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THE IMPACT OF THE FUTURE OF WORK FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT



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ABBREVIATIONS

ASTM	Asociacion Sindical de Trabajadores del Metro (Mexico)
ATM	Alianza de Tranviarios de México
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
MWU	Matatu Workers' Union (Kenya)
NUMSA	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
NUPSAW	National Union of Public Service & Allied Workers (South Africa)
PUTON	Public Transport Operators' Union (Kenya)
RAWU	Railway and Allied Workers' Union (Kenya)
SATAWU	South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union
SDITSTC	Sindicato Democratico Independiente de Trabajadores del STC (Mexico)
SEETU	State Enterprise Electrified Train Workers' Union (Thailand)
SINTRARECAUDO	Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Empresa Recaudo Bogotá SAS (Colombia)
SNTSTC	Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores del STC (Mexico)
SNTT	Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de Rama, Servicios de la Industria del Transporte y Logística de Colombia
SRUT	State Railway Workers' Union of Thailand
TAWU	Transport Workers' Union Kenya
TOWU	Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union (South Africa)

#OurPublicTransport

The ITF launched its 'Our Public Transport' programme in 2016 to campaign for public transport systems that meet the needs of the majority of people, workers and the environment. The overall objective of the programme is to coordinate activities, actions and projects to strengthen union power and capacities to win an alternative model of public transport based on public ownership, public investment, climate jobs and employment and organisational rights for transport workers organised in strong unions.

The ITF women transport workers' committee has decided to make this campaign a core pillar of the ITF women's programme. Gender-related issues and women's participation and leadership are integrated in every aspect of the programme.

www.ourpublictransport.org



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Public transport workers, already heavily affected by neoliberal policies that threaten employment conditions, are facing important changes due to the introduction of technologies that have the potential to further transform the way that work is currently performed, overseen and organised. This report has been commissioned by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) to ensure that the needs and concerns of women public transport workers are taken into account in discussions on the future of work in public transport. Too often women are considered primarily as users of public transport, with little attention to the issues facing the many women who participate in a variety of roles in the public transport workforce globally.

Gender segregation in the public transport workforce means that women are typically concentrated into the lower-paid administrative and customer service functions, with only small numbers occupying the better-remunerated driving roles. Jobs done by women may be particularly vulnerable to automation. However there are also opportunities for new forms of work brought about by technological change, but it is essential that women also gain access to the training and skills necessary to benefit from such employment opportunities.

The expansion of public transport infrastructure in developing countries may offer job opportunities for women and men, including the chance to shift from precarious or informal work into formal employment. However trade unions are often not sufficiently involved in consultation over the introduction of public transport developments and additionally some widely-

used systems, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), are tied to particular business models of public-private partnerships that may not favour labour rights and decent work conditions. This research therefore focuses on five cities that are introducing a new form of public transport system or are extending an existing transport mode, which have significant implications for women's employment. The five cities are:

- Bangkok, Thailand (expansion of Sky Train and metro networks);
- Bogota, Colombia (BRT introduced in 2000);
- Cape Town, South Africa (BRT introduced in 2010);
- Mexico City, Mexico (planned electric bus corridor); and
- Nairobi, Kenya (first phase of BRT opening in 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Fieldwork was conducted in each of the five cities by researchers commissioned by the ITF, working closely with the ITF Women's Department and the report author, with additional support from ITF regional officials. The primary data collection methods were a review of documentary evidence and 164 face-to-face and telephone interviews with women public transport workers, union representatives, transport employers, community organisations and NGOs, and policy makers and local politicians.

The research process included a participatory workshop in Bogota organised by the ITF and FES, involving all the researchers plus union representatives from the cities covered in the report and ITF head

office and regional representatives. This provided a valuable discussion of initial research findings across the five cities, with input from union representatives on the findings and on their experiences of organising and campaigning for women within the public transport sector. Following the workshop, researchers in each city produced a report summarising the findings of their documentary analysis and fieldwork.

WOMEN'S WORK IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The research confirmed that women continue to face gender segregation in the public transport sector, being concentrated into lower-paying and in some cases more precarious or informal positions. But there has been some change, with growing numbers of women entering the public transport workforce in Mexico City and in South Africa. Women are also gaining greater opportunities to move into typically male-dominated areas, including driving, in new forms of transport systems such as BRT and expanding metro systems. Women are also being attracted by the flexibility that driving for platform taxi services can offer, although there are issues with equal access and decent work, including employment status.

Nevertheless, gender stereotypes persist, expressed in negative attitudes about women's driving abilities or suitability to work in public transport and in practice through differences in status and conditions of the jobs done by women and men. On the other hand, some saw women drivers as less reckless and safer than men, as well as more likely to be polite to passengers. Having more women drivers was seen as a solution to women passenger safety too. For example in Mexico City the Atenea bus routes provide a service for women passengers operated by women drivers,

while Laudrive is a platform taxi service for women riders, operated by women drivers.

Violence and sexual harassment were experienced by women transport workers in all cities, from male colleagues and passengers, with insufficient action taken by employers and the authorities in response to passenger violence according to workers. Sexual harassment was also prevalent for women passengers, with measures taken to address it at local state level in Bogota and Mexico City, and by trade unions in conjunction with civil society organisations in Cape Town and Nairobi.

Working hours and shiftwork contributed to women's fears about safety, and constrained their participation in certain jobs or at certain times, for example driving buses on late shifts or platform taxi work at night, so missing out on the more profitable hours. Women in customer service and sales roles also worked early and late shifts, but were less likely than drivers to be provided by the employer with safe transport to and from work.

Access to toilet facilities and sufficient break time remain persistent problems for workers in public transport, causing particular difficulties for women. Several interviewees in driving and station-based roles reported a shortage of toilets, in some cases having to use the same toilet as passengers, often with insufficient break time to use the facilities. In some cases, lack of toilet facilities was believed to have contributed to medical conditions, such as cystitis.

THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY

Some technological innovations, such as automatic ticket vending machines, have led to loss of jobs, primarily among informal workers. However where workers affected by automation were unionised, redeployment agreements meant that ticket sellers, for example, were transferred to office positions or to jobs as ticket machine facilitators, in some cases resulting in improved conditions at work.

Further automation of ticket sales and fare collection is likely in all cities, although progress in further roll out has been limited by technological, business and political difficulties. Interviews with women workers in ticketing and customer service roles showed a strong preference from passengers for human interaction over machine services, which are often slower or function poorly. Indeed inefficient machines leading to passenger frustration could contribute to violence to staff.

Opportunities for training are essential to ensure that women gain access to new jobs when transport infrastructure is introduced or upgraded, including training to gain driving licences or operate new technological systems. In some examples, such as the Cape Town BRT, apprenticeship or sponsored learnership schemes were used to train women to get driving licences and increase their numbers as bus drivers.

While there may be potential benefits for women workers from the introduction of BRT systems, the financing model under which it operates insists on public-private partnerships, introducing competition between vehicle operating companies and the separation of local authority control and regulation

from operation of services. This normally results in little monitoring of worker terms and conditions in each operating company, and in some instances resulted in poorer driver terms and conditions compared to previous union agreements. Therefore women may be entering new driving jobs under worse conditions than previously.

PLATFORM WORK IN URBAN TRANSPORT

Ride-hailing taxi firms are expanding in most of the cities in this study, although Uber withdrew from operating in 2018 in Thailand, following a government declaration that platform taxis are not properly registered in Thailand. The legal position for platform operators is inconsistent in Bogota, where the platform legally exists but drivers using the platform operate outside the regulatory regime. This presents a barrier for women drivers who cannot make legal complaints or ask the police for help in case of danger from passengers. The unregulated nature of the service also makes it difficult for unions to organise platform drivers.

The research supports claims that platform taxi driving work can offer access to flexible employment opportunities for women, enabling them to balance work with other commitments such as family responsibilities or studying. However, these benefits may be more available to women who are not relying on this work as their sole household income, or those who have access to their own vehicle. Therefore, for poorer women, who have to pay others for a vehicle, or who need to work very long hours to earn sufficient income – especially in cities with high competition from multiple platform companies and downward pressure on earnings – the potential for exploitation is great.

The risks of violence and sexual harassment can be a deterrent for women drivers, with the result that women tend to avoid working in certain areas and during night times, thus losing out on some of the most profitable jobs. Technology can be used to alert women drivers to dangerous clients, or in some instances to call for assistance from other drivers, and there may be more that can be done to develop consistent, widely accessible apps or systems to ensure that drivers are confident that they will receive immediate assistance in case of danger.

TRADE UNION STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN PUBLIC TRANSPORT WORKERS

More women public transport workers are organising within their trade unions to defend jobs and improve terms and conditions when women are in leadership positions and there is visible action on gender issues. For example, SintraRecaudo in Bogota has been successful in organising ticket sales workers on the BRT system, through addressing their concerns about terms and conditions, safety and job losses. Both informal matatu workers and platform taxi workers have joined PUTON in Nairobi. Women have taken a prominent role in resisting deactivation by Uber following attendance at a union meeting, in the organisation of platform workers in PUTON and in negotiating with the government and other stakeholders to address issues of pricing control, employment conditions and safety.

Women trade unionists have also successfully collaborated with community activists and passengers, for example in a campaign by the ATM in Mexico City to save the trolleybuses, highlighting their popularity with users. Additionally unions have made links with NGOs on campaigns over sexual harassment in Cape Town and in Nairobi, revealing the further potential

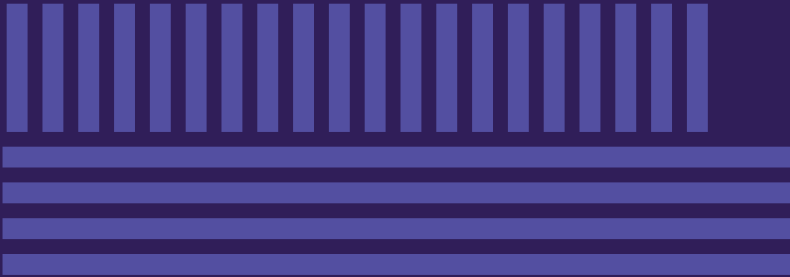
for alliances with community organisations and passengers to strengthen union campaigns on issues affecting both women public transport workers and passengers, to the benefit of both groups.

There are significant challenges for trade unions in organising platform workers, given the individualised and precarious nature of their employment. However the report has shown examples of successful organising in Cape Town and Nairobi, where platform workers have joined or worked closely with existing public transport unions. For example, drivers in Cape Town have formed their own association, the Uber Drivers Guild. SATAWU supported drivers in challenging their legal status as self-employed, a case which was lost on a technicality, but which represents an important example of collective organisation in this sector. It is likely that the legal basis of self-employment among platform workers will continue to be challenged in other cities, supported by trade unions.

