# DEVELOPING A GENDER AND MOBILITY POLICY ASSESSMENT TOOL: SOUTH AFRICA AS A PILOT COUNTRY

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## ABSTRACT

Meaningfully addressing women's mobility needs is essential for enhancing women's access to transport options, access to economic opportunities and services, and boosting economic development in general in a country. Transportation must consider the views and needs of the 50% of the population that are women, whether these women are transport workers, transport users, or transport decision-makers.

South Africa is no exception. Transport that is not fit for purpose matters for all residents, but it matters differently for women. In South Africa, lack of access to transport and mobility resources entrenches existing gender inequity and hinders women's development. While inadequate access to health, restricted social engagement, and poor education, are among other outcomes of transport poverty experienced by both men and women, women already start at lower levels in all these poverty dimensions.

This paper reports on a novel mobility gender policy and gap analysis and its first test application in South Africa, and includes an overview of the method, main findings, and recommended actions. To ensure replicability outside the pilot country, the assessment relies mostly on desk research, including existing literature and online data and information, complemented by stakeholder engagement.

The assessment was developed at the request of the Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) partnership, with financial support from the World Bank Group and Michelin Corporate Foundation. This work informs a broader sustainable mobility diagnostic being carried out in South Africa by the World Bank, at the request of the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

## 1. BACKGROUND

Transport is a primary enabler for all South Africans to access opportunities and achieve the equity and rights enshrined in the country's Constitution. At its most basic good practice, transportation should be affordable, available, accessible, safe, frequent, and reliable for all users. Mobility should also be useful in that it transports people to where they need to go and to the services they need to access.

Since 1994, South Africa has set out to achieve the above goals with expansive policy measures. Transport policy was immediately framed in terms of inclusivity and to redress apartheid era inequity (NDoT, 1999, 2007b, 2007a, 2008, 2009). Transport services were to be provided for everyone. Priority concerns were safety, access to work, healthcare, and school, and that transport would improve social development and economic growth.

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Yet South Africa has been slow in achieving its SDG targets. Its intentions to use quality public transportation to transform rural and urban development and alleviate poverty and inequity have been hindered by inherited (among other) challenges – as South African cities and transport patterns were shaped almost irrevocably by apartheid land use planning.

The consequent inequitable access to mobility resources matters for all South African residents, but it matters differently for women; it entrenches existing gender inequity and hinders women's development. While inadequate access to health, restricted social engagement, and poor education, are among other outcomes of transport poverty experienced by both men and women, women already start at lower levels of these poverty dimensions. This undermines policy direction to empower women and girls (Lucas, 2019; Porter, Abane and Lucas, 2020; Jennings and Arogundade, 2021). A number of the ways in which South Africa's transport challenges affect women differently are noted below.

In a country where gender roles are traditional and where almost 50% of households are headed by women (many of these as a single parent), travel-related time poverty has gendered impacts (Statista, 2020). Journeys to work frequently begin before dawn, and return trips end after sunset. Women as primary caregivers are unable to meet household and child or eldercare commitments, and rely on neighbours and family to fill the gap. These long days away from home often have tragic consequences for children, with high incidences of violence and school absenteeism (Morilly and Behrens, 2021). Time-poverty leaves little opportunity for healthcare, education, or leisure, among other needs.

The way in which minibus-taxis primarily ply the profitable morning and evening peak times especially affects women's travel patterns, as women make more trips than men do, and for different purposes, and change mode or vehicle more often. Instead of peak-hour commutes, women tend to travel at any time of the day, doing household chores, and accompanying children or elderly adults in their care to places of education and healthcare (SUM4All, 2019; Vanderschuren, Phayane and Gwynne-Evans, 2019; Porter, Abane and Lucas, 2020).

The survivalist minibus-taxi sector has little incentive or leeway to offer discounted fares for women who travel with others in their care, or for children who travel alone because their mothers or grandmothers might be working elsewhere. Even when they are subsidised, transport fares are still distance based, and are not integrated across modes and services. Further, women are more likely to earn less than men and have fewer financial resources to spend on transport (Statistics South Africa, 2016; Vanderschuren, Phayane and Gwynne-Evans, 2019). This leaves women with reduced access and limited ranges in which to seek employment, healthcare, affordable food and other goods, or access other opportunities.

