

Research Study:

**“Enhancing Women’s Mobility in
the West Bank and Gaza: North
West Bank as a Case Study”**

Submitted to: The World Bank

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Executive Summary

The present study was undertaken for the World Bank in order to gain a gender differentiated understanding of the mobility situation in the Palestinian territory, with a focus on mobility constraints and access to transportation options for both women and men.

The study is based on fieldwork conducted in three governorates in North West Bank (Nablus, Jenin and Tulkarem) as a case study. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were utilized as well as a desk review of relevant local, Arab and international literature. Nine focus group discussions were held with women, men, and drivers from areas that were selected on the basis of certain political, economic and social characteristics. In addition, a quantitative survey was conducted by means of a **Two Stage Stratified Cluster Sample** that included 385 women and men aged 16 years and above, yielding a confidence interval of 95% and margin of error of $\pm 5\%$. In addition; the researcher analyzed a weekly transportation log covering 2505 trips.

The research was designed within the framework of gender studies and mobility options, based on the widespread recognition that women and men often have substantially different patterns of demand for transport services, means of transport used, and time of use, in developing countries.¹

Gender and transport issues have not been systematically studied in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, apart from an on-going World Bank-funded study in Yemen. Although such research has been conducted internationally, the impact on planning and policy-making in MENA generally remains limited. Action plans in the transport sector typically do not demonstrate a recognition of the differing patterns in women and men's needs and demand for transportation. The results of international studies clearly highlight the fact that the transport sector is generally oriented toward serving men's demands for transport as it relates to reaching their workplace. Consequently, planning typically focuses on one-way, single-destination routes, which often are not compatible with women's needs for multi transportation means to various locations at different times throughout the day.²

The present study finds that the characteristics of the transport system in the Palestinian territory are consistent with the general trends outlined above. Moreover, the study highlights the added value and importance of public transportation in the Palestinian context, due to the severe Israeli restrictions on Palestinian movement—such as the extensive network of checkpoints, concrete barriers, and earth mounds, in the West Bank, as well as the separation wall—which force the majority of the Palestinian population to use public transportation.³ 97% of participants in the present research reported using public transportation in varying degrees. They also spend a

¹ Riverson, Kunieda, and Roberts, Lewi. "An Overview of Women's Transport Issues in Developing Countries. The Challenges in Addressing Gender Dimensions of Transport in Developing Countries: Lessons from World Bank's Projects." World Bank, November 2005.

² Peters, Deike. "Gender Perspectives for Earth Summit 2002: Energy, Transport, Information for Decision-Making." Background Paper for the Expert Workshop, Berlin, Germany, 10 - 12 January 2001.

³ World Bank. "The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank". World Bank, 2008.

relatively high level of income (19%) on transportation. The main findings of the study are as follows:

Uses of Public Transportation

According to the weekly transportation log analysis, more women depend on public transportation 73% than do men 61%. It is almost certain that this situation will persist for the foreseeable future, as 77% of women respondents do not have a driving license, and 55% do not intend to have one. Men use private cars more than women, as well as alternative means of transport (tractor, motor cycle, bicycle, carts...etc).

In addition, men's and women's purposes for using transportation differ. The majority of men 52%, compared to only 22% of women, use transportation to reach the work place. A primary reason for that is women's weak participation in the labor force. On the other hand, women are more likely to use transport for social and health-related reasons. 36% of women, compared to 17% of men, use transportation for family-related and other social activities, and 8% of women, compared to 3% of men, use it to access health services.

The differences in the use of transportation based on gender roles are not reflected in transportation planning, which focuses principally on providing single-destination routes to reach work or education centers, without taking women's needs into account.

Gender-Specific Daily Practical Transport Needs

83% of respondents use a single means of transportation, but 1 in 5 women, compared to 1 in 10 men, use two or more means of transportation. 47% of respondents use transportation during the morning, compared to 39% around mid-day, and 15% during the evening. The most significant difference between men and women was noon time 43% of women compared to 37% of men need transportation during the middle of the day, a time at which transportation is scarce.

Women noted during focus group discussions that they are often forced to change their schedule to match with what is available, or use a taxi (especially in times of emergency), which puts an added financial burden on the women and their families.

Evaluation of Means of Transportation

Respondents found significant shortcomings with respect to public transportation in terms of being child-friendly, safe, and comfortable. 48% of respondents mentioned that means of transportation are not child-friendly with an insignificant difference between women and men. A slight majority 60% felt that transportation means are safe, and 58% believed that they are new, again with little difference between the sexes. Only 32% of women and 41% of men believed that transportation means are comfortable for women.

Evaluation of Public Transportation Terminals

Public transportation terminals face many challenges, which negatively affect passengers as well as the quality of service offered. The challenges can be summarized as follows:

Most terminals lack sanitary facilities 93%, or information and complaints centers 91%. A large majority are far from population centers 81%, lack waiting chairs 81% or umbrellas 79%, and are not clean 66 %.

Because men and women travel accompanied by children, family members, elderly, disabled, etc. (typically 1 to 3 dependents for women and 4 to 6 dependents for men), and because the journey's duration is unpredictable due to the checkpoints and other barriers, there is a greater need for basic services at public transportation terminals.

Mobility Challenges Faced by Women and Men

- **Organizational and Regulatory Aspects:** A slight majority of respondents believed that drivers do not comply with the official fare (59%). 64% of women held this view, compared to 54% of men. The assessment showed that the average cost of transportation was higher for women (NIS 12) than for men (NIS 10). Women respondents highlighted the importance of regulation and monitoring, and complained about unregistered public transport providers, drivers who do not comply with the official fare, and lack of information about complaint processes.
- **Social and Cultural Constraints:** Women's mobility via public transport is challenged by cultural barriers. 27% of respondents reject the idea of women using public transport. For those women who use it, it is generally difficult unless the driver is known by the community. This limits mobility options available for women, and has implications for regulatory aspects in general. The percentage of women who use private cars is very small (8%), compared to 19% of men.
- **Infrastructure:** The results showed that road infrastructure faces challenges including road bumps (mentioned by 84% of respondents), unpaved areas 71%, slides and water-filled holes 70%, and road works 50%.

The main recommendations of the study are as follows:

The primary and overarching recommendation is that all physical barriers to movement within the Palestinian territory must be removed. The mobility of people is fundamental to their ability to be part of the society. In West Bank and Gaza, an area under military occupation since 1967, mobility is dramatically reduced for both men and women due to political restrictions including checkpoints and other barriers, a separation wall, and economic closure. Women's mobility in West Bank and Gaza is further constrained by social factors that reduce their access to the outside world. Specific recommendations to the principal stakeholders are listed below.

➤ **Recommendations to Planners:**

- Ensure that women's needs based on their multiple roles are taken into account and incorporated into national development plans.

➤ **Recommendations to Operators:**

- Integrate fares through coordination between lines to serve vulnerable groups who are forced to use more than one means of transport, such as women and refugees.
- Make the routes and schedules of public transport vehicles clear and predictable, to reduce waiting time.
- Commit to safety regulations and ensure drivers' commitment.
- Make the vehicles more comfortable and adopt a broader strategy to improve transport services, making passengers the center of the service.

➤ **Recommendations to General Directorate for Transport at the Ministry of Transport (implementing current regulations):**

- Improve the sector's monitoring through effective coordination between stakeholders including the police and the municipalities. Better law compliance was noted in areas having active presence of the police.
- Regulate public transport lines in coordination with operators to provide service at different times, thus increasing mobility for the public at large, and for women in particular.
- Monitor the sector's compliance with official fare, safety standards, registration and operations, and information provision about drivers.
- Improve vehicle's quality control (cleanliness, safety of the vehicle's windows, doors, air conditioning...etc)
- Improve the effectiveness of complaint mechanisms and raise public awareness about the importance of this process. In addition, take steps to create a model to improve quality of service.

➤ **Recommendations to General Directorate for Transport at the Ministry of Transport (initiating new regulations):**

On Vehicles' Specifications:

- Monitor the size of the seats, especially in the older cars; seats should be wide and comfortable.
- Specify seats with priority access for children and people with special needs
- Delimit a seating area with priority access for women, in case the vehicle is not fully equipped for comfortable seating.

➤ **Recommendations to Municipalities:**

- Re-consider the locations and specifications of terminals to ensure better service for a wider part of the population, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport.
- Ensure proper management of terminals by forming full-time administrative bodies that supervise all lines, identify and address problems, and receive complaints and follow them up.
- Enhance public safety and comfort by providing basic services such as shelters to protect customers from sun and rain, seats in the public transport terminals and compounds, clean sanitary facilities, and wide pavements that can be used by carts, or wheelchairs.

CHAPTER 1: Conceptual Framework

1-1 Gender and Transport Sector

The global literature on gender and transport explains inequalities between women and men in accessing transportation by way of three primary interlinked variables. Those are; (1) Gender-neutral norms of planning and policy making for transport sector, which fail to distinguish between the needs of women and men. (2) A patriarchal social system and its impact on power relations and division of labor between women and men, and manifestations on their different roles and needs, and (3) Poverty and its effects on women's access to and control of resources, which limits women's options, both in terms of owning means of transportation or paying for public means of transportation.

