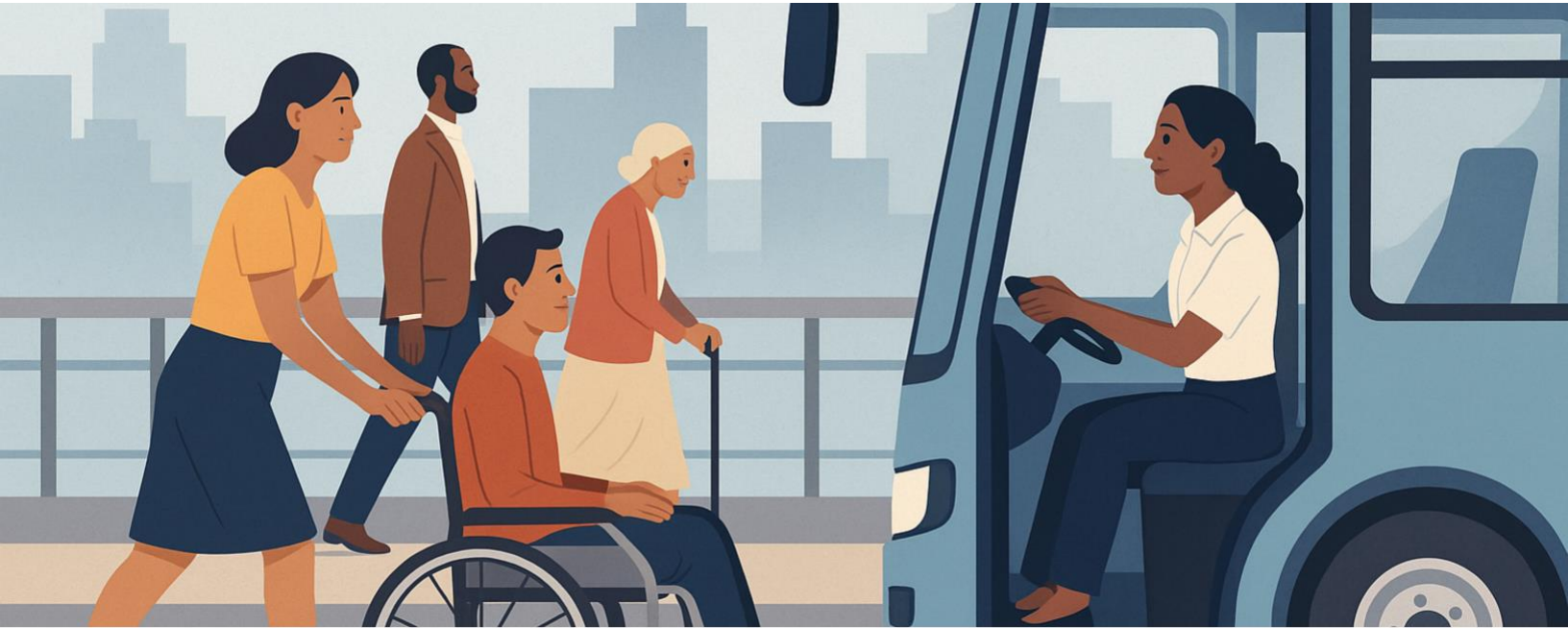




IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation
Évaluation indépendante du développement



2025 gLOCAL Evaluation Week

Proceedings Report

June, 2025



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

Bridging the Gap: Advancing Gender Inclusion in Transport for Sustainable Development

5th June 2025 (Online)

1. Overview

The event explored gender inclusion in transport as part of [gLOCAL Evaluation Week 2025](#). This session highlighted the crucial importance of incorporating gender equality principles into transport sector initiatives, showcasing innovative gender mainstreaming strategies and practices from diverse contexts. It featured evaluation and research findings from African Development Bank's Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) and World Bank's ieConnect for Impact Program on transport projects, illuminating their impact on gender equality, and offered a platform for dialogue, learning, and collaboration to examine the current policies and practices that advance gender-responsive transport, encouraging reflection on existing policies and practices that promote gender-responsive transport and support resilient, sustainable development. The session was co-organized by IDEV and the Gender, Women and Civil Society Department, in conjunction with ieConnect.

2. Key Highlights

Opening Remarks

Dr. Rufael Fassil, Division Manager at IDEV, noted that transport is not just about infrastructure, but also about access to education, jobs, healthcare, and opportunities. Yet, transport systems have historically been gender-blind, often failing to address women's safety, mobility needs, and socio-economic realities. He emphasized that gender-responsive evaluations are essential, not optional, as they enable decision-makers to understand who benefits from transport investments and who is left behind.

