Ministry’s efforts.

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Executive Summary

The present study was undertaken for the World Bank in order to gain a gender differentiated understanding of the mobility situation in the Palestinian territory, with a focus on mobility constraints and access to transportation options for both women and men.

The study is based on fieldwork conducted in three governorates in North West Bank (Nablus, Jenin and Tulkarem) as a case study. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were utilized as well as a desk review of relevant local, Arab and international literature. Nine focus group discussions were held with women, men, and drivers from areas that were selected on the basis of certain political, economic and social characteristics. In addition, a quantitative survey was conducted by means of a Two Stage Stratified Cluster Sample that included 385 women and men aged 16 years and above, yielding a confidence interval of 95% and margin of error of $\pm 5\%$. In addition; the researcher analyzed a weekly transportation log covering 2505 trips.

The research was designed within the framework of gender studies and mobility options, based on the widespread recognition that women and men often have substantially different patterns of demand for transport services, means of transport used, and time of use, in developing countries.

Gender and transport issues have not been systematically studied in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, apart from an on-going World Bank-funded study in Yemen. Although such research has been conducted internationally, the impact on planning and policy-making remains generally limited in MENA. Planning in the transport sector typically does not recognize the differing patterns in women and men's needs and demand for transportation. The results of international studies clearly highlight the fact that the transport sector is generally oriented toward serving men's demand for transport: reaching their workplace in the morning and going back to their residence in the afternoon. Consequently, planning typically focuses on one-way, single-destination routes, which often are not compatible with women's needs for multi transportation means to various locations at different times throughout the day.

The present study finds that the characteristics of the transport system in the Palestinian territory are consistent with the general trends outlined above. Moreover, the study highlights the added value and importance of public transportation in the Palestinian context, due to the severe Israeli restrictions on Palestinian movement—such as the extensive network of checkpoints, concrete barriers, and earth mounds, in the West Bank, as well as the separation wall—which force the majority of the Palestinian population to use public transportation. 97% of participants in the present research reported using public transportation in varying degrees. They also spend a relatively high level of income (19%) on transportation. The main findings of the study are as follows:

Uses of Public Transportation

According to the weekly transportation log analysis, more women (73%) depend on public transportation than do men (61%). It is almost certain that this situation will persist for the foreseeable future, as 77% of women respondents do not have a driving license, and 55% do not intend to have one. Men use private cars, as well as alternative means of transport (tractor, motor cycle, bicycle, carts...etc) more than women.

In addition, men's and women's purposes for using transportation differ. The majority of men (52%), compared to only 22% of women, use transportation to reach the work place. A primary reason for that is women's weak participation in the labor force. On the other hand, women are more likely to use transport for social and health-related reasons. 36% of women, compared to 17% of men, use transportation for

family-related and other social activities, and 8% of women, compared to 3% of men, use it to access health services.

The differences in the use of transportation based on gender roles are not reflected in transportation planning, which focuses principally on providing single-destination routes to reach work or education centers, without taking women's needs into account.

Gender-Specific Daily Practical Transport Needs

83% of respondents use a single means of transportation, but 1 in 5 women, compared to 1 in 10 men, use two or more means of transportation. 47% of respondents use transportation during the morning, compared to 39% around mid-day, and 15% during the evening. The most significant difference between men and women was noon time. Indeed, 43% of women compared to 37% of men need transportation during the middle of the day, a time at which transportation is scarce.

Women noted during focus group discussions that they are often forced to change their schedule to match with what is available, or use a taxi (especially in times of emergency), which puts an added financial burden on the women and their families.

Evaluation of Means of Transportation

Most respondents found that public transport means are not child-friendly, safe, or comfortable. 48% of respondents mentioned that means of transportation are not child-friendly with an insignificant difference between women and men. A slight majority (60%) felt that transportation means are safe, and 58% believed that they are new, again with little difference between genders. Only 32% of women and 41% of men believed that transportation means are comfortable for women.

Evaluation of Public Transportation Terminals

Public transportation terminals face many challenges, which negatively affect passengers as well as the quality of service offered. The challenges can be summarized as follows:

Most terminals lack sanitary facilities (93%), or information and complaints centers (91%). A large majority is far from population centers (81%), lacks waiting chairs (81%) or umbrellas (79%), and is not clean (66 %).

Because men and women travel accompanied by children, family members, elderly, disabled, etc. (typically 1 to 3 dependents for women and 4 to 6 dependents for men), and because the journey's duration is unpredictable due to the checkpoints and other barriers, there is a greater need for basic services at public transportation terminals.

Mobility Challenges Faced by Women and Men

- ***Organizational and Regulatory Aspects:*** A slight majority of respondents believed that drivers do not comply with the official fare (59%). 64% of women held this view, compared to 54% of men. The assessment showed that the average cost of transportation was higher for women (NIS 12) than for men (NIS 10). Women respondents highlighted the importance of regulation and monitoring, and complained about unregistered public transport providers, drivers who do not comply with the official fare, and lack of information about complaint processes.

- ***Social and Cultural Constraints:*** Women's mobility via public transport is challenged by cultural barriers. 27% of respondents reject the idea of women using public transport. It is generally difficult for women to use public transport means, unless the driver is known by the community. This limits mobility options available for women, and has implications for regulatory aspects in general. The percentage of women who use private cars is small (8%), compared to that of men (19%).
- ***Infrastructure:*** The results showed that road infrastructure faces challenges including road bumps (mentioned by 84% of respondents), unpaved areas (71%), slides and water-filled holes (70%), and road works (50%).

The main recommendations of the study are as follows:

The primary and overarching recommendation is that all physical barriers to movement within the Palestinian territory must be removed. The mobility of people is fundamental to their ability to be part of the society. In West Bank and Gaza, an area under military occupation since 1967, mobility is dramatically reduced for both men and women due to political restrictions including checkpoints and other barriers, a separation wall, and economic closure. Women's mobility in West Bank and Gaza is further constrained by social factors that reduce their access to the outside world. Specific recommendations to the principal stakeholders are listed below.

➤ ***Recommendations to Planners:***

- Ensure that women's needs based on their multiple roles are taken into account and incorporated into national development plans.

➤ ***Recommendations to Operators:***

- Integrate fares through coordination between lines to serve vulnerable groups, such as women and refugees, who are forced to use more than one means of transport.
- Make the routes and schedules of public transport vehicles clear and predictable, to reduce waiting time.
- Commit to safety regulations and ensure drivers' commitment.
- Make the vehicles more comfortable and adopt a broader strategy to improve transport services, making passengers the center of the service.

➤ ***Recommendations to General Directorate for Transport at the Ministry of Transport***

- Improve the sector's monitoring through effective coordination between stakeholders including the police and the municipalities. Better law compliance was noted in areas having active presence of the police.
- Regulate public transport lines in coordination with operators to provide service at different times, thus increasing mobility for the public at large, and for women in particular.
- Monitor the sector's compliance with official fare, safety standards, registration and operations, and information provision about drivers.
- Improve vehicle's quality control (cleanliness, safety of the vehicle's windows, doors, air conditioning...etc)
- Improve the effectiveness of complaint mechanisms and raise public awareness about the importance of this process. In addition, take steps to create a model to improve quality of service.
- Monitor the size of the seats, especially in the older cars; seats should be wide and comfortable.
- Specify seats with priority access for children and people with special needs
- Delimit a seating area with priority access for women, in case the vehicle is not fully equipped for comfortable seating.

➤ ***Recommendations to Municipalities:***

- Re-consider the locations and specifications of terminals to ensure better service for a wider part of the population, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport.
- Ensure proper management of terminals by forming full-time administrative bodies that supervise all lines, identify and address problems, and receive complaints and follow them up.
- Enhance public safety and comfort by providing basic services such as shelters to protect customers from sun and rain, seats in the public transport terminals and compounds, clean sanitary facilities, and wide pavements that can be used by carts, or wheelchairs.

CHAPTER ONE: Conceptual Framework

1. Gender and Transport

The global literature on gender and transport explains inequalities between women and men in accessing transportation by way of three primary interlinked variables. Those are; (1) Gender-neutral norms of planning and policy making for transport sector, which fail to distinguish between the needs of women and men. (2) A patriarchal social system and its impact on power relations and division of labor between women and men, and manifestations on their different roles and needs, and (3) Poverty and its effects on women's access to and control of resources, which limits women's options, both in terms of owning means of transportation or paying for public means of transportation.