1-1-1 Planning for Transport Sector and Gender (Analytical View):

Transport planning has tended to focus primarily on facilitating access to employment, thereby addressing the travel needs of regular commuters while paying limited attention to non-work travel, which may encompass social interactions, fulfilling various family needs, as well as access to services.⁴

According to Karen Levy, planners in the transport sector based their projects on the assumption that men are the head of households, with a clear division of labor whereby men are responsible for work outside the home, and women's role is to take care of the family inside the home. Another assumption is that the family is in agreement on its priorities; thus there is equality in access to and control over resources inside the family.⁵ According to Levy, the challenges to these assumptions are the following:

- Generally speaking, the focus in planning for transport sector was and still is on efficiency of the transport system, service provision and public safety, away from its connection to economic, social, cultural and political context.
- Transport infrastructure is usually based on making sure that the husband gets to his work place using private vehicle, and ultimately generalizing this priority to all families. The effect is most profound on low-income families and female-headed households, as they utilize low-cost means of transportation to reach work place and other places.
- For women, the assumption is that their primary role is a reproductive one; thus their need for and use of transportation is less. It is also thought that women's other roles are simply a continuation of their primary role; consequently women's demands become unforeseen and are not taken into account in the planning process.
- Women's multiple roles mean the need to reach different places to fulfill their needs. This is usually unforeseen by planners.

⁴ Vantor, C. Mashiri, M. Denise, B. "Engendering Mobility: Towards Improved Gender Analysis in the Transportation Sector." University of Pretoria Press, 2006.

⁵ Levy, Caren. "Transport" in Ostergaard, L (ed), Gender and Development: A Practical Guide, Routledge, 1992.

- Lack of understanding of women's multiple roles by planners means the design of an infrastructure that focuses on men's needs for regular transportation mainly to go to work based on their regular work. It also means that the transportation times are arranged according to the beginning and end of the working day. Due to varied roles of women, and the fact that there is no specific or known time for the need to use of transportation, women need transport services at different times than those emphasized by planners.
- Despite the fact that planners study transport needs of the target group, the general standards they utilize are connected primarily to jobs and access to them, vehicle ownership, and income. These are all standards disproportionately relevant to men, and do not apply to many women whose work is mostly informal, and who neither control access to resources nor use a private vehicle. The end result is to pay more attention to men's needs than to women's needs.
- For planners, the head of the household is the source of information. This in itself is a trap as the assumption is that the family is a homogenous unit with agreement on its priorities. The family is not a homogenous structure and there are variations between its members according to age, sex, and different potentials in access to resources. Participation in decision-making is based on power and authority of its members. Men also do not know as much as women do about the details of family's daily needs.

1-1-2 Patriarchal System⁶

This system represents a social and ideological structure that enables men's domination in accessing resources and mobility, and as allows them to derive most benefits from family-owned resources. Specifically in the transport sector, family transportation means typically allow the man to reach the work place, to support the family, and otherwise fulfill their needs. It does not satisfy women's needs in terms of mobility; thus the alternative for women is to use public transportation with all its challenges of cost, timing, and destination.

1-1-3 Poverty⁷

Poverty is linked primarily to the family's economic structure, and usually women have lesser capacity to access and control resources. This is most apparent in poor families, who live primarily at the outskirts of towns, or in slums usually far from public transportation lines. It is reflected in women's inability to reach means of transportation and services, and is linked to women's economic role, as women's participation in the formal labor market is less than men, especially among poor households. As a result, women are forced to live near the work place or vice-versa, to avoid paying for expensive transport, or walking long distances.

⁶ Overton, Karen. "Using the Bicycle for Women's Empowerment in Africa." *Sustainable Transport*, No. 6, Summer 1996, pp. 6-10. New York: The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP). And see: Peters, op. cit. 2. .

⁷ See: Chant, Sylvia. "Gender, Cities, and the Millennium Development Goals in the Global South," *Gender Institute*. Issue 21, November 2007. UK.

URL: <http://w.lse.ac.uk/collections/genderInstitute/pdf/CHANT%20GIWP.pdf>

And see: Peters, op. cit. 2.

The following are important conclusions from previous studies, which constitute the basis for the current study:⁸

1. Mobility and travel patterns differ significantly between women and men, and transport networks are often not equally appropriate for both, especially in light of women's multiple roles.
2. The above necessitates planning modifications in acknowledgement of women's different activities.
3. Current studies about women's mobility issues and transport sector are not adequate, and further research in the below areas are needed:
 - a. The impact of urban development, transport and mobility on all segments of the society, with a special focus on efficiency and equity.
 - b. Strategies for increasing women's participation in labor force in light of the increase in female-headed households. Also, studying place of residency as it relates to travel behavior, and transportation role vis-à-vis needs and priorities of both women and men.
4. Passengers' personal safety and security is a central and crucial issue which tends to be overseen; yet it merits more attention from transport planners.

1-2 Palestinian Context and Transport Sector

1-2-1 Access Restrictions in the West Bank

Most of the West Bank is inaccessible to Palestinians, due to Israeli restrictions on movement of people and access to natural resources. The 1995 Oslo interim agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel divided the Palestinian territory into three Areas—A, B, and C—with different security and administrative arrangements and authorities. The land area controlled by the Palestinians (Area A, corresponding to all major population centers, and Area B, encompassing most rural centers) is fragmented into a multitude of enclaves, with a dense regime of movement restrictions between them. Those enclaves are surrounded by Area C, which includes the entire remaining area and is the only contiguous area of the West Bank. Area C is under full control of the Israeli military for both security and civilian affairs related to territory, including land administration and planning. It is sparsely populated and underutilized (except by Israeli settlements and reserves), and holds the majority of the land (approximately 59%).⁹ Palestinians face extremely challenging conditions in their daily commuting between the Palestinian areas as a result of Israeli measures (closures, checkpoints, separation wall).

⁸ See: Vantor, op. cit. 4.

And see:

Gomez, Lara. Gender Analysis of Two Components of the World Bank Transport Projects in Lima, Peru: Bikepaths and Busways. (Draft August 2000) Washington DC: The World Bank. URL: www.worldbank.org/gender/transport

Levy, Caren. "Transport" in Ostergaard, L (ed), Gender and Development: A Practical Guide, Routledge, 1992.

World Bank. Sustainable Transport: Priorities for Policy Reform. Washington, D.C. World Bank, 1996.

⁹ World Bank. "The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank". World Bank, 2008.

At the end of June 2008, 171 communities were affected by the establishment of the separation wall. The communities were either isolated behind the wall, or divided by the wall passing through them. The population of those areas is 700,000. In addition, bypass roads (off limits to Palestinians) were established on the land of 96 communities, and Israeli settlements constructed on the land of 92 communities. All of the above has limited mobility and movement options for Palestinians in those communities. (*Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008*).

1-2-2 General Context for Transport Sector Planning in the Palestinian Territory

Despite geographic restrictions in the Palestinian territory, initiatives by the Palestinian Authority are in place to develop the general infrastructure in areas under its jurisdiction, and to organize the transport sector specifically. The Palestinian Ministry of Transport cooperates with a number of international partners; most significantly, the World Bank currently provides technical assistance to develop and regulate the transport sector. In 2007; the Ministry developed a transport sector strategy with the primary objective of regulating the sector, improving service provision, and reducing the cost paid by the beneficiaries.

The main challenges addressed by the transport sector strategy were those related to the fleet conditions, network and route optimization, and the impacts of access restrictions, closures and the separation between the West Bank and Gaza. The strategy also addressed the need to reform and develop the transport sector within a general context of efficiency and quality service provision, supported by the legal framework. Reform of the sector is crucial, but must be rooted in the social and economic context in order to be efficiently implemented.

In order to mainstream gender in transport sector development, a shift has to happen in the way development issues are addressed within local Palestinian organizations such as Ministry of Transport, Municipalities, Police, Operators and Drivers' Syndicate. They should draft a comprehensive vision for the transport sector based on justice and equitable service provision. In addition, the needs of all segments of society (including women, children, the elderly, persons with special needs, and other vulnerable groups) must be taken into consideration. Transport planning should recognize the substantially different patterns of demand for transport services among different segments of society, and interventions should be sensitive to those differences.

Based on the above context for planning, this study presents the following main points for consideration:

- It is extremely challenging for the Palestinian organizations to undertake comprehensive planning for transport infrastructure and movement in light of the complex geographic situation. As shown previously, Palestinian control within the Palestinian territory is very limited.
- Mobility for people and goods is severely curtailed, due to the presence of more than 500 checkpoint and physical barriers by the end of 2008, both fixed and temporary.¹⁰

¹⁰ UN OCHA. URL: www.ochaopt.org.

- The separation wall impacts several areas in the West Bank; almost half of them are located in the north (area of the current research).
- Political restrictions should be taken into account in any discussion of mobility and developing the transport sector.
- The Palestinian-Israeli conflict still threatens infrastructure development efforts due to the destruction of such infrastructure; this requires resources to be directed to rehabilitation rather than development.
- Most communities lack access to basic services. For example, 9% of Palestinians need more than an hour to reach health services at times of emergency, and 7% of patients with chronic diseases need more than an hour to reach health services. This has obvious links to transport sector infrastructure and the availability of suitable vehicles for ensuring access to health and social services.¹¹
- The Palestinian territory includes small areas separated by hundreds of Israeli checkpoints and barriers, in addition to the separation wall. The West Bank and Gaza are completely isolated from one another. Given this reality, it is difficult to plan for alternative means of transportation such as rail travel, with the possibility of using other simpler means. A separate feasibility study is needed which also addresses the issues of passage of those creative means of transport at the Israeli checkpoints.

1-2-3 Introduction to Transportation in the Palestinian Territory

According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, the length of paved road area in the West Bank and Gaza¹² was 5,147 square kilometers, out of which around 2,765 square kilometers are bypass roads, to which Palestinians do not have access. The number of vehicles reached 116,646 in the West Bank in 2007, 18,713 fewer than in 2005. These cars were distributed as follows:¹³

- 67.5% private cars
- 19.5% commercial vehicles
- 9.2 % taxis
- 3.7 % other

Surveys of the informal transportation sector in the Palestinian Territory have shown that the total number of operating vehicles is 10,087, of which 9,568 are for passenger transport, and 519 vehicles for freight transport by road. 75.7% of those are public vehicles, 19.4% private, and 4.9% are for freight transport. 10,919 people are engaged in this sector.¹⁴

There are several organizations responsible for the administration and operations of the transport sector.¹⁵ Their roles and responsibilities are summarized below; yet more information is needed regarding the nature of coordination among the various bodies.