Long wait times at bus stops, taxi ranks and train stations, together with travel during hours of darkness and overcrowded peak services, increase women's exposure to both petty and violent crime. In the Western Cape and Gauteng, 80–90% of women have reported feeling at risk of sexual harassment on crowded trains, buses, and minibus-taxis. Fifty-six percent of women have witnessed and/or experienced violence while using public transport (CCT, 2018; Sonke Gender Justice, 2018; Mabaso, 2019).

South Africa's post-1994 transport policy direction commits the country to pay attention to transport user's needs, and to redress inequity. However, these policies do not specifically

consider gender. Early post-apartheid transport planning focused on inclusivity and the redress of apartheid policies more broadly rather than directly addressing gender. Yet addressing gender challenges and resolving gaps in transport is critical for the sustainable development agenda. The goals of SDG 1 (eradication of poverty), SDG 3 (sustainable health systems), SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), and SDG 11 (inclusive cities), all depend on women having unconstrained access to mobility resources and transport goods (UN Women, 2017).

## 2. METHOD

Gender and transport challenges are significant globally, but systematic, replicable approaches do not exist to conduct a gender and mobility data and policy assessment that could reveal the gaps to inform decision making and policy actions. In response to this challenge, the SuM4All Gender Working Group engaged the World Bank to develop a methodological approach that would assist countries diagnose gaps in their gender and mobility data and policies.

This approach was tested in the form of desk-based research, and implemented in South Africa in 2022. It comprises:

- A tool for an initial, systematic, and rapid assessment of existing data and policies within a country.
- An assessment of the potential or actual contribution of these existing policies to the gender agenda.
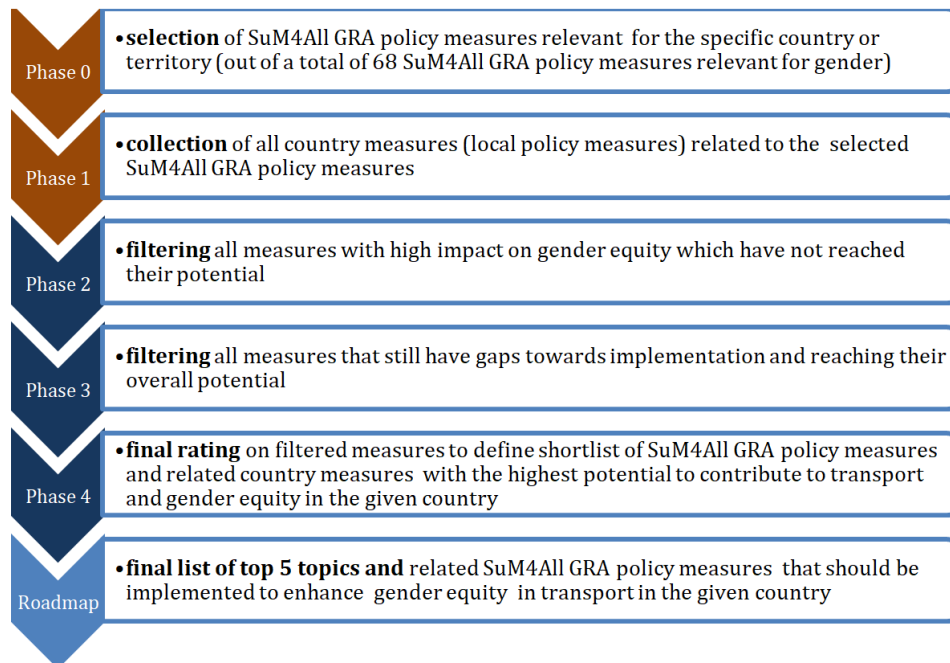
An outcome of the application of this tool is a short-list of country-specific policy measures that have the highest potential to contribute to transport and gender equity. A roadmap developed from the tool's findings can then be shared with stakeholders in the country under study, for discussion and refinement.