Planning for Transport and Gender (Analytical View)

Transport planning has tended to focus primarily on facilitating access to employment, thereby addressing the travel needs of regular commuters while paying limited attention to non-work travel, which may encompass social interactions, fulfilling various family needs, as well as access to services.¹

According to Karen Levy, planners in the transport sector based their projects on the assumption that men are the head of households, with a clear division of labor whereby men are responsible for work outside the home, and women's role is to take care of the family inside the home. Another assumption is that the family is in agreement on its priorities; thus there is equality in access to and control over resources inside the family.² According to Levy, the challenges to these assumptions are the following:

- Generally speaking, the focus in planning for transport sector was and still is on efficiency of the transport system, service provision and public safety, away from its connection to economic, social, cultural and political context.
- Transport infrastructure is usually based on making sure that the husband gets to his work place using private vehicle, and ultimately generalizing this priority to all families. The effect is most profound on low-income families and female-headed households, as they utilize low-cost means of transportation to reach work place and other places.
- For women, the assumption is that their primary role is a reproductive one; thus their need for and use of transportation is less. It is also thought that women's other roles are simply a continuation of their primary role; consequently women's demands become unforeseen and are not taken into account in the planning process.
- Women's multiple roles mean the need to reach different places to fulfill their needs. This is usually unforeseen by planners.
- Lack of understanding of women's multiple roles by planners leads to the design of transport service that focuses on men's needs for regular transportation mainly to go to work based on their regular

¹ Ventor, C. Mashiri, M. Denise, B. "Engendering Mobility: Towards Improved Gender Analysis in the Transportation Sector." University of Pretoria Press, 2006.

² Levy, Caren. "Transport" in Ostergaard, L (ed), Gender and Development: A Practical Guide, Routledge, 1992.

schedule. It means that the transportation times are arranged according to the beginning and end of the working day. Due to the varied roles of women, and the fact that there is no specific or known time for the need to use transportation, women need transport services at different times than those emphasized by planners.

- Despite the fact that planners study transport needs of the target group, the general standards they utilize are connected primarily to access to the job market, vehicle ownership, and income. These are all standards disproportionately relevant to men, and do not apply to many women whose work is mostly informal, and who neither control access to resources nor use a private vehicle. The end result is that planners pay more attention to men's needs than to women's needs.
- For planners, the head of the household is the source of information. This in itself is a trap as the assumption is that the family is a homogenous unit with agreement on its priorities. The family is not a homogenous structure and there are variations between its members according to age, gender, and different potentials in access to resources. Participation in decision-making is based on power and authority of its members. Men also do not know as much as women do about the details of family's daily needs.

Patriarchal System³

This system represents a social and ideological structure that enables men's domination in accessing resources and mobility, and allows them to derive most benefits from family-owned resources. Specifically in the transport sector, family transportation means typically allow the man to reach the work place, to support the family, and otherwise fulfill his needs. It does not satisfy women's needs in terms of mobility; thus the alternative for women is to use public transportation with all its challenges of cost, timing, and routing.

Poverty⁴

Poverty is linked primarily to the family's economic structure, and usually women have lesser capacity to access and control resources. This is most apparent in poor families, who live primarily at the outskirts of towns, or in slums usually far from public transportation lines. It is reflected in women's inability to reach means of transportation and services, and is linked to women's economic role, as women's participation in the formal labor market is less than men, especially among poor households. As a result, women are forced to live near the work place or vice-versa, to avoid paying for expensive transport, or walking long distances.

³ Overton, Karen. "Using the Bicycle for Women's Empowerment in Africa." *Sustainable Transport*, No. 6, Summer 1996, pp. 6-10. New York: The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP). And see: Peters, op. cit. 2. .

⁴ See: Chant, Sylvia. "Gender, Cities, and the Millennium Development Goals in the Global South," *Gender institute*. Issue 21, November 2007. UK.

URL: <http://w.lse.ac.uk/collections/genderInstitute/pdf/CHANT%20GIWP.pdf>

And see: Peters, op. cit. 2.

The following are important conclusions from previous studies, which constitute the basis for the current study:⁵

- Mobility and travel patterns differ significantly between women and men, and transport networks are often not equally appropriate for both, especially in light of women's multiple roles.
- The above necessitates planning modifications in acknowledgement of women's different activities.
- Passengers' personal safety and security is a central and crucial issue which tends to be overseen; yet it merits more attention from transport planners.

2. The Palestinian Context

Access Restrictions in the West Bank

Most of the West Bank is inaccessible to Palestinians, due to Israeli restrictions on movement of people and access to natural resources. The 1995 Oslo interim agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel divided the Palestinian territory into three Areas - A, B, and C - with different security and administrative arrangements and authorities. The land area controlled by the Palestinians (Area A, corresponding to all major population centers, and Area B, encompassing most rural centers) is fragmented into a multitude of enclaves, with a dense regime of movement restrictions between them. Those enclaves are surrounded by Area C, which includes the entire remaining area and is the only contiguous area of the West Bank. Area C is under full control of the Israeli military for both security and civilian affairs related to territory, including land administration and planning. It is sparsely populated and underutilized (except by Israeli settlements and reserves), and holds the majority of the land (approximately 59%).⁶ Palestinians face extremely challenging conditions in their daily commuting between the Palestinian areas as a result of Israeli measures (closures, checkpoints, separation wall).

At the end of June 2008, 171 communities were affected by the establishment of the separation wall. The communities were either isolated behind the wall, or divided by the wall passing through them. The population of those areas is 700,000. In addition, bypass roads (off limits to Palestinians) were established on the land of 96 communities, and Israeli settlements constructed on the land of 92 communities. All of the above has limited mobility and movement options for Palestinians in those communities. (*Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008*).

Transport Sector Planning in the Palestinian Territory

⁵ See: Venter, op. cit. 4.

And see:

Gomez, Lara. Gender Analysis of Two Components of the World Bank Transport Projects in Lima, Peru: Bikepaths and Busways. (Draft August 2000) Washington DC: The World Bank. URL: www.worldbank.org/gender/transport

Levy, Caren. "Transport" in Ostergaard, L (ed), Gender and Development: A Practical Guide, Routledge, 1992. World Bank. Sustainable Transport: Priorities for Policy Reform. Washington, D.C. World Bank, 1996.

⁶ World Bank. "The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank". World Bank, 2008.

Despite geographic restrictions in the Palestinian territory, initiatives by the Palestinian Authority are in place to develop the general infrastructure in areas under its jurisdiction, and to organize the transport sector specifically. The Palestinian Ministry of Transport cooperates with a number of international partners. The World Bank currently provides technical assistance to develop and regulate the transport sector. In 2007, the Ministry developed a transport sector strategy with the primary objective of regulating the sector, improving service provision, and reducing the cost paid by the beneficiaries.

The main challenges addressed by the transport sector strategy were those related to the fleet conditions, network and route optimization, and the impacts of access restrictions, closures and the separation between the West Bank and Gaza. The strategy also addressed the need to reform and to develop the transport sector within a general context of efficiency and quality service provision, supported by the legal framework. Reform of the sector is crucial, but must be rooted in the social and economic context in order to be efficiently implemented.

Based on the above context for planning, this study presents the following main points for consideration:

- It is extremely challenging for the Palestinian organizations to undertake comprehensive planning for transport infrastructure and movement in light of the complex geographic situation. As shown previously, Palestinian control within the Palestinian territory is very limited.
- Mobility for people and goods is severely curtailed, due to the presence of more than 500 checkpoint and physical barriers by the end of 2008, both fixed and temporary.⁷
- The separation wall impacts several areas in the West Bank; almost half of them are located in the north (area of the current research).
- Political restrictions should be taken into account in any discussion of mobility and developing the transport sector.
- The Palestinian-Israeli conflict still threatens infrastructure development efforts due to the destruction of such infrastructure; this requires resources to be directed to rehabilitation rather than development.
- Most communities lack access to basic services. For example, 9% of Palestinians need more than an hour to reach health services at times of emergency, and 7% of patients with chronic diseases need more than an hour to reach health services. This has obvious links to transport sector infrastructure and the availability of suitable vehicles for ensuring access to health and social services.⁸
- The Palestinian territory includes small areas separated by hundreds of Israeli checkpoints and barriers, in addition to the separation wall. The West Bank and Gaza are completely isolated from one another. Given this reality, it is difficult to plan for advanced means of transportation such as railways. It might be possible to use other simpler means. A separate feasibility study is needed to address the issues of passage of those creative means of transport at the Israeli checkpoints.

Introduction to Transportation in the Palestinian Territory

⁷ UN OCHA. URL: www.ochaopt.org.

⁸ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). "Access to Health Services Survey. 2003.

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, paved road area in the West Bank and Gaza⁹ was 5,000 square kilometers, out of which around 2,700 square kilometers are bypass roads, to which Palestinians do not have access. The number of vehicles reached 117,000 in the West Bank in 2007, 19,000 fewer than in 2005. These cars were distributed as follows:¹⁰ 67% private cars; 19% commercial vehicles; 9 % taxis; and 4 % other.

Surveys of the informal transportation sector in the Palestinian Territory have shown that the total number of operating vehicles is 10,000, of which 9,500 are for passenger transport, and 500 vehicles for freight transport by road. 76% of those are public vehicles, 19% private, and 5% are for freight transport. 11,000 people are engaged in this sector.¹¹

There are several organizations responsible for the administration and operations of the transport sector.¹² Their roles and responsibilities are summarized below; yet more information is needed regarding the nature of coordination among the various bodies.

