FIFTH ITF ANNUAL CONSULTATION ON GENDER AND TRANSPORT
THURSDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2021, 14.00 - 16.00 CET (via Zoom)
SUMMARY KEY POINTS

Context

Since 2016, the Annual Consultation on Gender and Transport provides an opportunity for the International Transport Forum (ITF) and its partner international organisations to exchange on how questions related to gender equality in transport can find a platform at the ITF Annual Summit. The meeting also serves as a platform for sharing best practices and insights concerning gender and transport more broadly.

The 2020 consultation on gender-focused on the theme *Transport Innovation for Sustainable Development* and the conclusions of this meeting were highlighted in the Summit programme. Further to the postponement of the 2020 Summit due to the Covid-19 crisis, the Summit programme has been refined to reflect the impact of the crisis on transport and mobility.

The 2021 Summit *Transport Innovation for Sustainable Development: Mobility in the Wake of Covid-19* will include in a number of sessions to discuss the impact of the crisis on gender in transport, as well as related challenges and policy options moving forward as countries recover.

Objective and thematic scope

Key ITF stakeholders were invited to share their perspectives on how questions related to the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on gender and transport should be addressed at the 2021 Summit *Transport Innovation for Sustainable Development: Reshaping Mobility in the Wake of Covid-19*.

The impact of Covid-19 on women has been significantly disproportionate due to pre-existing inequality and the fact that the majority of healthcare and other essential workers are women. Women also face a higher burden of unpaid care and housework than men, as well as gender-based violence. In transport, gender inequality is further exacerbated by women's travel behaviour patterns which point to higher use of public transport services, compared to private car use, in many parts of the world. In addition, women working in the transport sector are also more at risk of being contaminated by the Covid-19 virus, because of existing gender inequality in the transport workforce and lack of adequate measures to support women.

The consultation discussions featured topics related to gender in the 2021 Summit programme:

1) Gender and decarbonising transport
2) Innovative mobility services and infrastructure: equitable access for all users
3) Future of the transport workforce: a gender perspective
4) Data bias and gender.

This note presents key outcomes of the discussions in the breakout groups.

Breakout group 1: Gender and decarbonising transport

The long-term recovery from the Covid-19 crisis, towards a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive future, will depend on the implementation of recovery measures that address the priorities of all genders.

The economic stimulus packages and recovery plans governments are now putting in place, feature “green” measures; these include “green” approaches to transport and mobility.

Women could be at the centre of promoting more sustainable transport networks. At the same time, the Covid-19 crisis has deeply affected women’s economic and social conditions, limiting their mobility options and restricting access to economic opportunities and public services.

Transport is not gender-neutral. Women’s travel behaviour is often not taken into consideration in the design of transport infrastructure and services. Due to the gendered division of work in households, women often have multiple tasks and activities. As a result, women are more likely to commute shorter distances, make chain trips, make more non-work related trips, travel at off-peak hours, and choose more flexible modes. Future low carbon mobility options should recognise women’s needs to avoid further gender gaps.

Public transport has endured the most of Covid-19 related restrictions, with a drastic fall in transport users (notably women), and with many operators reducing their services by 50% or more during the crisis. While women heavily depend on public transport, there are a number of challenges that they face with regard to this mode. These include access, affordability and safety. Going forward, transport planners and policy makers must seek to address women’s mobility needs and provide safer spaces for women, notably in public transport.

Questions remain regarding which measures ensure that **greener modes are attractive to women**. So far, men are the early adopters of micro-mobility. Women represent a larger share of users of transport modes that are easier to access, in terms of infrastructure and services; therefore, micromobility is not their first choice. In addition, there is an income disparity that challenges women to seek green alternatives to public transport. A digital gender gap further hampers women’s access to innovative, digitally-based mobility services.

Several paths could be taken to pursue a greener, safer and more equitable development of transport networks. Gender-disaggregated data is key in this regard, as it helps ensure transport networks and services are designed with women’s needs in mind. Data contributes to more harmonious and impactful policies. It is also important to ensure that inter-sectoral analysis is carried out to understand the specific needs of women (e.g. affordability, accessibility) and find relevant solutions.