Referencing IDEV's evaluation of the Bank's transport operations, which included multi-country data on how women experience transport differently, Dr. Fassil noted that evaluation plays a key role in closing identified gaps from inclusive consultation and actionable findings. Evaluation, he added, is central to improving both development outcomes and system-level equity. Dr. Fassil concluded by calling for stronger partnerships across institutions to ensure that transport projects are designed and evaluated with gender equity at their core.

Presentations

- **Joseph Mouanda**, Chief Evaluation Officer at IDEV/AfDB, examined gender-related findings from the AfDB's evaluation of its transport sector support in African countries. It underscored that gender shapes mobility patterns due to differing social roles, with women facing unique challenges in affordability, safety, and access to employment in a male-dominated transport workforce. Rural-urban disparities, inadequate infrastructure design for caregivers and the elderly, and cultural norms further restrict women's mobility. While initiatives like Kenya's FLONE Initiative, the WILA Program, and the SHE-CAN Tool in Nigeria and Malawi show promise, the evaluation of 52 gender-tagged transport projects (2012–2023) revealed that only 15 met gender evaluation criteria. Common issues included gender elements being planned but poorly implemented, inconsistent monitoring, and a lack of sex-disaggregated data.

Case studies from Tanzania's Dar-es-Salaam Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System Phase II, Senegal's Dakar Express Train Phase I, and Kenya's Sirari Corridor Road Project, highlighted missed opportunities, including insufficient consultation with women, unaffordable fares, the absence of gender action plans, and a lack of long-term tracking. Across projects, there was generally a stronger

focus on gender at the design stage than during implementation, with weak institutional mechanisms limiting accountability. The way forward, according to Mouanda, requires mainstreaming gender in transport planning and execution, establishing clear targets and monitoring frameworks, and fostering inclusive, safe, and equitable transport systems as a foundation for sustainable development.

- **Aram Gassama**, Research Analyst, Development Impact Department, World Bank, examined the constraints to women's urban mobility in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, focusing on female students aged 18–27 who frequently rely on public minibuses (*daladalas*) and face high exposure to harassment during daily travel. The study revealed that verbal and physical harassment—such as catcalls, staring, and unwanted touching—is prevalent, though often underreported in traditional surveys. An experimental intervention using a mobile reporting app with 1,151 participants showed that incentivized users reported three times more incidents than non-incentivized users, and both treatment groups reported more than survey-only participants. The app proved particularly effective at capturing severe, high-stigma incidents and identifying spatial harassment patterns; however, mild, frequent incidents were less frequently recorded.

The findings suggest that women are willing to sacrifice up to 20% of their lifetime earnings for safer transport, with safety concerns significantly influencing women's mobility and economic participation in cities worldwide. While gender-segregated transport can enhance perceived safety, it may inadvertently reinforce stigma. The study highlights the potential of digital tools to improve data accuracy, inform safer transport planning, and shape gender-aware infrastructure policies. Next steps include refining spatial data analysis, exploring the effects of peer reporting, validating findings with police records, and adapting the tools for use in other contexts, such as Bangladesh—all aimed at advancing inclusive, reliable, and safe transport systems for women.

Q&A Session

The open discussion highlighted issues related to challenges in tracking long-term results beyond access indicators, as well as the limited systematic involvement of women (through the civil society framework) in the design and implementation stages. It was also noted that although gender considerations are included in the design stage, they are not integrated during implementation, most likely due to limited resources and inadequate due diligence. The AfDB was urged to identify specific actions that can have a real impact on gender outcomes and allocate the necessary resources to implement these actions effectively.

Panel Discussion: Advancing gender inclusion in transport for sustainable development

The panelists included: Nelly Maina, Principal Gender Officer, AfDB; Alice Duhaut, Researcher, Development Impact Department, World Bank; Sheila Enyonam Akyea, Senior Transport Engineer, Ghana Country Office (CoGH) AfDB; Horst Heimstädt, Executive Director, Southern African Development Community (SADC) Alliance of NGOs for Road Safety; and Bibie Nyagali, Planning Officer, Ministry of Transport, Republic of Tanzania.

The panelists discussed a range of topics focusing on the use of evaluation and research insights to enhance the gender-responsive aspects in sustainable urban mobility, AfDB's gender-responsive transport practices and lessons learned, women engineers' challenges and opportunities, Tanzania's BRT experience, and how civil society can advance gender-responsive, safe, and equitable transport systems. It was noted that:

- Addressing women's mobility constraints requires stronger alliances between policymakers and implementers, gender-focused pilots, adaptive and responsive systems, and improved institutional coordination to overcome the barriers of scarce data, overloaded projects, cost concerns, and weak gender integration.