¹¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). "Access to Health Services Survey. 2003.

¹² West Bank and Gaza excluding Jerusalem (lack of data).

¹³ PCBS. "Annual Transportation Survey." 2006.

¹⁴ PCBS. "Press Release on the Main Results of the Thirteenth Round of the Transport Survey - The Informal Sector in the Palestinian Territory," 2009.

¹⁵ Background paper prepared by engineer Ranya Dowleh – Nablus Municipality for this research.

1. Ministry of Transport: responsible for administration of this sector including determining number of lines for public transport, number of vehicles per line, and registration for vehicles.
2. Municipalities: responsible for the design and supervision of stops and areas for those lines, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport. Municipalities are also in charge of creating, paving and road rehabilitation.
3. Traffic Police: responsible for monitoring vehicles' movement internally and on outside roads, ensuring efficient transport, and guaranteeing all necessary documents and papers relating to vehicles' registration and insurance are in place.
4. Traffic Committees: The Ministry of Transport has lately re-activated the role of those committees in the different governorates. Committees include representatives from the Ministry of Transport, Municipalities, Transporters' Syndicates, Traffic Police and Governorates. They coordinate with the Ministry of Transport with regard to any issue relating to the public transport sector.

1-2-4 Transport and Gender Indicators in the Palestinian Context

This section focuses on women in the labour market and education system, which are the two principal spheres of women's activity that require mobility.

Palestinian women have very low levels of formal labor force participation. PCBS labor force surveys show that women's participation was only 15.4% in the first quarter of 2009 (compared to 66.9 % for men).¹⁶

The rate of women participation was 16.5% in the West Bank and 13.5% in Gaza. The highest rate of participation was in rural areas 17.1%, followed by women in urban areas 15.4 %, and in refugee camps 12.8 %.

The rate of unemployment among women is 23.8%, with the highest percentage among those who had finished 13 years and more of schooling, at 31%.¹⁷ Homemaking is the main reason for women staying outside of the labour force; 65.5% of women reported this to be the case, compared to only 0.5% of men. The above percentages reflect rather static division of labour between women and men, which is also reflected by their demand for transport services.

Women's formal labour force participation is largely segregated by sector into services (62.4%), agriculture (19.3%), followed by manufacturing (9.2 %), then commerce, hotels and restaurants (7.9%). 19.2% of women work without compensation, compared to only 5.4% of men.¹⁸ No detailed data are available about the locations of places where women work. One might expect that they are typically far from their homes; requiring more than one means of transportation.

The poverty rate reached 61.2% among female-headed households in comparison to 56.9% of male-headed households, in 2007. Poverty rates among female-headed households that include 7 children and more reached 79.7%.¹⁹

¹⁶ PCBS, op. cit. 15.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ PCBS. "A Press Release Issued by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics on the Occasion of the International Women's Day," March 2008.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Female education is an essential social right and a leading indicator of equality between women and men. In the Palestinian territory, female education levels are comparable to those of men in terms of enrolment, although there are some differences in terms of achievement. During 2008, 23.7% of females and 21.8% of males ages 15 years and older were enrolled in the education sector, and 15.1% of females have finished sixth grade compared to 17.4 % of males.

Females are less likely to hold Bachelors degrees, however, (7.6% of females versus 14.9% of males) and three times more likely to be illiterate (9.1% of Palestinian females 15 years and older, versus 2.9% of males).

Despite some overlap between women and men in their mobility needs, the above figures demonstrate clear differences between the sexes in labor force and education participation, which have a strong bearing on demand for transport services.

CHAPTER TWO: Research Methodology

2-1 Area Selection in the Three Northern Governorates (Tulkarem, Nablus and Jenin):

The three towns were selected as the areas for this research for several reasons including geographic, social, economic, and political variation offered by these towns at different levels:

- Political level: extensive presence of military checkpoints, enclaves, settlements and bypass roads.
- Economic level: the three towns are considered economically active with the availability of industries. Tulkarem and Jenin are close to Palestinian population centers within Israel and share some economic activities. The three towns, especially Nablus, are considered important commercial centres for the villages and nearby communities.
- Social level: the three towns enjoy varying social characteristics, yet they are clearly distinct from the middle and south West Bank. Also, the presence of many organizations, government institutions, universities and colleges create a certain societal movement in those towns.
- Agricultural level: this area is considered agriculturally active; thus providing some indicators about mobility issues for agricultural communities.
- Area: the three towns are representative of big Palestinian towns, consequently reflecting integration between towns, surrounding areas and villages.

The population of the three northern governorates (Jenin, Tulkarem and Nablus) is 735,437. Nablus is the largest one of the three. Table 1 provides some basic information about the three towns (rounded for easy reading).²⁰

Table (1): Basic Information About the Three Governorates (Jenin, Tulkarem and Nablus)

Governorate	Nablus	Tulkarem	Jenin
<i>Total Population</i>	320,830	158,000	256,000
<i>Male</i>	162,000	98,000	130,000
<i>Female</i>	158,000	78,000	126,000
<i>Urban</i>	177,000	106,000	147,000
<i>Rural</i>	113,000	34,000	99,000
<i>Refugee Camp</i>	31,000	17,000	10,000
<i>Average Family Size</i>	5.4	5.3	5.4

The three towns are the hubs of the public transport system within their respective governorates, as well as for transport to and from Palestinian town centres in other governorates. Each Municipality manages a (compound) or more for the purpose of regulating public transport.²¹ Details concerning transport facilities and fleets are as follows:

²⁰ PCBS. Census 2007.

²¹ Dowleh, Rania, op. cit. 16.

- Nablus Governorate: There are two area (compounds) managed by Nablus Municipality. They cover the needs of more than 50 communities through 510 vehicles. Due to continuous closures, many lines had to be moved to surrounding areas. Around 630 taxis serve Nablus city and an additional 89 buses distributed over 15 companies serving 29 lines in and outside Nablus Governorate.
- Tulkarem Governorate: there is one (compound) managed by the Municipality for Tulkarem city and environs. There are two bus companies with 46 small and big buses providing services to 16 lines inside and outside Tulkarem Governorate. In the area franchise there are taxis serving 34 lines within Tulkarem Governorate as well as outside the Governorate.
1.
- Jenin Governorate: There are three (compounds) managed by a private guarantor. Taxis serve 25 lines inside and outside the Governorate. There are 19 bus companies serving 34 lines with 128 small and big buses.

2-2 Sample Selection

1. *Population*: includes females and males 16 years of age and above who normally reside in the three governorates.
2. *Research Sample*: two-stage stratified sample, which included (385) women and men ages 16 years and above. The confidence interval was 95%, and the margin of error \pm 5%.

In the first stage, areas selection was done in a way to ensure geographic distribution and representation of the three governorates according to population size and urban, rural, and camp distribution.

In the second stage, the selection of individuals was done ensuring equal representation among women and men.

Sample distribution was as follows:

Table (2): Research Sample Distribution

No.	Community	Governorate	Type	Number of Households	Sample Size
1	Zbouba	Jenin	Rural	354	14
2	Yabad	Jenin	Urban	2484	11
3	Toura Gharbieh	Jenin	Rural	195	14
4	Arraneh	Jenin	Rural	356	14
5	Deir Abu Daif	Jenin	Rural	962	15
6	Kufr Ra'i	Jenin	Rural	1357	16
7	Arrabeh	Jenin	Urban	1779	11
8	Jenin Camp	Jenin	Camp	2015	6
9	Qabatya	Jenin	Urban	3476	13
10	Jenin	Jenin	Urban	7296	18
	Jenin Subtotal				132
11	Jaroushieh	Tulkarem	Rural	187	15
12	Atteel	Tulkarem	Urban	1703	14
13	Tulkarem	Tulkarem	Urban	9718	18
14	Beit Leed	Tulkarem	Rural	930	16
15	Bala'a	Tulkarem	Urban	1202	12
16	Nour Shams Camp	Tulkarem	Camp	1211	9

No.	Community	Governorate	Type	Number of Households	Sample Size
	Tulkarem Subtotal				84
17	Nisf Jubeil	Nablus	Rural	84	10
18	Nassarieh	Nablus	Rural	263	11
19	Qaryout	Nablus	Rural	383	12
20	Boureen	Nablus	Rural	430	12
21	Beit Dajan	Nablus	Rural	644	9
22	Salem	Nablus	Rural	860	11
23	Ein Beit El Ma'a Camp	Nablus	Camp	767	8
24	Huwarrah	Nablus	Urban	987	25
25	Til	Nablus	Rural	776	12
26	Balata Camp	Nablus	Camp	2800	8
27	Nablus	Nablus	Urban	26085	51
	Nablus Subtotal				169
					385

2-3 Research Implementation Phases

The research comprised three main components, outlined below.

- Preparatory Phase:** Literature review of available relevant studies, and reports on the Palestinian context, as well as review of available global literature about transport and gender.
- Focus Group Discussions:** 9 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held in the three Governorates attended by 96 participants (females and males). One FGD was held with each of the following groups: men, drivers, and university students. In addition, six FGDs were held with women. The FGDs aimed at understanding means of transportation available in the three governorates, gender-differentiated transport needs and use of available transport means, and challenges and restrictions facing both women and men using public transportation. In addition, participants discussed measures and standards relating to gender-differentiated transport demands. The following table provides detailed information on the FGDs, locations and participants.