Unions in some instances are still not doing enough to attract or defend female public transport workers, with some interviewees believing that unions do not take sexual harassment seriously when reported to them, thus deterring women from joining. Union strategies on tackling sexual harassment and violence towards women workers need further development and to be widely publicised and fairly implemented to reassure women transport workers. Some small-scale examples of union training and awareness raising on issues of harassment and gender discrimination were shown.

Several women union leaders and activists participated in this research, highlighting that where women are in leadership positions in the union, the issues facing women transport workers come to the fore and are addressed more effectively by the union. The visibility of women leaders also contributes to the recruitment of women public transport workers, as the SintraRecaudo example in Bogota shows.

1. INTRODUCTION



Trade unions are facing enormous changes in the workplace due to rapidly developing technologies that have the potential to eliminate or transform the way that work is currently performed. Jobs in public transport are particularly vulnerable to automation and digitalisation, for example automatic ticket sales, driverless vehicle systems, and the growth of digital platform business models currently affecting the taxi market. However technology itself is not neutral and its adoption takes particular forms determined by political and policy decisions. The introduction of new technology is often accompanied by changes in the form of work organisation and employment relationships that increase non-standard, precarious forms of work. However, new forms of work that represent a worsening of employment conditions are not an inevitable feature of technological change and innovation, but a consequence of political choices over their implementation made at governmental, industry and employer levels, often without gender impact assessment. Therefore governments, working with trade unions, have a crucial role to play in managing this digital transition to ensure that technology produces benefits for workers and society and does not further enhance existing inequality.

Many progressive organisations and trade unions, including the ITF, argue that the automation of work, including in the transport sector, presents an opportunity rather than a threat for workers and the trade union movement. Automation does not just replace jobs, it also creates new jobs, occupations, employers and sectors, and develops demand for new skills and models of employment.

However it is vital that discussions about the future of work in the transport sector also consider the impact on women workers, whose jobs may be particularly vulnerable to automation given the nature of occupational gender segregation. Equally, where there are opportunities for new forms of work brought about by technological change, it is essential that women also gain access to the training and skills necessary to profit from such employment opportunities. Public transport remains a male-dominated sector globally, with women typically concentrated into the lower-paid administrative and customer service functions, with few occupying the better-remunerated driving roles. Furthermore, when women do succeed in entering traditionally male roles, they are often greeted with hostility by their male colleagues, and in the worst cases, by sexual harassment or bullying. While many public transport trade unions have been working to address both the occupational segregation within the sector, and the issues women face in the workplace, this report highlights that there is still much more to be done to ensure that the future of public transport employment provides safe and decent working conditions for women, as well as men.

The ITF's Our Public Transport programme is campaigning for public transport based on public ownership, public investment, secure jobs and union rights for workers in public and private employers.¹ This report has been commissioned by the ITF to support its campaign priorities on ending gender-

based occupational segregation in the transport industry and tackling violence against women transport workers. These aims were endorsed as priorities for action by the ITF Women Transport Workers' Committee at the ITF Women Transport Workers' Conference in Marrakech in November 2017, and require ITF affiliated unions to build the power of women trade unionists in the transport sector, and to tackle the gender culture within trade unions and transport workplaces. This report contributes to these objectives by:

- presenting evidence of the main issues facing women public transport workers around the world currently;
- highlighting how women in trade unions have been campaigning for change and what more needs to be done to organise and support women transport workers;
- examining how the development of new public transport systems is impacting on women's employment;
- discussing the impact of technological change on the employment of women public transport workers up to now; and
- considering the prospects of further technological innovation in public transport for women's future employment.

¹ www.ourpublictransport.org

Original research was conducted in five selected cities to build a picture of the major current and future issues facing women public transport workers. The five cities are:

- Bangkok, Thailand;
- Bogota, Colombia;
- Cape Town, South Africa;
- Mexico City, Mexico and
- Nairobi, Kenya.

The cities were selected for inclusion in the research as each has introduced, or is in the process of introducing, a new form of public transport system or is extending an existing transport mode that has significant implications for women's employment. There has been a rapid increase in the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems in developing countries (from 40 cities in 2007 to 207 by January 2016). Operating buses in dedicated lanes, BRT is being hailed as the ultimate "win-win" solution to urban public transport problems, contributing to economic development and environmental improvements, supported by finance from the World Bank.² However, the conditions attached to World Bank lending include the operation of a public-private partnership model, with private companies operating buses, the benefits of which have been contested,³ including by trade unions. Furthermore, trade unions are frequently ignored in consultations over the introduction of such systems, which typically do not

include consideration of the implications for workers, and especially women workers.⁴ In order to provide evidence of the benefits and risks to women workers, two of the cities featured in the report have a BRT system – Bogota introduced Transmilenio in 2000 and in Cape Town MyCiti was introduced in 2010 – and a third, Nairobi, has extensive plans for a BRT system, with the first phase due to open in December 2018. In Mexico City, where BRT was introduced in 2005, plans for upgrading the city's public transport include a proposal for a dedicated zero-emission corridor for electric buses. In Bangkok, an Asian megacity with a highly diverse public transport system, expansion has been in the form of rail, particularly the airport link opened in 2010, and ongoing expansion of the Sky Train and metro networks.

² Rizzo, M. (2015). The political economy of an urban megaproject: The Bus Rapid Transit project in Tanzania, *African Affairs* 114(455): 249-270.

³ Rizzo, *ibid*

⁴ ITF, World Bank-Bogota TransMilenio Project draft report, unpublished.

“ There are issues of significant concern to women working in public transport, such as lack of opportunities for training, inadequate representation in unions, poor working environment and lack of facilities, as well as the violence and harassment that they commonly face from colleagues and passengers, that unions are not adequately addressing. ”

1.1 THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

As background to the analysis of evidence from the five cities researched for this report, section 2 examines predictions for the future of work in the face of technological change, and considers how such changes are likely to affect the public transport workforce worldwide. The position of women public transport workers is often overlooked, and this report seeks to address the gap in evidence on the future of work for women public transport workers. Section 2 outlines patterns of gender segregation in the public transport workforce globally, showing women’s concentration in mostly lower-paying jobs, and exclusion from better-paid male-dominated roles. It then highlights women’s experience of exclusionary practices based on gendered assumptions and finally presents evidence of the scale of platform working in transport, highlighting the potential and risks for women from these new forms of work. This section notes the significant role for trade unions in ensuring that technological innovation benefits both public transport workers and passengers, with particular emphasis on women’s needs.

Section 3 outlines the research methodology used to collect original data for the report, primarily consisting of documentary analysis and interviews with women workers, trade union representatives and employers

undertaken by researchers in the five cities covered in the report. The rationale for the choice of cities is described, followed by a brief summary of the key features of each city’s public transport system.

The report then draws on the evidence collected in each city to first highlight the extent of gender segregation in the public transport workforce in section 4, which sets the scene for the subsequent examination of the working conditions and gender cultures facing women workers in public transport. Section 5 sets out the issues that need to be addressed by trade unions to improve the future of work for women in public transport. Section 6 of the report then turns to how technological change has affected public transport workers, and in particular women, to learn lessons for the future from this past experience, and to consider the implications of potential forthcoming technological developments. Forms of platform working, primarily in the taxi sector, are then explored in section 7, revealing the opportunities and risks for women workers.

Section 8 highlights the work that trade unions are doing to organise women in the public transport sector, and gives examples of where women workers are successfully mobilising within unions to improve working conditions and resist threats to jobs in the face of further automation. However it also finds that there are issues of significant concern to women working in public transport, such as lack of

opportunities for training, inadequate representation in unions, poor working environment and lack of facilities, as well as the violence and harassment that they commonly face from colleagues and passengers, that unions are not adequately addressing. These failings have important consequences for trade unions' ability to protect current women transport workers, as well as their capacity to organise to defend jobs in the face of the future challenges from further automation. There is therefore much more that transport unions should be doing to attract, retain and serve women public transport workers.

Finally in section 9 conclusions are drawn and recommendations made for trade unions to ensure that women's needs are fully included in discussions about the future of work in public transport.

Definitions

Digitalisation is the growing use of digital technology in transport, the global economy and society

Automation is one type of digitalisation in which machinery, systems or algorithms can be controlled remotely, or self-sufficiently.

'Digital platforms' (also the 'Gig' or 'platform economy') are online intermediaries that connect and control the flow of information between producers, distributors, employers, workers and consumers.

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the work processes of machines that would require intelligence if performed by humans. AI thus means 'investigating intelligent problem-solving behaviour and creating intelligent computer systems'.⁵ Advances in AI thus open up a far wider range of human tasks to potential automation.

⁵ TUC (2017). Shaping Our Digital Future: A TUC Discussion Paper. London: Trades Union Congress, p.10

2. BACKGROUND:

THE FUTURE OF
WORK IN PUBLIC
TRANSPORT,
GENDER AND
TECHNOLOGICAL
CHANGE



“ Women’s experience of exclusionary practices can take the form of socio-cultural assumptions and prescriptions about suitability for particular forms of work, patterns of work and hours that conflict with family responsibilities, lack of training and skills acquisition, inadequate provision of facilities such as toilets, protective equipment and uniforms, and violence and sexual harassment from passengers and colleagues.”

This section provides a review of existing research and evidence on the future of work, how it will impact on public transport and on women’s experiences of working in public transport. It first examines the range of predictions for the future of work in the face of technological change, outlining the key technological developments likely to affect work. It considers how such changes are likely to affect public transport and its workforce around the world. The position of women public transport workers is often overlooked in such discussions, and this report seeks to address the gap in existing evidence on the future of work for women public transport workers. This section examines women’s representation in the public transport workforce globally, highlighting patterns of segregation of women into particular, mostly lower-paying, roles, and exclusion from better-paid male-

dominated roles. Women’s experience of exclusionary practices can take the form of socio-cultural assumptions and prescriptions about suitability for particular forms of work, patterns of work and hours that conflict with family responsibilities, lack of training and skills acquisition, inadequate provision of facilities such as toilets, protective equipment and uniforms, and violence and sexual harassment from passengers and colleagues. The section then presents evidence of the scale of platform working in the provision of transport, highlighting the potential and risks for women from these new forms of work. This section concludes by noting the significant role for trade unions in ensuring that technological innovation is introduced with benefits for public transport workers and passengers, with particular emphasis on women’s needs.