- Ministry of Transport: is responsible for administration of this sector including determining number of lines for public transport, number of vehicles per line, and registration for vehicles.
- Municipalities: are responsible for the design and supervision of stops and terminals for those lines, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport. Municipalities are also in charge of developing, upgrading and rehabilitating roads.
- Traffic Police: is responsible for monitoring vehicles' movement internally and on outside roads, ensuring efficient transport, and guaranteeing all necessary documents and papers relating to vehicles' registration and insurance are in place.
- Traffic Committees: The Ministry of Transport has lately re-activated the role of those committees in the different governorates. Committees include representatives from the Ministry of Transport, Municipalities, Transporters' Syndicates, Traffic Police and Governorates. They coordinate with the Ministry of Transport with regard to any issue relating to the public transport sector.

Gender Indicators in the Palestinian Context

Palestinian women have very low levels of formal labor force participation. PCBS labor force surveys show that women's participation was only 15% in the first quarter of 2009 (compared to 67% for men).¹³ The rate of women participation was 16% in the West Bank and 14% in Gaza. The highest rate of participation was in rural areas 17%, followed by women in urban areas 15%, and finally refugee camps 13 %.

⁹ West Bank and Gaza excluding Jerusalem (lack of data).

¹⁰ PCBS. "Annual Transportation Survey." 2006.

¹¹ PCBS. "Press Release on the Main Results of the Thirteenth Round of the Transport Survey - The Informal Sector in the Palestinian Territory," 2009.

¹² Background paper prepared by engineer Ranya Dowleh – Nablus Municipality for this research.

¹³ PCBS, op. cit. 15.

The rate of unemployment among women is 24%, with the highest percentage among those who had finished 13 years and more of schooling, at 31%.¹⁴ Homemaking is the main reason for women staying outside the labour force: 65% of women reported this to be the case, compared to only 0.5% of men. The above percentages reflect rather static division of labour between women and men, which is also reflected by their demand for transport services.

Women's formal labour force participation is largely segregated by sectors. Women are employed in services (62%), agriculture (19%), followed by manufacturing (9%), then commerce, hotels and restaurants (8%). 19% of women work without compensation, compared to only 5% of men.¹⁵

The poverty rate reached 61% among female-headed households in comparison to 57% of male-headed households, in 2007. Poverty rates among female-headed households that include 7 children and more reached 80%.¹⁶

Female education is an essential social right and a leading indicator of equality between women and men. In the Palestinian territory, female education levels are comparable to those of men in terms of enrolment, although there are some differences in terms of achievement. During 2008, 24% of females and 22% of males aged 15 years and older were enrolled in the education sector, and 15% of females have finished sixth grade compared to 17 % of males. Females are less likely to hold Bachelors' degrees, (8% of females versus 15% of males) and three times more likely to be illiterate (9% of Palestinian females 15 years and older, versus 3% of males).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ PCBS. "A Press Release Issued by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on the Occasion of the International Women's Day," March 2008.

¹⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO: Research Methodology

1. Area Selection in the Three Northern Governorates (Tulkarem, Nablus and Jenin):

The three governorates were selected for this research for several reasons including geographic, social, economic, and political variation offered by these governorates at different levels:

- Political level: extensive presence of military checkpoints, enclaves, settlements and bypass roads.
- Economic level: the three governorates are considered economically active with the availability of industries. Tulkarem and Jenin are close to Palestinian population centres within Israel and share some economic activities. The three governorate centres, especially Nablus, are considered important commercial centres for the villages and nearby communities.
- Social level: the three governorates enjoy varying social characteristics, yet they are clearly distinct from the middle and south West Bank. Also, the presence of many organizations, government institutions, universities and colleges creates a certain societal movement in the governorate centres.
- Agricultural level: this area is considered agriculturally active; thus providing some indicators about mobility issues for agricultural communities.
- Area: the three centres are representative of big Palestinian towns, consequently reflecting integration between towns, surrounding areas and villages.

The population of the three northern governorates (Jenin, Tulkarem and Nablus) is 735,000. Nablus is the largest one of the three. Table 1 provides some basic information about the three towns.¹⁷

Table 1- Population of the three governorates (Jenin, Tulkarem and Nablus)

Governorate	Nablus	Tulkarem	Jenin
Total Population	321,000	158,000	256,000
Male	162,000	80,000	130,000
Female	159,000	78,000	126,000
Urban	177,000	106,000	147,000
Rural	113,000	35,000	99,000
Refugee Camp	31,000	17,000	10,000
Average Family Size	5.4	5.3	5.4

The three towns are the hubs of the public transport system within their respective governorates, as well as for transport to and from Palestinian town centres in other governorates. Each Municipality manages a bus terminal (compounds) or more for the purpose of regulating public transport.¹⁸ Details concerning transport facilities and fleets are as follows:

¹⁷ PCBS. Census 2007.

¹⁸ Dowleh, Rania, op. cit. 16.

- Nablus Governorate: There are two area compounds managed by Nablus Municipality. They cover the needs of more than 50 communities through 510 vehicles. Due to continuous closures, many lines had to be moved to surrounding areas. Around 630 taxis serve Nablus city and an additional 89 buses distributed over 15 companies serving 29 lines in and outside Nablus Governorate.
- Tulkarem Governorate: there is one compound managed by the Municipality for Tulkarem city and environs. There are two bus companies with 46 small and big buses providing services to 16 lines inside and outside Tulkarem Governorate. In the area franchise there are taxis serving 34 lines within Tulkarem Governorate as well as outside the Governorate.
- Jenin Governorate: There are three compounds managed by a private operator. Taxis serve 25 lines inside and outside the Governorate. There are 19 bus companies serving 34 lines with 128 small and big buses.

2. Sample Selection

- Population: includes females and males 16 years of age and above who normally reside in the three governorates.
- Research Sample: two-stage stratified sample, which included (385) women and men aged 16 years and above. The confidence interval was 95%, and the margin of error + 5%.

In the first stage, areas' selection was done to ensure geographic distribution and representation of the three governorates according to population size and urban, rural, and camp distribution. In the second stage, the selection of individuals was done ensuring equal representation among women and men. Sample distribution was as follows:

Table 2 - Sample Distribution

No.	Community	Governorate	Type	Number of Households	Sample Size
1	Zbouba	Jenin	Rural	354	14
2	Yabad	Jenin	Urban	2484	11
3	Toura Gharbieh	Jenin	Rural	195	14
4	Arraneh	Jenin	Rural	356	14
5	Deir Abu Daif	Jenin	Rural	962	15
6	Kufr Ra'i	Jenin	Rural	1357	16
7	Arrabeh	Jenin	Urban	1779	11
8	Jenin Camp	Jenin	Camp	2015	6
9	Qabatya	Jenin	Urban	3476	13
10	Jenin	Jenin	Urban	7296	18
	Jenin Subtotal				132
11	Jaroushieh	Tulkarem	Rural	187	15
12	Atteel	Tulkarem	Urban	1703	14
13	Tulkarem	Tulkarem	Urban	9718	18
14	Beit Leed	Tulkarem	Rural	930	16
15	Bala'a	Tulkarem	Urban	1202	12
16	Nour Shams Camp	Tulkarem	Camp	1211	9

No.	Community	Governorate	Type	Number of Households	Sample Size
	Tulkarem Subtotal				84
17	Nisf Jubeil	Nablus	Rural	84	10
18	Nassarieh	Nablus	Rural	263	11
19	Qaryout	Nablus	Rural	383	12
20	Boureen	Nablus	Rural	430	12
21	Beit Dajan	Nablus	Rural	644	9
22	Salem	Nablus	Rural	860	11
23	Ein Beit El Ma'a Camp	Nablus	Camp	767	8
24	Huwarrah	Nablus	Urban	987	25
25	Til	Nablus	Rural	776	12
26	Balata Camp	Nablus	Camp	2800	8
27	Nablus	Nablus	Urban	26085	51
	Nablus Subtotal				169
Total					385

3. Research Implementation Phases

The research is comprised three main components, outlined below.

1. **Preparatory Phase:** Literature review of available relevant studies, and reports on the Palestinian context, as well as review of available global literature about transport and gender.
2. **Focus Group Discussions:** 9 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held in the three Governorates attended by 96 participants (females and males). One FGD was held with each of the following groups: men, drivers, and university students. In addition, six FGDs were held with women. The FGDs aimed at understanding means of transportation available in the three governorates, gender-differentiated transport needs and use of available transport means, and challenges and restrictions facing both women and men using public transportation. In addition, participants discussed measures and standards relating to gender-differentiated transport demands. The following table provides detailed information on the FGDs, locations and participants.