Table (3): Distribution of Focus Group Discussion Participants

Target Group	Location	Location Characteristics	Number of Participants
Women	Nablus City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large urban centre (city) - Governorate Centre including all services and government institutions. - Educational center: Al Najah University and other colleges. - Large number of employees who commute daily to other Governorates. - Presence of checkpoints: Huwwarah and Beit Eiba 	10
Men	Jenin City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large urban centre (city) 	10

Target Group	Location	Location Characteristics	Number of Participants
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governorate Centre - Large number of citizens who commute daily to other Governorates for work and education. - Presence of health, education and government services. - Heavy traffic to and through Jenin to reach schools and the American University. 	
Women	Tulkarem City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large urban centre (city). - Governorate Centre. - Large number of citizens who commute daily to other Governorates for work and education. - Presence of all basic services. - Transport available for all purposes and destinations. 	10
Female and male students	Nablus City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As mentioned previously 	14
Women	Yitma Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small village between Ramallah and Nablus. - Facing checkpoints of the three cities. - Surrounded by bypass roads (connecting Israeli settlements). - Limited availability of transportation 	10
Women	Boureen Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small village in Nablus Governorate. - Suffering from the presence of checkpoints. - Surrounded by settlements and bypass roads (connecting Israeli settlements). - Limited availability of transportation 	13
Women	Thaher Al Maleh Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remote village in Jenin Governorate surrounded by separation barrier. - Extreme difficulties in getting in and out of the village. - People outside the village need permits from the Israeli authorities to get into the village. 	10
Women	Nassarieh Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural village in the Jordan Valley area. - Difficulties in availability of transportation. - Jordan Valley checkpoints hinder movement 	9
Men drivers	Tulkarem City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As mentioned previously. 	10

3. Quantitative Survey: The field work utilized the following steps:

- Field researchers arrive to the site according to the sample.
- Field researchers select a starting point.
- Random selection of houses by counting the 10th house.
- Filling-out the questionnaire.

CHAPTER THREE: Study Findings (Analysis from a Gender Perspective)

3-1 Means of Transportation, Time of Use and Aims of Travel

3-1-1 Available Means of Transportation:

Nearly all respondents (97%) use public transportation, while about half (49%) use private cars. Other means of transport in lesser degrees include tractors (6%), bicycle (4%), animals (4%), motorcycles (2%), and animal-driven carts (2%). 7% of respondents mentioned that they use other means of transportation.

Women participants in Boureen Village highlighted the primary constraints on transport in their village:

- Transportation is only consistently available early in the morning, from 7-9 am, primarily serving university students. After that transportation becomes much more scarce.
 - Delays at the checkpoint, which cause drivers to spend the day awaiting the passengers who had left with them in the morning. Due to the delays, the driver does not return to the village after 9 am.
 - Abundance of non-registered and non-insured cars.
 - Bad economic conditions which neither allow for buying private cars, nor the use of taxis.
 - Lack of taxis in the village due to limited mobility, especially in the afternoons.
 - General attitude and behavior in the village, whereby everyone utilize morning time for mobility; thus limiting movement at other times.
- Respondents reported the following as concerns the availability of different means of transportation in the communities under study 97% said public transportation is available in their communities; 75% said the same for bicycles; 72% for tractors; 66.5% for private cars; 57% for animals, 55% for motorcycles, 49% for animal-driven carts, and 8% others.

It was apparent that there was strong cultural determinants governing the use of alternative means of transportation, and the degree to which they are used. One of the men in a FGD in Jenin says: *"It is true that bicycles are environmentally friendly, but is not appropriate to our culture and habits especially for women. In addition, it is not appropriate for the person's social status. Imagine a government or private sector employee wearing his suit and riding on a bike going to work. We are not living in China or Norway. Our environment, habits, and community do not coincide with this suggestion. Even if this suggestion was implemented - for the sake of argument - who can ride a bicycle from Jenin to Nablus or even to the suburbs. Roads are not safe due to conditions we live through."*

Frame (1): Available Public Transport and Checkpoints Restrictions:

In some of the small Palestinian villages, mobility depends on simple means. In **Nassarieh village** for example, women mentioned that they generally walk to go to schools or for visits inside the village. Some use animals, tractors and if they want to leave the village, they use public shared taxis.

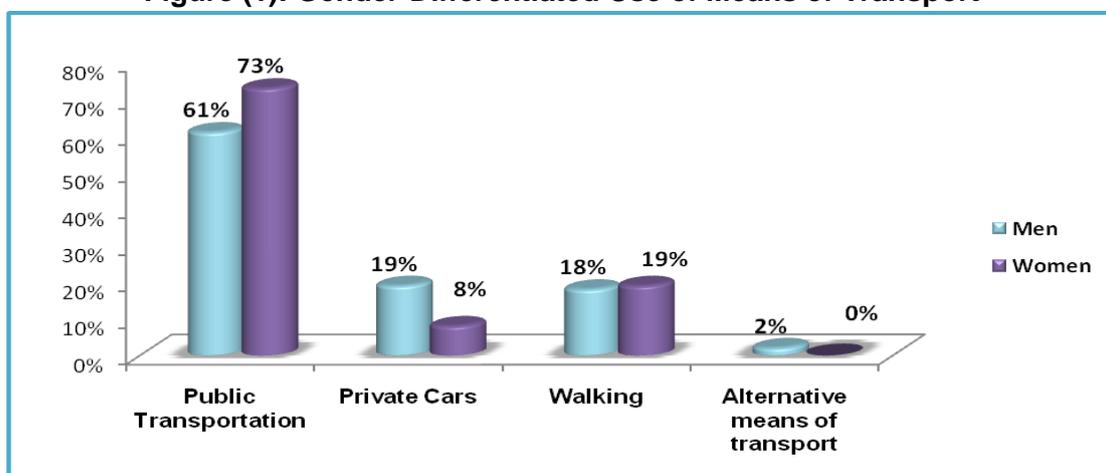
In **Tulkarem City**, one of the women participants in FGDs said: “Generally speaking we use taxis because there are no public transportation always available especially in the suburbs. We use buses from Tulkarem for movement outside the city.”

Another participant said: “In Shuwikeh District (Tulkarem) there are public cars from 7 am until evening. After those hours, we use taxis. There is no public transportation in the camp due to its proximity to the city.”

In **Thaher Al Malih Village**, one woman participant said: “There is public taxi to and from Barta’a – Thaher Al Malih through the gate. Generally, people walk through the checkpoint, and 200 meters beyond that is a big tree everyone knows, which serves as a bus stop. From there, passengers leave in a public taxi from Toura Village to Jenin, and visa versa. The Israeli soldiers search all bags and items with the citizens for security reasons (so they say), and without paying attention to privacy. They [soldiers] prevent big items from entering through such as a large bag of flour; instead the owner is forced to leave it in Toura Village and brings small quantities with him/her everyday. The villagers do not use any means of transportation except this taxi working on Barta’a line, sometimes they have private cars, or they walk. Even animals such as donkeys and horses are not allowed to pass through. Bicycles are also not allowed. Only the owner of the private car can drive it out of the village, and even the closest family member cannot drive the car.

It was noted that the transport used differ according to the gender: women use public transportation more than men (73% of females compared to 61% of males). Men use more private cars than women (19% of males compared to 8% of females).

Figure (1): Gender-Differentiated Use of Means of Transport



In focus group discussions, men compared their use of various transport means highlighting advantages and disadvantages of each. One of the male participants from Jenin said: “Private cars are limited these days due to their high price and running cost. It was affordable some years ago. Most people such as students and employees prefer to use big buses especially for trips outside the city as it is affordable. Even if the person owned a private car, he uses it for short distances. If he wants to go to Ramallah and other governorates, he prefers public transportation means such as buses and taxis. Transport means are available in Jenin around the clock, to a lesser extent on Fridays, has special parking places. There are 26 taxi companies in Jenin.”

3-1-2 Frequency of Use of Different Means of Transportation: 49% of men use public transportation daily, compared to 26% of women.

a. Frequency of Use of Public Means of Transportation

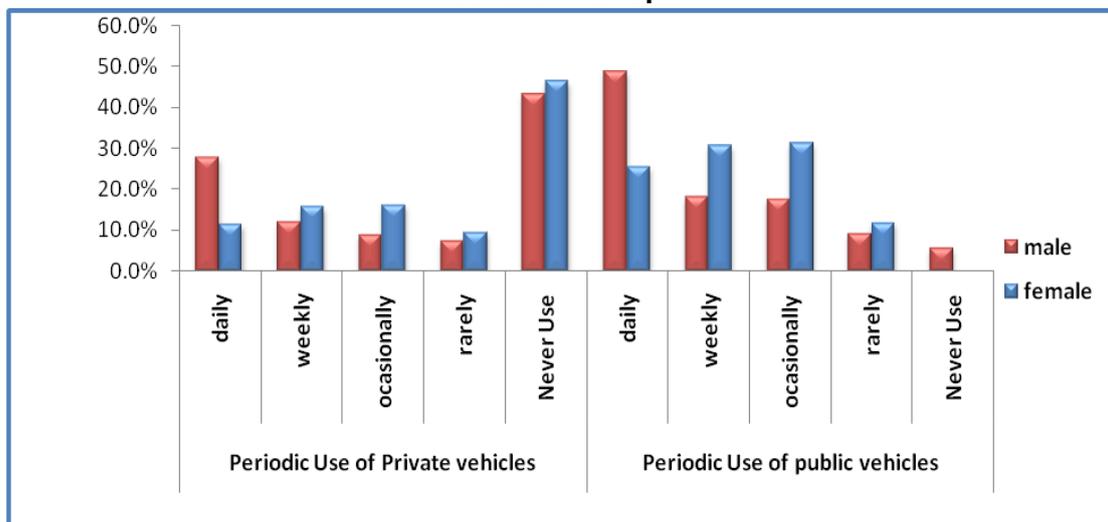
A sizable minority of respondents (37%) use public transportation on a daily basis (49% of males compared to 26% of females). Another 25% use it on a weekly basis (31% of females and 18% of males), and 25% use public transportation infrequently (31% of females and 18% of males).

b. Frequency of Use of Private Cars

20% of respondents use private cars on a daily basis (28% of males and 12% of females), 14% use private cars on a weekly basis (16% of females and 12% of males), 13% infrequently, and 9% hardly ever.