- The [Accra Urban Transport Project](#) showed that meaningful community engagement and participatory planning from the onset are critical for ensuring project inclusiveness and sustainability.
- Tanzania's efforts to create safer, more accessible, and inclusive environments for women and vulnerable groups have centered on policy reforms, infrastructure designs, and public awareness campaigns.
- Some of the key challenges faced by women engineers include bias, limited leadership opportunities, and work-life imbalances, while there are growing opportunities in inclusive, gender-responsive projects and mentorship programs.
- Increased dialogue, coalitions, and collaborations can promote shared learning among CSOs, governments, and development partners to fully promote grassroots-driven initiatives.

In conclusion, the panelists underscored that gender inclusion in transport requires cross-sectoral collaboration, investment in local capacity, community engagement, and a commitment to data-driven, context-specific solutions. The diverse perspectives shared, ranging from engineering to policy, civil society, and government, highlighted the richness of ongoing efforts and the importance of partnerships for sustainable change.

Closing Remarks

Maimounatou Ndiaye Diop, Lead Infrastructure Specialist at the AfDB, emphasized that mobility is central to achieving gender equality and that inclusive transport designs must be informed by robust evidence, adequate funding, and gender-disaggregated data. She closed the session with a call to action: to move from discussion to implementation, to strengthen collaboration between evaluators, policymakers, and practitioners, and to embed gender inclusion as a standard, not a special consideration, in all transport operations.

3. Key Messages and Takeaways

- A strong results chain is often missing from the outset of project designs. Without a clear theory of change, log frames tend to track only inputs and outputs that are easily measurable, with little follow-up on long-term effects.
- Mobility is central to achieving gender equality, and inclusive transport designs must be informed by robust evidence, adequate funding, and gender-disaggregated data.
- Transport systems are meant to serve people, not cars. Therefore, women, children, and other vulnerable road users should all be involved in the design processes. CSOs have a critical responsibility to advocate for transport systems that are equitable for all road users.

4. Quotes

"Too often, women's mobility needs, safety concerns, and economic and social roles have been overlooked in transport sector policies, in planning and investment decisions. This is why incorporating gender into transport sector evaluation is not simply a matter of equity; it is a matter of effectiveness and impact. When we evaluate with a gender lens, we begin to understand how policies and projects affect men and women differently," **Dr. Rufael Fassil, Division Manager, IDEV**

"Evaluation helps track where progress is being made and where gaps remain, especially in implementation, coordination, and sustainability," **Maimounatou Ndiaye Diop, Lead Infrastructure Specialist, AfDB**

"The diversity of the panelists illustrates the continuum of actors needed to improve the gender dimension in transport – researchers, transport engineers, civil society, and government institutions. Highlighting the

importance of broad alliances to change mentalities,” **Alice Duhaut, Researcher, Development Impact Department, World Bank**

“Actively involving women and other marginalized groups in the planning and design phase of a project ensures that the infrastructure meets their specific needs and safety concerns. This participatory approach promoted project ownership at the local level and strengthened their involvement,” **Sheila Enyonam Akyea, Senior Transport Engineer, CoGH/AfDB**

“CSOs’ strength lies in the connections. We connect data with emotion, communities with policymakers, and gender equality with sustainable development. By working collaboratively, listening actively and advocating strategically, we can help build transport systems where no woman or child, or any vulnerable road user, is left behind, as engineers will prioritise people above not cars when designing the roads,” **Horst Heimstädt, Executive Director, SADC Alliance of NGOs for Road Safety**

“Innovation in our road infrastructure lies in the gender-responsive approach, which integrates the needs of women and other special groups in the planning and design of road construction projects,” **Bibie Nyagali, Planning Officer, Ministry of Transport, Republic of Tanzania**

5. Resources

- [A Decade on the Move: Evaluation of the AfDB’s Support for the Transport Sector \(2012-2023\)](#)
- [Cluster Evaluation of AfDB Rail and Aviation Projects \(2012–2023\)](#)
- [Global Indicators Briefs No. 9: Constraints to Women’s Use of Public Transport in Developing Countries, Part I: High Costs, Limited Access, and Lack of Comfort](#)

6. Participants

The event drew over 120 participants from development institutions, government ministries, civil society, the private sector, and academia.

7. Contact

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