This systematic approach is based on the SuM4All's Global Roadmap of Action (GRA) (SUM4All, 2019), which lists 197 policy measures able to achieve sustainable mobility in a country. Of these 197 GRA policy measures, approximately 31 have particular relevance to gender and mobility in South Africa, and these formed the basis of the gap analysis process. The GRA includes a detailed description of each policy measure, in terms of general best practice and gender-specific best practice.

| Best practice policy | General best practice | Gender best practice |
|---|---|---|
| • **Expand Public Transport Infrastructure** | • Public transport infrastructure development is prioritised above private motorised traffic. Investments include walking and cycling infrastructure. Compact and mixed land-use development is prioritised. | • Expand the public transport network adjusted to demand requirements, with an emphasis on equitable access and considering the most appropriate modes in each context, including bus, rail, demand-responsive service, cable-propelled transport and ferry transport. |

**Figure 1: An example of a SuM4All GRA policy measure, with its general best practice and gender best practice**

To undertake the gap analysis, South Africa's mobility and related country measures (policies, strategies, frameworks, etc) were assessed according to the way in which they aligned or responded to the general and to the gender best practice descriptor in the 31 policy measures. In many instances, multiple national, provincial, or local measures together responded to one policy measure. For a list of measures and descriptors, refer to the full report (World Bank Group and SuM4All, 2022)

**Phase 0**
- **selection** of SuM4All GRA policy measures relevant for the specific country or territory (out of a total of 68 SuM4All GRA policy measures relevant for gender)

**Phase 1**
- **collection** of all country measures (local policy measures) related to the selected SuM4All GRA policy measures

**Phase 2**
- **filtering** all measures with high impact on gender equity which have not reached their potential

**Phase 3**
- **filtering** all measures that still have gaps towards implementation and reaching their overall potential

**Phase 4**
- **final rating** on filtered measures to define shortlist of SuM4All GRA policy measures and related country measures with the highest potential to contribute to transport and gender equity in the given country

**Roadmap**
- **final list of top 5 topics and** related SuM4All GRA policy measures that should be implemented to enhance gender equity in transport in the given country

**Figure 2: Gender policy assessment: step-by-step process**

## 3.    FINDINGS

For South Africa, in a first desk-top based trial, the World Bank technical team assessed more than 200 identified relevant policy measures in the country against the 31 SuM4All GRA best practice measures (see above). The 31 measures were then grouped into 10 topics, which emerged during the assessment process. These ten topics are: (1) Integrated transport planning and user needs, (2) Gender mainstreaming, (3) Personal security, (4) Road safety, (5) Knowledge sharing and co-ordination, (6) Data collection and analysis, (7) Women as transport workers, (8) Infrastructure and access, (9) Social and environmental impact, and (10) Stakeholder engagement and consultation.

### 3.1    Integrated Transport Planning and User Needs

Integrated transport planning is mandated in South Africa. There are multiple policies, such as the National Transport Policy White Paper 1996 (revised 2017) (NDoT, 1996), National Land Transport Act (NDoT, 2009), and integrated provincial and metro frameworks and planning, which includes urban functional areas and informal settlements on the periphery.

Government encounters challenges in implementing these policies, however, and although on balance the policies align with general best practice, gaps remain. For example, neither of the key overarching policies noted above includes an explicit gender focus. All key transport policy measures note that user needs are to be considered, but user needs are only broadly understood.

Within these policies, women's needs are narrowly framed as safety and security, and even these are inadequately attended to. Across the majority of transport policies, the gendered nature of travel receives little attention beyond women as special needs passengers who are limited in their movements by children (NDoT, 2009). Policy direction does little to redress inequity in this regard.

## 3.2   Gender Mainstreaming

South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (Ministry of Women, 2000) – the Gender Policy Framework – reflects South Africa's vision for gender equality and how it intends to realise this ideal. This policy also details a strategy for gender mainstreaming and provides guiding principles for its implementation.