As for other means of transportation mentioned previously (bicycles, motorcycles, etc.), their use does not exceed 1% on a daily basis, whereas 8% of respondents—all women—mentioned that they use other means of transport on at least a weekly basis.

Figure (2): Gender-Differentiated Frequency of Use of Public and Private Means of Transport



3-1-3 Public Transportation and Mobility Modes

21% of respondents said big buses (50 passengers) are available in their areas of residence, whereas smaller buses (20 passengers) are available in 38% of respondents’ areas of residence. Public taxis (7 passengers) are the most available (in 80% or respondents’ areas). Smaller public taxis (4 passengers) are available upon request to 78% of respondents. Table 4 provides further information on availability of public transportation means:

Table (4): Availability of different public transportation means

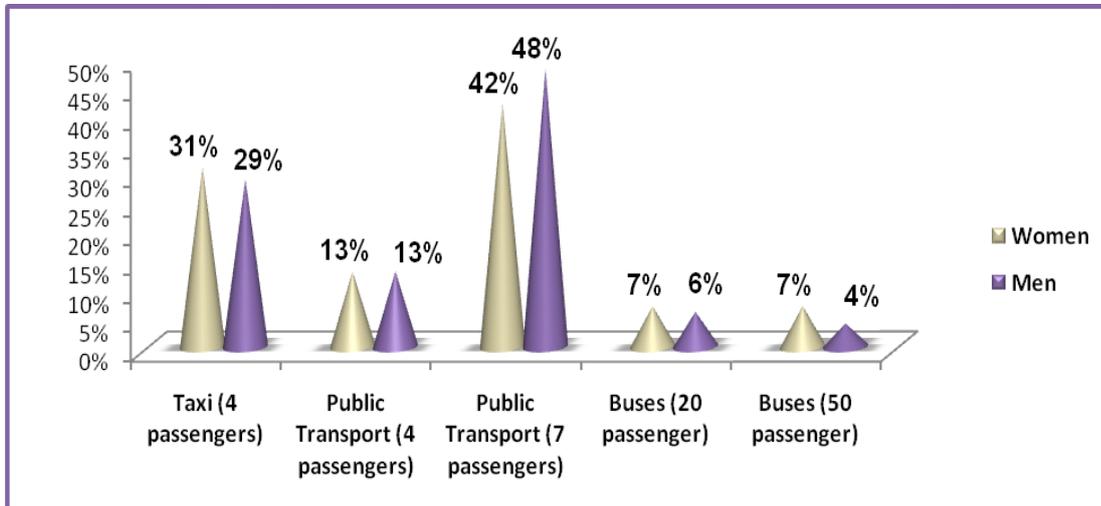
	Buses (50 passengers)	Buses (20 passengers)	Public cars (7 passengers)	Public cars (4 passengers)
Always Available	7%	24%	54%	45%
Limited and do not fulfill citizens' needs	3%	4%	2%	2%
Available in certain hours only	13%	14%	25%	10%
Not Available	77%	59%	19%	43%

Transportation terminals are available and in use by 50% of respondents, while 45% said they are not available. Another 5% said that terminals are available but that they do not use them.

3-1-4 Preferred Public Transport Means

45% of respondents considered public taxis (7 passengers) to be their preferred mode of transport, followed by the smaller public taxis (30% of respondents). 13% preferred taxis upon request, followed by buses (20 passengers) at 7%, and lastly buses (50 passengers) at 5%.

Figure (3): Gender-Differentiated Preferred Public Transport Means



The focus group discussion in Boureen Village revealed the most important reasons for preferring smaller taxis, rather than 7-passenger vehicles, from women’s point of view. There is no difference in the price; taxis are much faster; the drivers are from the village, and their cars have registration and insurance. Finally, the passengers in the taxis are less than in the 7 passengers vehicles; thus passengers are not obliged to wait and there are no extra passengers.

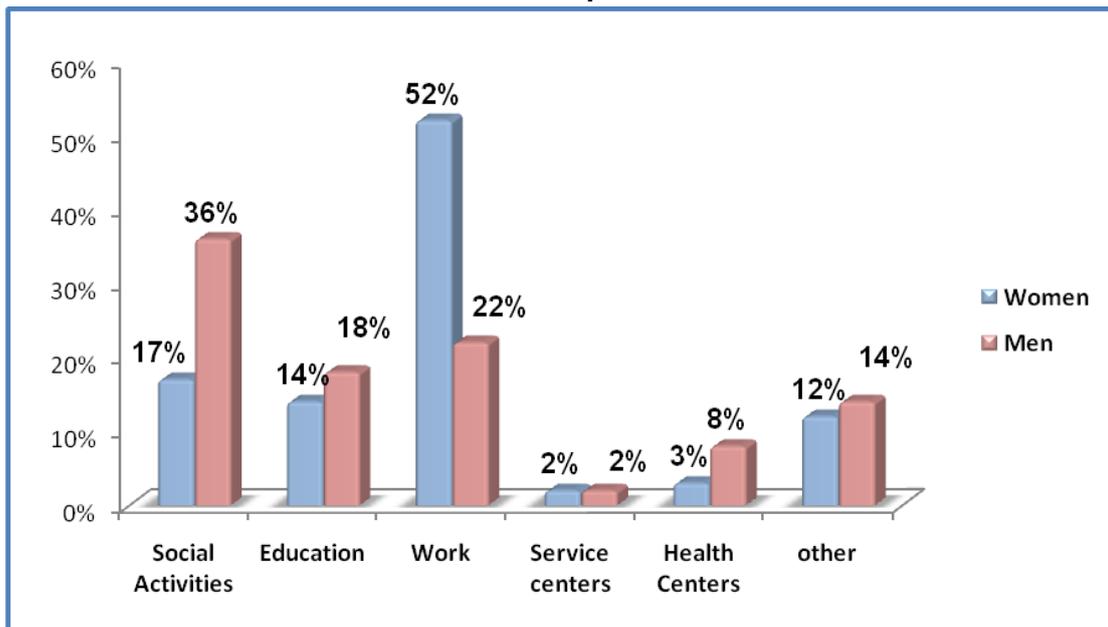
3-1-5 Use of Public Transportation in the Presence of Private Cars: Women prefer public transportation for long distances

50% of respondents who have private cars expressed their preference of using public transport for long distances (59% of women compared to 43% of men). 39% mentioned that they do not use their private cars in travel between towns and villages, due to the checkpoints and the separation wall. 51% of private cars owners cite bad road conditions as the reason why they prefer to use public transport. 86% said they use their private cars for work and family travel, while 14% use them for other family purposes (19% of males and 8% of females).

3-1-6 Objective of Using Public Transportation: Men use it to reach the work place, and women to reach health services and for social activities

The majority of men use public transportation primarily in order to reach their workplaces (52% of males compared to 22% of females). In contrast, women are more likely to use public transportation for social activities related to family needs (36% for females compared to 17% for males), and for accessing health services (8% for females compared to 3% for males), and for accessing health services (8% for females compared to 3% for males).

Figure (4): Gender-Differentiated Main Objectives of Using Public Transportation



Women FGD participants discussed their objectives in more detail. Women from Nassarieh Village said: *“Usually mobility is for work, education, buying items for the house that are not available in the village, going to the doctor, buying clothes, taking children to the schools since it is far, bringing needed pesticides, and transferring the crops from the village to the city.”*

One participant from Thaher Al Maleh said: *“The reasons behind using private cars are lack of regular public transportation due to the small area of the village and its location behind the wall. In many instances, we as women need to go to Toura Village or Jenin City for shopping, treatment, vaccination or delivery.”*

3-1-7 Gender-Differentiated Practical Needs for Different Transport Means within Daily Calendar

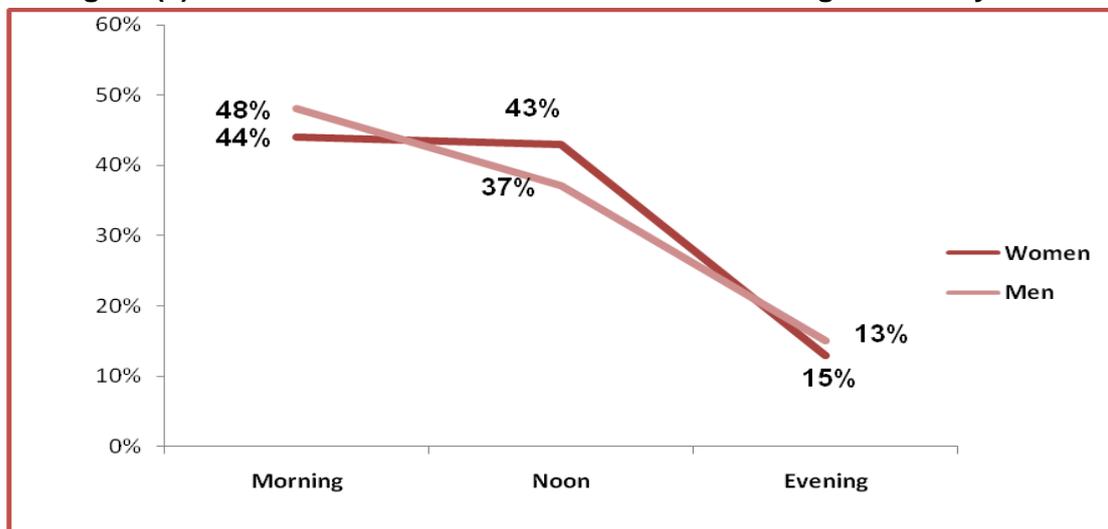
Most of the respondents (83%) mentioned that they use a single means of transportation. The percentage of men who use one means of transportation on a weekly basis is almost double the percentage of women (85% versus 43%). Correspondingly, the percentage of women who use two modes of transportation is higher than men (29% versus 11%). Table 5 provides further information on the number of means of transportation employed by male and female participants..

