

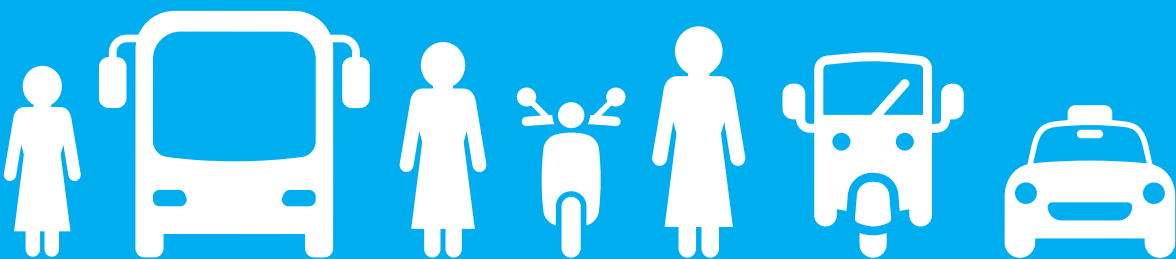


WOMEN AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN EAST AFRICA

# Expanding available data and knowledge base about women and public transport in Nairobi and Kampala

## Nairobi Report

Written by Calvin Kayi





WOMEN AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN EAST AFRICA

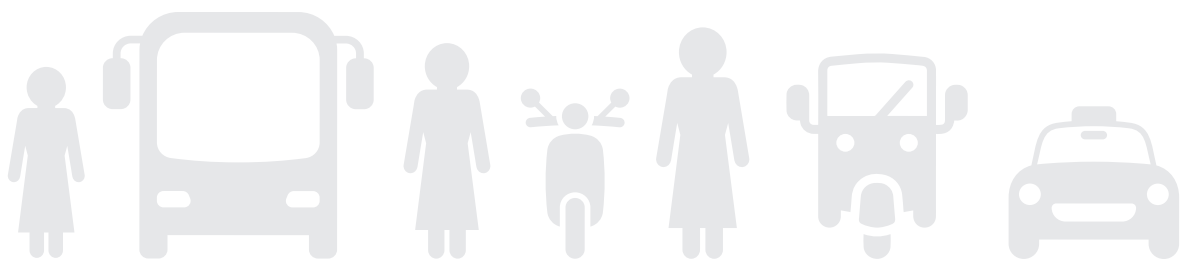
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December 2021





Women and Public Transport East Africa: Expanding available data and knowledge base about women and public transport in Nairobi and Kampala—Nairobi Report. Written by Calvin Kayi


East and Southern Africa Regional Office  
UN Gigiri Complex, UN Avenue;  
Block M, Ground Floor  
P.O. Box 30218- 00100 Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: +254 20 762 4778


[africa.unwomen.org](http://africa.unwomen.org)

Email: [esaro.publications@unwomen.org](mailto:esaro.publications@unwomen.org)

 [unwomneafrika](#)

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Transport, Infrastructure, Housing, Urban Development and Public Works, the National Transport and Road Safety Authority (NTSA), and the Nairobi Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (NaMATA) towards improving the data collection tool are highly appreciated. MOBILE ACCORD, which successfully bid to implement the survey in East and Southern Africa (ESA), is acknowledged for developing the CATI application following the skips and flow of the questionnaire and for organizing translation into Swahili. Last but not last, this study recognizes with gratitude all the women who spared their precious time to participate in the survey to help provide a better understanding of women’s issues in urban public transport.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The specific objectives of this survey were fourfold, to: identify the general public transport needs of women; identify the obstacles faced by women accessing and using public transport; identify interactions between women's economic activities and public transport use and barriers; and identify the incidents of gender-based violence (GBV)- particularly harassment and physical violence and its interface with the use of public transport by women. To achieve the objectives, the study adopted a descriptive survey design. The information required was collected from 2,484 women respondents in Nairobi with the individual being the unit of analysis. Information was collected using a CATI survey platform and a questionnaire designed to provide rich quantitative data that enhanced insights on varied commuters' opinions on the variables of interest.

The findings show that majority (58.8%) of the respondents were aged between 25 and 44 years. Only 35% of respondents were engaged in working for someone else while 9% owned formally registered businesses not related to agriculture. Eleven percent reported that they were involved in small-scale informal business activities. All respondents indicated that they use motorized public transport to commute in Nairobi with 50% using public transport daily. The main purposes for which public transport was used included commuting to work (44.3%) and commuting for shopping/market (41.6%). Medium-sized paratransits with the capacity to ferry 14 to 59 passengers were the most (61.6%) frequently used means of motorized public transport by women in the survey. They used these vehicles to undertake key daily trips such as commuting to work or to their businesses. The lower capacity 14-seater *matatus* were the second most preferred (57.8%) means of public transport. This may not be surprising given that *matatus* are the most commonly used form of motorized transport in Kenya and Nairobi in particular.

With regard to commuting time, nearly half (46%) of the respondents spent up to half an hour to commute to their work or business locations while 41% required between half an hour to one hour to arrive at work. Seven percent required up to two hours and more to commute to work. On commute spending, 37% of the respondents had no prior budgetary allocation for transportation needs but spent on a daily basis as the need arose.

People living with a disability (PLWD) consistently face challenges of access to public transport. In this survey, 7% of the respondents had physical hindrances that made it difficult for them to use public transport. Given that women aged 34 years and younger formed the biggest part of the sample, they also comprised the biggest (41.3%) sub-group with problems hindering their access to public transport. However, age-specific analyses showed that women older than 55 years were significantly more likely to experience problems (26% compared to 2.4% of the 18 to 24 age group and (and 11% respectively for age groups 35-44 years and 45-54 years). Walking (41.9%) and chronic illnesses presented the biggest barriers (21.8%) in accessing public transport. Sixteen per cent of respondents had vision-related difficulties.

One of the major concerns for women using public transport in Nairobi is their safety and security. About 46% of the women commuters felt most unsafe while using public transport at night/early morning between 10pm and 7am. In addition, the majority of women commuters have either witnessed or experienced harassment while using public transport. For example, 87.2% reported that while using public transport they had witnessed disputes arising out of overpayments, overcharging transport fares, not giving passengers the correct change or the transport crew demanding payment twice. The second most (82.9%) witnessed type of harassment was verbal or other





forms of emotional abuse. Harassments, including sexual and emotional abuse, while using public transport may prevent women from accessing and fully exploiting economic opportunities such as jobs and businesses as well as providing or enjoying social services. When disaggregated by the means of transport used, the analysis reveals that 38% of harassment incidents occurred while the respondents were using the medium-sized 14-59 passenger capacity minibus *matatus* popularly known in Nairobi as *manyangas*<sup>1</sup>. The *manyangas* are quite popular with the youth due to the graffiti and other forms of special art features including blaring music. Apparently, *matatu* conductors, known as *makangas* in colloquial lingo were most (72.7%) responsible for the harassment experiences of women commuters. Stage marshals and *matatu* drivers accounted for 8.5% and 8.2% of harassment respectively.

It is of concern that although women commuters face harassment while using public transport in Nairobi, the incidents go unreported. The survey findings revealed that majority (78%) of respondents never reported the harassment incident to anybody. Only a paltry 7% somewhat reported the cases.

It was noted that the victims of harassment have little faith in the National Police Service (NPS) and would rather report harassment incidents to friends, co-workers of the *matatu* crew responsible for harassment, or the Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCO)<sup>2</sup> under which the *matatu* operates. Only 1% of the victims indicated that they reported the harassment occurrences they experienced while using public transport to the police. This should be of very serious concern since the National Police Service’s POLICARE – an integrated response to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) as well as police gender desks were established

in police stations in Kenya to expressly address gender-related complaints and build the confidence of the victims in the police service.

Although a few women reported the incidents, very little or no action was taken against the perpetrators. According to 39 respondents (1.6%), the most serious action taken by the victims, was to ensure that a refund arising from overcharging was made. Only 1% of the actions taken following harassment encounters led to the person(s) responsible being apprehended. The respondents were asked to indicate the areas in which they would need support. The following were mentioned as the key areas of need in terms of support for women commuters in Nairobi: protection from further victimization or harassment (47.1%) by both *matatu* conductors/stage marshals and fellow male passengers; building women’s confidence to report and strengthening police response (46.3%); legal support (45.6%); providing psychosocial support to survivors of public transport SGBV (42.8%), and security/crime prevention (37.3%). These areas of support considered together with the persons to whom the harassment reports were made, may help explain the low rates of reporting incidents.

This study recommends a multi-stakeholder and integrated approach in mainstreaming gender issues in transport, especially in dealing with harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse, in the public transport sector. The women commuters using public transport must be empowered to speak up and report incidents of harassment while using public transport. For this to happen, there is need to develop a framework or system that addresses survivors’ fears of re-victimization and harassment in case they report for action to be taken against the culprits. For a start, discussions could be held with *matatu* owners and SACCO managers on the need to fit their vehicles with Closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras. The cameras would help to monitor what goes on in the *matatus* and have a record of this for review in case of complaints. Already, even in the

1 Loosely translated to mean “cool”, modern, or fancy in Nairobi street language

2 As part of regulatory efforts for the sector in the past few years, the Kenyan law require all public service vehicle (PSV) operators including *matatus* to be members of with one of over 700 independent Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) - government-registered groups - or a PSV company before applying for a PSV license.



absence of any structured frameworks, a number of *matatu* owners have fitted their vehicles with CCTV cameras to help monitor and manage the *matatus*. While such systems may not eliminate harassment incidences, they may serve to deter and reduce them. In addition, after conforming to the necessary judicial provisions, the surveillance systems may provide supportive evidence to enable the relevant charges to be pressed in courts of law against those responsible for the

incidences. This would of course require the collaboration of the various stakeholders including the SACCO management, law enforcers, victims themselves, the public transport crew, and civil society organizations (CSOs) among others. The SACCO management, for example, could be quite key in ensuring discipline among vehicle crew members.



# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CATI	Computer Assisted Telephonic Interview
CCTV	Closed-circuit television
CSO	Civil society organization
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-based violence
ESA	East and Southern Africa
ESARO	East and Southern Africa Regional Office
INTP	Integrated National Transport Policy
KUWEEH	Kenyatta University’s Women’s Economic Empowerment Hub
KYGEC	Kenya Youth Generation Equality Consortium
LTA	Long-term Agreement
NPS	National Police Service
PLWD	People living with a disability
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
UN	United Nations



# 1 | BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The UN Women ESA gender data and statistics unit has been exploring a collaboration with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) on gender and the environment data. The Institute has a presence in East Africa through their office located at the World Agroforestry (International Council for Research in Agroforestry - ICRAF) compound. SEI conducted a study<sup>3</sup> on gender and the environment in Kampala, Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi in May 2021. The study was aimed at analyzing gender mainstreaming in public transport and urban planning and focused on the inclusion of these issues in policy and regulatory instruments.

The main findings of the study were that:

- Policymakers are not fully aware of gender mainstreaming in the transport sector and, therefore it remains an under-accomplished activity
- Research on women's needs for mobility is still limited, particularly in developing countries
- Policies and regulations include some sections on gender equality, but either their enforcement fails or they are not considered when moving to the projects and services proposals
- Some of the recommendations of policies, strategies and impact assessment reports are too simplistic and do not solve the problems of women's mobility
- Out of the three country case studies, Uganda and Tanzania had most references to gender in their policies and regulatory instruments
- Stakeholders reported the need for gender issues to be integrated in the transport sector.

Based on these findings, the SEI study recommended, among others, that city governments should consider the needs of all users when developing policy instruments. However special attention should be given to vulnerable groups, including women. Once established, regulations and policies should be properly enforced to effectively regulate and protect as intended.

The study further recommends that Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) should be used for policies, plans and strategies. These should include public participation to ensure that women's needs become more evident. New urban plans should be linked to required transport services and consider gender mainstreaming. Furthermore capacity building on gender issues should be mandatory in all levels of government and service providers.

The paucity of data and existing studies on women and transport was one of the constraints of the desk review component of the study. Due to financial constraints, the primary data collection component of the study was limited to qualitative data collection with key informants. The study observed that virtually no information was available about the extent of problems faced by women when using public transport.

In order to bridge these gaps, a proposal for the current study was developed with the intention that complimentary Computer Assisted Telephonic Interview (CATI) sample surveys be conducted in Kampala and Nairobi to generate statistical evidence on the needs of women when using public transport and the obstacles they face in doing so.

<sup>3</sup> [Mainstreaming gender](#) in urban public transport. Stockholm Environment Institute Linnegatan 87D 115 23 Stockholm, Sweden. May 2021.



## 1.1 Purpose

The survey was aimed at generating representative statistical evidence on women in public transport in Nairobi and Kampala.