Table 3 - Distribution of Focus Group Discussion Participants

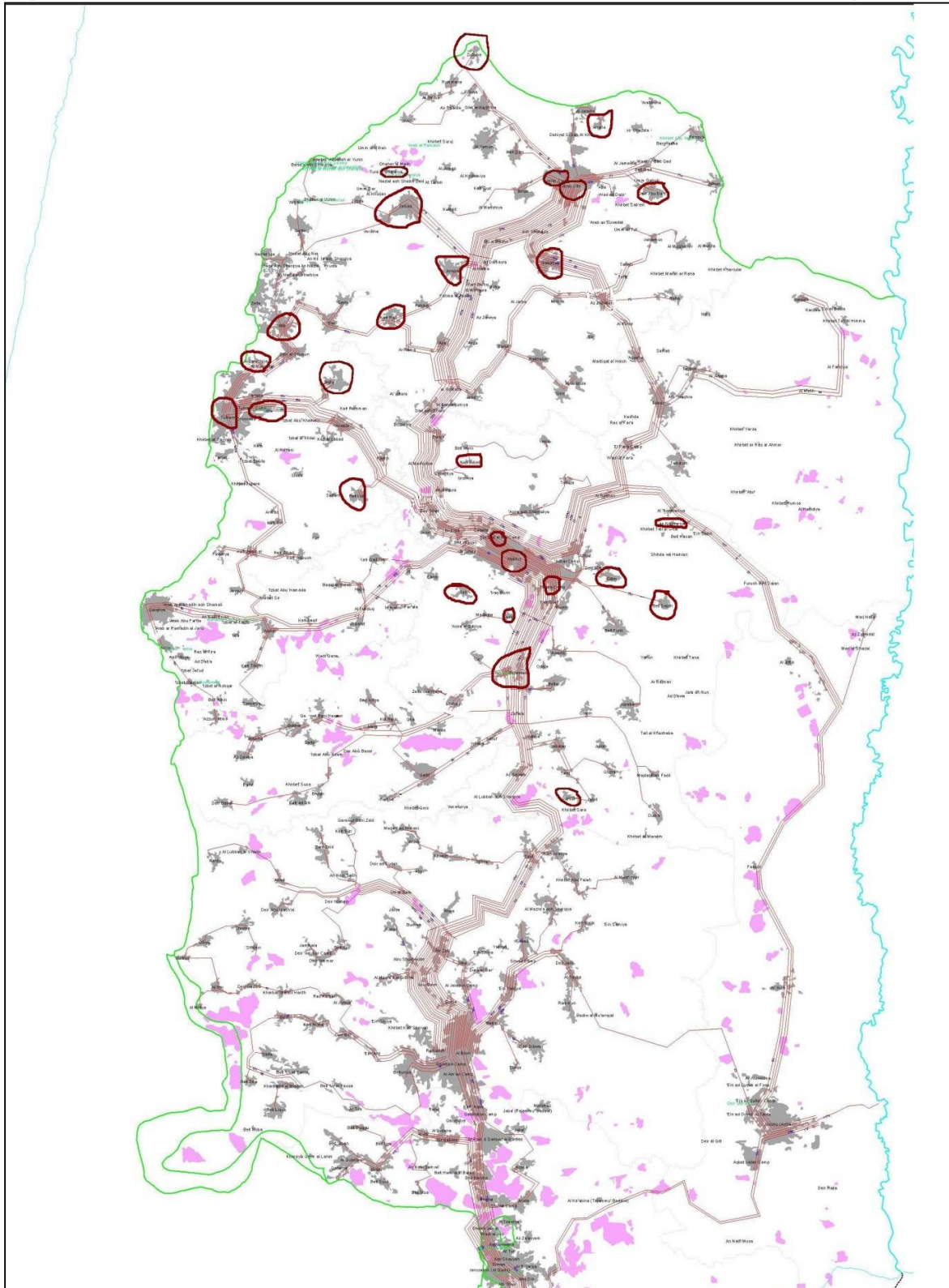
Target Group	Location	Location Characteristics at the time of the survey	Number of Participants
Women	Nablus City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large urban centre (city) - Governorate Centre including all services and government institutions. - Educational center: Al Najah University and other colleges. - Large number of employees who commute daily to other Governorates. - Presence of checkpoints: Huwwarah and Beit Eiba 	10
Men	Jenin City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large urban centre (city) - Governorate Centre - Large number of citizens who commute daily to other 	10

Target Group	Location	Location Characteristics at the time of the survey	Number of Participants
		Governorates for work and education. - Presence of health, education and government services. - Heavy traffic to and through Jenin to reach schools and the American University.	
Women	Tulkarem City	- Large urban centre (city). - Governorate Centre. - Large number of citizens who commute daily to other Governorates for work and education. - Presence of all basic services. - Transport available for all purposes and destinations.	10
Female and male students	Nablus City	- As mentioned previously	14
Women	Yitma Village	- Small village between Ramallah and Nablus. - Facing checkpoints of the three cities. - Surrounded by bypass roads (connecting Israeli settlements). - Limited availability of transportation	10
Women	Boureen Village	- Small village in Nablus Governorate. - Suffering from the presence of checkpoints. - Surrounded by settlements and bypass roads (connecting Israeli settlements). - Limited availability of transportation	13
Women	Thaheer Al Maleh Village	- Remote village in Jenin Governorate surrounded by separation barrier. - Extreme difficulties in getting in and out of the village. - People outside the village need permits from the Israeli authorities to get into the village.	10
Women	Nassarieh Village	- Agricultural village in the Jordan Valley area. - Difficulties in availability of transportation. - Jordan Valley checkpoints hinder movement	9
Men drivers	Tulkarem City	- As mentioned previously.	10

3. **Quantitative Survey:** The field work utilized the following steps:

- Field researchers arrive to the site according to the sample.
- Field researchers select a starting point.
- Random selection of houses by counting the 10th house.
- Filling-out the questionnaire.

Map 1 - Northern West Bank (Selected Communities, Public Transport Routes)



CHAPTER THREE: Study Findings (Analysis from a Gender Perspective)

1. Transport means: General trends

Availability and use

Different means of transportation are available in the communities under study. Public transport means are available for 97% of respondents; bicycles are available for 75% of them; tractors for 72%; private cars for 67%; animals for 57%; motorcycles for 55%; and animal-driven carts for 49%. Nearly all respondents (97%) use public transportation, while about half (49%) use private cars. Other means of transport available in lesser degrees include tractors (6%), bicycles (4%), animals (4%), motorcycles (2%), and animal-driven carts (2%). Overall, 7% of respondents mentioned that they use one of these alternative means of transportation.

Women participants in Boureen Village highlighted the primary constraints on transport in their village:

- Transportation is only consistently available early in the morning, from 7-9 am, primarily serving university students. After that transportation becomes much scarcer.
- Delays at the checkpoint cause drivers to spend the day awaiting the passengers who had left with them in the morning. Due to the delays, the driver does not return to the village after 9 am.
- Non-registered and non-insured cars abound
- Bad economic conditions don't allow for buying private cars, or using taxis.
- Taxis lack in the village, especially in the afternoons due to limited movement.
- Everyone moves in the morning; thus limiting movement at other times.

Strong cultural determinants govern the use of alternative means of transportation, and the degree to which they are used. One of the men in a FGD in Jenin says: *"It is true that bicycles are environmentally friendly, but they are not appropriate to our culture and habits, especially for women. In addition, they are not appropriate for the person's social status. Imagine a government or private sector employee wearing his suit and riding on a bike going to work. We are not living in China or Norway. Our environment, habits, and community wouldn't allow this. Let's assume, for the sake of argument, that this suggestion is implemented. Who can ride a bicycle from Jenin to Nablus or even to the suburbs? Roads are not safe due to the conditions we live in."*

Frame 1 - Available Public Transport and Checkpoints Restrictions:

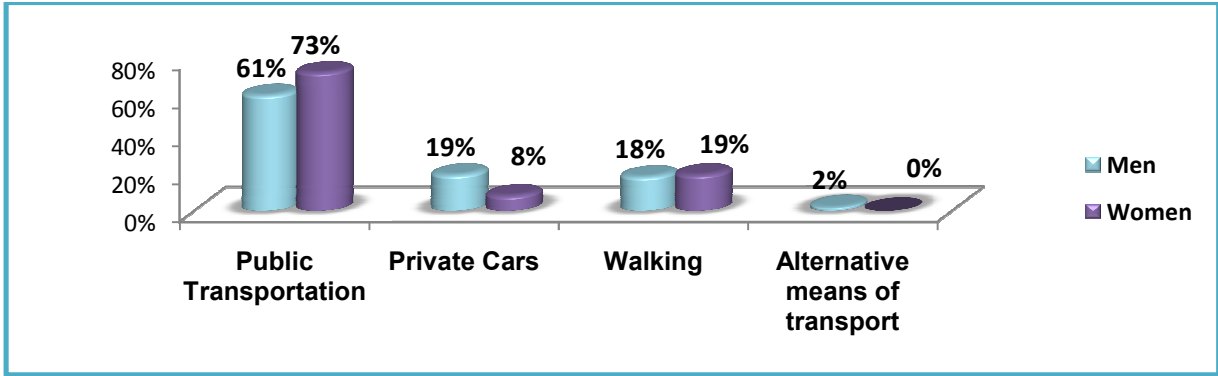
for the mobility needs. to go to schools or for ve the village, they use

r speaking we use taxis bs. We use buses from istrict (Tulkarem) there is. There is no public

route linking Barta'a to int, and 200 meters after ere, passengers leave in heck all bags and other eople's right to privacy. g through. The owner is er every day. Villagers . They walk. And those r can drive it out of the e the car. Even animals ot allowed either.

It was noted that means of transport used differ according to the gender: women use public transportation more than men (73% of females compared to 61% of males). Men use private cars more than women (19% of males compared to 8% of females).