2.1 THE FUTURE OF WORK AND TECHNOLOGY

There have been many predictions about the total number of global job losses from new technology, but these vary widely depending on the methodology used. Some methods have examined whole occupations, producing higher estimates of job loss, whereas others have pointed out that even occupations considered to be at high risk of automation still contain a substantial share of tasks that are difficult to automate.⁶ The varied estimates highlight the uncertainty surrounding predictions of future job loss. Furthermore it is important to note that most predictions are based on official data sources from the high-income OECD countries. Therefore they do not capture the likely extent of job loss in developing countries, where employment in the informal sector is much higher and therefore numbers are unrecorded. The informal sector provides large and growing numbers of transport workers across the world.⁷ Some analysts of predictions on the future of work, including the ITF, have argued that narratives on automation, the elimination of jobs, and a post-work society are inaccurate, with fears about technological change and the displacement of labour regularly resurrected in periods of low economic growth.⁸

Indeed history shows us that fears about technological innovation are not new and predictions are often incorrect. Technological change has consistently changed the nature of work from the first industrial revolution of the 19th century onwards, with many dramatic predictions over that period of job loss and a future without work. However, evidence shows that previous waves of technological change did not produce long-lived unemployment for several reasons. A report by the Centre for Future Work at the Australia Institute⁹ argued that job loss has been offset by many other factors, including new jobs in the development, production, and operation of new technology, alongside new tasks made possible by the new technology and shifts in macro-economic policies shaping the labour market.

Analysis has also shown that historically many occupations have experienced partial automation of certain tasks, together with an increase in the number of jobs in that occupation due to the fact that where a task is automated it can be performed more quickly or cheaply. Therefore the demand for workers to do other non-automated tasks associated with it may increase.¹⁰ Furthermore, technology has historically resulted in a steady decline in average working hours since the late 19th century, with average hours falling in OECD countries since the 1950s. This is associated with productivity growth, in that as productivity increases people choose to work less, thus average hours

⁶ TUC 2017

⁷ ITF (2017). *The Power of Informal Transport Workers: An ITF Education Booklet*. London: International Transport Workers' Federation

⁸ ITF Automation and digital transport, accessed 12 Sept 2018, <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/cross-sectoral-work/priority-projects/automation/>

⁹ Pennington, A. and J. Stanford (2017). *Technology, Work Organisation, and Employment in Public Transport*. Canberra: Centre for Future Work at the Australia Institute.

¹⁰ Lawrence, M., C. Roberts and L. King (2017). *Managing Automation Employment, inequality and ethics in the digital age*, Discussion paper. The IPPR Commission on Economic Justice.

worked per adult are significantly higher in low-income countries than in high-income countries with higher productivity rates.¹¹ On the other hand, early evidence from platform workers indicates that lack of regulation and competition between workers and among different platforms may reduce earnings and therefore require long working hours in order to gain an income. Therefore the way in which new forms of technology are being adopted and exploited may reverse the trend for reducing hours, at least for some types of workers, with the outcome dependant on factors such as the strength of labour organisation and regulation.¹²

There are other important ways in which the current period of technological change is different from previous waves, due to the nature of innovations in computing and automation that are encroaching into a new range of tasks. Forms of automation developed from machine learning and artificial intelligence can increasingly undertake non-routine tasks that require judgment, flexibility, and decision-making capacity.¹³ Thus it is not only low-skilled jobs that are vulnerable to the current wave of automation and digitalisation. However, to date evidence on the effects of technological change shows a polarising effect on the UK labour market, with the share of employment in high skilled occupations increasing in the last two decades, alongside the share of low-skilled jobs, while the share of middle-skilled employment has declined.¹⁴

In the transport sector too, the impact of technology on the future of work is difficult to predict, although estimations have highlighted the high risk of job loss from automation, for example to ticket selling jobs and other clerical and administrative functions, as well as to driving occupations from driverless vehicle systems.¹⁵ On the other hand, some have indicated a possible growth in transportation and logistics roles, due to the need to connect countries and industries in the wake of increasing globalization, as well as increasing numbers of travellers from rising middle classes in emerging markets.¹⁶

The risks and benefits from automation are not shared equally among workers, though, and a report from the UK's Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) shows that – while automation is increasingly also likely to affect high skilled work – jobs with the highest potential for automation typically have lower wages. On average, low wage jobs have five times the potential to be automated compared to high paid jobs. Furthermore, a greater proportion of jobs held by women in the UK are likely to be technically automatable, compared to men. Additionally women make up a smaller proportion of those in high-skill occupations that are more resilient to automation. Different patterns of labour market participation also mean that automation risks exacerbating inequality between ethnic groups, as there are higher proportion of some ethnic groups (such as Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) working in low-skill potentially

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² Labour Research (2016). Are workers getting a fair share of this gig? August 2016, London: Labour Research Department.

¹³ Pennington et al 2017

¹⁴ Lawrence et al 2017

¹⁵ Frey and Osborne 2016, p. 48, cited in Pennington et al 2017

¹⁶ World Economic Forum 2016

automatable occupations in the UK. The IPPR report concludes that while automation is unlikely create a future of mass joblessness, it seems likely that it will accelerate inequalities of wealth and income without significant policy intervention.¹⁷ Thus it is clear that how technological change is implemented is a policy choice, and one that will be determined by who holds power over such decisions.

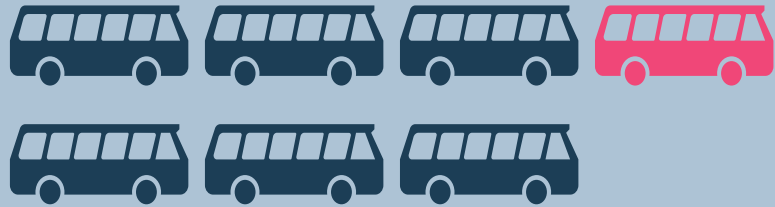
The rather more optimistic World Economic Forum report emphasises the potential to reduce gender gaps in employment, as women continue to enter the workforce in increasing numbers and to fill labour shortages in some areas, together with the potential for technology to offer more flexible work. However it also recognises that many of the office and administrative occupations held by women are being lost, while many of the growth occupations are male-dominated (i.e. architecture, engineering, computing). Feminist writers have revealed the historical association of technology with masculinity, uncovering the social and cultural beliefs that naturalise male skills and abilities as technical, physical and rational, while women are assumed to excel in social, personal and communication skills.¹⁸ Such constructions shape the jobs that are considered appropriate for women and men. Wacjman notes that despite the rhetoric proclaiming opportunities for women in the new knowledge economy, men continue to dominate technological jobs, with women's representation in information technology, electronics and communications actually declining by around 10 per cent. She concludes that "gender is a marker that still functions to sort out high-tech from low-tech or no-tech."¹⁹

“ However there has been little research on women’s experiences of working in transport occupations, with the literature on women and transport typically focusing on gender differences in transport use and its limitations on women’s labour market participation. ”

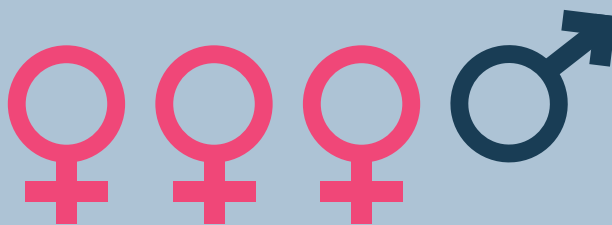
¹⁷ Lawrence et al 2017, p.24

¹⁸ Cockburn, C. (1983), *Brothers : male dominance and technological change*. London: Pluto; Wacjman, J. (2006), *New connections: social studies of science and technology and studies of work*. *Work, Employment and Society* 20(4): 773-786.

¹⁹ Wacjman 2006, p.780



LABORSTAT figures indicate that women constitute only **one in seven transport workers** around the world.



Despite their relatively small numbers, LABORSTAT data show that women suffered **three-quarters of the job losses** in transport between 2008 and 2011.



Women's presence in technical or operational roles such as drivers is especially low – often **under 10 per cent**.

2.2 WOMEN IN THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT WORKFORCE

Thus while automation and digitalisation may be heralded as opportunities to increase jobs and improve working conditions, including in the transport sector, women's unequal participation in the transport workforce currently should be recognised. Data on the employment of women in the transport sector internationally are difficult to find, but available data suggest that women are massively under-represented in transport work; LABORSTAT figures indicate that women constitute only one in seven transport workers around the world. But despite their relatively small numbers, LABORSTAT data show that women suffered three-quarters of the job losses in transport between 2008 and 2011.²⁰ Wide country variations exist, with women accounting for 30 per cent of those in transport, storage and communications occupations in Botswana (compared to 43 per cent labour market participation) but only one per cent in Pakistan (compared to 13 per cent labour market participation).²¹ In the 27 EU member states in 2006, 21 per cent of the labour force in transport were women, with air transport jobs such as flight attendants and check-in and customer services accounting for large proportions of women.²² In the urban public transport sector in the EU, women accounted for only 17.5 per cent of employees overall, with proportions of women

varying by country from five to 31 per cent.²³ Women's presence in technical or operational roles such as drivers is especially low – often under 10 per cent.

The reasons for women's low participation in the transport sector can be classified into two areas: poor working conditions, including the timing and place of work, experiences of harassment and violence; and gender stereotyping, which prevents women from choosing transport occupations and can mean women are made unwelcome when they do enter such work, therefore affecting their retention. However there has been little research on women's experiences of working in transport occupations, with the literature on women and transport typically focusing on gender differences in transport use and its limitations on women's labour market participation.²⁴

Working hours and the difficulties of achieving work-life balance have been identified as one of the key barriers to women's participation in transport occupations, particularly in urban transport jobs such as bus, tram and train driving, together with the 'male working culture' and presence of gender stereotypes.²⁵ A significant issue for women working in operational transport roles is violence, with the industry recording one of the highest levels of violence towards employees. Violence was the main concern raised by women in research conducted for the International

²⁰ Turnbull, P. (2013). Promoting the employment of women in the transport sector: Obstacles and policy

²¹ Turnbull 2013, table 1, p.3

²² Turnbull 2013, p.5

²³ Project WISE (2012). Women Employment in Urban Public Transport Sector. Cologne: Germany, VDV-Akademie e.V.

²⁴ Wright, T. (2016). Gender and sexuality in male-dominated occupations: women workers in construction and transport. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

²⁵ Wright, T. (2016). Gender and sexuality in male-dominated occupations: women workers in construction and transport. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Labour Organization.²⁶ This may take the form of harassment, abuse or violence from male colleagues – often to signal that women are unwelcome in a ‘man’s job’ – but is also commonly experienced from passengers.²⁷ While trade unions are increasingly likely to take a public stance against sexual harassment and bullying through policy statements, guidelines for union representatives and union training, there remain occasions when women fail to receive support from union officers when reporting sexual or homophobic harassment.²⁸ Therefore unions need to do more to ensure that women feel confident to report harassment to the union, and to know that appropriate action will be taken.