Specifically, the study focused on identifying:

- a) General public transport needs of women
- b) Obstacles faced by women in accessing and using public transport
- c) Interactions between women's economic activities and public transport use and barriers
- d) The incidence of gender-based violence (GBV), particularly harassment and physical violence, and its interface with the use of public transport by women

The findings of this study are expected to impact on national and local government regulations related to women and public transport, as well as provide statistical evidence that can be used for advocacy purposes.

## 1.2 Organization of the Report

This report consists of five sections, excluding the Executive Summary: (1) Introduction, (2) Literature Review, (3) Approach and Methodology, (4) Findings and Discussions (5) Conclusion and Recommendations. The first section of the report introduces and puts the study in context while the second reviews related and relevant literature. The research approach used to collect information for this study is discussed in section three while the findings of the study and subsequent discussions are found in section four. The report concludes with a summary, conclusions, and recommendations in the fifth section.



## 2 | REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Transport and gender relations: an overview

Scholars and practitioners have engaged in discourse on the relationship between transportation and gender. Indeed, experts from a variety of fields such as transportation research, urban planning, geography, architecture, sociology, and gender, among others, have analyzed differences in travel behavior and patterns of both women and men as well as features of the built environment that are associated with this behavior – the way it encourages or restricts particular mobility patterns (Lehmann, 2020). The differences in mobility patterns have largely been associated with men’s and women’s everyday activities, which closely relate to their social and/or gender roles. In this review, we endeavor to show the intersection and interrelatedness of transport/mobility and gender.

In relation to transport, Law (1999) coined ‘daily mobility’ as the object of study for feminist scholarship, which incorporates a wide range of issues including the unequal distribution and use of resources, i.e., the experience of social interactions in transport-related settings and participation in a system of cultural beliefs and practices that somewhat dictate the mobility demands of women and men. In the current study, quantifiable urban travel patterns of women in East Africa are of specific interest. However, in general, the whole range of women’s individual experiences while using public transport and the travel behaviors associated with them are of great interest in the current study.

Cresswell and Uteng (2008), in a collection of gendered mobilities have not only tried to offer a broader understanding of movement, but also of the potential of undertaking movements (motility), as it is lived and experienced. Thus, understanding transport and mobility needs and patterns means understanding observable

physical movement, the meanings that such movements are encoded with, the experience of practicing these movements as well as the potential for undertaking these movements. Gender may, then, be used to highlight the various aspects relevant to transport/mobility behaviors of women and men. Valentine (2007) observes that although our identities as individuals might be multiple and fluid, but power operates in and through the spaces within which we live and move in systematic ways to generate hegemonic cultures that could exclude particular groups such as women. The question that arises is, how is the public transport space in the East African cities organized, and who exercises control and power?

### 2.2 Transport and “women’s issues in transportation”

Literature shows that investigations on the relation between gendered everyday activities and mobility patterns can be traced back to the 1970s when some researchers particularly began to examine the differences between women and men and their respective travel behaviors. For example, a conference on “Women’s Travel Issues” was held in the United States in 1978 (Law, 1999). This conference devoted specific discussions to the topic of gender and transport. According to Law (1999), to a large part, this conference was linked to the women’s increased entrance into the labor market and their dual role of worker and housekeeper that many mothers took on. Transport, therefore, became, and still is, very critical in ensuring that these roles were fulfilled. Even then, ordinary planning (including transport planning) did not take gender seriously as a variable in the calculation of future infrastructural needs. Rosenbloom (1978) observes that a planning practice was adapted to the travel needs of male commuters with relatively simple movement patterns (from home to work and back). This did not consider the



reproductive work that women combined with their activities as part of the workforce. Indeed, Rosenbloom (2006), has noted that women ordinarily combine household (e.g., shopping), caring (e.g., escorting), leisure, and salaried work activities.

Lehmann (2020) reckons that, shorter work trip lengths for women than for men have consistently been observed and accredited to, among others, women's lower incomes – not being able to travel longer distances, characteristics of the labor market for women (being employed in “traditionally female” sectors i.e., service or office-related, and often part-time jobs), the effect of the division of labor within the household (where key responsibility, on average, is persistently allocated to women, forcing them to limit their time outside the house). In addition, as can be gleaned from Hanson and Johnston (1985), women's choices of mode of transport are characterized by use of public transport and limited availability or access to the car (where available), or differential spatial distributions of women's and men's residential locations and employment or business opportunities.

By and large, empirical findings demonstrate consistent and significant differences in travel patterns between women and men. According to Sánchez de Madariaga (2013), women tend to travel shorter distances in a geographical area close to the home, they make more trips, they travel for a wide variety of purposes, which differ to a great extent from the men's, they have less access to a car, and are the main users of public transport systems. In addition, they cease driving earlier than men, they make more chained trips, and more multimodal trips. Women's travel patterns tend to be shaped as polygons as opposed to the commuting patterns from home to workplace prevalent among men. It has been observed that many more men than women work in the transport sector and that participation of women is particularly low in positions of responsibility. Additionally, it has been noted that women are more sensitive to safety and security concerns and tend to self-limit their movements in urban space

because of the perceived risk. According to Loukaitou-Sideris (2016), women's and men's different perceptions of risk and experiences of fear and violence in public spaces have been a matter of concern for years and are considered important factors for understanding the potential barriers to women's mobility and use of public transport. Bondi and Rose (2003) observe that the fear of violence deserve a special attention – the range of potential threats: verbal or gestural harassment while using public transport to physical sexual assault; rape or sexual murder. The current study investigated women's safety/harassment experiences and concerns while using public transport in the two east African cities of Nairobi and Kampala.

### 2.3 Gender mainstreaming in transport policy and planning

Gender planning as a concept emerged in the context of development policy and practice in the 1980s. According to Moser (2014), it was based on the premise that women and gender were marginalized in planning theory and practice. Gender mainstreaming was spurred by the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, and the 1997 adoption of gender mainstreaming across all policy fields by the United Nations (UN). Gender mainstreaming further got a boost with the 1998 Treaty of Amsterdam where it became a requirement in all areas of European Union (EU) policy (Roberts, 2013). In our context, therefore, gender mainstreaming provides an important point of reference and reflection with regard to the contemporary discourse on gender, transport, and mobility as well as planning. The question that arises is, to what extent have gender issues and women's concerns relating to transport been incorporated into the policy documents, planning and practice with regard to public transport in the three East African cities under consideration?

According to Peters (2013) as cited in Muhoza, Wikman and Diaz-Chavez (2021), policy responses to gender-sensitive transport issues vary between measures to reduce inequality in access to transport modes, services, and destinations on the





one hand, and measures which explicitly recognize women's specific needs on the other. In Kenya, while the Integrated National Transport Policy (INTP) has some progressive provisions, it does not explicitly address gender and women-related issues. For example, chapter four, which deals with road transport, identifies nine (9) items identified under the mission, and seven (7) strategic objectives, yet none of these address the specific mobility needs of women. The closest the policy comes to addressing issues of equity and accessibility is under Section 4.1.2 (f), which reads: "Provide adequate accessibility together with safety and security within the constraints of social affordability", and Section 4.1.3 (f), which reads "Provide increased mobility and improved accessibility to safe and secure road transport services as part of the Government's efforts towards poverty reduction and wealth creation." The INTP appreciates in Section 4.8.8 that human resource development is a critical issue. It states as follows: "Disciplined operations in the passenger transport industry can best be achieved through operator and personnel education to increase ethic levels and discipline in the

industry. (These) are currently lacking and have led to lack of operational ethics and order." The indiscipline in the passenger transport industry inordinately negatively affects women commuters in the form of harassment as they use public transport, yet this is not expressly captured in the INTP.

Currently, it may be fair to argue that in Kenya, the national and county governments have not yet fully embraced gender mainstreaming in transport policy and planning. What exist are broad aspirations, without provisions that address women's specific concerns with regard to employment in the transport sector as well as access, their safety and security while using public transport. It is apparent that there are no systematic gender inclusion procedures for the transportation policy frameworks. The understanding of and providing for the women's mobility needs require a very clear gender lens. Thus, deliberate efforts should be made include issues specific to women in transport policy and planning engagements.





## 3 | APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The project built on the long-term agreement (LTA) that has been closed with GEOPOLL as part of the COVID-19 Rapid Gender Assessments conducted in 2020. The study was based on a sample of 2,400 women 18 years and older with access to mobile phones and living in Kampala, Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi. The sample was drawn to ensure it was representative of the population by age and location. With a sample size of n=2400, the margin of error is +/-2.0% at 95 percent confidence level for reporting at city level. The actual data collection included 2,484 women. The sample was then adjusted via benchmarking to correspond with the demographic quotas representative of women in Nairobi County prior to the commencement of the study.

**Table 1: Number of responses per sub-county**

Sub-county	Frequency (weighted)	Percent
Dagoretti	260	10.8
Embakasi	764	31.8
Kamkunji	126	5.2
Kasarani	467	19.5
Kibra	120	5.0
Lang'ata	128	5.3
Makadara	94	3.9
Mathare	89	3.7
Njiru	67	2.8
Starehe	128	5.3
Westlands	158	6.6
Number of weighted responses 2400		

The data was collected using Computer Assisted Telephonic Interview (CATI) between August 19, 2021 and September 1, 2021. Fifty five percent of the respondents preferred the English language while for 45.4% of the respondents the survey was conducted in Kiswahili. Some 10 respondents (0.4%) did not know the Nairobi sub-county in which they lived. The project deliverables included three research

reports (one per country) providing an integrated picture of the findings of the study as well as detailed recommendations with regards to policy, activities and advocacy messages that can be used for the implementation of interventions related to women and public transport.

### 3.1 Analytical focus

Research analysis and recommendations focused on highlighting the needs and obstacles faced by women when using public transport with the view to develop appropriate advocacy messages in support of the inclusion of gender issues in the regulatory frameworks of city governments and where appropriate national government. Appropriate numerical and graphical methods have been used to present the findings of the study.

### 3.2 Ethical considerations

Given the risks associated with COVID-19 and associated movement as well as social distancing restrictions, a CATI survey was considered the best way of safeguarding participants in the study. The study was also executed in a manner to ensure that confidentiality and anonymity was guaranteed. Ethical and safety principles were followed to ensure that there was no harm to the women being interviewed. There were regular checks to ensure respondents were answering the survey in a private and safe space. The survey likewise ensured the safety of interviewers, where the recommended anti-COVID-19 barrier behaviors amongst teams of interviewers were observed to avoid any risk of contamination. Working hours were in accordance with the curfew restrictions in the country during the survey period.

### 3.3 Partnerships

The questionnaire used in the study was developed by SEI in partnership with UN Women ESARO and shared with the



other stakeholders at city level including local authorities, representatives from the public transport sector, and the ministries of gender and transport for further refining during the consultative processes. Stakeholders included: Kenyatta University's Women's Economic Empowerment Hub (KUWEEH), representatives of National Road Safety Authority (NTSA), Nairobi Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (NaMATA), and the Ministry of Transport, among others. SEI facilitated the

organization of consultative meetings at country level before the survey was conducted and for the purposes of validating the report. MOBILE ACCORD, the successful bidder to implement the survey in ESA, was responsible for: Developing the CATI application following the skips and flow of the questionnaire and organizing translation of the questions into Swahili.



## 4 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study. The section is largely organized along the four key sub-sections: the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents; women and urban public transport in Nairobi; women’s safety and security while using public transport, and actions taken following harassment incidents while using public transport. The section also presents information of the areas and nature of support required by the harassment victims.