Table 5: Gender-Differentiated Distribution of Number of Means of Transportation Used on a Weekly Basis

Number of Means of Transportation	Male	Female	Total
1	86%	75%	82%
2	10%	2.2%	4.1%
3	3%	3%	3%
4 and above	0.2%	1.1%	0.5%

The greatest use of transport services is in the morning, due to work and education schedules. 47% of respondents said that they travel in the morning, compared to 39% at noon time followed by 15% in the evening. Figure 5 shows gender-differentiated distribution according to mobility time.

Figure (5): Gender-Differentiated Distribution according to Mobility Time



Women in FGDs discussed examples of the links between transportation services and women’s activities, including the nature of their work and studies. Women’s use of transportation begins early in the morning, especially for working women and university & school students. They primarily use public transportation, which is available in the morning from 7:30 to 8 a.m. The period between 8 am and 1:30 pm is a quiet time for transportation providers, although it is a

time when many women need to move in order to access services. In many cases, women are forced to wait for hours before any car passes, or are forced to use private taxis.

Availability of public taxis generally resumes from 1:30 to 3 pm, the period during which employees and students need to go home. Most women use public transportation during this time, if available. After 3 pm, public transportation ceases to be available, and both women and men rely on private taxis.

One woman participant from Boureen Village said: *“After 9 am there is no easy transportation available. I have to order a private taxi but it is very expensive, or leave early with university students. Sometimes, I organize my trips outside of the village with relatives who own private cars.”*

One of the woman participants from Tulkarem said: *“In rare instances, women walk to nearby areas such as Shweikeh, Thinabbeh and Irtah. Roads are not always safe because there are areas which are empty and because of the presence of the occupation army. In Tulkarem Camp everyone walks due to close proximity to the town. In Al Jaroushieh area for example, from 9 am to 1 pm it is quiet, and also on Fridays till after the prayers in all areas. People use private taxis if need be for both women and men.”*

In Thaher Al Maleh, one of the women participants said: *“Students leave their homes early in the morning to the (gate) using cars. They pass the gate on foot to the school in Toura Village. This is morning time from 7-10 am where women and men leave the village through the gate²². After this time, if there is not a car to take them to the gate, they are forced to walk or abide by men’s time if they own a private car and would want to leave the village. If all these means were not available and the gate was about to close, the woman waits until it re-opens in the afternoon, or goes back home and cancel the trip. In most cases, it would be the second option.”*

As for the timing of use of transportation modes for both men and women, one of the men participants from Jenin said: *“There are different times for women’s use of public transportation according to the nature of work. For example, women working in retail trade leave home early between 6:30 and 7 am. Generally speaking taxis take them from home to work and back. The same can be said about employees and students from the city or surrounding villages. Housewives usually go shopping or to the doctor at about 10 am. Transportation becomes less between 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Sometimes, employees from the city walk, and so do students except in heavy rain and hot weather conditions. Transportation becomes active from 1:30 to 3 pm when employees and students want to go back home. Women use public transportation during these times if available. During evenings, people use private taxis and also on Fridays.”* It is obvious that men have the same point of view as women with regard to mobility timing.

The time spent in daily travel is divided into two intervals; the first is waiting time where people spend it at bus stops, or inside the vehicles until the number of passengers become complete.

²² In some areas, such as Thaher Al Malih, there is an Israeli gate located at the village entrance that opens at certain hours of the day. Palestinians who are not from the area, including married women in the village not originally from the village, need a special permit from the Israeli authorities to enter the village.

The second interval is the average time needed to reach the destination. On average, the waiting time for the first interval is 13 minutes for both women and men. As for the second interval, it is on average 21 minutes (18 minutes for men, and 24 minutes for women).

Focus Group Discussion results show that women feel that they have special needs while traveling different from those of men due to women’s reproductive roles. Women need to consult the doctor when pregnant or about to deliver, or for her children’s treatment. On the other hand, one of the women participants from Nassarieh said: *“A man can take a private taxi despite the cost. He can also take more than one transportation mode. A woman sometimes is forced to wait for more than an hour until a driver she knows comes. The culture, habits and environment all affect the woman’s ability to take a private taxi.”*

Most men who participated in Jenin’s FGD agree with the women on their special needs while traveling. Some mentioned that this specificity stems out from society and men’s appreciation of women’s role, and their endeavor to provide them [women] with the most comfortable mode of transport, especially in 4-passenger or 7-passenger taxis. As for 50-passenger buses, they are comfortable and have large seats.

As for travel with accompanying family members, women travel more accompanied with 1-3 people, and men travel accompanied with 4-6 people.

Table (6): Gender-Differentiated Weekly Schedule Distributed on Accompanied Family Members

Number of Accompanying People	Males	Females	Total
1	37.8%	38.3%	38.1%
2-3	27%	36.8%	32.1%
4-6	34%	20.8%	27.2%

3-1-8 Evaluating Efficiency and Quality of Transport Sector

Towns and large urban centers offer a higher quality of transport services, as compared to small remote communities and those faraway from towns’ centers, such as those in the Jordan Valley, behind the separation wall, or near the settlements and checkpoints. The availability and quality of transport services in large centers is generally good compared to the situation in the small communities, where transport services are weak and suffer from many challenges.

Women in Nassarieh, for example, note that the transport services are bad in their village and receive no attention from the village council, despite the presence of one woman representative. The council cannot address the village’s problems in light of limited financial resources and the absence of Palestinian Authority’s jurisdiction in its region.

One woman participant said: *“The most important priority in Nassarieh is the availability of a school bus. Students walk 6 km back and forth to school and many students don’t want to go to school anymore. During winter, the situation becomes very bad as the area is subject to floods which makes it dangerous for children.”*

a. Evaluating Comfort and Safety of Transport Means

48% of respondents felt that transportation means are not comfortable for children (51% of females and 45% of males). In addition, 58% of respondents said that transport means are generally modern (61% of males and 55% of females). 60% said that transport means are safe. Males find public transportation more comfortable than women do: 41% of males said it is comfortable, compared to only 32% of females.

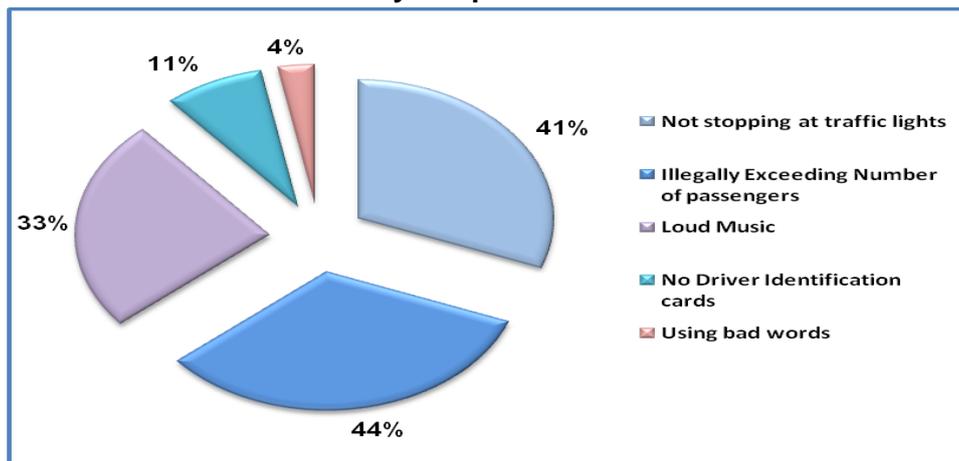
As for vehicles' specifications and their impact on women's comfort, one of woman participants from Tulkarem mentioned: *“There are aspects specific to women while traveling especially with the presence of some male behaviors disturbing women, and not being comfortable in the seat especially if it was amongst men. For travel between towns, using the bus is not comfortable as they are old and unequipped. There should be a law to allocate seats for women (middle seats) especially if they were in a taxi with men inside. As for allocating vehicles for the use of women only, this is not practical as generally men travel more than women. The availability of equipped buses for all lines would be optimal.”*

b. Evaluating the Drivers: Positive and Negative Aspects

On the positive side, 72% of respondents believed that drivers generally have experience and qualifications, and 70% said that the drivers' behavior is good (75% for females compared to 63% for males).

More critically, 44% mentioned the increase in number of passengers beyond the allowed number. 41% said that drivers do not comply with the allowed speed or traffic lights, and 33% cited loud music.