“ The introduction of new transport systems such as Bus Rapid Transit typically includes objectives to replace exploitative informal jobs with better, formal jobs. However, it has been noted that women sometimes do not benefit from opportunities to transition from informal to formal work, with difficulties in gaining access to vehicle licensing and other forms of training, which is often dominated by men. ”

Many of the world’s transport workers are informal, occupying a range of positions from bus, minivan and taxi drivers, conductors, despatchers, porters, cleaners, inspectors, booking clerks and ticket agents to associated roles at transport terminals such as toilet attendants, security guards, food vendors and waste-pickers. Informal transport work is growing globally with the proliferation of transport jobs in the “gig economy”, including in the “developed world”. In some countries women are found in significant numbers as informal drivers, vehicle-owners and conductors, but they are most commonly found in the most precarious, vulnerable and low paid jobs – cleaning, vending, catering etc.²⁹

The introduction of new transport systems such as Bus Rapid Transit typically includes objectives to replace exploitative informal jobs with better, formal jobs. However, it has been noted that women sometimes do not benefit from opportunities to transition from informal to formal work, with difficulties in gaining access to vehicle licensing and other forms of training, which is often dominated by men.³⁰

²⁶ Turnbull 2013

²⁷ Wright 2016

²⁸ TUC Equality Audit 2016; Wright 2016

²⁹ ITF 2017

³⁰ ibid

“ In 2018 Uber claims to operate in over 600 cities across 78 countries, with an estimated 18 per cent of people globally having used a ride-hailing service in the 12 months to 2017, and predictions of an eightfold increase in ride-hailing by 2030, with total trips rising to 100 million a day.”

2.3 PLATFORM WORK

Platform working has already significantly impacted on the form and nature of employment for millions of workers worldwide and will continue to change the way work is organised, to affect the content and quality of jobs and to redefine the nature of the employment relationship. Also known as the gig economy, platform work is characterised by non-standard forms of employment, flexibility, often irregular hours and inconsistent earnings, with competition between firms and platform workers to offer the lowest price, therefore reducing earnings.³¹ While it affects many types of work, platform work has a major impact on transport workers, particularly taxi drivers with the advent of ride-hailing apps, with the most widespread currently being Uber, although several other platforms exist.

The extent of platform work and the size of the gig economy are not yet known. Research in the United States estimates that only 0.5 per cent of the US workforce earns the majority of their income through app-based platforms, while surveys by Huws and Joyce

find that three per cent of United Kingdom residents work via online platforms at least once a week, while two per cent of German respondents state that represents their only source of income.³² The value of platform working has been estimated as being worth \$63 billion by 2020.³³ In 2018 Uber claims to operate in over 600 cities across 78 countries, with an estimated 18 per cent of people globally having used a ride-hailing service in the 12 months to 2017, and predictions of an eightfold increase in ride-hailing by 2030, with total trips rising to 100 million a day.³⁴

A report by the International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group) and Uber promotes platform work and ride hailing as a way of increasing flexible employment opportunities for women. A survey of women in six countries found that flexible working was the most popular reason given for choosing this work by women drivers (cited by 74 per cent of women compared to 64 per cent of men). The report suggests that ride-hailing platforms are enabling greater numbers of women to enter taxi driving jobs, with about 20 per cent of drivers who use the Uber app in the United States being women. However figures were

³¹ Johnston, H. and C. Land-Kazlauskas (2018). Organizing on-demand: Representation, voice, and collective bargaining in the gig economy. Geneva: International Labour Organization.

³² ILO 2018

³³ ITF (2018). Digital inequality, ITF policy briefing, March 2018

³⁴ IFC and Uber (2018). Driving Toward Equality: Women, ride-hailing, and the sharing economy. Washington: International Finance Corporation and Uber Technologies.

considerably lower for the six countries examined in the report: the average was 2.3 per cent women drivers, with the highest proportion in Mexico at 5.2 per cent. The report gave some evidence of a boost to women's income from driving work. Analysis of Uber earnings data indicated that women drivers' income was 13 percent higher on average than before they began working with Uber, compared to a seven per cent increase for men. This is partly explained by the fact that women drivers surveyed were less likely than men to have been working full time before signing up. The barriers to women joining Uber were primarily felt to stem from concerns about safety and security. In addition, women face greater difficulties than men in getting access to a vehicle.

Despite the potential economic benefit to women from platform work, an analysis of earnings of over a million US Uber drivers³⁵ found a gender pay gap, with men earning roughly seven per cent more per hour than women on average. The authors explain the gap by three elements. Firstly, hourly earnings vary by location and time of week, and men tend to drive in more lucrative locations. Men tend to live near more profitable locations and are more willing to drive in areas with higher crime and more drinking establishments where women may feel

unsafe. Secondly, more previous experience predicts higher earnings, and male drivers accumulate more experience by driving more each week and by continuing to drive with Uber. The third factor is average driving speed, which typically increases driver earnings by enabling them to complete trips more quickly and therefore undertake more trips. The authors state that men's higher driving speed seems to result from preferences, as there is no evidence that drivers respond to the incentive to drive faster.

Concerns about the safety of women passengers have been aired in the media. A worrying investigation by CNN³⁶ in the United States found that at least 103 Uber drivers in the US had been accused of sexually assaulting or abusing their passengers in the past four years. As there is no publicly available data on the number of sexual assaults by Uber drivers or those working for other ride-hailing companies, CNN analysed police reports, federal court records and county court databases for 20 major US cities. The CNN investigation revealed that at least 31 drivers had been convicted for crimes ranging from forcible touching and false imprisonment to rape, with dozens of other cases pending.

³⁵ Cook, C., R. Diamond, J. Hall, J. A. List and P. Oyer (2018). The Gender Earnings Gap in the Gig Economy: Evidence from over a Million Rideshare Drivers. Stanford University Graduate School of Business. Working Paper No. 3637.

³⁶ O'Brien, S. A., Black, N., Devine, C., & Griffin, D. (2018), 103 Uber drivers accused of sexual assault or abuse. Retrieved 9 August 2018 from <https://money.cnn.com/2018/04/30/technology/uber-driver-sexual-assault/index.html>

2.4 THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS

This background section has highlighted the challenges as well as opportunities facing trade unions in the face of future technological developments. Many have argued that technological change is neither inevitable nor is technology itself neutral. The academic field of social studies of science and technology began to challenge solely objective, scientific understandings of technology from the 1970s, revealing technology to be “a sociotechnical product, patterned by the conditions of its creation and use.”³⁷

An important distinction between the use of new technologies and the way that work is subsequently organised, using that technology, to provide public transport services was made in a report by the Centre for Future Work in Australia.³⁸ It highlighted that new platform providers, such as Uber, have adopted business models using on-demand, contingent labour: “but that practice should never be interpreted as a natural or inevitable outcome of the technology itself. Rather, the conjuncture between digital technology and the expansion of insecure, precarious work reflects the ability of employers to capitalise on their economic power in the present labour market.”³⁹

Therefore trade unions, in alliance with public transport groups and community organisations, have a crucial role to play in ensuring that innovative technology is introduced in ways that improve the efficiency and

quality of public transport, which is intrinsically linked to decent standards of work. There may be work to do, though, for trade unions to convince workers that they are doing enough. A recent UK survey⁴⁰ found that while most workers are optimistic about the future of work in the face of technological change, around 37 per cent of the population (or 10 million people) believe their job will change for the worse, particularly among public sector workers (45 per cent). And they did not believe that the government, employers and unions were doing enough to help adaptation: only 16 per cent of employees who have trade union(s) in their workplace agreed that trade unions are ensuring that new technologies improve work. Thirty-eight per cent did not agree, while a further 21 per cent said they didn't know.

“Therefore trade unions, in alliance with public transport groups and community organisations, have a crucial role to play in ensuring that innovative technology is introduced in ways that improve the efficiency and quality of public transport, which is intrinsically linked to decent standards of work.”

³⁷ Wajcman 2006.

³⁸ Pennington et al 2017

³⁹ Ibid, p.85

⁴⁰ Community and Fabian Society Commission on Workers and Technology (2018). Workers and technology: our hopes and fears. Retrieved 6 August 2018 from <https://fabians.org.uk/workers-and-technology-our-hopes-and-fears>

Nevertheless, many trade unions and union federations globally are keenly aware of the challenges they face in organising and defending members in the face of both technological developments and the new forms of employment relationships that are being engendered by platform working and the gig economy. Legal challenges to the model of self-employment adopted by Uber and others have been made by unions in several countries, with some successes for example in the UK,⁴¹ but this remains a developing and contested area of labour rights, as examples from the countries featured in this report will show.

This section has shown, and the remainder of this report will emphasise, that women's needs as transport users are often prioritised over discussion of women as transport workers. Of course the two issues intertwine, and the means for women to gain access to employment is a vital aspect of women's empowerment. However women transport workers should not be forgotten, and this report shows that women's needs are not always sufficiently addressed by transport unions. Through listening to the views of women expressed in this report, unions should be able to formulate more inclusive strategies and action plans.

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⁴¹ Labour Research (2018). Cracking down on gig economy exploitation, February 2018. London: Labour Research Department.

3. METHODOLOGY



3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to gain a global perspective on the future of work for women in public transport, five cities were selected as the focus for the research. Each of the cities has introduced, or is in the process of introducing, a new form of transport system or is extending an existing transport mode that has significant implications for women's employment. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was introduced in Bogota in 2000, in the form of Transmilenio, and a similar BRT system, MyCiti was introduced in Cape Town in 2010 in time for the World Cup. Nairobi has extensive plans to introduce a BRT system, with the first phase due to open in December 2018. In Mexico City, plans for upgrading the city's public transport include a proposal for a dedicated zero-emission corridor for electric buses, while in Bangkok, public transport expansion has been in the form of rail, particularly the airport link opened in 2010, and expansion of the skytrain and metro networks.

The research adopted a collaborative research methodology, which involved researchers conducting fieldwork in each of the five selected cities, in

consultation and discussion with the ITF Women's Department and the external research co-ordinator. Researchers in each of the five cities were contracted by the ITF to undertake documentary analysis and fieldwork, and produce a research report. They were supported by ITF regional officials, who provided links to relevant trade unions in each city.

The primary data collection methods were a review of documentary evidence and face-to-face and telephone interviews. Types of documents reviewed included: academic journals; newspaper and magazine articles and web sources; television documentaries and clips; reports from national and international organisations covering the future of work and technology; national and regional policy documents on transport; company documentation; and union reports.