### 4.1 Socio-economic characteristics of respondents

A total of 2,484 women from all the sub-counties in Nairobi participated in this study. These responses were then adjusted via benchmarking to 2400 as per the original design of the study. Embakasi sub-county, which covers Nairobi’s industrial area, accounted for the highest (31.2%) number of respondents while Mathare and Kibra sub-counties, which largely fall in the informal settlements, cumulatively accounted for 8.5% (See Table 1). Starehe sub-county, within which Nairobi’s central business district falls, accounted for 5.6%. With regard to age, majority (37.8%) fell in the 25-34 years age bracket. In essence,

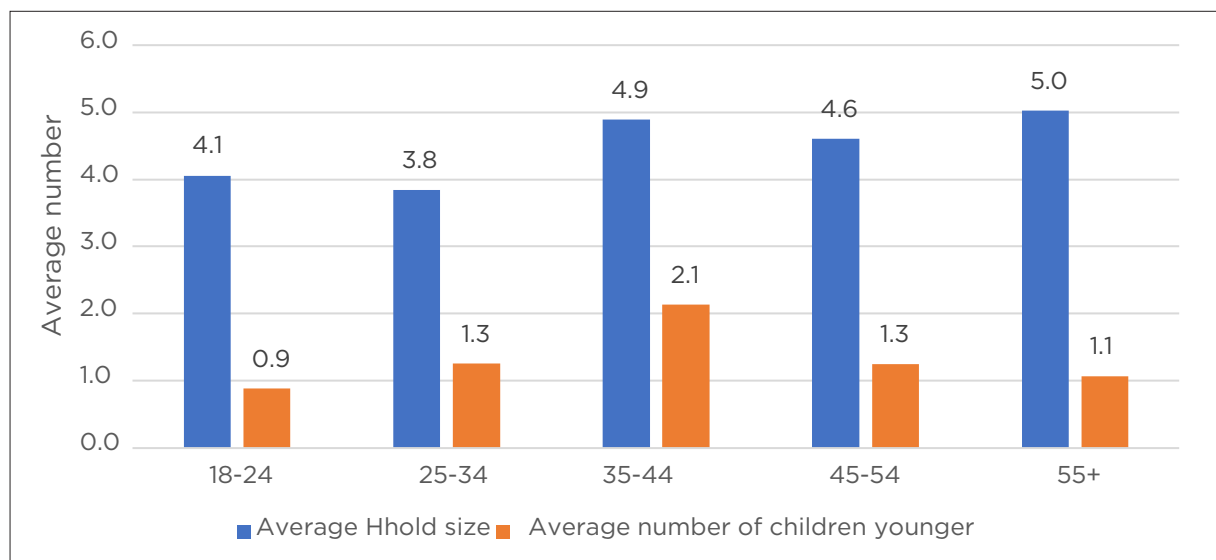
those who were between 25 and 44 years old accounted for 58.8% of the respondents (Table 2). This category is by and large the most economically active group and thus has high mobility needs.

**Table 2: Respondents distribution by age**

Age-group	Frequency (weighted)	Percent
18-24	599	25.0
25-34	907	37.8
35-44	503	21.0
45-54	242	10.1
55+	149	6.2
Total	2400	100.0

The findings show that the average household size among the respondents is 4. It should be noted, however, that 400 (16.1%) of the respondents did not respond to the question on household size. The question that arises is whether or not the question asked was not clear to them or if they were uncomfortable giving the answers sought. When disaggregated by age-group, the 35-44 years category was found to have the highest number of children as shown in Figure 1.

When asked whether or not they were working for someone else including the



**Figure 1: Average number of household members and children aged 0-17 years per age-group of the respondents**



Government at the time of the survey, about 2/3 (65%) of the participants responded in the negative (Figure 2). Only 35% indicated that they were engaged by working for someone else. Given that 65% of the respondents indicated that they were not formally working for someone, it was then of interest to investigate how they earn their livelihood. Further analysis revealed that only about 9% of the respondents owned formally registered businesses not related to agriculture. A huge majority, 2,271 (91%), did not own formally registered businesses. At the time of the survey, the women who were not working but were in the process of looking for a job accounted for (56%) 2%. However, there was an interesting finding with regard to the women that were not working and looking for a job, and those who were neither working nor looking for a job. About thirteen percent indicated that they were not working but were not looking for a job. There are probably a number of reasons why those who were not working but were not looking for a job. These may include being a housewife (homemaker), full-time student, or ill health at the time of the survey.

It is interesting to note that respondents neither worked for someone else nor owned formally-registered businesses. Only 33.4% reported that they were involved in small-scale informal business activities, which is gaining traction in Kenya and popularly

referred to as “hustling”. The natural expectation would be that those who are not formally employed or engaged in formal businesses would end up earning their livelihoods in the informal sector. These findings, however, do not seem to support that thesis, and probably require further investigation.

In response to the question of whether or not the respondents were involved in subsistence farming or employing other people in farm-related activities, only 325 responded in the affirmative. This is not surprising given that this study was conducted in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya where farming is not a key economic activity. Farm produce is brought in from nearby counties such as Kiambu and Kajiado as well as further counties such as Meru, Kisii, Nyeri, Muranga and Nyandarua among others to feed Nairobi’s population. Of those who responded in the affirmative, it was not clear whether their involvement in subsistence farming and related activities was being carried out in Nairobi or on farms in rural areas. In a number of cases, women (and men) who move to the towns and cities keep strong ties with their rural homes and continue to engage in farming activities to supplement their town/city incomes. It is not uncommon in Kenya for city/town dwellers to frequently receive food supplies from their rural homes. This is meant to help reduce their expenditure on food items that end to be quite expensive in

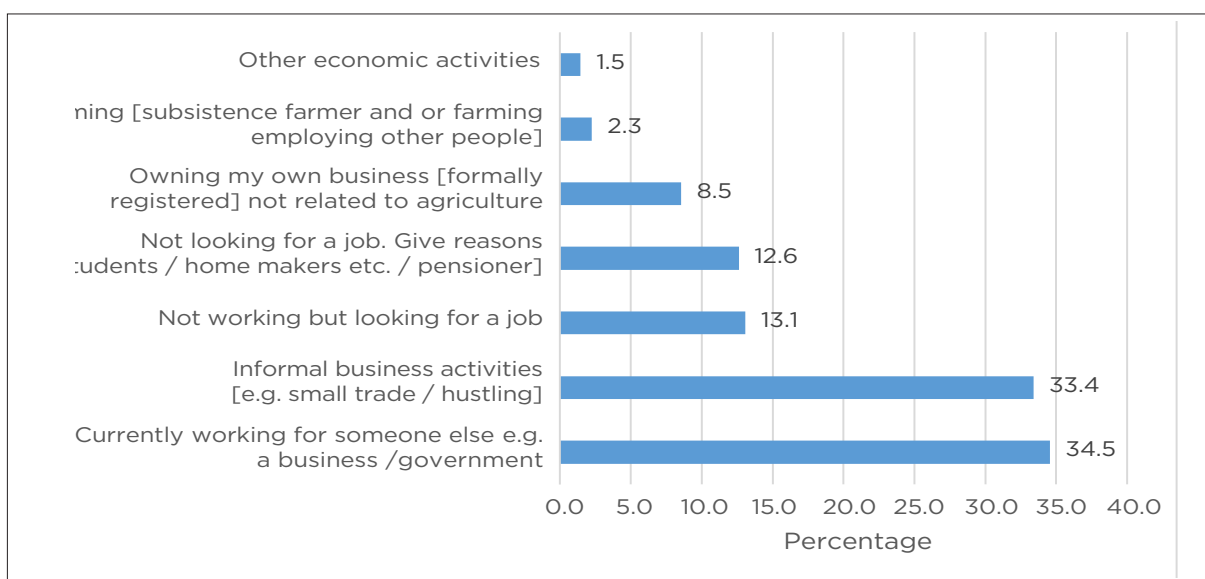


Figure 2: Nature of women’s economic activities, Nairobi



urban areas.

When disaggregated by age cohorts, respondents aged 45-54 years and 35-44 years were found to be more likely to be economically active than all other age groups at 88.4% and 85.6% respectively. Those aged 18-24 years (54.9%) were least likely to be involved in economic activities followed by the 55 year and older cohort (71.8%). However, within age groups, economic activity ranged from 44.7% (18-24) to 74.5% (25-34) and 76.2% (35-44). Women living in Kamukunji/Starehe (81.4%) were more likely to be economically active than women living elsewhere (Figure 3).

This can largely be attributed to their higher involvement in paid employment/working for someone else (41.8%) compared to women from Dagoretti/Westlands (40.2%) and Langata/Makadara (35.5%). Women living in Kibra/Mathare and Njiru/Kasarani/Embakasi were found to be more likely to engage in informal business activities (42.8% and 34.7%) than being formally employed (30% and 31.8% respectively).

Figure 4 disaggregates the same information by age group. It is evident that even though there are some fluctuations between different sub-counties in terms of women's main economic activities, the

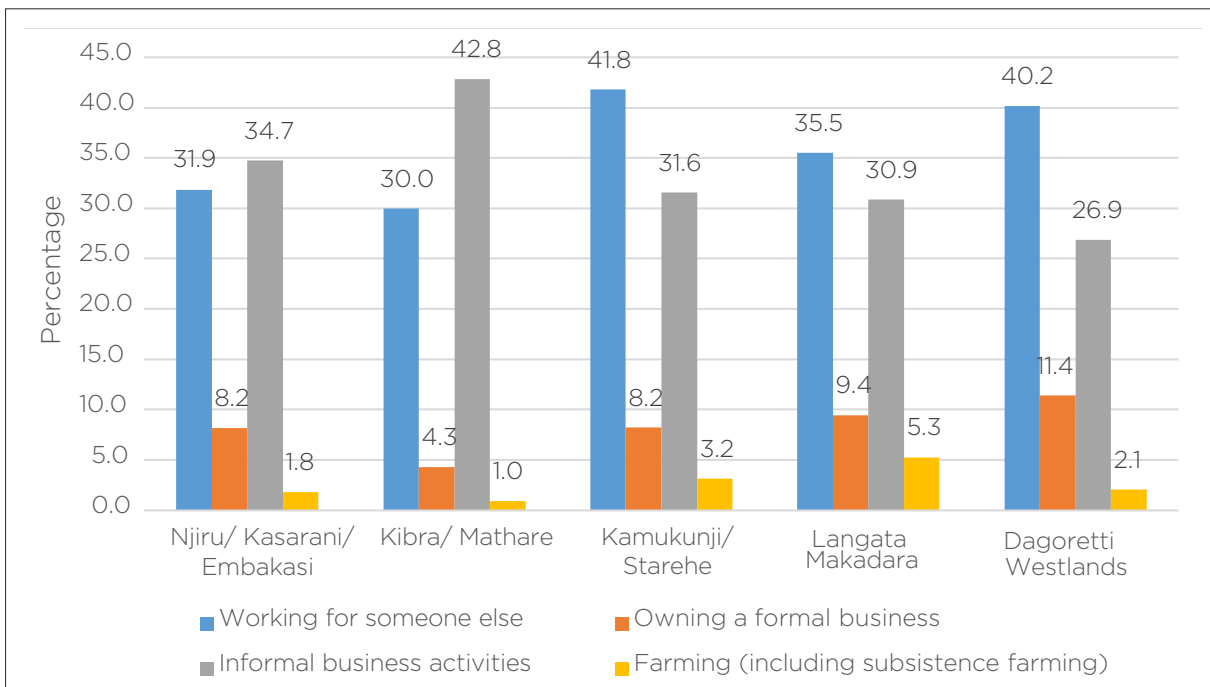


Figure 3: Employment status of women who are economically active, by sub-county of residence

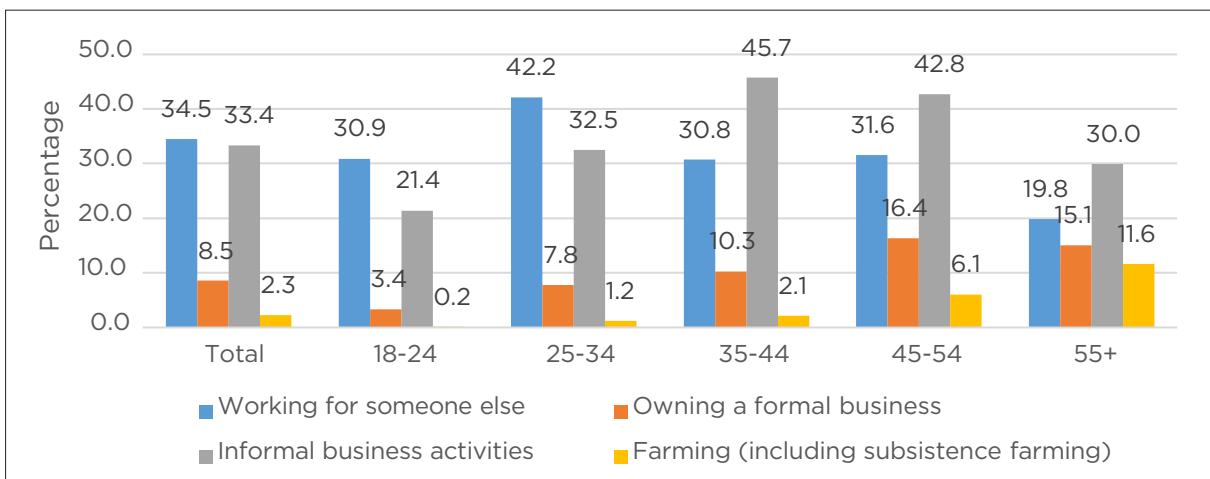
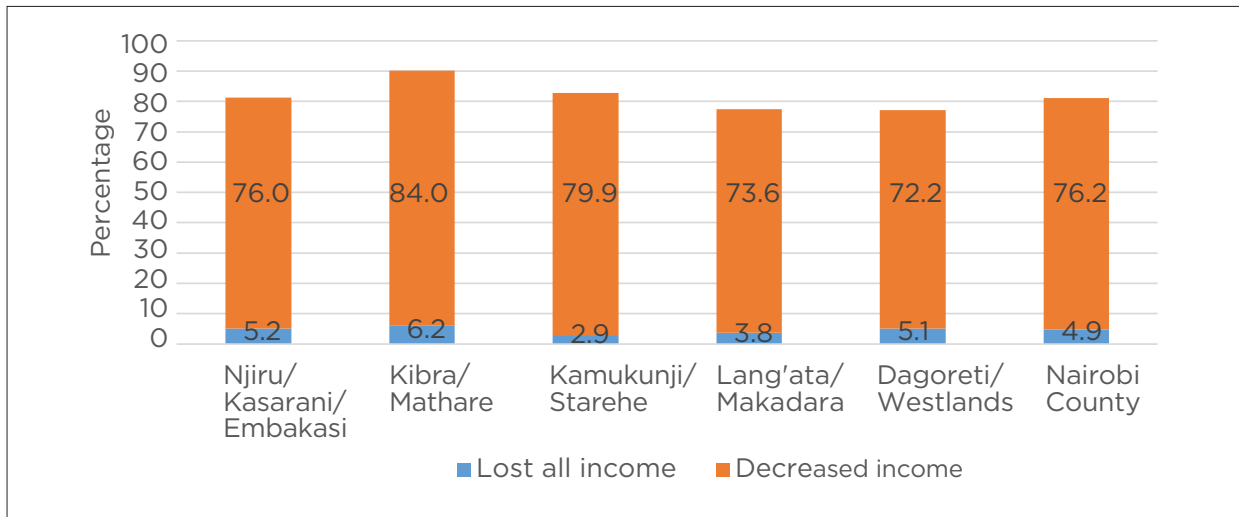