Figure (6): Evaluating the Drivers: Negative Aspects as Seen by Respondents



Frame (2): Reasons for Preferring One Driver Over Another (from the FGD with students at Al Najah University):

1. The driver's reputation, and the degree to which he abides by ethics and good behavior. Some drivers scream at the women getting down from the cars to hurry up, or for not closing the door quietly...etc.
2. Speed (the driver should not drive too quickly).
3. Music (driver should not play loud music).
3. Courtesy (drivers should not swear at the passengers).
4. Comfort (drivers should use the air conditioning in hot weather, and to use inner lights at night).
5. Driver's should not smoke in the car.
6. Seats should be comfortable and in good condition.
7. Drivers should not exploit the passengers by taking too much money.

From the drivers' perspective, the key challenges they face are: 1) high cost of insurance and registration, 2) the presence of checkpoints, 3) their relations with the passengers; female and male, and 4) the presence of large numbers of unregistered cars or drivers working illegally. The FGD with a group of drivers from Tulkarem Governorate yielded more detailed information about the challenges and problems the drivers face in the course of their work, as summarized in Frame 3 below.

Frame (3): Main Transport Problems and Challenges from the Perspective of the Drivers

1. Registration and Insurance

"They request huge amounts of money for the car insurance and registration. They also ask for unnecessary detailed information. Last year, I paid NIS 3,000 for insurance, and this is a big amount for me."

"The issue of having to pay for the insurance and registration at the same time is a problem as the drivers have to pay a big amount of money. I have to pay NIS 10,000 or 15,000 for insurance and registration. If only they were supported."

2. Falling Value of Fares

"The biggest problem for me is the fare. A long time ago it was 10 JDs or about NIS 60 (passenger's fare from Tulkarem to Jericho). Now it became NIS 45 due to exchange rate despite inflation and the increase in the cost of fuel and diesel."

3. Israeli Checkpoints

"There are two major checkpoints (Innab and Beit Iba) in addition to the flying checkpoints. The road to Nablus used to take 20 minutes, and now it takes us more than an hour. This delays the students and all passengers."

"The checkpoints are slow and causes delays in reaching Nablus. Sometimes, they randomly select some cars, order passengers to get down to delay all others. We naturally cannot move without all passengers."

4. Relations with Palestinian Police, and Laws to Regulate the Transport Sector

“One of the problems I face is with the Palestinian police. They stop us more than once a day asking for our driving license and other papers. They also search the car, and this causes delays.”

“There are problems with the police as they are very picky on us. One time, they pick on the horn, at other times on an extra passenger, and also on the seatbelt....”

5. Relations with the Passengers

“Sometimes, some women insist on not paying the fare on their children, thus; those children are left with no seats as if they are extra passengers, and this causes problems with the police.”

“As it comes to harassment, it rarely happens either from the drivers or from any of the passengers. The community here is small and no one can bypass the general norms of behavior.”

6. Competition with Other Means of Transportation, Especially Unregistered and Illegal Cars.

“There is competition from the buses and taxis from outside the line which use this line that is not theirs.”

“There are illegal cars working inside the town and in some of the villages. Lately, their numbers have decreased due to the campaign against illegal cars implemented by the police.”

“One of the most important challenges we face is the availability of too many cars, more than the actual needs of each city or community. I heard from one of the employees of the Taxi Drivers’ Syndicate is that there are 5,000 cars more than the actual needs.”

c. Evaluating Transport Terminals

The following table provides the most important challenges as it relates to transport terminals:

Table (7): Challenges of Transport Stops

Challenges	(%)
The majority lack sanitary facilities	93%
The majority lack information and complaint centers	91%
The vast majority are faraway from the centre	81%
The vast majority lack waiting chairs	81%
The vast majority lack shades	79%
The majority are unclean	66%

One of the women participants from Tulkarem said: *“In Thinnabeh, Shweikeh and Tulkarem Camp there are no cars’ stop, so women are forced to stand at the side of the road waiting for a car. This is not comfortable and in some cases is unsafe.”*

d. Evaluating Transport Fare

Fares are considered burdensome by most respondents, and women appear to be particularly disadvantaged by costs. 59% of the respondents believe that the drivers do not comply with the specified fare (64% of females compared to 54% of males). Women noted that they generally have less capacity than men to negotiate fares with male drivers, due to cultural and social constraints. 47% of respondents agreed that the specified fare coincides with the distance, whereas 53% believed otherwise. 68% of respondents said that transport fares pose an economic burden. Because women are forced to take more than one means of transportation, the results showed that the average daily transport cost was higher for women than men (NIS 12 for women compared to NIS 10 for men).

3-1-9 Transport Sector and Access to Resources, Services, and Social Interaction

Over half of respondents (57%) believed that there is no relationship between means of transportation and attaining a job, while 32% said the relationship is important and 7% described it as insignificant.

38% of males believed that means of transport are important in order to get a job, compared to only 25% of women. The results coincide with job patterns that show that females prefer to work in the same area or governorate, whereas males travel to other governorates for work.

The majority of respondents (58%) considered means of transport to be important in social interactions. 26% rated it of less importance and 7% thought it to be insignificant. Slightly more women than men found it to be important (61% vs. 54%).

In terms of accessing health and governmental services, 59% of respondents believed that means of transportation are important.. Furthermore, 90% said that means of transport are crucial in decreasing financial expenditures (69% to a great extent, and 21% to a lesser extent).

Frame (4): Mobility and Girls' Education in the Context of Conservative Traditions: Al Nassarieh and Thahir Al Malih Villages.

A number of girls in Al Nassarieh Village were forced to drop out of school for several reasons related to transport limitations, according to FGD participants. Schools in the village do not offer classes beyond the 9th grade, so the girls must go to Nablus in order to continue their education. The primary problems they face are: 1) Parents are afraid for their girls to travel a long distance to Nablus, and transportation can not always be secured with a known driver, 2) The presence of checkpoints, 3) Preference for a driver from the village itself who is known to the people, 4) Lack of a specific bus for students, 5) Lack of feeling of security, forcing many women to plan the trip to Nablus ahead of time, and 6) Fear and embarrassment about riding in the car with an unknown driver.

In Thahir Al Malih Village, women suffer from an inability to work outside the village due to mobility restrictions. One of the participants from the village said: *"I finished my Bachelors Degree in Arabic. My dream was to be a teacher. Due to mobility restrictions, I opted to stay home and raise up my kids."* People in such villages need special permits to access these

locations. Married women in Thahir Al Malih who are originally from Tulkarem and Nablus have to obtain a special permit from the Israeli authorities in those areas in order to live in Thahir Al Malih. Their parents cannot visit them in their homes in the village.

3-1-10 Mobility Constraints: A Gendered Analysis

a. Constraints and Restrictions as a Result of the Political Situation

The political and security situation created by Israel's military occupation and civilian settlement of the West Bank severely impacts the Palestinian transport sector, especially in the areas outside urban centers. Transport infrastructure is fully controlled by the Israeli authorities, and Palestinian citizens are vulnerable to restrictions and, in some cases, attacks from soldiers and settlers when traveling. As a result, many parents in isolated villages such as Thahir Al Malih, described above, have taken their girls out of school and deprived them from continuing their education.

40% of respondents mentioned that the Israeli checkpoints hinder their mobility, and 9% mentioned that the separation wall restricts their mobility. When asked to prioritize the constraints on mobility, 53% mentioned the checkpoints, and 42% cited settlers' attacks.

One of the woman participants from Thahir Al Malih said: *"A teacher from Um Al Rihan was arrested during a school trip. While passing through the gate, he saw his nephew detained. He went to enquire, but the soldier hit him and claimed that the teacher hit him, so he was arrested. Lately, they [Israeli authority] gave all students from kindergarten and above a magnetic card. If a student forgets it or lost it, the soldiers detain him/ her without any regard to age, and sex."*

On the other hand, all women participants agreed that there is no safety on the roads, especially while passing through the gates, in which women must undergo body searches. One woman participant from Thahir Al Malih said: *"If any woman had to pass through Barta'a Gate, then harassment is in abundance where she has to go through body search."*

Women participants from Yitma Village said: *"Settlers attacked the village, broke the windows, and hit some of the villagers. They also set wild pigs free in the village. All people now prefer to wait next to the village's bus stop as it represents a sense of security. In addition, the villagers cannot go to Za'tara checkpoint due to intense presence of the settlers on the roads. The village's nurse was once attacked by settlers, and then the soldiers interfered and pushed them [settlers] away. Now, she walks to Qabalan intersection and rides in one of the cars to Sawiyeh in order to go to Ramallah."*

Checkpoints and other movement restrictions also negatively impact women's access to essential health services, including times of medical emergency. One woman participant from Boureen said: *"There are several women who gave birth at the checkpoint, and elderly people died before reaching the hospital. My own father died before the ambulance was able to reach him, where we had to take him to the hospital in a private car, but we were delayed at the checkpoint. We arrived the hospital in Nablus much delayed."*

Another woman participant from the same village; Boureen said: *“My sister-in-law was in labor when she arrived at the checkpoint. The soldier asked her to step out of the car and passes through the checkpoint walking. After she passed, she rode on a cart to reach the Ambulance a few meters away. As soon as she arrived at the hospital and gave birth, she fainted as she was extremely exhausted.”*

