

UNECE – UIC joint workshop on the security of vulnerable rail users

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- Transportation varies considerably between people depending on their gender, age, or physical condition.
- Across the world, women and girls fear and experience various types of sexual violence in public spaces, from unwelcome sexual remarks and touching to rape and femicide. It happens on streets, in and around schools, public transportation, such as trains, workplaces, parks, public toilets, and other spaces in urban, rural, online, and conflict/post-conflict settings.
- The mobility patterns of women are different from those of men. As collected by UN Women and UNOPS in the “Handbook of a Gender Perspective for Public Work” published by our Argentina Country Office:
 - Women do predominantly “polygonal trips”: these trips link different points of the territory, they involve taking children to school, carrying out a procedure or purchase, and only then, arriving at the workplace. Men usually make round trips between the home and their place of work.
 - Diverse and complex mobility: women usually travel accompanied by other people, some with some degree of dependency or reduced autonomy and in general, carrying more packages.
 - More intensive use of nearby public spaces: due to their care responsibilities, women are the ones who use public spaces the most (squares, parks, etc.).
 - Travel experiences more sensitive to environmental conditions: women make a high proportion of their trips on foot, so they are more affected by the state of the sidewalks, lighting, signage, water runoff, the existence of covered transport stops, trees that provide shade, security, among other factors.
 - Greater immobility: a trend that is observed especially among women who do not perform paid work that necessarily involves a transfer outside from their homes or neighborhood.

- Women are the ones more at risk of experiencing violence and insecurity during the use of transportation services.
- The actual occurrence of acts of violence against women coincides with the three moments of the trip that generate a greater feeling of insecurity: the trip itself, the previous walk and post-trip, as well as the time of waiting.
- This highlights the importance of the conditions of routes and the waiting places.

- Data tells us that:
 - 64% of women in Bogotá and 60% of women in Lima have been victims of sexual assault in transport, while 62% of the women are afraid of suffering sexual assault on transport in Guadalajara (Mexico).
 - The study “She moves safely” carried out in Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area points out that users of public transport said that ‘transit’ is “the worst part of the day”.
 - The same study reveals that 72% of women transport users claim to have felt insecure, compared to 58% of male users.
 - According to the ILO and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), violence against female transport workers prevents women from being interested in jobs in the transportation sector, especially regarding positions in direct contact with the public. It should also be noted that the transportation sector is male-dominated due to social norms and gender stereotypes.
- As a result, many women and girls do not enjoy the right to freedom of movement. Transportation infrastructure, such as railways, connects points and people and guarantees the exercise of rights of citizens to access essential services, opportunities, and markets. They are also essential to create and strengthen links and relationships between the different territories and their communities.

- Examples of UN Women’s work
 - In Delhi, India, a partnership with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation raised awareness and promoted women's safety through public service announcements in two high-traffic metro lines. Messages on ending violence reached more than 200,000 people. Additionally, communities organized dialogues with women, girls, men, and boys to emphasize their roles as agents of change and encourage them to design their strategies to stop violence against women.
 - This example is part of UN Women’s Global Flagship Initiative “Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls”, which builds on its “Safe Cities

Free of Violence against Women and Girls” Global Programme (2011). The project aims to prevent and respond to sexual violence against women and girls in public spaces by supporting local and national governments. Several cities from over 32 countries from the Global North and the Global South have joined the initiative.

- To conclude, the integration of a gender perspective in the railways sector must:
 - Translate into the promotion of actions addressed to women as users of transportation systems and women as part of the workforce in this sector.
 - Ensure the meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision-making: design, construction, maintenance, and operation.
 - Seek the identification and elimination of barriers that limit women’s access to achieve adequate female representation in the different links of the sector's value chain.