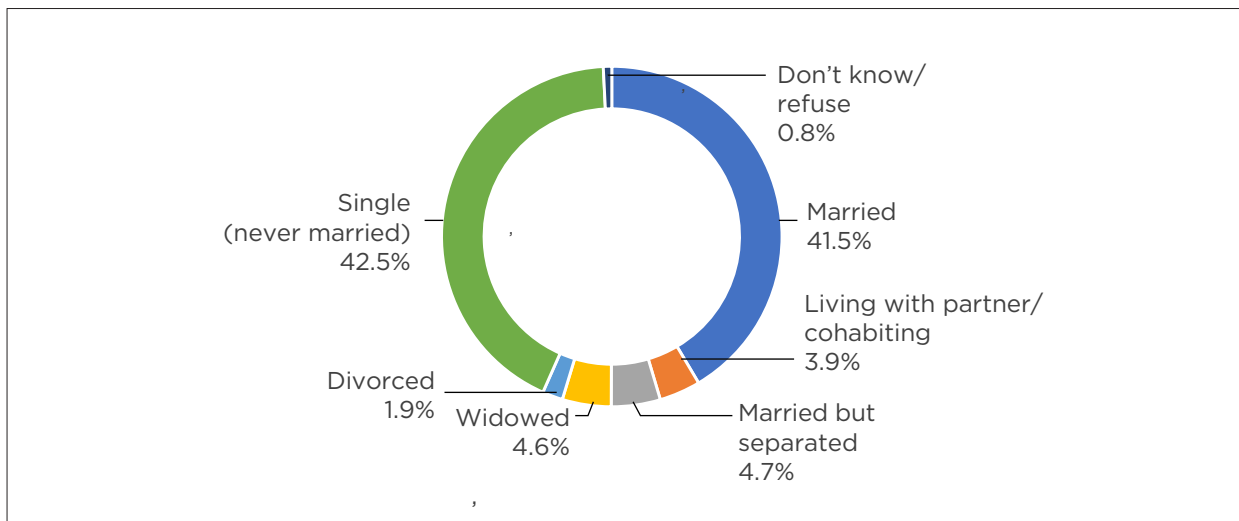
Figure 4: Employment status of those who are economically active, by age group







**Figure 6: Respondents whose personal incomes decreased or stopped altogether since the onset of COVID-19, by place of residence**



**Figure 7: Marital status of the respondents**

responses on the nature of relationship between the respondents and the household head, only 27% indicated that the household heads were their spouses/partners. This is a much lower percentage when compared to 41% who indicated that they are married. The implication of this is that even within the marriage relationships, a large number of women in Nairobi assumed the responsibilities of household head. Ordinarily, it is assumed that household heads are the key income providers or the primary decision-makers in households.

According to Posel (2001), the practice of identifying a household head in surveys has a long history but it is increasingly coming under scrutiny. In a study conducted in

South Africa, Posel (2001) found that majority of self-reported household headship captured the characteristics expected of the (economic) role of headship. In that survey, heads were found to earn the most income in households, and in most households, their income accounted for more than half of the total household income. Furthermore, the study found that approximately one-third of household heads who were not the highest income-earners reported income of less than R50.00 a month (approximately KES 500), and the great majority of these had no recorded income. However, this constituted less than 7% of the whole sample. When the highest income-earners were not household heads, they were usually partners of male





heads, or children of female heads.

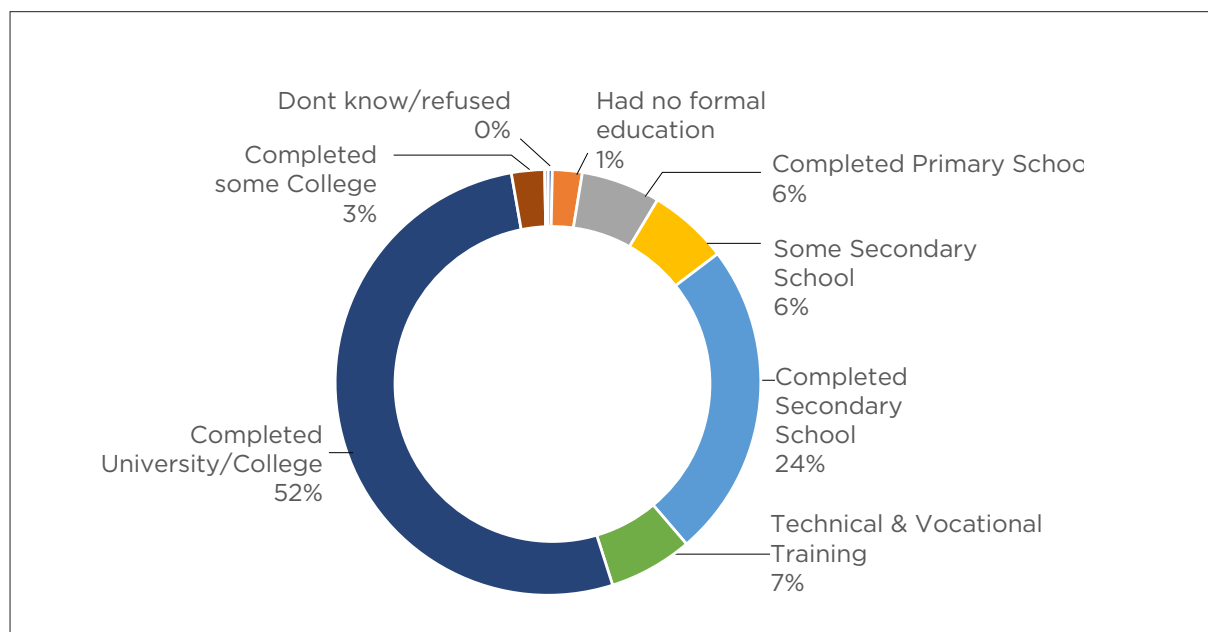
In a gender disaggregated analysis of household heads, Posel (2001: p. 652) found that the characteristics of household heads differ according to the gender of the head. Male heads, on average, were found to be younger than female heads of household and were more likely to be primary income-earners. Yet, female heads seemed to conform most to the conventional view of the household head as the key decision-maker. Attempts have been made to distinguish between household heads and household managers with the argument that the two have different spheres of influence in a male-headed household. Female spouses largely seem to assume proportionally more responsibility for spending on household production and the needs of children while the male heads appear to have more influence over expenditure on livestock and large purchases (including durables). On the hand, in female-headed households, women assume responsibility for both spheres of resources. Thus, authority and responsibilities, including financial, appear to be more fully vested in the female heads.

On the highest level of education attained,

the study revealed that most (52%) of the respondents were university/college graduates (Figure 8). Those who had completed secondary and tertiary levels accounted for 24% and 6% respectively. Six percent of the respondents indicated that they had some secondary school education, which implies that they did not finish secondary school, while another 6% had attained primary education. Only one percent of those interviewed reported that they had no formal education.

**Table 3: The Size of Households**

Household size	Frequency (weighted)	Per cent
1 to 2	666	27.8
3 to 4	971	40.5
5 to 6	583	24.3
7 to 8	137	5.7
9 or more	36	1.5
Do not know/ Unspecified	6	0.2
Total weighted responses	2400	100.0
Average household size = 4		



**Figure 8: Respondents by highest level of education attained**





When asked whether the respondents lived with other people, 84% responded in the affirmative while 16% indicated that they live alone (Figure 9). With regard to household size, the findings reveal that on average, there were four (4) members per household. This somewhat mirrors the findings of Salon and Gulyani (2019) that household sizes in Nairobi are not large at approximately three (3) people per household. Most urban Kenyan households live in rented houses. This means that there is limited space to accommodate more people in the house. In the current study, the data gathered on household heads is largely reflective of a ‘standard’ two-generation household, which consists of parent or parents and children. Over forty percent (40.8%) of the respondents reported having children aged between 0-5 years.

### 4.3 Women and urban public transport in Nairobi

#### 4.3.1 Use of motorized public transport

All the respondents indicated that they use motorized public transport to commute in Nairobi. A disaggregated analysis by frequency revealed that half (50%) of the women interviewed used public transport

daily (Figure 10). A substantial number (41%) of the respondents reportedly used public transport once a week or more frequently, but not on a daily basis. Those who used public transport at least four times a month and less frequently than four times a month accounted for 4% and 5% respectively. The survey results show that public transport plays an important and integral role in meeting women’s mobility needs. Thus, an efficient, safe, and reliable public transport system is key in enhancing, empowering, and enabling women to access and exploit jobs and other economic opportunities such as trade. In essence, public transport can play an enabling or derailing role with regard to access to available economic opportunities and social services.

When aggregated by age group, the results show that women aged 25-34 years are most likely to use public transport at least once a week or more often (53.3%), followed by the 18-24 years group (51.3%) (Figure 11). The age group least likely to travel once a week or more often is the 55 years and older women. Only 37.4% of them travelled that frequently using public transport.