While the Gender Policy Framework is entirely gender-focused, it is not sector specific. South Africa's transport policies are devoid of gender mainstreaming and implementation processes. Stakeholders interviewed as part of the engagement process report that, particularly within municipalities, systematic or institutionalised attention to gender is barely acknowledged; commitment and capacity varies by political leadership, individual officials, election cycle, or pressure during "Women's Month" in August every year. Gender mainstreaming rarely underpins policies and actions within government.

Stakeholders also report that gender is considered a soft measure within the transport sector, and 'hard-core' issues take priority when it comes to requests by local government, for example, to develop capacity or to share knowledge.

## 3.3   Personal Safety

Without safety and security in the public spaces used to access transport, women's travel needs cannot be met. Safety and security fall under South Africa's general criminal legislation, and enforcement of overall safety and security – not only in the transport sector – is a substantial concern. South Africa's Integrated Urban Development Framework (RSA, 2016) singles out gender-based violence in urban public spaces as a policy matter within this sphere.

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (RSA, 1997) mandates treating citizens as 'customers' of public service delivery, and listening to and considering their views in making decisions about services.

There are no mandatory requirements for training of public transport and security staff in gender aspects, although civil society organizations have developed materials to train the minibus-taxi industry, for example, in gender sensitivity, often in response to government requests. Stakeholders report that in too many instances, when training is offered directly to government departments, gender is seen as a soft issue and relegated to relatively junior employees or officials.

## 3.4   Road Safety

In South Africa, women are not necessarily more vulnerable than men in terms of road safety. Fatal crashes in the country disproportionately affect men, where 76% of victims from fatal crashes are males. Children are a particularly vulnerable category of road users (Sum4All, 2019b, 2019a). However, research undertaken by the Gauteng City-Region

Observatory (GCRO) Quality of Life Surveys (GCRO, 2021) suggests that the fear of road accidents may be a major factor in the decisions women make around transport modes and particularly decisions for their children. Thus road safety should also be considered with regards to how women and children make decisions around transport.

## 3.5   Knowledge Sharing and Co-Ordination

South Africa's transport governance is fragmented and contested, without adequate coordination transversally in land use, spatial planning, and enforcement. Although mechanisms exist that support, assist, oversee, and strengthen institutionally, the absence of gender mainstreaming and sufficient gender-specific data and indicators, render gender and mobility either invisible or not fully understood.

South Africa's Local Government Association (SALGA) National Women's Commission aims to develop frameworks that support and strengthen corporations that in turn, support women in government. The SALGA Municipal Multi-Party Women's Caucus is supposed to drive a 50–50 representation in government. However, stakeholders report that by and large, a lack of financial and human resources hinders the capacity to run such programs, interest levels are low, and there is little focus or understanding directed to particular gender and mobility concerns.

A purpose of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) is to ensure that provinces and municipalities carry out their service delivery and development functions effectively. It publishes information on municipal support and capacity-building programs online, but little in the way of transport and gender integration.

Across all spheres of government, no dedicated gender budget lines support efforts to collect and evaluate transport projects centrally, and to increase the understanding of the gendered nature of travel. An explicit gender focus is missing in these planning or capacity development processes and intergovernmental approaches.

## 3.6   Data Collection and Analysis

Although the National Land Transport Act (NDoT, 2009) mandates that cities and provinces collect data, such data is largely required to support demand modelling, not necessarily to engage with gender, accessibility, or social inclusion needs.

One of the systematic challenges that need to be resolved in South Africa, for both general sustainable transport best practice, and gender-sensitive transport planning, is actual data over and above guidelines for the collection of data. Inadequate data, or a lack of up-to-date data, poor quality or unreliable data, or a lack of disaggregated, or qualitative data, are routinely raised concerns among planners and researchers. Data is a key ingredient that cuts across all attempts to close the gender and transport gap.

## 3.7   Women as Transport Workers

Women have been significant beneficiaries of South Africa's post-1994 attention to: (i) the development and protection of the rights of workers, and (ii) employment equity and broad-based black economic empowerment (B-BBEE).