Figure 1 - Gender-Differentiated Use of Means of Transport



In focus group discussions, men compared their use of various transport means highlighting advantages and disadvantages of each. One of the male participants from Jenin said: *“Private cars are limited these days due to their high price and running cost. It was affordable some years ago. Most people such as*

students and employees prefer to use big buses especially for trips outside the city as they are affordable. Even if a person owned a private car, she uses it for short distances. If she wants to go to Ramallah and other governorates, she prefers public transportation means such as buses and taxis. Public transport means are available in Jenin around the clock, but to a lesser extent on Fridays.”

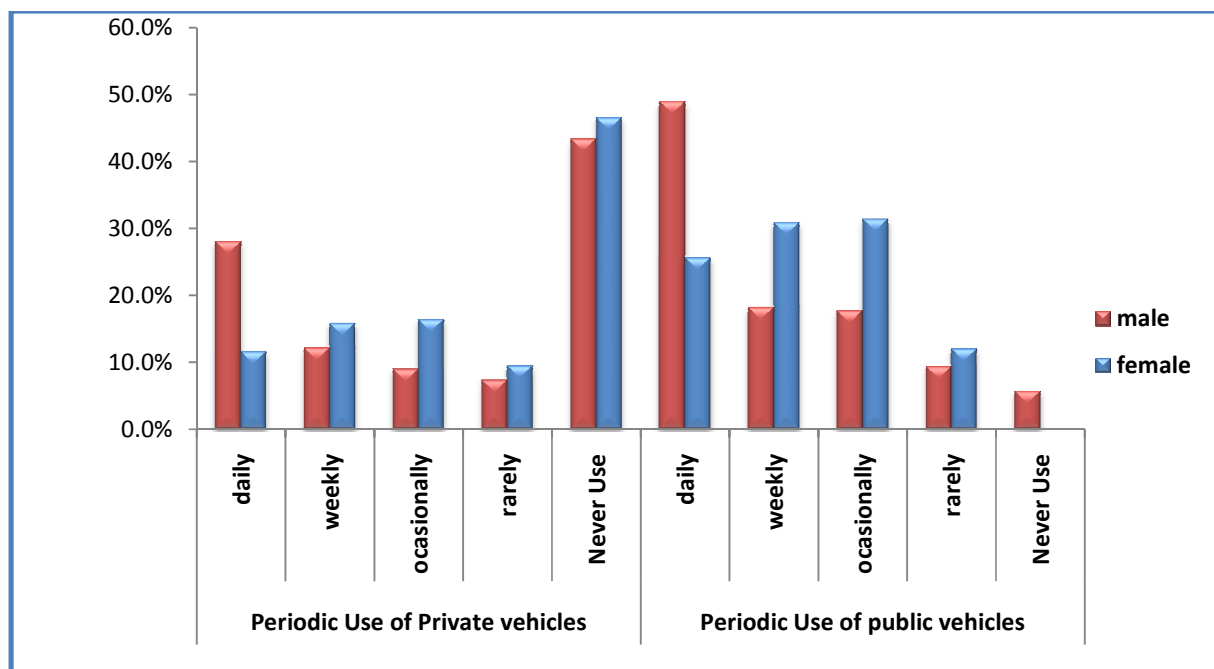
Frequency of Use

A sizable minority of respondents (37%) use public transportation on a daily basis (49% of males compared to 26% of females). Another 25% use it on a weekly basis (31% of females and 18% of males), and 25% use public transportation infrequently (31% of females and 18% of males).

20% of respondents use private cars on a daily basis (28% of males and 12% of females), 14% use private cars on a weekly basis (16% of females and 12% of males), 13% infrequently, and 9% hardly ever.

As for other means of transportation mentioned previously (bicycles, motorcycles, etc.), their use does not exceed 1% on a daily basis, whereas 8% of respondents—all women—mentioned that they use other means of transport on at least a weekly basis.

Figure 2- Gender-Differentiated Frequency of Use of Public and Private



Availability and use of Public Transport means

20% of respondents said big buses (50 passengers) are available in their areas of residence, whereas smaller buses (20 passengers) are available in 38% of respondents' areas of residence. Shared taxis (7 passengers) are the most available (in 79% of respondents' areas). Smaller shared taxis (4 passengers) are available upon request to 55% of respondents. Table 4 provides further information on availability of public transportation means:

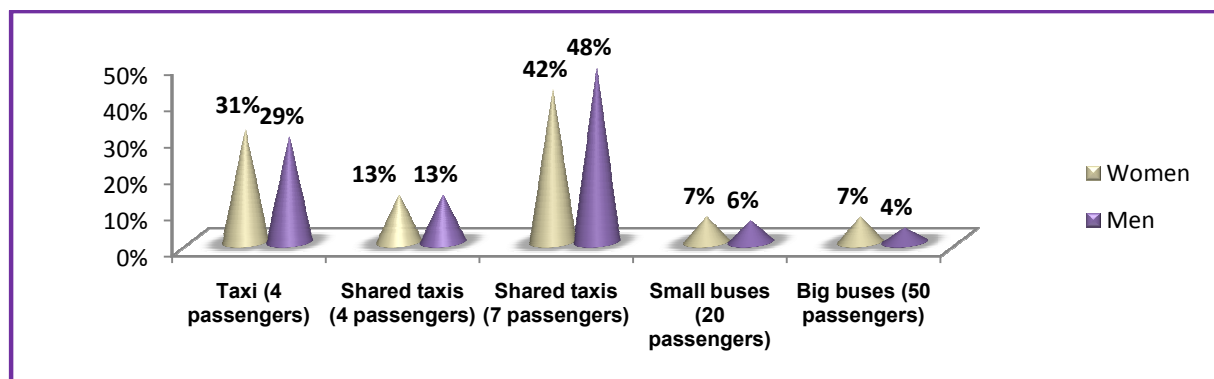
Table 4 - Availability of different public transportation means

	Buses (50 passengers)	Buses (20 passengers)	Shared cars (7 passengers)	shared cars (4 passengers)
Always Available	7%	24%	54%	45%
Limited and do not fulfill citizens' needs	3%	4%	2%	2%
Available in certain hours only	13%	14%	25%	10%
Not Available	77%	59%	19%	43%

Transportation terminals are available and in use by 50% of respondents, while 45% said they are not available. Another 5% said that terminals are available but that they do not use them.

45% of respondents considered shared taxis (7 passengers) to be their preferred mode of transport, followed by the smaller shared taxis (30% of respondents). 13% preferred taxis upon request, followed by small buses (20 passengers) at 7%, and lastly big buses (50 passengers) at 5%.

Figure 3 - Preferred Public Transport Means



The focus group discussion in Boureen Village revealed the most important reasons for which smaller taxis are preferred by women (and maybe men) to 7-passenger vehicles. Participants acknowledged that there is no price difference between those two transport means; smaller taxis are much faster; the drivers are from the village, and their cars are registered and insured. Finally, there are fewer passengers in the smaller taxis which reduce waiting time at checkpoints.

Most men who participated in Jenin's FGD agree that women have special needs while traveling. Some mentioned that this specificity stems out from society and men's appreciation of women's role, and their endeavor to provide them [women] with the most comfortable mode of transport, especially in 4-passenger or 7-passenger taxis. As for 50-passenger buses, they are comfortable and have large seats.

taxi despite the cost.
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50% of respondents who have private cars expressed their preference for using public transport for long distances (59% of women compared to 43% of men). 39% mentioned that they do not use their private cars in travel between towns and villages because of the checkpoints and the separation wall. 51% of private cars owners cite bad road conditions as the reason why they prefer to use public transport. 86% said they use their private cars for work and family travel, while 14% use them for other family purposes (19% of males and 8% of females).

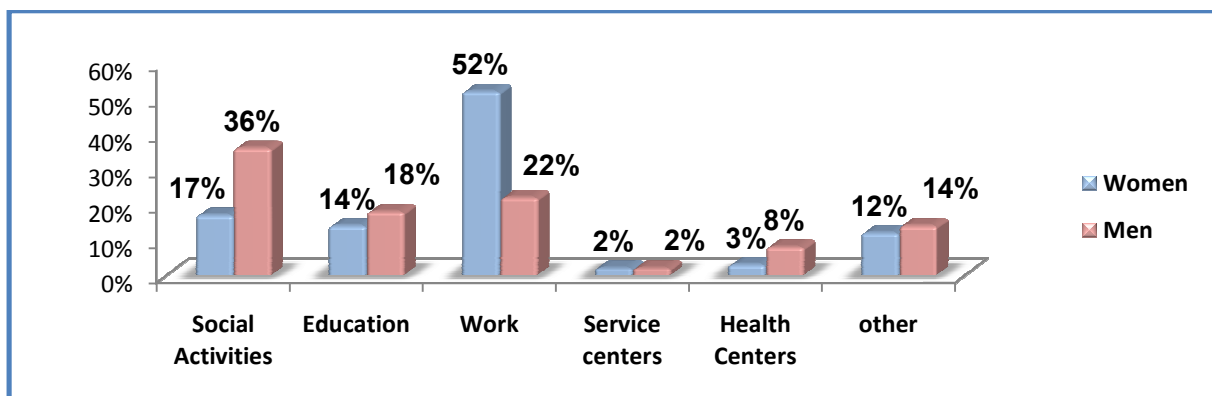
One participant from Thaher Al Maleh said: “Private cars are used because public transportation is lacking due to the small area of the village and its location behind the wall. In many instances, we as women need to go to Toura Village or Jenin City for shopping, treatment, vaccination or birth delivery.”