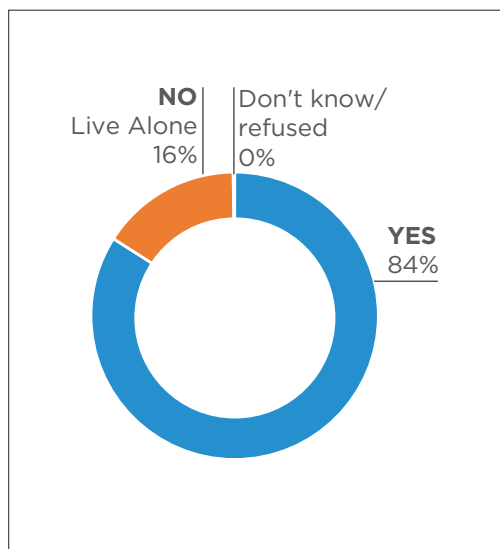


Figure 9: Respondents living with other people

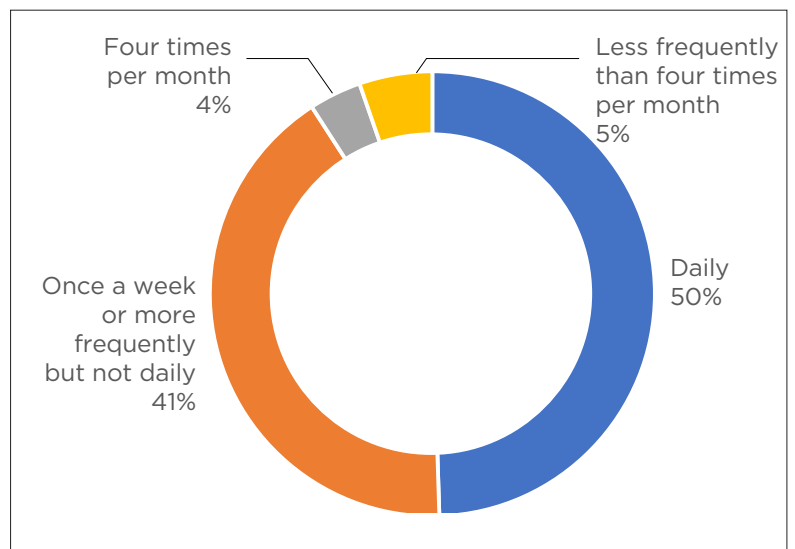


Figure 10: Frequency of public transport use by women, Nairobi



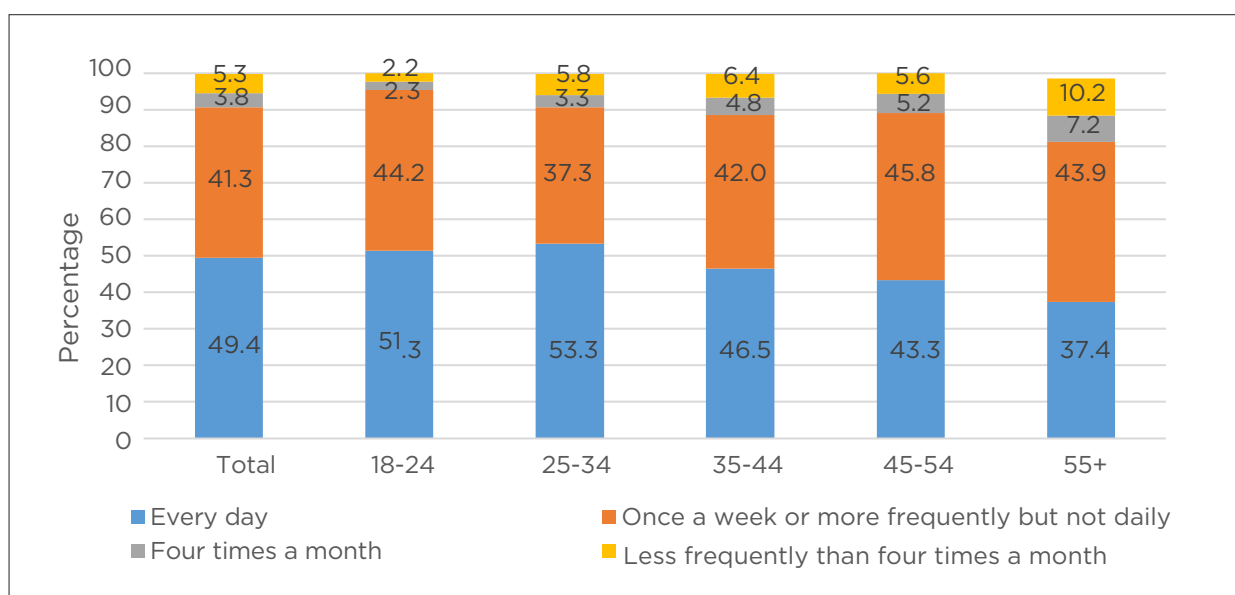


Figure 11: Frequency of public transport use by age-group of women, Nairobi

A study conducted by Aloul, Naffa, and Mansour (2018) on gender and public transport in Jordan revealed that 80.5% of the women surveyed believed that public transport is an integral part of women’s economic participation. The study found that public transport had an impact on women’s employment and economic participation. In addition, the trio observed that despite economic constraints, the challenges that women commuters face in accessing public transit represent a major deterrent from joining the job market.

### 4.3.2 Difficulties when using public transport

Access to public transport is often a problem for persons living with a disability. In this particular survey, international best practice questions such as the Washington Group questions were not used. Even though the response categories are similar to that of the Washington Group, the question was phrased differently to get a better indication of the health and well-being nexus with public transport.

Seven per cent of the respondents had physical hindrances that made it difficult for them to use public transport (Table 4). Given that women aged 34 years and younger form the biggest part of the sample, they also comprised the biggest (41.3%) sub-group with problems hindering

their access to public transport. However, as expected, the age-specific percentages show that women older than 55 years are significantly more likely to experience problems (26% compared to 2.4% of the 18 to 24 age group and (and 11% respectively for age groups 35-44 and 45-54). Walking (41.9%) and chronic illnesses (21.8%) presented the biggest difficulties. Sixteen per cent of respondents also had difficulties related to vision.

According to the Kenya National Population Census, 2009, the overall disability rate in Kenya is estimated at 3.5% which translates to about 1.3 million persons living with a disability in Kenya (Nyaura and Ngugi, 2019). The duo observed that the largest proportion (413,698 persons) of those living with a disability fall in the physical impairment category. This was followed by 331,594 persons living with visual impairments. Despite the Kenyan Constitution, 2010 clearly defining disability to include any physical, sensory, mental, psychological, or other impairment, condition or illness that has, or is perceived by significant sectors of the community to have, a substantial or long-term effect on an individual’s ability to carry out ordinary day-to-day tasks, access to public transport for people living with disability has remained a challenge. The impaired access and use of public transport by people living with disability adversely affects their



**Table 4: Difficulties when using public transport**

Difficulties	Age group	Number of cases in age group	Number of women with difficulties in age group	Percentage of age group	Percentage of everyone with difficulties
Respondents with physical hindrance that makes it difficult to use public transport	Total	2400	163	6.8	100.0
	18-24	599	14	2.4	8.6
	25-34	907	37	4.1	22.7
	35-44	503	46	9.2	28.2
	45-54	242	27	11.2	16.6
	55+	149	39	26.0	23.9
Hindrances Description	Number of cases with a specific difficulty		Percentage of those with difficulties		
	Total		163	100.0	
	Walking		68	41.9	
	Seeing		26	16.1	
	Hearing		14	8.9	
	Remembering		4	2.3	
	Chronic illness		35	21.8	
Other		21	13.1		

participation in social, economic, and environmental activities. In recent times, scholars (for example, Alsnih and Hensher, 2003; CEMT, 2004; Metz, 2000 as cited in Rosenkvist et al., 2009) have had a growing interest in accessibility of public transport services for persons living with a disability (PLWD). However, specific problems faced by persons with disability have not been sufficiently studied (Rosenkvist et al., 2009).

As highlighted earlier, the findings of the current study have revealed that the most important factors that hinder women in Nairobi from accessing public transport are walking, vision-related and chronic illnesses. It is, therefore imperative that an inclusive, gender-sensitive policy and urban public transport planning framework be put in place to enhance women’s access to public transport. This would be critical in reducing the isolation, vulnerability, and dependency of women living with disability, and thereby help to improve their access to, enjoyment and exploitation of economic opportunities.

### 4.3.3 Motorized public transport trip purpose

The respondents were asked to indicate the main purposes for which they normally use motorized public transport. The findings show that 44% of respondents used motorized public transport to commute to work while 42% used motorized public transport to commute to shopping or to the market. Close to one-third of those surveyed indicated that they meet their business/trading mobility needs through motorized public transport. In addition, 13% of the respondents used public transport to commute to schools, colleges, and other educational institutions. Surprisingly, 25% fulfilled their leisure or holiday mobility needs through motorized public transport. Although the preceding data may give purposes of the trips taken by women using motorized public transport, it falls short of painting the complete picture of the nature of the women’s travel patterns, which are complex and are largely multipurpose. Sánchez de Madariaga (2013) for example observes that women tend to travel shorter distances in a geographical area close





**Table 6: Public transport trip purpose by sub-county of residence and age group**

Trip purpose	Sub-County of residence				
	Njiru/ Kasarani/ Embakasi	Kibra/ Mathare	Kamukunji/ Starehe	Lang’ata/ Makadara	Dagoreti/ Westlands
Going to school/college or other educational institution	13.2	11.7	14.9	16.7	10.2
Shopping/market	41.6	46.5	34.5	42.4	43.0
Going to work	41.8	44.3	54.8	45.8	45.0
Going to my business or for trading purposes	27.0	30.3	30.2	33.1	28.1
Travel for leisure/holiday	25.5	25.1	21.0	23.2	28.8
Other	9.7	10.0	6.3	8.5	9.4
Age group					
Age group	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Going to school/college or other educational institution	37.5	5.4	5.1	4.0	2.5
Shopping/market	38.0	40.8	40.2	47.8	55.7
Going to work	35.1	52.5	46.0	42.1	29.5
Going to my business or for trading purposes	19.7	27.8	33.5	36.1	36.9
Travel for leisure/holiday	33.5	25.6	18.7	16.0	28.3
Other	7.1	8.7	10.1	10.1	15.8

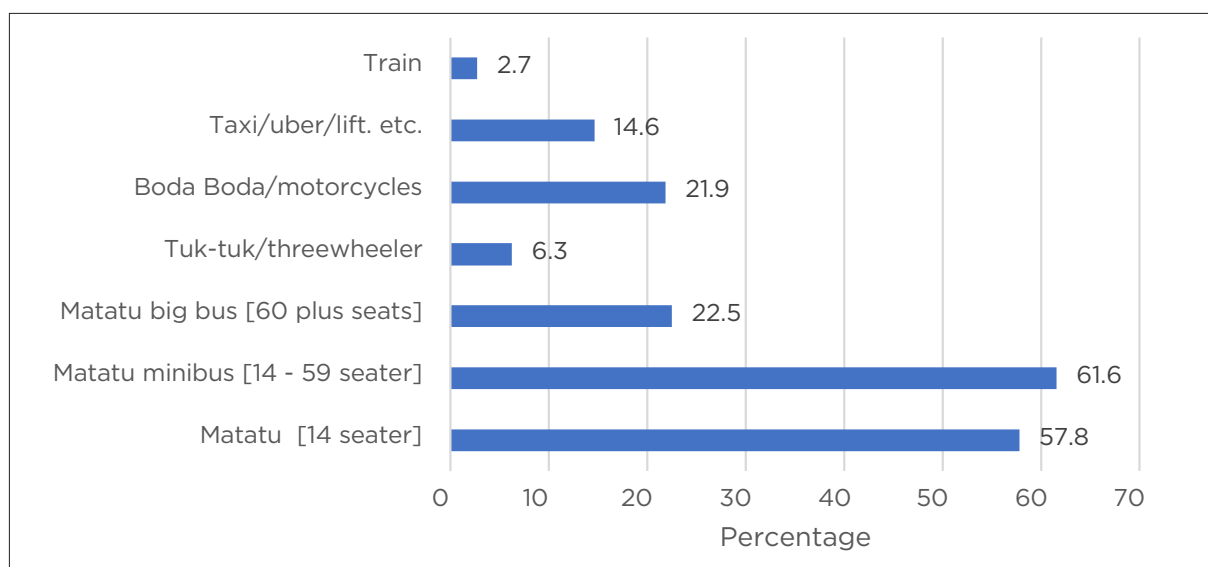
treatment and education mobility needs accounted for 11.5% and 11.1% respectively. The findings in the Jordanian study reinforce the argument that apart from their paid work, women, ordinarily, perform other culture-ascribed responsibilities that increase their transportation demands over and above that of men. In Nigeria, for example, Oyesiku and Odufuwa (2002) found that more females than males used motorcycles on a daily basis. The females and males accounted for 25.3% and 24.6% respectively of pillions in Nigerian cities. They attributed this to the fact that females do more of routine activities than males do and are thus frequent users of motorcycle as a form of public transport. Oyesiku and Odufuwa (2007) also found that females use motorcycle transport more for both short and long distance than men do.

#### 4.3.4 Women’s modal choice of means of public transport

Commuters usually use the various means of transport available to them in order to satisfy their mobility needs. In the current study, respondents were asked to indicate the type of motorized public transport that they used most frequently or for the longest distance to travel to work or to their businesses. The weighted data shows that medium-sized paratransits with capacities to ferry 14 to 59 passengers were the most (61.6%) frequently means of motorized public transport used by women in the survey to accomplish key daily trips like commuting to work or to their businesses. The lower capacity 14-seater *matatus* were the second most preferred (57.8%) means of public transport. The modal choice is summarized in Figure 12.

Although the use of 14-passenger capacity *matatus* to commute is by far the most widespread, the medium-sized PSVs may have been preferred by the respondents





**Figure 12: Women's urban public transport modal split, Nairobi**

because of their bigger capacity, thus lower fares per trip. The findings reinforce the dominance of the *matatus* in urban public transport not only in Nairobi, but also in the other cities in Kenya. Salon and Gulyani (2019) while analyzing commuting in urban Kenya found out that *matatus* – both small and medium-sized capacity – were the most used form of motorized transport. In a survey of 14,580 households conducted in 15 Kenyan cities in 2013, the duo found *matatus* to account for almost 88% of all motorized commutes in the five biggest cities, and 72% of the motorized trips in the 10 medium-sized and small cities. There are several reasons that may explain the popularity of the 14-passenger capacity *matatus*. Firstly, although they may have routes, they do not have designated stops for onboarding and disembarking. This means that they pick-up or drop off passengers at locations convenient to them even though such locations may not be official bus stops. Secondly, they require fewer passengers than the 14-59 or above 60-passenger *matatus* to fill-up. This means that they have a faster trip-turn around and get to their destinations in a much shorter period of time. The ubiquitous 14-passenger capacity *matatus* provide high frequency trips making the commute times shorter compared to the others. Thirdly, the *matatus* are also known to use *panya* routes ('roundabout routes', 'secret paths', or 'non designated routes') to circumvent the challenges of traffic jams (traffic congestion

is substantial in Nairobi, especially at peak hours) delivering passengers to their intended destinations in the shortest time possible. While it is bad practice, it is nonetheless common for *matatus* to ignore traffic rules and use the road shoulders or lanes for opposing traffic to bypass traffic jams and shorten the commute especially during congested periods.