Increasing the **representation of women at all stages of transport policy planning and implementation** will make transport more responsive to the needs of all users. Compared to men, women tend to have a stronger desire to improve sustainability in the sector. They are change agents who could challenge the dominant male norms and trigger changes in transport policies to achieve greater levels of sustainability.

Education and raising awareness, from early childhood, is also key in supporting the transition to sustainable transport. Fostering discussions on sustainable travel among children could help promote more sustainable transport and shape the travel behaviours of younger generations.

Breakout group 2: Innovative mobility services: better access for all users

The Covid-19 crisis has exacerbated existing inequalities in transport and, in doing so, brought questions about inclusion in transport to the fore. At the same time, this crisis could be seen as a great leveler, as it requires transport planners to rethink mobility.

Women's travel behaviour has been affected by the pandemic, in particular, due to the disruptions of public transport. Beyond the measures taken to contain the spread of the virus and subsequent reductions of public transport services, these networks saw a considerable decrease in the number of their users. As the main users of public transport, the negative impact on women was particularly visible.

Men and women have **different travel behaviours.** Women should be considered not as vulnerable users, but as a group that has different mobility patterns and different needs in terms of access. A significant number of women use low-carbon transport modes, particularly walking and cycling, to travel to work. This is the case in many rural villages. Yet, governments often lack gender-disaggregated data, and therefore women's requirements for safety, security and comfort are neglected, limiting women's ability to participate equally in economic and social activities.

Safety and security appear as two recurring elements that heavily influence women's mobility choices and behaviours. **Safety is essential for improving access** for women, and innovation plays a key role in achieving this. Innovation should not only be thought of as technical solutions, but also as new ways of thinking about mobility and the reallocation of public spaces.

Improving walking environments and lighting could influence women's perception of safety, notably at pedestrian crossings, near bus stops and on roads. Concepts such as "15-minute cities" (i.e. all residents' needs can be met within 15 minutes of their homes by foot, by bike, or on public transit) could be allies for women to feel safer, and to improve their access to education, jobs, health and other public services.

Innovation and new technologies could help improve gender balance within the transport workforce. Digitalisation might also make certain jobs more attractive. On the other hand, innovation in reshaping transport mobility is equally important. For instance, protecting cycling lanes from traffic and lowering speeds can improve women's perception of safety. Improving cycling infrastructure and providing a high degree of separation from motor traffic are also important steps toward increasing transportation cycling among women.

Overall, innovation in its different dimensions can improve transport access for women. Nevertheless, **gender-disaggregated data** is key to helping expand women's transport options. There is a need for routine analysis of gender-related issues during transport planning and implementation phases. Making transport accessible to women implies incorporating gender perspectives into city planning, projects, and the provision of services. Gender-informed transport policies require the presence of more women in leadership positions.

Innovation allows for more participation and involving communities remotely, and governments should take this opportunity to consult with all groups when making decisions about the design of transport systems and urban environment.

Breakout group 3: Future of the transport workforce: a gender perspective

The participation of women in the transport workforce was a major challenge for the sector even prior to the Covid-19 crisis. The crisis has reinforced the existing challenges for women in the transport workforce and may have significant, long-term implications for gender equality in transport. Although the crisis has had a severe impact on all workers, there have been additional adversities affecting women specifically. This is primarily because women are disproportionately affected by inadequate policy designs, putting them at increased health and occupational risks in the transport sector, notably during the crisis.

Covid-19 revealed inequalities with regard to **transport infrastructure**, in terms of security, safety, and work-life balance. For onsite workers, Covid-19 brought additional levels of risk, including higher rates of infection, due to increased exposure for customer-facing roles and a lack of personal protective equipment. Since public transport was deemed an essential service, even as schools and other establishments closed, many female workers in the sector were challenged with new duties at home. In some countries, legal and regulatory barriers, such as the limitation of hours that women workers (as other workers) are allowed to work during the day, added to the negative impacts of the pandemic.