2. Travel Patterns

Purpose

The majority of men use public transportation primarily in order to reach their workplaces (52% of males compared to 22% of females). In contrast, women are more likely to use public transportation for social activities related to family needs (36% for females compared to 17% for males), and for accessing health services (8% for females compared to 3% for males).

Figure 4 - Main Objectives of Using Public Transportation



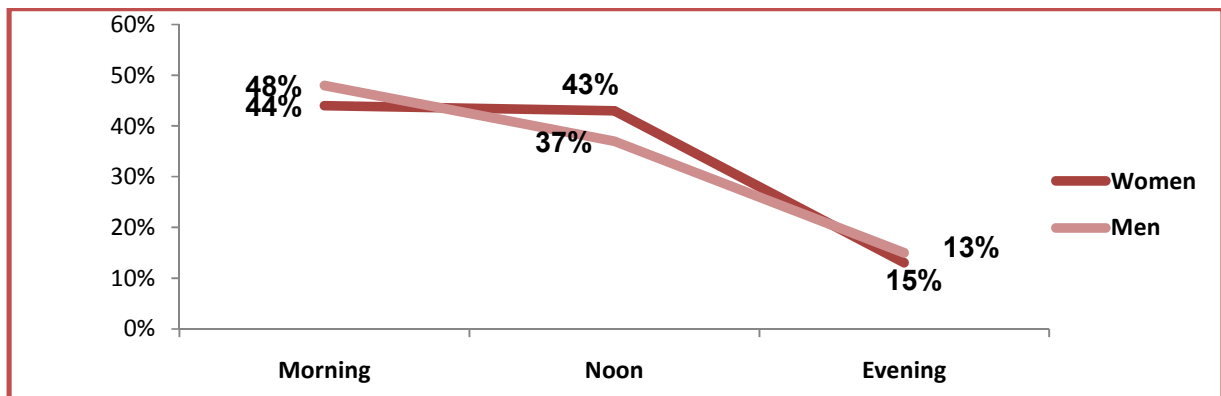
Women FGD participants discussed their objectives in more detail. Women from Nassarieh Village said: “Usually mobility is for work, education, buying items for the house that are not available in the village, going to the doctor, buying clothes, taking children to the schools since it is far, bringing needed pesticides, and moving crops from the village to the city.”

Focus Group Discussions show that women feel that their reproductive role results in special movement needs. Women need to consult the doctor when pregnant or about to deliver, or for her children’s treatment.

Schedule

Most interviewees use transport services in the morning, due to work and education schedules. 47% of respondents said that they travel in the morning, compared to 39% at noon time followed by 15% in the evening. Figure 5 shows trips' schedules for men and women.

Figure 5 - Travel Schedule



Women in FGDs discussed examples of the links between transportation services and women's activities, including the nature of their work and studies. Women's use of transportation begins early in the morning, especially for working women and university & school students. They primarily use public transportation, which is available in the morning from 7:30 to 8 a.m. The period between 8 am and 1:30 pm is a quiet time for transportation providers, although it is a time when many women need to move in order to access services. In many cases, women are forced to wait for hours before any car passes, or are forced to use private taxis.

One woman participant from Boureen Village said: "After 9 am there is no easy transportation available. I have to order a private taxi although it is very expensive, or leave early with university students. Sometimes, I organize my trips outside of the village with relatives who own private cars."

Availability of shared taxis generally resumes from 1:30 to 3 pm, the period during which employees and students need to go home. Most women use public transportation during this time, if available. After 3 pm, public transportation ceases to be available, and both women and men rely on private taxis.

One of the woman participants from Tulkarem said: "In rare instances, women walk to nearby areas such as Shweikeh, Thinabbeh and Irtah. Roads are not always safe because there are areas which are empty and because of the presence

of the occupation army. In Tulkarem Camp everyone walks due to proximity to the town. In Al Jaroushieh area for example, from 9 am to 1 pm it is quiet, and also on Fridays till after the prayers in all areas. People use private taxis if need be for both women and men."

As for the time of use of transportation modes for both men and women, one of the men participants from Jenin said: “There are different times for women’s use of public transportation according to the nature of their jobs. For example, women working in retail trade leave home early between 6:30 and 7 am. Generally speaking taxis take them from home to work and back. The same can be said about employees and students from the city or surrounding villages. Housewives usually go shopping or to the doctor at about 10 am. Transportation becomes less between 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Sometimes, employees from the city walk, and so do students except in heavy rain and hot weather conditions. Transportation becomes active from 1:30 to 3 pm when employees and students want to go back home. Women use public transportation during these times if available. During evenings, people use private taxis and also on Fridays.”

In Thaher Al Maleh, one of the women participants said: “Students leave their homes early in the morning to the gate using cars. They pass the gate on feet to the school in Toura Village. This is from 7 to 10 am where women and men leave the village through the gate¹. After this time, if there is not a car to take them to the gate, they are forced to walk or arrange their schedule to fit with a relative who owns a private car and plans on leaving the village. When all these means are not available and the gate is about to close, women wait until it re-opens in the afternoon, or they **go back home and cancel their trip**. In most cases, it would be the second option.”

Duration

The time spent in daily travel is divided into two intervals; the first is waiting time that people spend at bus stops or inside the vehicles waiting for the vehicle to be filled. The second interval is the average time needed to reach the destination. On average, waiting time is 13 minutes for both women and men. Travel time is on average 21 minutes (18 minutes for men, and 24 minutes for women).

Number of Used Transport Means

The analysis of a weeklong transport log (over 2500 travels) shows that most interviewees (81%) use one means of transportation to get from their departure point to their arrival point. Many however are obliged to use more than one and up to four transport means because there is no direct routing from their start to their end point. These represent 15% of men and 27% of women. They pay more for their trips because there is no fare integration and customers pay a full ticket whenever they ride a bus or a taxi, no matter how long they stay in it. They also spend more time in transport because they have to wait for their connections.

Table 5 - Gender Distribution of Number of Means of Transportation Used for a Trip

Number of Means of Transportation	Male	Female	Total
1	85%	73%	81%
2	11%	23%	15%
3	4%	3%	3%
4 and above	0.2%	1.1%	0.5%

Company

Only 38% of the travels analyzed were done by an individual. In a majority of cases, men and women travel accompanied. Women tend to travel in smaller groups (2 to 3 people) while men tend to travel in larger groups (4 to 6).

Table 6 – Number of Travelers, by Gender of Interviewee

Number of travelers	Males	Females	Total
1	37.8%	38.3%	38.1%
2-3	27%	36.8%	32.1%
4-6	34%	20.8%	27.2%

3. Evaluating the Transport Sector

Towns and large urban centers offer a higher quality of transport services than small remote communities and those faraway from city centers, such as those in the Jordan Valley, behind the separation wall, or near settlements and checkpoints. The availability and quality of transport services in large centers is generally good compared to that in the small communities, where transport services are weak and face many challenges.

Women in Nassarieh, for example, note that the transport services are bad in their village and receive no attention from the village council, despite the presence of one woman representative. The council cannot address the village's problems in light of limited financial resources and the absence of Palestinian Authority's jurisdiction in the area.

A FGD participant says: "The priority in Nassarieh is the availability of a school bus. Students walk 6 km back and forth to school and many students don't want to go to school anymore. During winter, the situation becomes very bad as the area floods which makes it dangerous for children."

Comfort and Safety

48% of respondents felt that transportation means are not comfortable for children (51% of females and 45% of males). In addition, 58% of respondents said that transport means are generally modern (61% of males and 55% of females). 60% said that transport means are safe. Males find public transportation more comfortable than women do: 41% of males said it is comfortable, compared to only 32% of females.

A woman from Tulkarem mentioned: "Some men take advantage of promiscuity on public transport mean, which disturbs women travelers. Women are uncomfortable when seated among men. Interurban buses are not well equipped and are even less comfortable. Some seats should be specifically allocated for women on public transport means. This is even more important on shared taxis. Allocating vehicles for women transport is however a bad idea. Indeed, men travel more than women and this action would reduce women's mobility. The availability of equipped buses for all lines would be optimal."