A guiding principle of Sub-Sector B-BBEE Charter developed by the Department of Transport (NDoT, 2014), for example, proposes that black women were to constitute 25%

of executive directors within the transport sector, by 2019; 22% of senior top management, 22% of top management, and 26% of senior management. The Charter specifies that black women are to have at least 30% of economic interest and voting rights in multinationals within the transport sector, and that 12% of the ownership base of the transport sector in earmarked for black women by 2019. The transport sector also aimed that at least 1% of the transport workforce, including construction work, was to constitute black women living with disabilities. Fifty percent of beneficiaries of skills development initiatives were to be black women by 2019.

The Charter mandated that these data be published and that targets were to be monitored and published as an annual scorecard. However, while policy responses are ambitious and in line with international best practice, the World Bank team was not able find publicly accessible monitoring and evaluation data that report on the achievement and impact of these targets.

## 3.8 Infrastructure and Access

Policy statement 14 of the Roads Policy for South Africa (NDoT, 2017) notes that women have particular transport needs in being limited by children, pregnancy, at risk of crime and abuse, or carrying loads. All key transport policy measures note that user needs are to be considered, and that people with special categories of mobility needs should not be ignored. In reality, however, resource and other constraints mean that this ideal has not been widely translated in practice. Further, it is implicitly assumed that attention to Universal Access will meet the needs of women travellers.

Women's walking or cycling  infrastructure needs are at times narrowly interpreted as being a need for lighting and security, or facilities for prams (NDoT, 2014).

Access is too often understood simplistically in distance to public transport stops. Further, extending access to underserved users in South Africa is largely understood in terms of geography or distance, rather than in the intersectionality of disadvantage and vulnerability. Little explicit recognition is given in policy statements, for example, of how spatial redress interventions could contribute to serving the access and mobility needs of women and vulnerable groups. Gender interventions are mostly of minimum standard, and rarely empowering or transformational.

## 3.9 Social and Environmental Impact

South Africa's policy responses have no explicit gender focus.

## 3.10 Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation

Although frameworks exist in South Africa to consult stakeholders, stakeholder engagement can often be regarded as time consuming, costly, and a hindrance. Little deliberate and concerted effort is made to ensure that women are able to participate, and that their voices are heard. Overall, no explicit focus exists to obtain meaningful participation from women.

Public participation in decision-making on important transport issues, including the formulation of policy and the planning of major projects, is to be encouraged (NDoT, 1996). Further, the National Framework for Public Participation (RSA, 2005) mandates local governments to consider the special needs of people who cannot read or write,

people with disabilities, women, and other disadvantaged groups. The Municipal Structures Act (RSA, 1998), Municipal Systems Act (RSA, 2000), and Development Facilitation Act (RSA, 1995) also aim to facilitate active participation and engagement.

It is required that, for example, at local government level in South Africa, ward committees comprise a diversity of interests in the ward, with women equitably represented. Every political party is encouraged, but not required, to ensure that 50% of the candidates on a party list are women, and that women and men candidates are evenly distributed through the list. Stakeholders report, however, that patriarchy presents a very real barrier to ensuring 50–50 representation in government lists.

## 4.    CONCLUSIONS

Because gender and mobility are not yet a priority in South Africa's transport environment, and because gender is yet to be entrenched in its transport policies and plans, the interventions proposed in terms of this study's roadmap (refer to the full report, World Bank Group and SuM4All, 2022) are broad, minimum, or baseline activities. With the proposed structures and data in place, South Africa will be able to move forward systematically, from a sound evidence base, to meet the needs of women in transport. Overall, paying attention to these steps will lead to an approach that covers the broad base in gaps, and sets the stage for refinement and mainstreaming.

The interventions proposed are low or medium cost, either within an authority's existing capacity, resources, and capability, or requiring minimal external or transversal resourcing. None of the interventions require access to significant additional funding, external resources, infrastructure development, or capital investment.