Researchers sought data on numbers of workers employed in different modes of public transport, broken down by gender. However these data proved difficult to obtain in some cities where national data is not available or where informal working is common. In some cases informed estimates were provided by union respondents or other experts.

Across the five cities, 164 interviews were carried out with a range of stakeholders, which covered:

- Women public transport workers
- Union representatives within public transport plus representatives from the ITF regional offices
- Community organisations and NGOs with a focus on women's rights and/or urban transport
- Policy makers, local politicians and employers

Researchers followed the ethical research protocols pertaining to their organisations, and in addition a participant consent form was provided by the ITF, which outlined the nature of the consent to participate given, as well as how data would be stored and used, and confirming the participant's anonymity. In some cases interviewees were not willing to sign formal consent forms, and in these cases, their details are kept confidential to the local researchers. They nonetheless provided verbal consent prior to the interviews.

An innovative aspect of the research methodology was a participatory workshop held in Bogota during the research period, attended by 20 participants, including all local researchers, nine union representatives from the cities covered in the report,⁴² ITF head office and regional representatives and research co-ordinator Tessa Wright. Interpretation was provided in English, Spanish and Thai to enable full participation. This three-day workshop, organised by the ITF and FES, and hosted at the offices of SNTT, provided a valuable opportunity for researchers to present and discuss

their initial findings with the other researchers and the ITF team. In addition, the union representatives from the different cities were able to comment on the initial research findings and to present their experiences of organising and campaigning for women within the public transport sector. Exchange of ideas was facilitated through several formats: presentations followed by questions and discussion; small group workshop-type discussions; focus group sessions and interviews.

Researchers communicated via regular conference calls with Claire Clarke and Jodi Evans, ITF Women's Department, and research co-ordinator Tessa Wright, as well as via email. All city research reports were submitted to the research co-ordinator, for synthesis and inclusion in this overall report.

⁴² with the exception of Cape Town, where SATAWU was unable to attend

3.2 THE SELECTED CITIES

To provide context for the analysis of key themes discussed in the rest of the report, this section briefly outlines the key features of the public transport system in each city, plus the main public transport unions.

Bangkok

While bus remains the most commonly used form of public transport in Bangkok, use of urban rail has been increasing. The rail system has expanded since the launch of the BTS Sky Train in 1999, operated by Bangkok Mass Transit System Public Company Limited. It also includes trains run by the State Railway of Thailand, the Metro (known as MRT), with the first 'Blue Line' opening in 2004, and the Airport Rail Link, opened in 2010. The Metro has expanded to add a Purple Line, with the ongoing construction of a Pink Line, Yellow Line, Red Line and Orange Line. There is also construction work to extend the Sky Train from 38.1 km to 215 km in 2023 and the Metro from 43 km to 70 km in 2019.

While Uber has withdrawn from the platform taxi market in Thailand, Grab (partly owned by Uber) All Thai Taxi, Taxi Beam and LINE Taxi all operate taxis, although personal vehicles are not licensed to provide taxi services which limits the operation of platform services.

Unions exist at the two state-owned transport operators, the State Railways and at the Airport Rail Link, in the form of the SRUT and the SEETU. However the Metro and Sky Train have no unions, nor is there a union presence at the taxi firm Grab.

Bogota

Before 2000 the transport system in Bogota was dominated by buses, known as *busetas*. These are known for precarious working conditions and poor personal security, which push drivers to compete for as many passengers as possible, a practice called “*la guerra del centavo*” (“the penny war”), where profit is derived from the use of old vehicles (buses over 20 years old) and exploitation of drivers through excessive working hours. The system is based on a “one bus, one man” model, using owner-drivers or subcontracted drivers. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was introduced in Bogota in 2000, in the form of Transmilenio. In 2012 other buses were incorporated into the Sistema Integrado de Transporte Público (SITP), which complements the BRT as an expanded feeder system. This was accompanied by some automation of ticket sales and the introduction of an integrated card for all BRT and SITP services. *Busetas* still operate, but they are gradually being formalized through the SITP system. TransMilenio S.A. is the managing entity of the BRT system, under a public-private model, which subcontracts bus operation and maintenance to 18 companies, the collection of fares and the provision of technological services (i.e. screens inside buses and stations) to one company, Recaudo Bogota S.A.S., and further subcontracting of cleaning services in buses and stations.

Uber started in Colombia in 2013, now with approximately 83,000 drivers. However for Uber and other platforms like Cabify, Pícap and Beat, the legal position is inconsistent in Bogota as the platform legally exists, but drivers using the platform operate outside the regulatory regime.

The union that represents Transmilenio workers is Sintratransmilenio. The unions that represent the drivers are UgeTrans and SNTT. Recaudo Bogotá workers are represented by SintraRecaudo (currently in the process of merging with SNTT). Although the SNTT has attempted to organise platform taxi workers, they have had little success so far mainly because of the lack of legal status for platform drivers in Colombia.

Cape Town

Minibus taxis account for almost two-thirds of public transport in South Africa. Minibus taxis are generally 16-seater minibuses which travel on specific routes, with flexible pick up and drop off points. Apart from the driver there is often a conductor who collects fares and gathers up potential passengers. Many of the taxi drivers work for an owner who might have several taxis. Taxi owners and drivers are organized into a number of different associations which protect their particular routes from competition. Conflict between taxi owners, between different associations, and between taxis and government can sometimes break out into violence.

In Cape Town, rail accounts for 47 per cent of public transport use, minibus taxi for 32 per cent, and bus is 21 per cent. In addition there are metered taxis and an increasing presence of platform taxi operators. Bus services include the legacy bus system run by a private company (Golden Arrow Bus Services or GABS) under contract to the provincial government, and the BRT system, MyCiti, introduced in Cape Town in 2010 in time for the World Cup. The first phase of the BRT, which consists of two trunk lines – Dunoon-Table View-Civic Centre-Waterfront and Atlantis-Table View-Omuramba – was criticised for only meeting the needs of middle class users, so the second phase

had an explicit commitment to extend into working class areas. The BRT uses a public-private model, with ownership of the infrastructure, buses, stations and routes remaining in the hands of the city authority, while private companies (currently four) provide the drivers and run the bus service. The city also has contracts with companies to provide security services and cleaning, cashiers etc.

The city has also seen a recent expansion of platform transport in the form of Uber and Taxify, resulting in conflict with metered taxis and protests against their employer by the app workers.

There are a number of different unions operating in the public transport sector in Cape Town. They include SATAWU, NUMSA, TOWU and Tirisano Transport and Services Workers' Union. SATAWU is the majority union in the transport sector as a whole, but NUMSA is the majority union at MyCiti. About 600 Uber drivers are members of SATAWU.

Mexico City

Public transport (including taxis and ride-sharing) in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area (Valley of Mexico) represents 45 per cent of all trips made. Public transport is operated by a mixture of public and private sector bodies, with the subway, trolleybus, light rail and some buses government owned and operated. The M1 (Mobility System 1) is a government-run and subsidised network of buses operating 94 routes, providing cheap fares, while the BRT and suburban train is run under a mixed public-private model. Bus, minibus and taxi services are subcontracted to companies or individual owner-drivers, while ride-hailing cars and bike taxis are regulated, but motorbike taxis are unregulated.

Mexico City is said to be Uber's busiest global city, with 50,000 drivers.⁴³ Several other companies operate private taxis via platform apps: Cabify, CityDrive, Didi and Laudrive, which has only women drivers and passengers. Two other companies use both taxis and private cars, Easy Taxi and Taxify, and in addition Urban, Jetty and Bussi run collective taxi services using shuttles or vans.

Unions represent workers in the state-run STE, the electric transport company that runs trolleybuses, light rail and electric taxis, through the ATM and on the public-private subway (STC) through the SDITSTC, the SNTSTC and the ASTM. In Mexico City there is no organisation of platform drivers. Some new transport unions are emerging, such as the Sindicato Democrático Independiente de Trabajadores del Sistema de Transporte Colectivo, the Sindicato de Trabajadores del Transporte de Pasajero del DF and the Colectivo Metrobús Toluca Ya.

“ Mexico City is said to be Uber's busiest global city, with 50,000 drivers. Several other companies operate private taxis via platform apps: Cabify, CityDrive, Didi and Laudrive, which has only women drivers and passengers. ”

⁴³ Lehr, L. (2017). Growing LatAm Marketplaces Face Mass Payouts Hurdles, AMI Perspectiva, 9 February. Retrieved 9 August 2018; <https://amiperspectiva.americasmi.com/growing-latam-marketplaces-face-mass-payments-hurdles/>

Nairobi

Kenya's public transport is largely run through the informal matatu sector, which includes buses, minibuses and 14-seater vehicles. It is estimated that about 8,000 matatus operate along close to 70 routes in Nairobi and carry about 400,000 passengers per day. Matatus are organised into Savings and Credit Cooperatives Societies (SACCOs) which regulate the workers in the sector. The National Transport and Safety Authority awards operating route licences to the SACCOs. There are an estimated 200 SACCOs operating in Nairobi. Rail transport in the city provides services during peak hours along selected routes. There are also private bus companies running cross-city routes, such as the Kenya Bus Service (KBS), City Hoppa, City Shuttle and Double M. The previous state-run National Youth Service (NYS) bus company (Nyayo buses) collapsed due to competition, mismanagement and corruption, however NYS has recently been re-established to provide bus services on selected city routes, in preparation for introduction of BRT in Nairobi. The first phase of the BRT will involve the launch of an express bus service along one corridor (Thika Superhighway), due to open in December 2018, with the construction of BRT infrastructure and full BRT services in later phases.

In addition to matatu drivers and conductors, many other informal jobs are associated with the matatu sector, primarily stage workers, which include callers (kamagera), porters/loaders, pigasetti (who sit in vehicles and pose as passengers to create the impression that the vehicle is getting full; as passengers get in, they leave the vehicle), stage managers, clerks and wardens, stage security workers (screen boarding passengers for security), supervisors and managers.

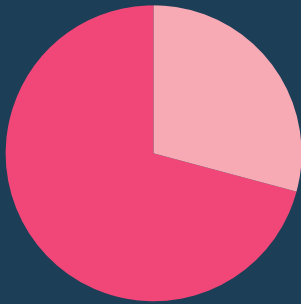
Several platform companies also operate taxis in Nairobi, including Uber, Taxify, Little Cab, Pewin, Fone Taxi, ShareCab, Mondo, and Nyumbani. Car sharing/pooling companies have emerged like Ubabi Vanpooling Society.