As for vehicles' specifications and their impact on women's comfort, women participating in FGDs

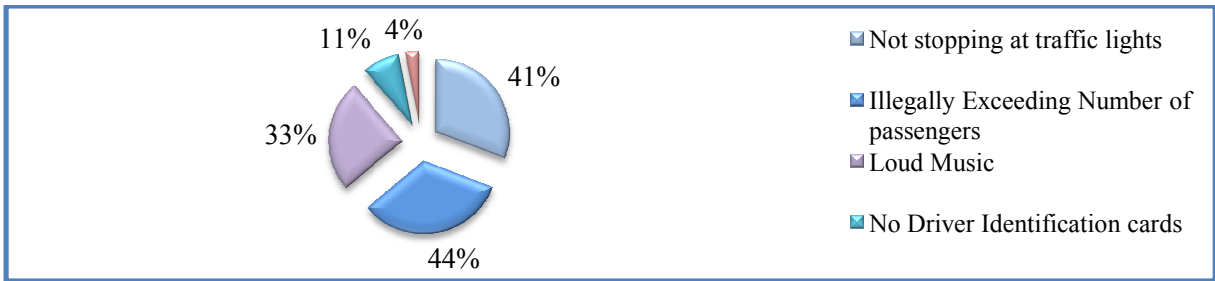
mentioned that promiscuity on public transport means, favored by small seats and benches, makes them uncomfortable.

Drivers’ Behavior

On the positive side, 72% of respondents believed that drivers generally have experience and qualifications, and 70% said that the drivers’ behavior is good (75% for females compared to 63% for males).

More critically, 44% of interviewees mentioned that they are bothered by the increase in number of passengers beyond the allowed number. 41% said that drivers do not comply with speed limits or traffic lights, and 33% cited loud music as one of the negative aspects.

Figure 6 - What Bothers Interviewees in Driver's Behavior



Frame 2 - What Makes a Driver Popular (according to Al-Najah University Students)

behavior are extremely or for not closing the

From the drivers’ perspective, the key challenges they face are: 1) the high cost of insurance and registration, 2) the presence of checkpoints, 3) their relations with the passengers; females and males, and 4) the presence of large numbers of unregistered cars or drivers working illegally. The FGD with a group of drivers from Tulkarem Governorate yielded more detailed information about the challenges and problems the drivers face in the course of their work, as summarized in Frame 3 below.

Frame 3 - The Drivers' Perspective: Main Challenges

Registration and Insurance - “Huge amounts of money are requested for the car insurance and registration. We have to provide unnecessarily detailed information. Last year, I paid NIS 3,000 (750 USD) for my car’s insurance; and this is a big amount for me.”“The issue of having to pay for the insurance and registration at the same time is a problem as drivers have to pay a big amount of money at once. I have to pay NIS 10,000 or 15,000 (2500 USD – 3750 USD) for insurance and registration. If only payments were separated....”

Falling Value of Fares - “The biggest problem for me is the fare. A long time ago it was 10 JDs or about NIS 60 (passenger’s fare from Tulkarem to Jericho). Now it became NIS 45 due to exchange rate fluctuation and despite inflation and the increase in the cost of fuel and diesel.”

Israeli Checkpoints - “There are two major checkpoints (Innab and Beit Iba) in addition to the flying checkpoints. The road to Nablus used to take 20 minutes, and now it takes us more than an hour. This delays the students and all passengers.”“The checkpoints are slow and cause delays in reaching Nablus. Sometimes, they randomly select some cars, order some passengers to get out which delays all the passengers in the vehicle. We naturally cannot move without all the passengers back to the vehicle.”

Palestinian Police - “One of the problems I face is with the Palestinian police. They stop us more than once a day asking for our driving license and other papers. They also search the car, and this causes delays.”“We face problems with the police as is is very picky on us. One time, they pick at the horn, at other times at an extra passenger, and also at the seatbelt....”

Passengers - “Sometimes, some women insist not to pay their children’s tickets. Thus, those children don’t have assigned seats and travel as extra passengers, and this causes problems with the police.”“Harassment, whether by the drivers or any of the passengers, is rare. The community here is small and no one can bypass the general norms of behavior.”

Competition and Illegal vehicles - “Some buses and taxis operate our line illegally and compete with us, the legally registered drivers of the line.”“Unregistered cars operate inside town and in some of the villages. Lately, their numbers have decreased due to the campaign against illegal cars implemented by the police.”“One of the most important challenges we face is the excess of public transport vehicles. Supply of those exceeds the needs. I heard from one of the employees of the Taxi Drivers’ Syndicate that there are 5,000 cars more than needed.”

Transport Terminals

The following table summarizes the most important challenges related to transport terminals:

Table 7 - Evaluation of Public Transport Terminals

Interviewees think that	(%) of interviewees who expressed this view
Terminals lack sanitary facilities	93%
Terminals lack information and complaint centers	91%

Terminals are far away from the centre	81%
Terminals lack waiting chairs	81%
Terminals lack shades	79%
Terminals are unclean	66%

A woman from Tulkarem said: “In Thinnabeh, Shweikeh and Tulkarem Camp there are no bus stops, so women (and men) are forced to stand by the side of the road waiting for a car. This is not comfortable and in some cases unsafe.”

Fares

Fares are considered burdensome by most respondents, and women appear to be particularly disadvantaged by costs. 59% of the respondents believe that the drivers do not comply with the specified fare (64% of females compared to 54% of males). Women noted that they generally have less capacity than men to negotiate fares with male drivers, due to cultural and social constraints. 47% of respondents agreed that fares are proportional to the traveled distance, whereas 53% believed otherwise. 68% of respondents said that transport fares are an economic burden. Because women take more than one means of transport to go from their start to their end points, and because they have to pay each time they change vehicle, the cost of a trip is on average higher for women than for men (12 NIS for women versus 10 NIS for men).

4. Transport and Access

Most interviewees think that public transport is important, whether to get a job (75%, identical for both genders), keep a job (77%), reduce economic costs (73%), or access health and economic services (65%). Interestingly, more women (67%) think public transport is important to connect with social networks than men (60%).

A participant from Thahir Al Malih Village says: “I finished my Bachelors Degree in Arabic language. My dream was to be a teacher. Due to mobility restrictions, I opted to stay home and raise my kids.”

Frame 4 - When Social Constraints Combined with Mobility Restrictions Challenge Girls' Access to Education

A number of girls in Al Nassarieh Village were forced to drop out of school for several reasons related to limited access to transport, according to FGD participants. Schools in the village do not offer classes beyond the 9th grade, so girls (and boys) must go to Nablus in order to continue their education. Parents worry for their daughters traveling long distances to Nablus, especially with the presence of checkpoints and the general feeling of lack of security that forces women to plan their trips to Nablus ahead of time. Moreover, there is no specific bus for high school children. Parents prefer sending their daughters with familiar drivers from the village but this is not always possible. The girls themselves are afraid and embarrassed when riding a car with an unknown driver.

In Thahir Al Malih Village, women suffer from an inability to work outside the village due to mobility restrictions.

5. Mobility Constraints

Constraints and Restrictions Related to the Political Situation

The political and security situation created by Israel's military occupation and civilian settlement of the West Bank severely impacts the Palestinian transport sector, especially in the areas outside urban centers. Transport infrastructure is fully controlled by the Israeli authorities, and Palestinian citizens suffer from these restrictions and, in some cases, attacks from soldiers and settlers when traveling. As a result, many parents in isolated villages such as Thahir Al Malih described above, have taken their girls out of school and deprived them from continuing their education.

A participant from Thahir Al Malih Village explains: The Israeli authority gave all students from kindergarten and above a magnetic card. If a student forgets it or loses it, the soldiers detain him/ her without any consideration for age or gender."

40% of respondents mentioned that the Israeli checkpoints hinder their mobility, and 9% mentioned that the separation wall restricts their mobility. When asked to prioritize the constraints on mobility, 53% mentioned the checkpoints, and 42% cited settlers' attacks.

A woman from Thahir Al Malih said: "A teacher from Um Al Rihan was arrested during a school trip. While passing through the gate, he saw his nephew detained. He went to enquire, but the soldier hit him and claimed that the teacher hit him, so he was arrested."

Moreover, all women agreed their journeys are not safe, and even more so when they pass through the gates where women undergo body searches.

Frame 5 – Checkpoints, Settlers and Health Services

Women participants from Yitma Village said: "Settlers attacked the village, broke the windows, and hit some of the villagers. They also set wild pigs free in the village. All people now prefer to wait next to the village's bus stop where they feel secure. In addition, the villagers cannot go to Za'tara checkpoint due to intense presence of the settlers on the roads. The village's nurse was once attacked by settlers, and then the soldiers interfered and pushed them [settlers] away. Now, she walks to Qabalan intersection and rides in one of the cars to Sawiyeh in order to go to Ramallah."

Checkpoints and other movement restrictions also negatively impact women's access to health services, even when there is a medical emergency. One woman from Boureen said: "*There are several women who gave birth at the checkpoint, and elderly people died before reaching the hospital. My own father died before the ambulance was able to reach him. We had to take him to the hospital in a private car, but we were delayed at the checkpoint. It was too late when we reached the hospital in Nablus.*"

Another woman from the same village; Boureen said: "My sister-in-law was in labor when she arrived at the checkpoint. The soldier asked her to step out of the car and passes through the checkpoint walking. After she passed, she rode on a cart to reach the Ambulance a few meters away. As soon as she arrived at the hospital and gave birth, she fainted as she was extremely exhausted."

Harassment, physical attacks, or denial of access at checkpoints affected 38% of respondents (40% of men and 37% of women), and 6% had experienced settlers’ attacks (9% of men and 3% of women). Those who face these problems face them regularly. Indeed, of those who declared having been harassed at checkpoints, 15% faced the problem only once, while 40% face it often and 45% face it regularly. Settlers’ aggressions are less frequent. Indeed, only 30% of those who were attacked were so repeatedly.