In the case of South Africa, the five shortlisted action-based themes are:

1.  Actively engage and consult women as stakeholders.
2.  Institutionalise gender in transport planning and transversal government coordination.
3.  Collect gender-response and disaggregated data.
4.  Develop gender-responsive infrastructure and operations.
5.  Develop gender and mobility indicators and knowledge-sharing protocols.
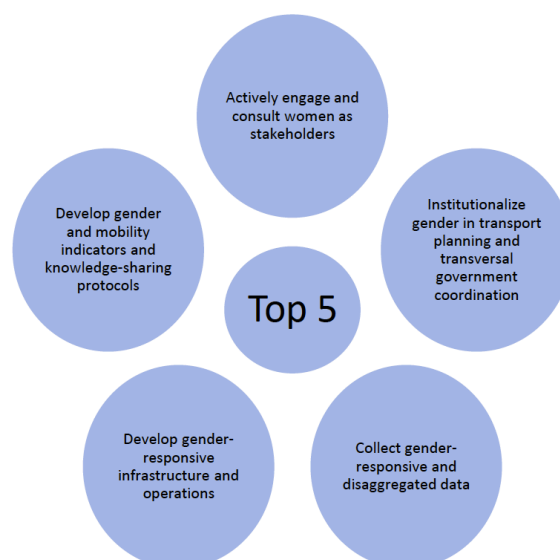


**Figure 3: Prioritised themes for the South Africa gender and mobility roadmap**

By following the roughly sequential actions in the roadmap (World Bank Group and SuM4All, 2022), the outcome will mean that:

- Women's voices will be actively sought and heard. As an outcome, women's needs are more likely to be clearly understood rather than assumed.
- Data will be collected that reflects stakeholder values and insights, enables gender-sensitive response, and transformative planning.
- Frameworks will be installed to communicate these needs across agencies and tiers of government.
- Integrated planning will be established for action and audit.
- Mechanisms will be implemented to ensure that gender-sensitive, responsive, and transformative transport will become part of mainstream transport policy making, planning, and implementation.

Ultimately, these interventions will lead to a comprehensive review of women's needs in transport in South Africa, and a plan of action for responding to these needs.

The project team's overarching recommendation is that a first step, in responding to the gaps in gender and mobility in South Africa, is to develop a gender and mobility working group to take this study forward. The working group could constitute government stakeholders in addition to civil society and appropriate individuals.

The World Bank aims to build on the work in South Africa and to modify the presented method in additional countries. Based on the study experience, the team notes that while an initial desk-based analysis is a good place to begin, an increased focus on project communication and integrated stakeholder engagement throughout the process is essential, to co-create user-centred interventions.

## 5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**APPENDIX**

The final list of 31 selected SuM4All GRA policy measures which were used in the gender assessment for South Africa.

1. Develop Mobility Plans at the Sub-National Level
2. Set Design Standards for Sidewalks and Bicycle Paths
3. Adopt sanitary protocols and reduce crowding in passenger transport
4. Define Laws for Key Safety Rules
5. Make Public Transport Fares Affordable for the Poor
6. Improve the Quality and Safety of Public Transport
7. Consult with Stakeholders during the Full Project Cycle
8. Expand Public Transport Infrastructure
9. Ensure Access to Transport Services in Underserved Areas
10. Implement Anti-Harassment Campaigns in Public Transport
11. Develop an Integrated National Transport Plan
12. Facilitate Capacity Building at the International Level
13. Coordinate Planning across Government Agencies
14. Share Knowledge on Successes and Best Practices
15. Develop Data Repositories and Data Collection Guidelines
16. Build Capacity Across Levels of Government
17. Mainstream Gender Aspects in Transport Plans
18. Establish Joint Gender Programs Across Agencies
19. Review Legal Framework for Women's Security in Transport
20. Integrate Gender in Public Procurement and PPPs
21. Train more Women on Skills Needed in Transport
22. Ensure Legal Protection for Women in the Workplace
23. Include Women in Recruitment and Foster Women's Leadership
24. Train Security and Transport Staff in Gender Aspects
25. Ensure Transport Project Design Includes Gender Aspects
26. Audit the Usability and Safety of Public Transport for Women
27. Ensure Women are not Marginalized during Resettlements
28. Comply with Gender-Based Violence Prevention Practices
29. Mitigate the Impact of Transport on Ecosystems and Biodiversity
30. Ensure Women's Participation in Consultation Processes
31. Run Campaigns to Attract Women to Transport Professions