4. GENDER SEGREGATION IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT EMPLOYMENT

Women's participation in public transport was low overall in all the countries covered by the study, with typical patterns of gender segregation into clerical and administrative roles and only small numbers of women in driving or managerial positions. However there was variation, and growth in some areas. Mexico City showed a high rate of women's participation in the transport industry at 29.1 per cent of its 19,989 workers in 2014. This compares to the average workforce participation rate of 41.6 per cent for women in the city, but is almost three times the national rate of 10.8 per cent for women working in public transport. Additionally Mexico City saw a growth of seven percentage points in women's participation in transport occupations in 10 years, compared to a 3.2 percentage point increase nationally (2004-2014). The precise reasons for this growth are unclear, but may be due to a combination of factors, such as job loss among men in the reduction of public transport companies between 2009 and 2014, together with the hiring of women in the BRT operations from 2005, and government policies to increase women's workforce participation.

MEXICO CITY



Mexico City showed a high rate of women's participation in the transport industry at **29.1 per cent of its 19,989 workers in 2014.**



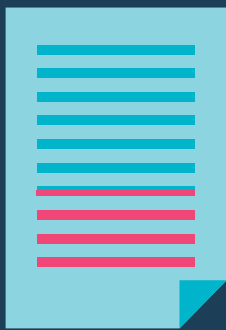
35%

women on the subway

31%

women on electric vehicles

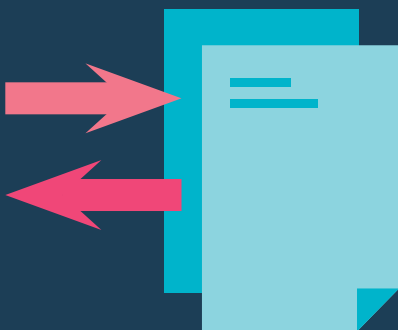
Government-operated transport tends to employ more women, especially on the subway (**35 per cent**) and on electric vehicles (**31 per cent**).



Women are employed principally in administrative roles in Mexico, representing **36.7 per cent of all transport jobs.**



Only 26.1 per cent of driver and operation support jobs are held by women, which include fare collection and maintenance.



Outsourced jobs also typically have more women, with participation of **32.3 per cent.**



Women represent just **2.5 per cent of bus owners.**

“ Mexico City showed a high rate of women’s participation in the transport industry at 29.1 per cent of its 19,989 workers in 2014. ”

The proportions of women working in urban transport varies according to mode in Mexico. Government-operated transport tends to employ more women, especially on the subway (35 per cent) and on electric vehicles (31 per cent). Various factors could explain this trend, including: the need for administrative positions for central operation control and planning; the existence of trade unions in the public sector organisations; and the obligation that these types of transport have to follow policies with a gender focus. The local government offices that run the subway, electric buses and M1 buses have had equality units since 2017 with the aim of mainstreaming gender equality into all policy processes, including a gender-focused strategy to improve the organizational environment and culture. Bus companies are typically less regulated, so any policies to include women would be voluntary, and these companies do not normally have union presence.

In common with other countries, women are employed principally in administrative roles in Mexico, representing 36.7 per cent of all transport jobs. Outsourced jobs also typically have more women, with participation of 32.3 per cent. It is worth noting that outsourcing contracts usually have precarious conditions, placing these women in more vulnerable positions. Only 26.1 per cent of driver and operation support jobs are held by women, which include fare collection and maintenance. Women represent just 2.5 per cent of bus owners.

“ South Africa has also seen a recent increase of 19 per cent in the employment of women in the transport industry between 2017 and 2018, bringing the number of women employed to an estimated 203,000, or 20 per cent of all workers in the sector.”

South Africa has also seen a recent increase of 19 per cent in the employment of women in the transport industry between 2017 and 2018, bringing the number of women employed to an estimated 203,000, or 20 per cent of all workers in the sector. Total figures for Cape Town are not available, but according to one informant interviewed, women account for 38 out of the 112 drivers (34 per cent) at one of the companies operating running buses for MyCiti. The roles of regulator and dispatcher are also typically male. Regulators, who are based at bus stations and ensure the buses go out, were nine men and four women at one of the BRT operating companies, while among dispatchers, who are based at depots and monitor the arrival and departure of buses, five were men and one woman. Cashiers (known as ambassadors by the bus companies) are mainly women.

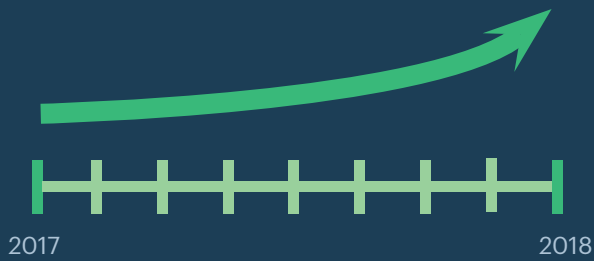
Minibus taxis, which operate as a main form of public transport across South Africa, have historically been male dominated. The origins of the taxi industry lie in the apartheid system when public transport, particularly for the working class, was completely inadequate. Many taxis started operating illegally, without permits, in order to get people to work. In addition, the movement of black men and women was tightly controlled, particularly in the cities. During the 1970s many white middle class South Africans drove large Valiant cars, but these became a burden when

the oil crisis struck and many were bought by black men who began using them as taxis. They used them to transport workers in and out of white areas where they worked, and driving Valiants made them less identifiable.

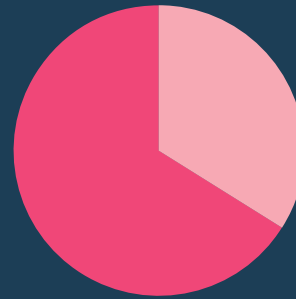
When MyCiti was introduced in Cape Town, negotiations were held with the taxi industry, who feared loss of work as a result of the new system, to prioritise taxi drivers in recruitment. This was part of a strategy to ensure black economic empowerment, in compliance with South African legislation. However in this instance, the practice also replicated pre-existing patterns of male-domination in the new workforce.

The City of Cape Town employs various staff to ensure the functioning of the MyCiti system, many of whom are women. These jobs include working as part of contract management, schedule management, footage viewing and operating controllers (nearly all women). The city council outsourced cleaning services to a company called AEM in around 2013, transferring the mainly female workforce from two of the vehicle operating companies (VOCs). As a result of working fewer hours, some workers found their wages nearly halved. They were also made to work on public holidays and not paid for overtime and those on night shift not transported home.

CAPE TOWN



South Africa has also seen a recent increase of **19 per cent** in the employment of women in the transport industry between 2017 and 2018, bringing the number of women employed to an estimated **203,000**, or **20 per cent** of all workers in the sector.



Total figures for Cape Town are not available, but according to one informant interviewed, women account for **38 out of the 112 drivers (34 per cent)** at one of the companies operating running buses for MyCiti. The roles of regulator and dispatcher are also typically male.



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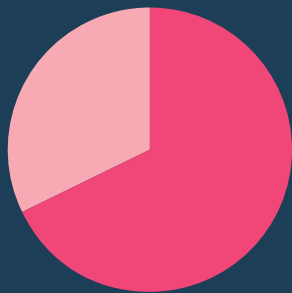
BOGOTA



In the Bogota bus sector, women are also more likely to be employed in public sector positions (**women are 37 per cent of workers**) or as contractors (**professionals, mainly engineers, running the BRT operation centrally, of whom half are women**).



Figures on employment among the sub-contractors operating bus services for TransMilenio and SITP, show that only **1.2 per cent of drivers are women**.



In 2018 Recaudo Bogota employed 2,751 workers, of whom **1,871 were women (68 per cent)**, in service positions at stations, in equipment maintenance and in office positions.



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In Bogota the collection of fares and the provision of technological services, such as screens inside buses and stations, is contracted to a private company, Recaudo Bogota S.A.S. In 2018 it employs 2,751 workers, of whom 1,871 are women (68 per cent), in service positions at stations, in equipment maintenance and in office positions. Most of the workers are in user service positions as ticket sellers

–approximately 2,100 workers – and the SintraRecaudo union estimates that 80 per cent are women. These are divided into two roles: Representatives of Information and Control (RIC) and Attention Representatives (AR). The AR are in charge of money management at the ticket office or outside it, while the RIC are located at the entrance barrier and give information on routes and frequencies. Each station can have between four and 10 fare collectors (depending on whether it is a main station or an intermediate station). However, due to the high volume of passengers, according to the Inspection Office, security staff have had to undertake additional functions, such as reporting on routes, frequencies and schedules, and other tasks not included in the job description, such as preventing users from accessing the system without paying, which has already claimed a fatality among the workers and many instances of violence against them.

“ estimates from interviews indicate that there are few women drivers, typically only around one out of 10 drivers, whereas three or four out of 10 conductors are women. Other jobs include stage workers, who include the stage managers, wardens, and supervisors, security staff. Some also work as secretaries, accountants or as insurance agents/valuers.”

In Nairobi actual data on the number of men and women workers in the transport sector is not available, primarily as most of it is informal work, through the matatu sector. However estimates from interviews indicate that there are few women drivers, typically only around one out of 10 drivers, whereas three or four out of 10 conductors are women. Other jobs include stage workers, who include the stage managers, wardens, and supervisors, security staff. Some also work as secretaries, accountants or as insurance agents/valuers. Similar to the findings of a recent study of matatu workers,⁴⁴ this research found most women public transport workers to be young, with an average age of 32 years, with the youngest at 23 years and the oldest 42 years.

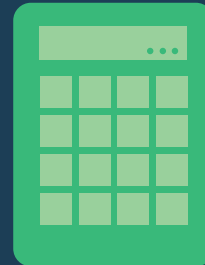
Other jobs in the sector where women work include crew or SACCO managers, accountants and clerks, as well those who own vehicles but give them to SACCOs to manage. From the interviews carried out, only two out of 29 women worked as drivers, one of whom was a relief driver. Most worked as conductors (16 out of 29) and stage managers/wardens/supervisors (eight out of 29). Three worked as callers (kamagera) and one as an accountant. Most (27 out of 29) were in permanent employment, with only two women being casually employed. This means that women in the transport sector are more likely to work as employees as opposed to being self-employed (owning their own business).