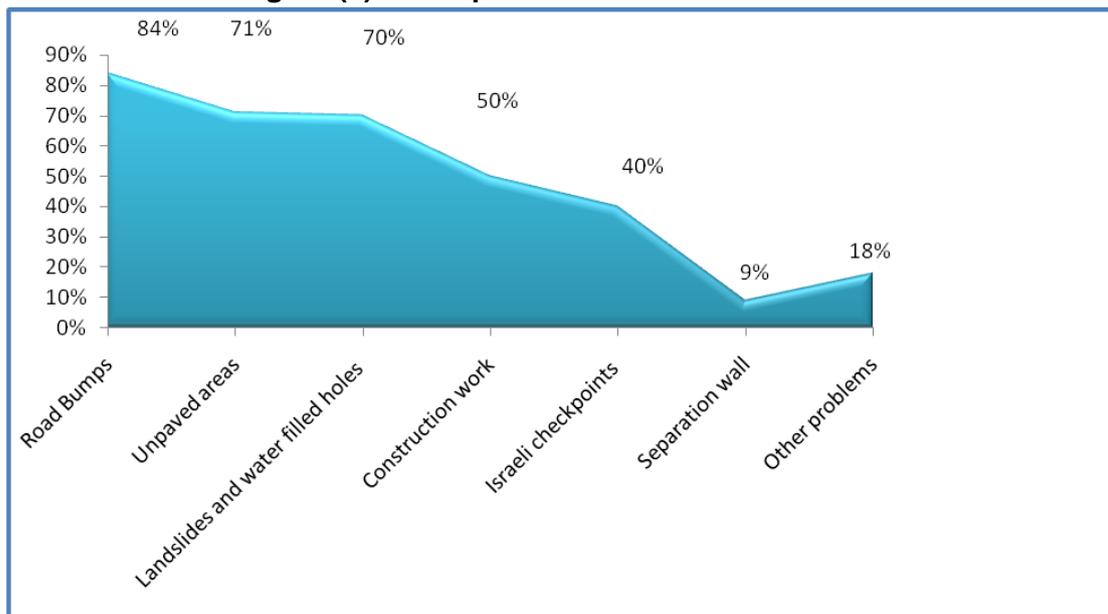
Harassment, physical attacks, or denial of access at checkpoints affected 38% of respondents, and 6% had experienced settlers’ attacks. Respondents also emphasized that the incidents at checkpoints are not one-time events, but rather part of a pattern of behavior on the part of the Israeli military. Around one third of respondents mentioned that they’ve experienced attacks at checkpoints more than 20 times.

b. Constraints and Restrictions related to Economic and Social Context

Constraints Related to Transport Infrastructure

The results showed that transport infrastructure has its own challenges such as road bumps, mentioned by 84% of respondents, unpaved areas 71%, water filled holes 70%, and road construction 50%. In addition, 18% of respondents mentioned other challenges.

Figure (7): Transport Infrastructure Constraints



Mobility Challenges Faced by Both Women and Men Using Public Transport

82% of respondents named the high cost of transportation as the biggest problem they encounter, followed by continuous delays in reaching their destination, which were noted by 74% of respondents (77% of females compared to 71% of males).

One female participant from Tulkarem said: *“In some suburbs there is no specified schedule for taxis except in morning time where women are forced to leave early. Any delay means taking private taxis, which is very costly for students and employees.”*

Harassment from drivers, primarily in verbal form, is another widespread problem. 38% of respondents said that they were subjected to such harassment, and 37% were harassed by other passengers. Significantly, there was no major difference between men and women's responses. Only 1% of respondents had been subjected to sexual harassment; verbal harassment was much more common. 15% of respondents were verbally harassed by one of the passengers or drivers. Around 70% of those who were verbally harassed had experienced the behavior between one and three times.

Men in FGDs discussed the harassment to which women in particular are subjected to, albeit on a very limited scale. Some patriarchal opinions surfaced as certain participants accused women of bringing the harassment upon themselves. One participant said: "Most harassment are caused by women because of make-up and perfume. It is generally happening with females studying at universities in Ramallah and Nablus. There is harassment but it is limited."

Other public transport challenges include illegal public transport cars, mentioned by 32% of respondents, and theft 32%.

Frame (5): Factors impacting Women's Feelings of Safety and Security while Traveling

Women in Yitma and Boureen Villages summarized the most important factors in making them feel safe while traveling:

- Car insurance and registration
- For the driver to have his driving license
- For the driver to have ethics and positive decent attitude
- For the driver to be from the village
- Availability of a comfortable seat
- To comply with the rules relating to number of passengers
- Not having children standing in the vehicle as this will endanger them
- For the driver not to drive quickly
- Absence of road bumps

Men share the same opinion as women as it relates to cars' insurance and registration. One of the male participants in Jenin said: *"More than 90% of cars are insured and registered, and are being monitored by the Palestinian police. Before, there were stolen cars. After the latest campaign to eliminate illegal cars, we do not see them anymore."*

There is a general attitude refusing women's travel in public transportation, although it is a minority opinion (27%). The prospect of women working as drivers was widely rejected, with 48% of respondents opposed and no differences between women and men.

Frame (6): Mobility Challenges faced by Al Najah University Students

1. Non-specification of taxi fare as some drivers ask for NIS 2 whereas others ask for NIS 2.5.
2. Lack of traffic lights in some areas where they are needed.
3. The locations of the vehicles' stops (franchise) are not appropriate. It would

be preferable if each area has its own franchise.

4. Lack of shade at stops.
5. Traffic jams, especially at times when school students go to school and come back.
6. Drivers' attempts to bring in passengers rather than arriving to the destination.
7. Some drivers taking advantage of passengers especially at night by asking for more money instead of the fare.

Challenges are even greater for women who live in small remote areas and must pass through checkpoints or settlers' bypass roads. Residents of Yitma Village face all these challenges and more. Women FGD participants from Yitma summarized the challenges as follows:

- 1) Because of unpaved, some drivers are unwilling to come to the village.
- 2) Due to social habits and the prevailing culture in the village, women have to wait for long periods of time for a car instead of taking a taxi.
- 3) The cars in the village are insured and registered, which creates a sense of safety; yet sometimes the other passengers would be all men. Women are reluctant to ride in the car in such situations.
- 4) Harassment by the drivers.
- 5) The presence of children in the car. In some cases parents refuse to pay the full fare for children; instead the children stand inside the vehicle, which makes them more vulnerable to accidents.
- 6) High transportation costs due to the village's location behind two checkpoints (Huwarrah and Za'atara). Passengers have to pay NIS 5 to the checkpoint, and then an additional NIS 3 to the city.
- 7) Loud music and the topics discussed amongst passengers might not be appropriate.
- 8) Lack of shelter needed in hot and cold weather conditions, in addition to lack of public sanitary facilities, which are especially needed when traveling with young children as women often are.
- 9) Due to prevailing culture, women cannot use alternative means of transportation such as bicycles or motorcycles.

CHAPTER FOUR: Recommendations

4-1 Conclusion

Mobility is a major determinant of access to economic resources, education, health and other key prerequisites for women's empowerment. In West Bank and Gaza, an area under military occupation and conflict since 1967, mobility is dramatically reduced for both men and women due to political restrictions such as checkpoints and other physical barriers to movement, a separation wall that divides Palestinian areas from one another, and economic closures.

The restrictions on mobility of people and goods have generated powerful and widespread adverse impacts on the broader functioning of society and the economy. Transport is very expensive, and waiting times are unpredictable and often protracted. As a result, the market for travel, and hence the economic viability of the transportation sector, have been greatly reduced. The security measures and road closures mean that operators provide transport services in sub-optimal conditions (long diversions, lengthy delays at checkpoints, unreliability), while incurring higher costs and attaining lower productivity.

The impacts of the conflict and these higher transaction and financial costs do not fall equally on men and women, however. Because men have better social networks and trade links outside their community, they have greater access to more sophisticated and flexible means of transport, particularly private cars. Women's mobility in West Bank and Gaza is further constrained by social factors that reduce their access to the outside world.

4-2 Recommendations

The primary and overarching recommendation deals with the need to remove all physical barriers to movement. The mobility of people is fundamental to their ability to participate fully in society. In turn, society can only function well when the full range of its members can contribute to the economy by working and trading, participate in education and personal development, and contribute to the social fabric through their community, social and leisure activities.

Recommendations to Planners:

- Ensure that women's needs based on their multiple roles are taken into account and incorporated into national development plans.

Recommendations to Operators:

- Integrate fares through coordination between lines to serve vulnerable groups who are forced to use more than one means of transport, such as women and refugees.
- Make the routes and schedules of public transport vehicles clear and predictable, to reduce waiting time.
- Commit to safety regulations and ensure drivers' commitment.
- Make the vehicles more comfortable and adopt a broader strategy to improve transport services, making passengers the center of the service.

Recommendations to General Directorate for Transport at the Ministry of Transport (implementing current regulations):

- Improve the sector's monitoring through effective coordination between stakeholders including the police and the municipalities. Better law compliance was noted in areas having active presence of the police.
- Regulate public transport lines in coordination with operators to provide service at different times, thus increasing mobility for the public at large, and for women in particular.
- Monitor the sector's compliance with official fare, safety standards, registration and operations, and information provision about drivers.
- Improve vehicle's quality control (cleanliness, safety of the vehicle's windows, doors, air conditioning...etc)
- Improve the effectiveness of complaint mechanisms and raise public awareness about the importance of this process. In addition, take steps to create a model to improve quality of service.

Recommendations to General Directorate for Transport at the Ministry of Transport (initiating new regulations):

Vehicles' Specifications

- Monitor the size of the seats, especially in the older cars; seats should be wide and comfortable.
- Specify seats with priority access for children and people with special needs
- Delimit a seating area with priority access for women, in case the vehicle is not fully equipped for comfortable seating.

Recommendations to Municipalities:

- Re-consider the locations and specifications of terminals to ensure better service for a wider part of the population, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport.
- Ensure proper management of terminals by forming full-time administrative bodies that supervise all lines, identify and address problems, and receive complaints and follow them up.
- Enhance public safety and comfort by providing basic services such as shelters to protect customers from sun and rain, seats in the public transport terminals and compounds, clean sanitary facilities, and wide pavements that can be used by carts, or wheelchairs.

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