As shown in Figure 12, the least preferred means of motorized public transport by women in Nairobi are train (2%), tuk-tuk (6%) and taxi/Uber/lift (15%). Although relatively cheaper, train transportation is the least attractive means of motorized public transport. This may be explained by the following key reasons. Firstly, the railway network in Nairobi is thin and serves only very few residential areas in the eastern side of Nairobi that are largely inhabited by the low-income earners. Secondly, the train travels at a comparatively slower speed than the *matatus*. Thirdly, the trains are characterized by congestion and overcrowding and are therefore not comfortable to travel in. Fourthly, trains have an unreliable schedule with only one round trip - one from the suburban terminals to Nairobi's station in the morning and another from the Nairobi terminal to suburban terminals in the evening. As for tuk-tuks (the three-wheelers), although they may have the advantage of affordable fares particularly for short distance passengers, they have the disadvantage of very slow





speeds and limited seating capacity when compared with *matatus*. This probably explains why they were unattractive to women using motorized public transport in Nairobi. Taxis/uber may be a convenient, comfortable, and relatively safer means of transport for women commuters. However, the cost could be out of reach for many women commuting daily to work or to their businesses. It is worth noting though that very rarely would a trip to work (or for any other purpose) or vice versa be completed strictly using a single means of transport. Ordinarily, commuters use mixed modes/ means (combining one or two means) to accomplish their mobility objectives.

A cross-tabulation of the means of public transport most frequently used by age group (Table 7) revealed that younger women (18-24 years age group) were more likely to use *boda-boda* (approximately 22% for age groups 18-44 years) than older women (16.2%) (55+ years age group). Women aged 25-34 years and those 55 years and older are more likely to use taxis/ Ubers (17.8% and 16.2%) than the other age groups. Big buses (27.4%) are more likely to be used by younger women (18-24 years), than women 55 years and older (11.6%).

#### 4.3.5 Women’s commute-time to work/businesses

Travel time is a major factor in a traveler’s decision on which mode of transportation to take (Koimur, Kangogo and Nyaoga,

2014). In order to gain a more nuanced understanding of the length of the journey to work for the women surveyed in Nairobi, respondents were asked to indicate the duration (in minutes) of their home-to-work commute. The findings show that nearly half (45.2%) of respondents spent up to half an hour to commute to their work stations or business locations. Forty one percent (41%) of the women surveyed required between half an hour to one hour to arrive at work (Table 8). Oster et al., (2011) observe that components of travel time consist of more than average speed of travel. For instance, the following aspects would need to be included in the total travel time: frequency of departure; wait times; security; travel to the station or bus stop, and the potential for delay. If the preceding were to be taken into account, the duration of travel to work for the women surveyed in Nairobi would, most definitely, be higher.

**Table 8: Duration (in minutes) taken by women in Nairobi to commute to work**

Minutes	Frequency (weighted)	Percent
1-30	825	45.2
31-60	749	41.0
61-90	100	5.5
91-120	97	5.3
Above 121	17	0.9
Do not know unspecified	114	6.3
Number of weighted responses: 1,902		

**Table 7: Cross-tabulation (percent) of means of public transport most frequently used by age group**

Public transport means (more than one response is possible)	Age group					
	Total	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Matatu (14-seater)	57.8	56.3	58.6	57.6	58.2	56.3
Matatu minibus (14 – 59-seater)	61.6	59.6	65.6	57.9	60.1	57.8
Matatu big bus (60 plus seats)	22.5	27.1	24.3	21.1	17.7	11.6
Tuk-tuk/three-wheeler	6.3	6.6	6.1	4.7	5.4	14.2
Boda-Boda/motorcycles	21.9	21.5	23.3	22.7	18.6	16.2
Taxi/uber/lift. etc.	14.6	12.4	17.8	11.4	12.6	16.2
Train	2.7	1.5	3.6	3.4	0.9	1.9
Other	0.2	0	0	0.2	0.9	0



One extremely striking feature of the findings summarized in Table 8 is that 5.3% of the respondents indicated that they require one-and-a-half to over two hours to commute to work. If the same scenario plays out on the return journey, then, it implies that these respondents would have to budget for four hours to commute to and from work. These findings disagree with Salon and Gulyani (2019) who observed that the median commute time in Nairobi is 30 minutes, and that only 5% of adult commuters in the city commute longer than an hour each way. Salon and Gulyani (2019) had opined, on one hand that their finding was a significant departure from the prevailing narrative about excessively long commute times in Kenya’s largest city. On the other hand, the duo observed that Nairobi *matatu* commuters are mostly accessing jobs in the city, but that it takes them a long time because Nairobi is physically large and the roads are heavily congested.

**4.3.6 How do women in nairobi budget for the commute spending?**

Transportation costs have become part and parcel of household daily, weekly or monthly expenditures. Olvera, Plat and Pochet (2008) observe that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the cost of transport faced by city dwellers, particularly the poor, tends to add to their travel and economic difficulties.

However, knowledge of the burden of transport expenditure in the household budget seems deficient. In this survey, an attempt was made to evaluate the monetary cost of urban public transport for women in Nairobi. Respondents were asked to indicate the average amount of money that they spent per day, per week, or per month to commute. However, the question seems to have elicited responses that relate to whether or not the respondents were budgeting for their transport expenditures on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. The survey has shown that majority of respondents do not seem to have prior budgetary allocation for transportation needs but spend on a daily basis as the need arises. About one-third of respondents plan their transport cost expenditure on a monthly basis while only 5% does so weekly. A disaggregation by the amount spent on transport and age-group reveals that 43.8% of the respondents spent between KES. 1,501 and 3,000 per month. This was followed by 28.2% of the respondents who spent between 3,001 and 4,500 shillings on transport (Figure 13).

Transport costs is one of the elements that influence households access to motorized public commuting services. Access to transportation services is not merely the physical availability of the means of transport, but ability to be able to enjoy the transport services. Salon and Gulyani (2019)

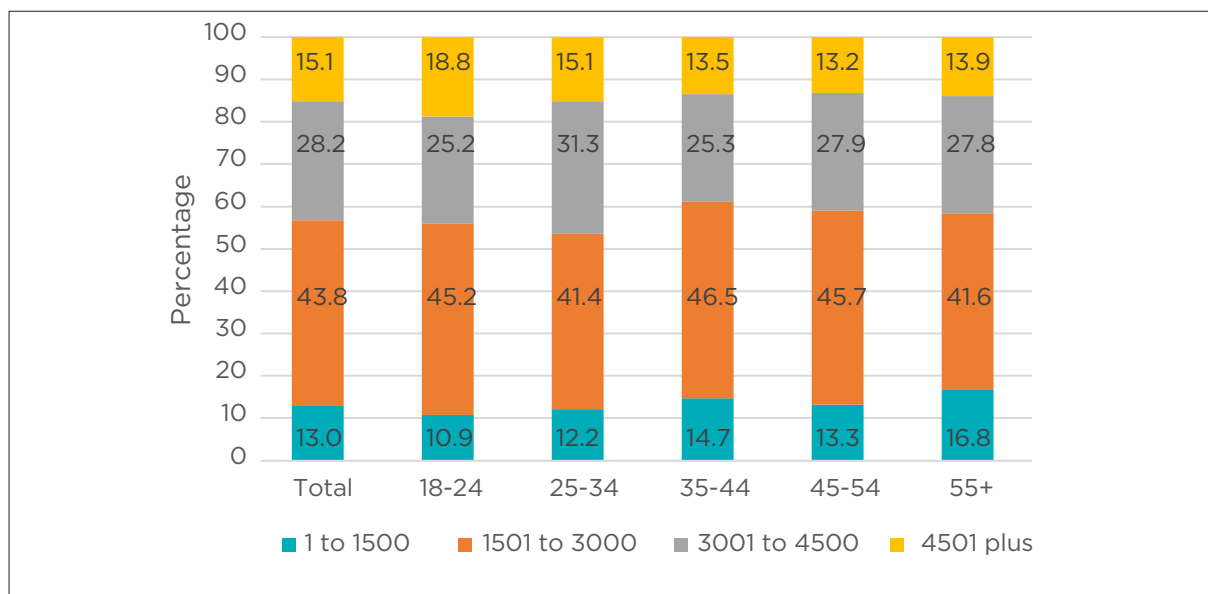


Figure 13: Urban transport budget spend per month, by age





have argued that physical availability of public transport is extremely high in urban Kenya. However, physical availability does not necessarily equate to use. Affordability of transportation services remains one of the key challenges that may hinder women from accessing urban transport services. Given that transport is an enabler accessing work-related as well as business opportunities in addition to other services, inadequate meeting of mobility needs may have negative implications on women's economic and social well-being. Indeed, Aloul, Naffa, and Mansour (2018) have argued that the economic constraints and the challenges that Jordanian women commuters face in accessing public transit represent a major deterrent from joining the job market.

#### 4.4 Women's safety and security in urban public transport

##### 4.4.1 Women's feelings of un-safeness in public transport in Nairobi

Transport risk perception influences the choices that commuters make with regard to public transport. Essentially, perceptions of risk are an inherent part of transport-related decision-making processes. In establishing the safety and security concerns for women using in public transport in Nairobi, respondents were asked to indicate how safe or unsafe they felt when using public transport during specific time periods. The specific time periods were: 7pm to 9pm; 10pm to 7am and 8am to 7pm. Table 9 summarizes the respondents' feelings of safeness or un-safeness when using public transport during the different time periods.

With a rating of 45.7%, the findings show that women commuters feel most unsafe while using public transport between 10pm and 7am. This was followed at 11.3% by 7pm to 9pm. The survey, expectedly, revealed that women feel very safe (55.8%) when using public transport during the day, between 8am and 7pm. According to Loukaitou-Sideris (2016), women's and men's different perceptions of risks and experiences of fear/violence in public places has been a matter of concern for years. Thus, the risk perceptions and experiences as relates to fear and violence are important factors that should be considered in understanding the potential barriers to women's mobility and use of public transport. Bondi and Rose (2003) observe that fear of violence deserve special attention. The duo identified the range of potential threats in public transport to include verbal or gestural harassment, physical sexual assault, rape, and sexual murder.

In addition to the temporal aspects of women's safety and security when using public transport, the way in which the daily routines of women and men are structured have been found to be of great importance too. Valentine (1989), for example, argue that women move in public places predominantly during the day-time due to the affordances of their working lives and household tasks. Women's fear of violence does not just take place in space, but is tied up with the way public space, including public transport, is organized, used, occupied, and controlled by different groups of people at different times. A number of authors have observed that sexual harassment is a serious deterrent to

**Table 9: Women's feelings of safety on public transport in Nairobi (percent)**

Time period	7 pm to 9 pm	9 pm to 7 am	7 am to 7 pm
Very safe	10.1	4.3	55.8
Somewhat safe	39.4	8.2	40.7
Unsafe	36.4	33.1	2.4
Very unsafe	11.3	45.7	0.7
Don't know/refused	2.6	8.8	0
Number of weighted responses= 2400			





The second most witnessed type of harassment was verbal or other forms of emotional abuse. Of those surveyed, 1,989 (82.9%) reported that they had witnessed this form of abuse while using public transport in Nairobi. These findings seem to agree with the Kenya Youth Generation Equality Consortium (KYGEC) (2021) report which found that most common type of harassment that occurs in public transport spaces in Kenya is verbal abuse. According to the KYGEC (2021) report, about 42% of the respondents reported either having witnessed or experienced verbal type of harassment, which included suggestive comments, abusive language, or jokes that make victims feel offended. Furthermore, the KYGEC report observes that these forms of harassment or abuse were found to be more common at night than at any other time of the day and that they majorly occur in PSVs. It should be remembered that respondents in the current study reported feeling most unsafe at night, especially between 10pm and 7am. Another common form of harassment reportedly witnessed by the respondents while using public transport was sexual harassment (1,254 respondents or 52.2%). This is discussed in more detail in the next paragraphs.

Albeit with lower percentages, the trend of the types of harassment ever experienced

by the respondents is reflective of what they had witnessed while using public transport (Figure 14). The most-commonly (67.7%) experienced form of harassment was as a result of disputes related to payments of *matatu* fares. As observed earlier *matatus* operate without a fixed and well-regulated fare structure or system. This, coupled with the fact that employment arrangements between *matatu* crews and owners are hinged on meeting daily targets, means that fares may be abruptly hiked especially if the crew are running the risk of missing their daily target. It should be kept in mind that *matatus* are privately owned and operated and thus driven by making the highest possible profit and not necessarily driven by the desire to provide quality commuter transport service.