⁴⁴ Spooner, D. (2018). Nairobi Bus Rapid Transit Labour Impact Assessment: Preliminary Research & Baseline Study Report. Manchester: Global Labour Institute

NAIROBI



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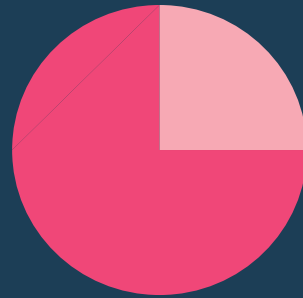
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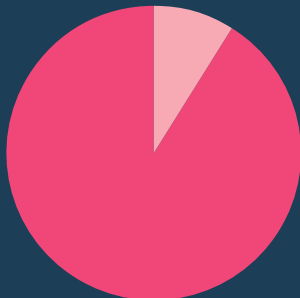
BANGKOK



In Bangkok's urban rail sector women occupy many positions in Skytrain, Metro and Airport Rail Link, as technicians, station masters and assistants, train operators, safety officers and security guards, and in public relations, as well as representing **the majority of workers in ticketing.**



Figures provided for the Airport Rail Link show that women account for a quarter of its 500 employees **(153 women and 347 men).**



The State Railway of Thailand, where women work as train hosts, general service officers and in finance, has **10 per cent women employees (1,503 women and 13,079 men), but no women drivers.**




Women have recently begun to enter train operating jobs on the Sky train Metro, with women drivers joining the Purple Line, **with 13 women drivers in 2018,** alongside 80 men drivers.


“ The State Railway of Thailand, where women work as train hosts, general service officers and in finance, has 10 per cent women employees (1,503 women and 13,079 men), but no women drivers. ”

While national statistics from Thailand record an increase of 210,000 workers in the transport industry since 2016 to 1.39 million, these data are not broken down by gender. In Bangkok’s urban rail sector women occupy many positions in Skytrain, Metro and Airport Rail Link, as technicians, station masters and assistants, train operators, safety officers and security guards, and in public relations, as well as representing the majority of workers in ticketing. Figures provided for the Airport Rail Link show that women account for a quarter of its 500 employees (153 women and 347 men). The State Railway of Thailand, where women work as train hosts, general service officers and in finance, has 10 per cent women employees (1,503 women and 13,079 men), but no women drivers. BTS Sky Train has 2,372 workers overall, but no official gender statistics are collected. Metro (BEM company) has 2,199 workers. However a driver interviewed for

the research estimated that there are now about 80 women drivers and 250 men drivers. Women have recently begun to enter train operating jobs on the Sky train Metro, with women drivers joining the Purple Line, with 13 women drivers in 2018, alongside 80 men drivers.



5. WORKING CONDITIONS AND GENDER CULTURE



“ Women do not want to stay long in the transport sector. The passengers also think that these women are in the wrong place. It’s like finding a man in the kitchen.”

Male union representative, Nairobi

In this section, evidence of the working conditions and gendered workplace cultures experienced by women workers in public transport from the five cities is presented. It is necessary for trade unions to understand the main issues faced by women transport workers currently, so that steps can be taken to improve the future of work for women in public transport.

5.1 GENDER STEREOTYPES

The segregation of women and men into largely different occupations, outlined in section 4, is underpinned by gendered assumptions and stereotypes about women and men's suitability for different types of work.

Public transport work suffers from a negative public perception in some cities, for example in Nairobi many perceive matatu workers as being disorderly, chaotic, drug dealers etc., which deters women from entering the sector. For women who do take up this work, many hope that it will only be short term until they find a job that has a better working environment, as a male union rep commented:

"Women do not want to stay long in the transport sector. The passengers also think that these women are in the wrong place. It's like finding a man in the kitchen."

Male union representative, Nairobi

Deep-rooted cultural beliefs shaped by patriarchy affect notions of a "good" woman and what constitutes a "marriageable" woman. One respondent noted that "not many men want to have wives in the [matatu] sector." Such thinking might explain why many of the women workers in Nairobi, especially those doing conductor jobs, which are considered to be tough, are either single or separated, and often young.

Nevertheless, there is also a level of admiration for women who dare to venture into public transport. Such women are perceived as courageous and tough, and it is not a job for the faint-hearted. Some women reported that:

"Passengers say that we must be tough to do this kind of work."

Woman matatu worker, Nairobi

"To be a public transport driver, you must be a mangaa (don't care)."

Woman caller and squad conductor, Nairobi

Women's driving capabilities are often called into question, by both passengers and fellow drivers. A woman taxi driver in Nairobi said:

"There are male clients who think that they can drive better than you and are continually giving instructions throughout the journey... Some women clients also look down upon lady drivers and are arrogant when dealing with them. They perceive them to be inferior and that's the reason why they are drivers."

Woman taxi driver, Nairobi

On the other hand, gendered assumptions may be positive about women drivers, for example with women seen as better drivers than men because they are regarded as less reckless, less likely to speed, more likely to be polite to passengers and so on. One woman bus driver in Cape Town said: "I often get compliments for driving – people say they feel safer with a woman driver."

Management, too, sees the benefits of women drivers:

"So there's also a greater benefit to have female drivers. On the work setting per se we also have less complaints; and, yah initially the accidents soared, but once they started to get a little bit of experience, you know going into your six months, just over the curve, then they stabilise. So your accident rates go down. You get better interaction. You get people that are (sighs) reliable, they don't just stay out of work and

they don't have that fierce, hostile driver towards the public. It's just, we find that the female drivers give us a better fit... I don't know how to say it, but it's almost like a better fit to do this type of work. That is probably for me a generalisation, but that is what we from our management team we experience."

Bus manager, Cape Town

Gender stereotypes also vary across cultures. Whereas in Bangkok, women have only recently been considered suitable to work as metro train drivers, in Mexico City social acceptance of women operating trains is higher than women driving on roads, with smaller numbers of bus drivers. This is based on the idea that the operation of subway and light rail trains is easier, given the technological assistance now available, as expressed by this male driver:

"You do not need a great mind or abilities. I mean, you do not need to measure distances, or deal with other cars. In those [trains] you stay in your rail and press some buttons, that is enough! That's why this technology is suitable for women to operate, otherwise you need men to handle all the difficulties."

Male trolleybus driver, Mexico City

A male TransMilenio driver in Bogota believed that while macho attitudes among drivers and passengers persist, there has been an improvement, although more could be done to educate passengers: "I believe the district (DSM) should give training or information through TV and radio to educate users." A similar suggestion came from an interviewee in Nairobi who proposed that stickers containing messages like "respect my job" should be put inside public transport vehicles to educate passengers about women's role or that screens in the vehicles should be used to promote positive messages about women's employment. A woman security guard in Bangkok confirmed that differences existed in public attitudes to men and women staff:

"Security guard is a man's job. When I tell the passengers to wait before getting into the train, sometimes they don't listen or care. They will listen to the male security guards because they look fine and strong."

Woman security guard, Bangkok

Gaining acceptance from male colleagues can also be a problem, especially for women bosses. Nairobi informants noted that in taxi companies, male drivers find it hard to accept disciplinary measures given by women managers.

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Male trolleybus driver, Mexico City

5.2 EMPLOYMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Patterns of occupational segregation identified above are also accompanied by differences in status and conditions of the jobs done by women and men. In general, occupations dominated by men have higher status. For example, in Nairobi, conductor jobs where women are more likely to work, occupy a lower rank compared to drivers' jobs and are lower paid and more precarious. Similarly in Bogota, drivers have better working conditions than those in ticket collection, who are mostly women, for example a higher salary and transport to work provided by the company.

A particular bone of contention for Recaudo Bogota S.A.S. workers, mostly women, is the bonus. The two roles for station workers, identified above, are the AR and RIC, who have similar salaries (the AR rate is a little higher than the minimum wage, which the RIC is paid) and receive an additional "variable" bonus. The bonus should improve the salary, which at the minimum wage rate fails to satisfy the basic needs of existence in Colombia, according to a city councillor interviewed. However, there are many different reasons why the bonus may be deducted or even eliminated each month: being late or leaving the workplace too early; absences (even with a doctor's note); poor rating in training; and mismatches in cash greater than \$3.4 USD throughout the month. In addition, there is no transparency over the definition of faults leading to deductions, which can be discretionary. According to one woman worker, representing the views of many:

"For anything, for absences, late arrivals, they take the bonus away. It feels as if they were playing with workers' salaries. They have taken it from me several times unjustifiably and they do not give it back."

Woman Recaudo Bogota S.A.S. worker

“ Patterns of occupational segregation ... are also accompanied by differences in status and conditions of the jobs done by women and men. In general, occupations dominated by men have higher status. ”

Another single mother of two children affirmed:

"You cannot be absent because they take away the bonus. When I'm absent, it is because I feel really sick. It is very cruel that a sick person cannot go to the doctor."

Woman Recaudo Bogota S.A.S. worker

While officially there are possibilities for promotion to positions such as supervisor, billing or in the control centre in Bogota, in reality they are limited, either because workers do not fulfil the requirements of having studied an administrative career, or because they do not have the connections within the company that they feel are needed in order to get the job. Although the company confirms that they provide training and that it is possible for all staff to ascend, the SintraRecaudo rep points out that most of the supervisors are men.

In Bangkok it was also felt that gender norms operated to restrict promotion opportunities for women. A woman general service officer reported that she had worked at the rail company for 26 years, but that the managers typically select men first for promotion over women, operating a preference for men in higher positions.

As described in section 7 on platform work, women's earnings, even when they are doing the same jobs as men, are also determined by the hours they can work. These may be restricted by family responsibilities, as well as by fears about safety while working at night.

The research also highlighted differences in terms and conditions between those working for state-owned enterprises – which were more likely to be unionised – and those in private companies. In Bangkok women considered that jobs with the state enterprises Airport Rail Link and State Railway of Thailand offered better employment conditions and benefits than the privately run metro and sky train.

“ A woman general service officer reported that she had worked at the rail company for 26 years, but that the managers typically select men first for promotion over women, operating a preference for men in higher positions. ”

In Cape Town, the introduction of the BRT MyCiti system was accompanied by a worsening of terms and conditions at the vehicle operating companies (VOCs) running the MyCiti routes compared to those on the traditional buses run by Golden Arrow (GABS). GABS is a private company that had always been contracted by the provincial government to run the bus service in Cape Town, and has had a good relationship with the union, which was able to win good conditions for its members. However when the VOCs were set up wages and working conditions were set at the bargaining council minimum levels. Wages are better for GABS bus drivers who get annual increases based on years of service, as well as an inflation-linked increase, medical aid, and transport to take them home between split shifts, while the drivers working for MyCiti operators must stay on the premises when not driving. The worsening of terms and conditions among the newer operators has implications for women, who had low rates of participation as drivers traditionally, but are more likely to be taken on as drivers by the new companies under worse conditions.

In Bogota, Transmilenio has appointed an officer responsible for gender equality. The company recently participated in Ranking PAR, run by Aequales, a scheme that assesses gender equality performance in organisations, and obtained fifth place among public institutions. Positive actions on gender equality included a breastfeeding room and training on gender equality. However, the ranking does not include the bus subcontractors nor the money collection company, although Transmilenio claims that all subcontractors must review the gender approach within their organisations.