With respect to job security, women - transport workforce are usually more likely to be vulnerable, and during the pandemic, women had fewer job opportunities and held more precarious positions. Even flexible job opportunities, such as Uber drivers, were jeopardised by the crisis.

Women also make up the majority of **informal workers** and workers in **non-standard forms of employment,** which often lack of adequate social and labour protection. They also experience a higher level of violence and harassment at the workplace, compared to men.

The COVID-19 pandemic provides an opportunity to reexamine innovation across the transport sectors through the lens of gender. Inadequate policy designs harm women, increasing their health and occupational risks to a disproportionate extent. For example, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Recommendation 205 on Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience (2017), demands a gender perspective in all crisis responses, gender-inclusive social dialogue to enable more inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Gender impact assessments can also provide an avenue to develop inclusive policies and more gender-responsive and disaggregated data. The ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019) also provides a solid foundation to shape a human-centered approach to the future of work.

Getting women into the transport sector is as important as **retaining women in the sector**. In this regard, training should be used to allow women to develop their skills, notably in the context of increased automation of the sector and emerging business models. During the Covid-19 crisis, the movement towards online platforms had a positive impact in allowing larger access to training. In the maritime sector, for instance, training institutions saw an increase in the number of women participating in their online courses.

Women should be included in the **decision-making processes** with regard to the digitalisation of transport. Women need to be involved in social dialogues and gender impact assessments, so that technological innovation can benefit female workers as well. Good governance of innovation in transport should ensure women’s participation in the decision-making.

Breakout group 4: Data bias and gender

Gender-disaggregated data is the key to a better understanding of women's mobility patterns. Gendered analysis helps assess whether specific gender needs are properly met and what the impact of innovation on mobility would be. New data sources can help develop that knowledge base, but it is important to avoid biases that have become ingrained in past transport policies.

Gender-disaggregated data is still underused when collecting information on transport activities. There are some positive examples, such as a relatively good collection of gender-related data in road safety, but there remains much space for improvement.

To reinforce the messaging about the importance of gender-disaggregated data in transport, good pracitces are needed. For instance, although the majority of Americans killed or injured in car crashes are male, the raw data mask that women are actually at greater risk of death or injury when a crash occurs. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) show that men drive a greater total of miles than women, and are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, such as speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol and not wearing a seat belt. However, a study from NHTSA shows that a female driver or front passenger who is wearing her seat belt is 17 percent more likely than a man to be killed when a crash takes place. Furthermore, a 2019 study from the University of Virginia (UVA) shows that for a female occupant, the odds of being injured in a frontal crash are 73 percent greater than the odds for a male occupant. It is relevant to note, the study controlled for occupant age, height, and body mass index, in addition to collision severity and vehicle model year.

In order to collect gender-disaggregated data, national statistics offices should redesign their means and processes of **collecting data**. For instance, surveys need to be carefully built to avoid gender bias in the formulation of questions. Alternative sources of data could also be identified, such as use of data mobility surveys or data from mobile applications.

Another important factor to be considered to bridge gender gaps in transport data collection is the standardisation of data, and the use of information and platforms that are comparable. An intersectional approach can be also helpful, including gender data, as well as other factors, such as ethnicity, are taken into consideration.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning may help identify biases in data that were previously overlooked. However, most AI algorithms are based on historical collections of data that tend to be gender-biased. Furthermore, computer scientists shaping AI and machine learning today are predominantly male. Therefore, there are inherited problems with how women have been represented (or suppressed) in historical data records. Given the growing dependence of transport networks on AI and machine learning, including women in the design and implementation of these technologies in the sector is essential.

ANNEX 1
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ORGANIZATION	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	JOB TITLE
ACEA	Fuensanta	Martinez Sans	Director Transport Policy
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IMO	Chris	Trelawny	Chief, Maritime Development
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International Transport Forum	Young Tae	Kim	Secretary-General
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International Transport Forum	Mallory	Trouvé	Analyst & Modeller
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World Economic Forum	Maya	Ben Dror	Lead