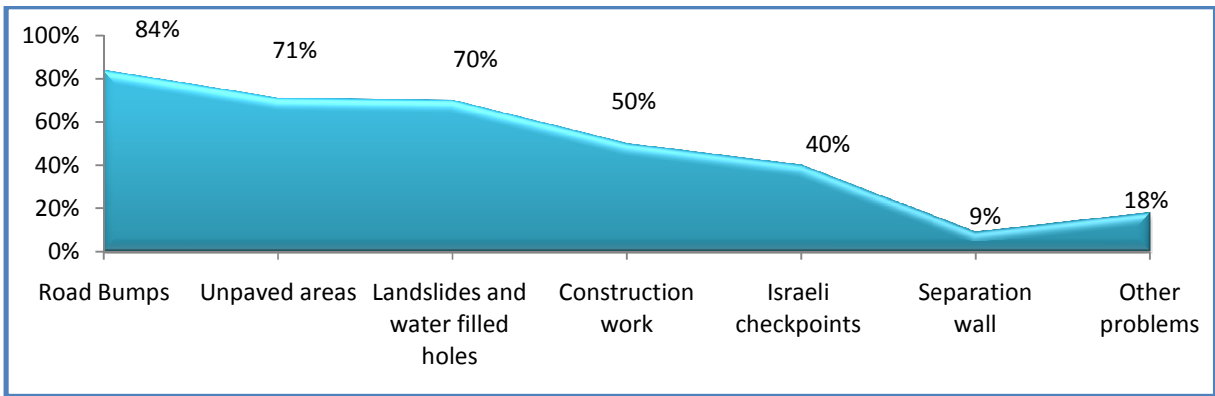
These physical barriers make remote villages hard to access and result in high transport costs for villagers. FG discussants from Yitma and Boreen declared that the village being located behind two checkpoints (Huwarrah and Za’atara), passengers have to pay NIS 5 to the checkpoint, and then an additional NIS 3 to the city (a total of 8 NIS or 2 USD for a typical daily commute).

Constraints and Restrictions related to Economic and Social Context

a) Constraints Related to Transport Infrastructure

The results show that transport infrastructure is constrained by road bumps, mentioned by 84% of respondents; unpaved areas (71%); water filled holes (70%); road works (50%); and other unspecified problems (18%). These constraints impact private cars’ users, yielding higher maintenance costs.

Figure 7 – Constraints Facing Road Users



b) Challenges related to Public Transport

According to 82% of interviewees, high transportation cost is a major problem. For 74% of them delays and unpredictable schedules are also important constraints. One woman from Tulkarem said: *“In some suburbs there is no specified schedule for shared taxis except in morning time, and women are forced to leave early if they want to catch one. Any delay means taking a private taxi, which is very costly for students and employees.”*

Harassment from drivers or other passengers are also seen by 38% of interviewees, as constraints facing public transport users. Significantly, there was no major difference between men and women’s responses. However, when 15%

GD declared “Sexual limited and mainly n wearing makeup and are students at mallah and Nablus”

of respondents declared having been verbally harassed by a driver or other passengers, only 1% declared having been sexually harassed. Some women might have been subject to sexual harassment but did not declare it. Indeed, there is a belief that women provoke sexual harassment by the way they dress or behave.

Other constraints faced by public transport users include illegal public transport providers, mentioned by 32% of respondents, and thefts (32%). 6% of interviewees were robbed on public transport means, and 14% had an accident because of high speed.

Frame 6 – What Gives Women a Feel of Safety

Women in Yitma and Boureen Villages summarized the most important factors that make them feel safe while traveling. These factors are:

- The presence of the car's insurance, its registration, and the driver's license;
- Good ethics and positive decent attitude from the driver;
- A familiar driver (preferably from the village);
- Comfortable seating;
- Respect for safety rules inside the car, which should not be overloaded by passengers or standing children;
- Respect for speed limits;
- and Absence of road bumps.

Men share the same opinion when it comes to cars' insurance and registration. One of the male participants in Jenin said: "More than 90% of cars are insured and registered, and are being monitored by the Palestinian police. Before, there were illegal cars. After the latest campaign to eliminate illegal cars, we do not see them anymore."

Frame 7 – Challenges Faced by Students

Students at Al-Najah University discuss the challenges they face.

- Random taxi fares: some drivers ask for NIS 2 whereas others ask for NIS 2.5 for the same trip. Fares are even higher at night as drivers take advantage of students.
- Lack of traffic lights in some areas where they are needed.
- The location of the vehicles' stops is not appropriate.
- Lack of shade at stops.
- Traffic jams, especially at times when students go to school and come back.
- Drivers' frequent stops for additional passengers.

c) Social constraints facing women's mobility

Women's access to transport means is limited. Alternative means of transport such as bicycles, motorbikes, tractors and carts are socially prohibited for most women and only 5% of female interviewees

declare using them (versus 17% for male interviewees). Although 25% of interviewees declared that their household owns a car, the number of women who can drive these cars is much smaller. Indeed, only 13% of women have a driving license (versus 45% of men) and a large number (55%) doesn't even intend getting one (22% for men). Only 8% of women's analyzed trips were done using private cars (19% of men's trips). This leaves the majority of women with only one option: public transport. Unfortunately, even the use of public transportation is socially constrained: most FG discussants mentioned that women should only ride with drivers from their own villages. The use of buses is socially preferred for women, and use of shared taxis is accepted, although not when all other riders are men. However, use of private taxis is not easily accepted.

CHAPTER FOUR: Recommendations

1. Conclusion

Mobility is a major determinant of access to economic resources, education, health and other key prerequisites for women's empowerment. In West Bank and Gaza, an area under military occupation and conflict since 1967, mobility is dramatically reduced for both men and women due to political restrictions such as checkpoints; a wall that separates Palestinian areas from one another; and other physical barriers to movement, economic closures, as well as lack of physical infrastructure and underperforming public transport providers.

The restrictions on mobility of people and goods generate adverse impacts on the broader functioning of society and the economy. Transport is very expensive, and waiting time is unpredictable and often protracted. As a result, the market for travel, and hence the economic viability of the transportation sector, have been greatly reduced. The security measures and road closures mean that operators provide transport services in sub-optimal conditions (long diversions, lengthy delays at checkpoints, unreliability), while incurring higher costs and attaining lower productivity.

The impacts of the conflict and these higher transaction and financial costs do not fall equally on men and women, however. Because men have better social networks and trade links outside their community, they have greater access to more sophisticated and flexible means of transport, particularly private cars. Women's mobility in West Bank and Gaza is further constrained by social factors that reduce their access to the outside world.

2. Recommendations

The primary and overarching recommendation is that all physical barriers to movement within the Palestinian territory must be removed. The mobility of people is fundamental to their ability to be part of the society. In West Bank and Gaza, an area under military occupation since 1967, mobility is dramatically reduced for both men and women due to political restrictions including checkpoints and other barriers, a separation wall, and economic closure. Women's mobility in West Bank and Gaza is further constrained by social factors that reduce their access to the outside world. Specific recommendations to the principal stakeholders are listed below.

➤ ***Recommendations to Planners:***

- Ensure that women's needs based on their multiple roles are taken into account and incorporated into national development plans.

➤ ***Recommendations to Operators:***

- Integrate fares through coordination between lines to serve vulnerable groups, such as women and refugees, who are forced to use more than one means of transport.
- Make the routes and schedules of public transport vehicles clear and predictable, to reduce waiting time.
- Commit to safety regulations and ensure drivers' commitment.

- Make the vehicles more comfortable and adopt a broader strategy to improve transport services, making passengers the center of the service.
- ***Recommendations to General Directorate for Transport at the Ministry of Transport***
 - Improve the sector's monitoring through effective coordination between stakeholders including the police and the municipalities. Better law compliance was noted in areas having active presence of the police.
 - Regulate public transport lines in coordination with operators to provide service at different times, thus increasing mobility for the public at large, and for women in particular.
 - Monitor the sector's compliance with official fare, safety standards, registration and operations, and information provision about drivers.
 - Improve vehicle's quality control (cleanliness, safety of the vehicle's windows, doors, air conditioning...etc)
 - Improve the effectiveness of complaint mechanisms and raise public awareness about the importance of this process. In addition, take steps to create a model to improve quality of service.
 - Monitor the size of the seats, especially in the older cars; seats should be wide and comfortable.
 - Specify seats with priority access for children and people with special needs
 - Delimit a seating area with priority access for women, in case the vehicle is not fully equipped for comfortable seating.
- ***Recommendations to Municipalities:***
 - Re-consider the locations and specifications of terminals to ensure better service for a wider part of the population, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport.
 - Ensure proper management of terminals by forming full-time administrative bodies that supervise all lines, identify and address problems, and receive complaints and follow them up.
 - Enhance public safety and comfort by providing basic services such as shelters to protect customers from sun and rain, seats in the public transport terminals and compounds, clean sanitary facilities, and wide pavements that can be used by carts, or wheelchairs.

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