Closely related to disputes over fare payments is verbal and other forms of emotional abuse, which 45% of respondents reported to have experienced while using public transport. Ordinarily, when the disagreements are not amicably resolved, they may degenerate into name-calling, insulting, threatening, blaming, manipulating, and humiliating the commuters in order to shame and exert control over them and force them to pay the fares demanded by the crew. As opposed to physical or sexual abuse, which

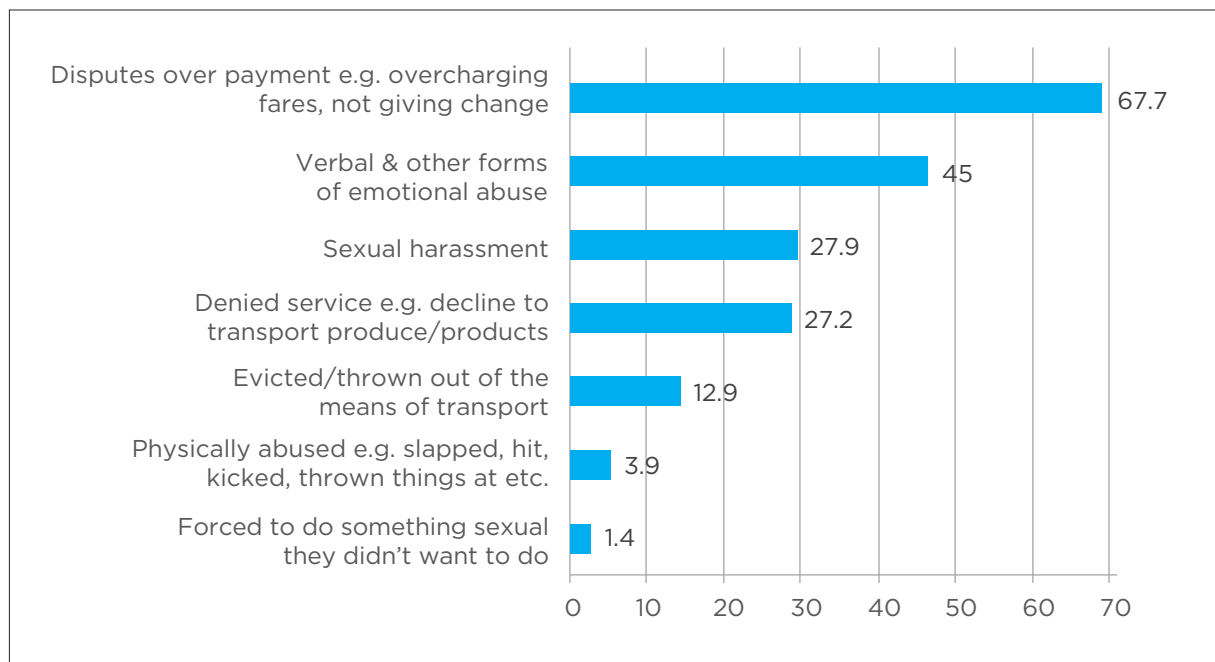


Figure 14: Types of harassments ever experienced (percent) by the women using public transport in Nairobi





using public transport in Nairobi seem to revolve around disputes over payment of fares (e.g., overcharging and not giving change), verbal and other forms of emotional abuse and sexual harassment. It is thus important to address fare structures and regimes. Under the current framework in Nairobi, this may only be enforced, to some extent, by the SACCOS to which the *matatus* belong. Relevant government departments and agencies must work closely with the managers of the SACCOS to ensure and instil internal discipline among the *matatu* crew who are members of the SACCOS.

#### 4.3.3 Means of public transport where women experience harassment

In an attempt to establish where most harassment-related incidents took place, respondents were asked to indicate the means of public transport they were using when the most recent incidence took place. When disaggregated by the means of transport used, analysis reveals that majority (44%) of the cases occurred when the respondents were using the minibus *matatus* popularly known in Nairobi as *manyangas* (Table 11). The *manyangas* are medium-sized 33-passenger capacity *matatus* that are quite popular with the youth due to the graffiti and other forms of special art features. The decorated *manyangas* are characterized by blaring music systems loudly playing the latest, sometimes obscene, music accompanied by disco lights and often on TV screens in the vehicles. They are driven fast and often recklessly and are largely manned by young drivers and conductors. With the deafening music and disco-like environment, it is not surprising that *manyangas* account for the largest share of the means of public transport in which women are harassed as they commute. On aggregate, the *matatu* sector accounted for 94.2% (Table 11) of all the harassment cases recently experienced by women public transport commuters. Although the relevant regulatory frameworks to govern the public transport sector are in place available, implementation and enforcement remain an issue.

**Table 11: Means of public transport used during the most recent harassment, Nairobi**

Means	Frequency (weighted)	Percent
Matatu [14 seater]	801	38.6
Matatu minibus [14 -59 seater]	912	44.0
Matatu big bus [60 plus seats]	241	11.6
Tuk tuk/three wheeler	14	0.7
Boda boda/ motor cycles	38	1.8
Taxi	16	0.8
Train	2	0.1
Other [specify]	36	1.7
Do not know/ refused	14	0.6
Number of weighted respondents: 2400		

In the Jordanian study, 24.4% of the women surveyed reported being harassed when walking on the street on their way to access public transport while 18.8% reportedly experienced the harassment as they awaited public means of transport. In addition, most of the women surveyed in that study observed that they experienced harassment at all times of the day, and several times a month when using public transport. In addition, the respondents observed that most harassment came from passersby on the street while the women walking to transit stops or while waiting for the public transport to arrive.

In the current study, when participants were asked to identify the persons responsible for their most recent harassment experience while using public transport, *matatu* conductors, also known as *makangas*, topped the list with 84.3% of the respondents indicating that they had been harassed by them. This was followed at a distant second and third by stage marshals (9.9%) and drivers (9.4%) (Figure 16). The marshals help manage the termini and direct the *matatus* to parking slots. In addition, they also call-out to passengers to fill-up *matatus*, especially during off-peak hours when demand is low. The finding



that conductors accounted for the highest percentage of those harassing women commuters using public transport may not be a surprising one and may be explained by a number of reasons. For example, conductors dominate and exercise a lot of power in the space that is public transport and interact with commuters for the longest duration during trips. Additionally, conductors exercise the power to demand for fare, and may, at will, allow a commuter to travel without paying for the trip since no receipts are issued to passengers. This power can be abused and used to intimidate some women commuters.

#### 4.4.4 Locations of harassment incidences while using public transport

Analysis shows that majority (69.2%) of the most recent harassment incidences experienced by women commuters using public transport occurred on/in the vehicles. The second most common place where women commuters encountered harassment is at the points at which they board or disembark from public transport vehicles, the termini (24.2%) while 4.7% of incidences occur in other locations after the vehicle has stopped (Figure 17). There seems to be a close correlation between these findings and those on the persons

responsible for the recent harassment incidences. As discussed in section 4.3.3, conductors and the stage marshals were responsible for 84.3% and 9.9% of the incidences respectively while on/in-vehicle and termini-related incidences were the highest and second-highest respectively. As indicated earlier, these two categories of public transport workers wield a lot of power and control over the public transport space, which can be abused and misused to intimidate some women commuters.

Some respondents (4.7%) indicated that they recently experienced harassment at other locations after the vehicle had stopped. This presumably means that they were harassed after having disembarked from the public means of transport. It should be remembered that a large portion of Nairobi residents live in the suburbs where bus stops or termini are located quite a distance from their houses. In essence, commuters must walk or take other forms motorized of transport between their residences and the locations at which they are can catch public transport. With respect to the location of harassment incidences, these findings are at variance with those of Aloul, Naffa, and Mansour (2018) who found that for majority of women commuters in Jordan, harassment

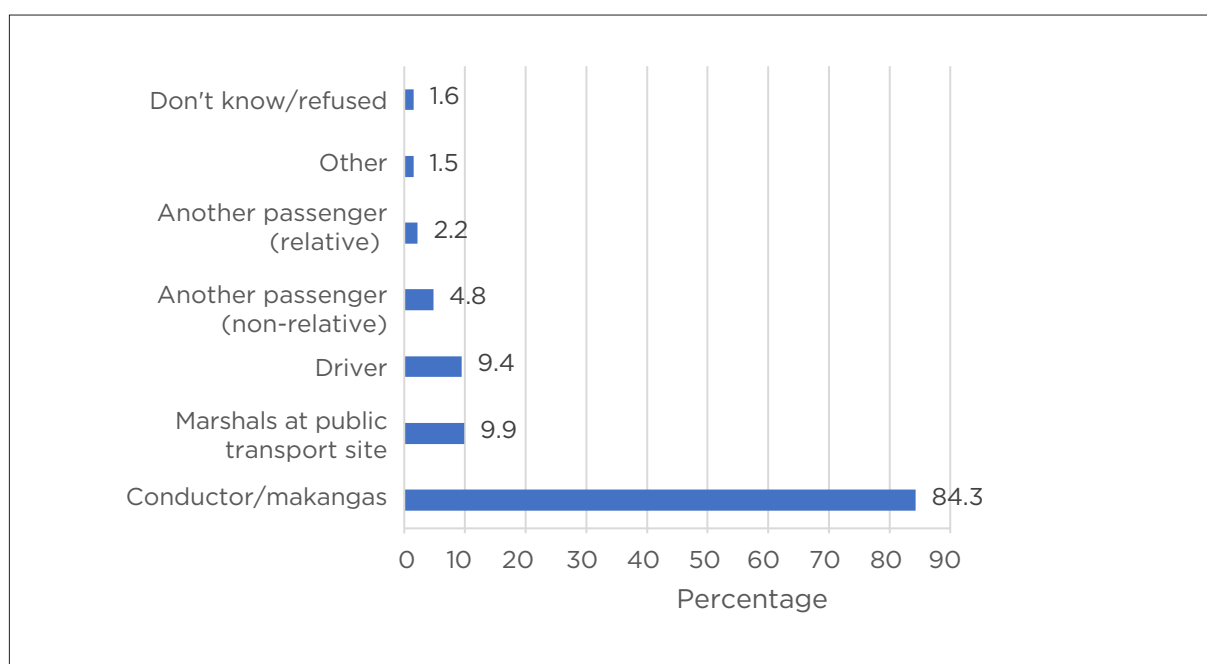
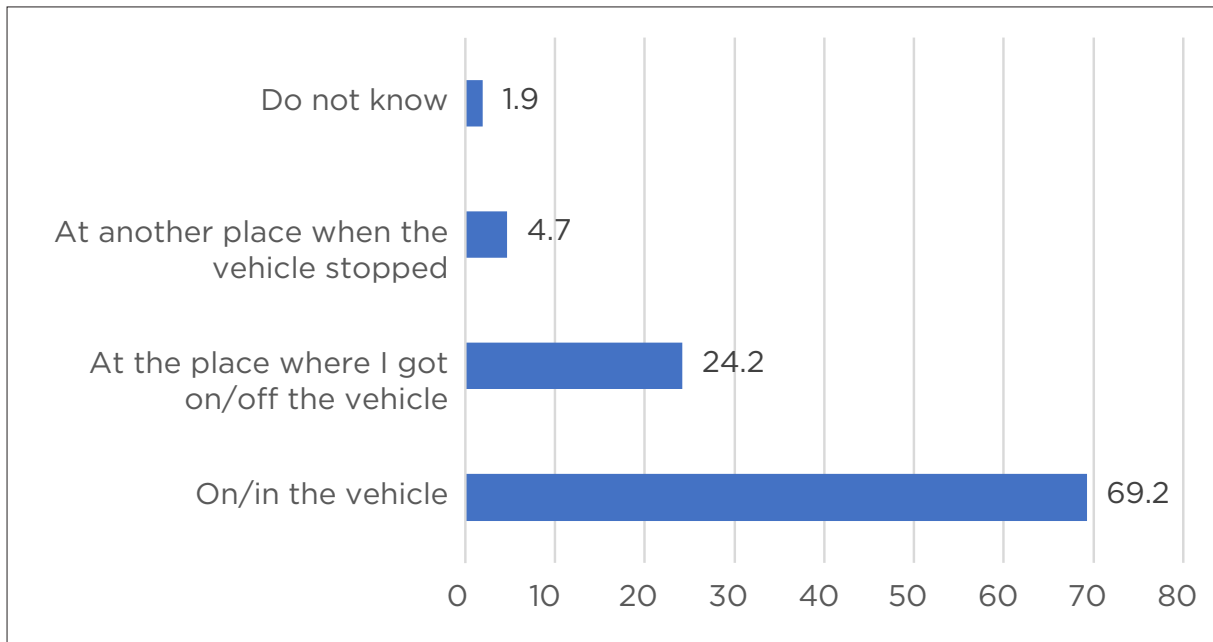


Figure 16: Persons responsible for recent harassment experiences (percent) of women using public transport in Nairobi





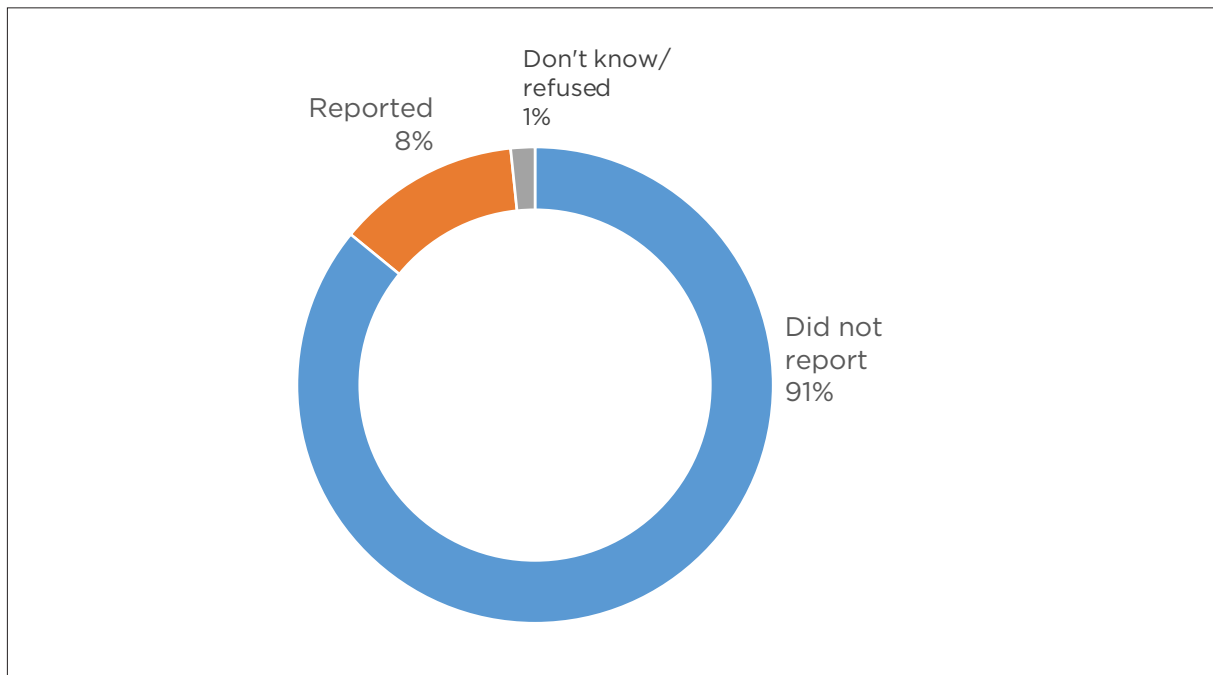


**Figure 17: Prominent locations where women commuters using public transport get harassed**

incidences were more prominent (24.4%) on the streets as they walked to public transportation, probably the termini. Apparently, a near-similar percentage of women in Jordan (18.8%) and Nairobi (21%) experience harassment at the termini while awaiting means of public transport.

The policy implication of these findings is that surveillance frameworks and systems need to be strengthened. This may give women a stronger voice and courage to speak out at the time of harassment. For

example, although it is not mandated by law, some *matatu* owners have fitted their vehicles with CCTV cameras to help monitor what goes on in their *matatus* and have a record of this for review. While such systems may not eliminate on/in-vehicle harassment incidences, they may act to deter and reduce them. In addition, after conforming to the necessary judicial provisions, the surveillance systems may provide supportive evidence to facilitate pressing the relevant charges in courts of law against those responsible for the harassment incidences. This, of



**Figure 18: Reporting rate of harassment incidences while using public transport**







further notes that it is very common for sexual assault survivors — most frequently, women — to decline to report the offence to the police. He reported that an incredibly low number, 23%, of survivors report such crimes to the police.

Incidences of harassment, and especially sexual-related ones, are serious offenses. So why aren't women commuters comfortable with reporting these? Literature reveals that victims do not report such harassment for several reasons ranging from fear of retaliation — not just from the perpetrators, but from society at large, fear of re-victimization, distortion of allegations, and generally not being believed. In a report by the U.S. Department of Justice, 13% of victims said that they did not report the incidents because they believed that the police would not do anything to help. Tragically, 8% said that they did not think rape or sexual assault was important enough to report (Kimble, 2018). Thus, there is need to address societal and structural barriers that prevent reporting of cases.

**Table 13: Type of actions taken following harassment encounter, Nairobi**

Action	Frequency (weighted)	Percent
Person apprehended	25	29.2
Refund was made	38	44.5
A police case was opened	2	2.3
Referred for medical treatment	1	1.1
Other [specify]	17	19.4
Don't know	3	3.4
Number of weighted respondents: 85		

With regard to the question of whether victims took any action following a harassment incident, most (96.5%) did not respond to this question indicating that either they did not understand the question or they did not want to relive the experiences they may have gone through. However, about 45% of those responding indicated that the action they took was to ensure that a refund was made (Table 13). As discussed earlier, most (87.2%) of the disputes between

women commuters and workers in the urban public transport sector relate to fare payment and arise from actions such as overcharging or failure to give change to the passenger(s). About 29% of those responding indicated that their actions led to the person(s) responsible for the harassment encounter being apprehended. Although apprehending the aggressors is a positive development, it is not good enough. It is important to follow up so that if such persons are found to have violated the rights of women passengers, appropriate punishment is handed to them. Of serious concern is the fact that only two (2) victims (2.3%) reported that they had police cases opened with regard to their harassment experience. This question would need to be addressed together with that of dramatically low reporting rates.

**Table 14: Persons / institutions from which victims sought help, Nairobi**

Person/institution	Frequency (weighted)	Percent
Sacco owners	23	10.2
Family	55	24.1
Community leaders	1	0.4
Friends	86	37.9
Helpline	4	1.7
Police	8	3.5
Health facility	2	0.9
Other	61	26.8
Don't know/refused	4	1.7
Number of respondents for each: 277		

The nature and scale of actions taken by victims may raise a number of questions. For example, do women victims know exactly what they need to do when they encounter harassment incidences? In case they need help, do they know the kind of help they can get and from where? In the current study, majority (76.2%) indicated that they never sought any help. Only 9.5% sought some form of help. Analysis by the persons or organizations or institutions from which help was sought shows that 37.9% (Table 14) of victims trusted and looked for help from their friends. Apparently, only 3.5% of victims sought help from the NPS which has



institutionalized gender-based desks. Are the desks functioning effectively? Is the public aware that such desks exist at the police stations? Or could it be that victims have inadequate confidence in the police to appropriately and effectively handle the cases?

**Table 15: Nature of support needed by women victims of harassment, Nairobi**

Support type	Frequency	Percent
Information about security/crime prevention / referral linkages	894	37.2
Someone to talk to	802	33.4
Psycho-social support	1027	42.8
Medical support	750	31.2
Financial support	644	26.8
Legal support	1095	45.6
Help with insurance/compensation claim	708	29.5
Help in reporting the incidents and dealing with the police	1113	46
Protection from further victimization/harassment	1127	46.9
Enforcement of gender-sensitive transport policy and traffic regulations	1228	51.2
Number of respondents for each support type: 2400		

As part of establishing the nature of relevant support that may be given to women commuters, respondents were asked to indicate the type of information/support they needed to prevent violence on public transport. The findings show that the five highest ranking areas of need for the women commuters in Nairobi are (Figure 15): enforcement of gender-sensitive transport policy and traffic regulations (51.2%); protection from further victimization or harassment (46.9%); reporting the incidents and dealing with the police (46%); legal support (45.6%); psychosocial support (42.8%), and security/crime prevention (37.3%). These areas of support considered together with the persons to whom the harassment report was made may help explain the low incident-reporting rate. For example, it is worrying that while the police are expected to enforce relevant laws and regulations such as the Sexual Offences Act, 2006 and the National Transport and Safety Authority Act, 2012 harassment victims do not just require support in reporting, but in dealing with the police as well. Yet, these laws provide for, among other things, commuters' rights and enforceable consequences when these rights are violated. Despite the challenges faced by women commuters when using public transport in Nairobi, 1,379 respondents (56%) indicated that they did not switch the means of transport used to accomplish important mobility needs. This, however, may not be out of choice since *matatus* are the most dominant means in the public transport sector in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi.



## 5 | CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overarching goal of this survey was to generate representative statistical evidence on women in public transport in Nairobi and Kampala. Specifically, the study focused on: identifying the general public transport needs of women; obstacles faced by women in accessing and using public transport; interactions between women's economic activities and public transport use; and barriers as well as incidents of violence – particularly harassment and physical violence and its interface with the use of public transport by women. The information used in this study was collected through the survey method. A total of 2,484 women from all the sub-counties in Nairobi participated in the survey. Sixty percent of the respondents were aged between 25 and 44 years. The findings have shown that all the respondents use motorized public transport to commute in Nairobi with half (50%) of them using it on a daily basis. Only 35% indicated that they were engaged by working for someone else, yet a huge majority, 2,271 (91%), did not own formally registered businesses. Most respondents (53%) were heads of their households.

With regard to motorized public transport, 44% of respondents used motorized public transport to commute to work while 42% used motorized public transport to commute to shopping or to the market. It should be noted, however, that the mobility patterns of women are complex unlike for most men whose commutes comprise a simple home to work and vice versa. Women make more trips and travel for a wide variety of purposes, which differ from those of men to a great extent. Women have less access to a car and are thus the main users of public transport systems. However, one of the key obstacles to women accessing and using public transport is the concern for their safety. Women feel particularly very unsafe (46%) when using public transport between 10pm and 7am. Thus, for women to fully enjoy public transport and exploit employment

and business opportunities, their safety concerns need to be adequately addressed.

Another challenge faced by women commuters while using public transport is harassment, including sexual harassment. Majority (67.7%) of harassment arises from disputes over payment of fares such as overcharging and refusal to give change. Most of the harassment takes place in the *matatus* and is perpetrated by the *matatu* crew, most often *makangas*/conductors. To ensure the safety of all commuters, but much more particularly that of women, it is important to work with all the relevant stakeholders to enhance the level of professionalism and discipline in the public transport sector. It is also important to empower women commuters to be able to prevent harassment and violence in public transport. For example, women need to be assured that they would not be victimized and harassed further if they were to report the incidents.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Although laws against SGBV are in place in Kenya, there is need to appropriately mainstream gender in the public transport sector with to protect all commuters, particularly women, against any form of harassment while using public transport.
- As part of addressing women's specific concerns with regard to the transport sector, the national and county governments should develop systematic gender inclusion procedures for transportation policies women commuters' safety and security while using public transport. Deliberate efforts should be made to include issues specific to women in transport policy and planning engagements.
- This study recommends a multi-stakeholder and integrated approach



in mainstreaming gender issues in transport, especially in dealing with harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse, in the public transport sector. Women commuters using public transport must be empowered to speak up and report incidents of harassment while using public transport. For this to happen, there is a need to develop a framework

or system that addresses their fears of re-victimization and harassment, in case they report, for action to be taken against the culprits. This could include fitting public service vehicles with CCTV cameras as a deterrent to harassment and to enable reviewing of incidents when they do occur and are reported.



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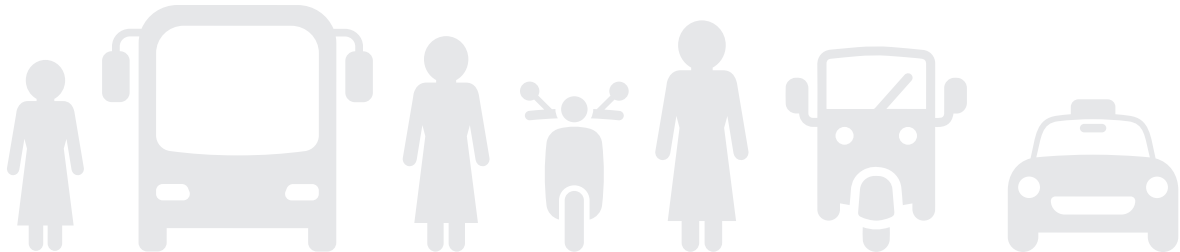
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East and Southern Africa Regional Office  
UN Gigiri Complex, UN Avenue;  
Block M, Ground Floor  
P.O. Box 30218- 00100 Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel: +254 20 762 4778

[africa.unwomen.org](http://africa.unwomen.org)

Email: [esaro.publications@unwomen.org](mailto:esaro.publications@unwomen.org)

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