“ Women also fear the impact of taking maternity leave on their jobs, with women train operators at a Bangkok rail company told that they cannot get pregnant for two years after starting the job, despite labour law prohibiting the dismissal of pregnant workers.”

5.3 WORKING HOURS AND PARENTAL LEAVE

Long working hours and shiftwork are features of public transport work that often make it harder for women with family responsibilities to participate. This can be especially true of the better-remunerated driving positions where flexibility for workers is often not available. An example is the system of split shifts for BRT drivers in Bogota, in which a driver has a working day of nine hours, but this includes a break of up to six hours between shifts. The break often does not allow sufficient time for drivers to go home due to the distance of their homes from work. Drivers may be required to start work at five in the morning and finish at eight or eleven at night. Both men and women drivers say this destroys their quality of life since they are not able to spend enough time with the family or undertake household tasks, but for many women it is impossible to sustain such hours and look after their children.⁴⁵

In Cape Town too the hours of work are a challenge for many workers, particularly women. Workers who work the first shift of the day struggle to get to work unless they have their own car, and the bus operating companies do not provide transport for their workers. Travel early in the morning and at night can also be particularly dangerous for women workers (see 5.4).

Women are more likely to be able to undertake the hours required for work as ticket sellers in the Bogota TransMilenio system, rather than as drivers, and indeed the company gives priority to mothers who are heads of families for jobs in ticket sales.⁴⁶ However, the hours include very early start and finish times, when no public transport is available, which creates safety risks for women.

In order to earn a sufficient income from platform taxi working, long hours are often required, especially with increased competition from new companies entering the platform market with associated downward pressure on wages. The most profitable working hours are also during the night-time, which many women consider to be unsafe, as discussed below and in section 7.2.

Women also fear the impact of taking maternity leave on their jobs, with women train operators at a Bangkok rail company told that they cannot get pregnant for two years after starting the job, despite labour law prohibiting the dismissal of pregnant workers. One station assistant at the Airport Rail Link in Bangkok did not take her full legal entitlement to 90 days' paid leave and returned after 60 days, fearing a negative impact on her performance evaluation if she took the full 90 days.

⁴⁵ ITF, World Bank-Bogota TransMilenio Project draft report, unpublished.

⁴⁶ World Bank, 2013, Implementation Completion and Results Report. Report No. ICR2623, p.92

“ Women are more likely to be able to undertake the hours required for work as ticket sellers in the Bogota TransMilenio system, rather than as drivers, and indeed the company gives priority to mothers who are heads of families for jobs in ticket sales. However, the hours include very early start and finish times, when no public transport is available, which creates safety risks for women.”

5.4 SAFETY

In all cities included in this study, public transport workers are at risk of violence, with women facing particular risks, which constrain their participation in certain jobs or at certain times. Extreme instances, such as that of the rape of a woman train driver in Cape Town, have been reported.

Night work poses particular risks for women. A union rep and former station master's assistant in Bangkok described how routes home from isolated stations are often desolate, and she had faced robbers on this route. In addition, it is not considered safe to take a taxi alone.

The working hours required for TransMilenio station staff in Bogota – starting at 3:30 am and finishing at 23:15 pm – mean that they must commute during hours when there is no public transport available. One woman worker recounts the lack of employer understanding of the difficulties workers face:

"For example, on a public holiday I arrived half an hour late, because there were no taxis available that day and they summoned me to a disciplinary process. Now I've had to ride my bike at 3:00 am in a city where they kill you for a cell phone. I must go out and risk my life to try to get to my job quickly. The other day I fell, and I had to work with a wounded knee all day (...) the company should be more humane."

Woman Recaudo Bogota S.A.S worker

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Woman Recaudo Bogota S.A.S worker

In Nairobi, to address safety concerns, female crew often have to stay in residential areas that are close to where buses are parked at night where rent may be high in relation to their income.

Violence from the public is also a major problem for workers in the stations, with insufficient action taken by the employers and the authorities, according to workers. Those responsible for checking tickets and stopping fare dodging are particularly at risk:

“Colleagues of mine have been slapped at, their hair pulled, punched. We already had a dead male colleague in the system. The measures taken by the regulatory bodies have not been effective. The aggressor does not care if the person asking them to validate their ticket is male or female, although women are more vulnerable.”

Woman Recaudo Bogota S.A.S worker

Women’s increased vulnerability to passenger violence, especially from those enraged by service delays or problems, was recounted by a woman train operator in Mexico City:

“One day I was operating the light train, and one male user was very upset because the service ended up one station before the final terminal. [...] many announcements were made in every station but this man did not pay attention.... He was yelling at me, very aggressive, I should say, so I kind of ran and went to the operation cabin. Next day, a male worker told us a similar story, the same man, but this time he was not that aggressive. Anyway, the day after that, a female operator was punched on her face by the same man. The only difference was that I ran to the cabin, but instead, she stayed there in front of him trying to give him explanations...”

Woman train driver, Mexico City

In public transport systems where operations are outsourced to multiple private companies, lines of responsibility for worker safety may become blurred. This was indicated in a comment about the Transmilenio system from a Recaudo Bogota S.A.S manager interviewed: "The system belongs to everyone and no one." While Transmilenio has supervisory responsibility for its contractors, and can in theory impose conditions on the operators with respect to workers’ rights, in reality there is no specific monitoring of the conditions of the workers among operators, only the quality of the service provided.

In addition, employers appear to have little trust in their workers' behaviour, as indicated by a Recaudo manager who believed that often it is the workers who start aggressions: "The employee is as guilty as the customer."

It was also believed that employers are not doing enough to protect women drivers from passenger violence on the SITP bus network in Bogota, with a lack of safe cabs:

"Several female drivers have been beaten by users with umbrellas, one even had sustained head injuries. The only thing the company did about it was tell them to go see their doctor. They are not going to adapt booths inside the buses just to protect us and let us drive."

Female SITP driver, Bogota

In Cape Town, however, some felt that the introduction of BRT had resulted in safer job opportunities for women in public transport, at least compared to the dangers of taxi driving, accompanied by safer buses with power steering, dedicated lanes and CCTV camera surveillance.

“ While Transmilenio has supervisory responsibility for its contractors, and can in theory impose conditions on the operators with respect to workers' rights, in reality there is no specific monitoring of the conditions of the workers among operators, only the quality of the service provided. ”

5.5 SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Experiences of sexual harassment were reported in nearly all cities in the research. Women workers had experienced this from male colleagues and passengers, but it was also a risk for women passengers. In Nairobi, a study by the Flone Initiative⁴⁷ found verbal abuse to be the most common form of harassment used against women passengers and workers in public transport. A union representative commented:

“Public transport is not friendly to women workers and users, and both the passengers and workers experience harassment.”

Male union representative, Nairobi

This recognition has resulted in common campaigns addressing gender-based violence for both passengers and staff. The Flone Initiative in Nairobi has been training women public transport workers on how to react and respond to sexual violence. It also previously organised public campaigns against the harassment of women passengers. Similarly in Cape Town the NGO Sonke Gender Justice has been campaigning against the sexual harassment women passengers experience in taxis. In Bogota 64 per cent of women have experienced sexual harassment when using public transport and 35 per cent avoid using the Transmilenio system for fear of sexual harassment. Such facts have led the District Secretariat of Women in Bogota to introduce polices to prevent sexual harassment on

public transport, although so far there has been no monitoring or follow up of their effect.⁴⁸ In order to address sexual harassment on Mexico City’s public transport, the government introduced the Atenea service within the M1 bus service in 2008, which offers bus services on 50 routes for women with women drivers. The main objective is to provide a reliable form of transport on principal routes in the city that is free of sexual harassment.

Harassment from passengers is a common occurrence for women in some transport roles. For example for a train host in Bangkok, her daily duties include serving passengers and making beds, and she has faced sexual harassment from passengers. She has no safe place to rest away from passengers:

“I don’t have a bed on the train to take a rest. I have to sleep beside the toilet, using a sheet as a curtain to make a partition between the passengers and myself.”

Woman train host, Bangkok

“Public transport is not friendly to women workers and users, and both the passengers and workers experience harassment.”

Male union representative, Nairobi

⁴⁷ Wafula, P. (2018). Violence against Women and Girls in Public Road Transport and Connected Spaces in Nairobi County, Kenya. Preliminary Research and Baseline Study report. Editors, Mwaura, N. and Kihonge, L., Flone Initiative.

⁴⁸ Moscoso, M. (2018). Las cuentas de las mujeres – Bogotá (resultados preliminares) – Despacio. Retrieved July 23, 2018, from <http://www.despacio.org/2018/06/01/las-cuentas-de-las-mujeres-bogota-resultados-preliminares/>

“ I don't have a bed on the train to take a rest. I have to sleep beside the toilet, using a sheet as a curtain to make a partition between the passengers and myself. ”

Woman train host, Bangkok

Previous research on sexual harassment has identified that it can be used to signify male opposition to women entering formerly 'male' jobs, with the intention of forcing women out.⁴⁹ This was observed in the present study in Mexico City, where men felt uncomfortable with the idea of women working in tasks that were traditionally male, and adopted mechanisms for maintaining their power, such as insults, harassment etc. Attitudes towards women who chose driving work were expressed starkly by this trolleybus driver:

“I am a gentleman with my wife, my daughter and even with girls on the street, but on the route where I drive... women know how the male environment is, even though they want to work here... It is not me who must change the behaviour... they wanted to work here, they are not like other women. I know they are women, but not like others, you get it? If they want it, come and get it.”

Male trolleybus driver, Mexico City

While all women were at risk of sexual harassment from users and colleagues, interviewees from Mexico City confirmed that women in lower positions, such as cleaners, taxi drivers, and platform taxi drivers, are more vulnerable to these situations.

“ I am a gentleman with my wife, my daughter and even with girls on the street, but on the route where I drive... women know how the male environment is, even though they want to work here... It is not me who must change the behaviour... they wanted to work here, they are not like other women. I know they are women, but not like others, you get it? If they want it, come and get it. ”

Male trolleybus driver, Mexico City

⁴⁹ Collinson, M. and D. Collinson (1996). 'It's Only Dick': The Sexual Harassment of Women Managers in Insurance Sales. *Work Employment Society* 10(1): 29-56; DiTomaso, N. (1989). Sexuality in the Workplace: Discrimination and Harassment, *The Sexuality of Organization*, J. Hearn, D. Sheppard, P. Tancred-Sheriff and G. Burrell (eds). London: Sage, 71-90; Wright, T. (2016). Gender and sexuality in male-dominated occupations: women workers in construction and transport, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

“ Even though the TransMilenio system in Bogota was built fairly recently, in 2000, it was not designed to include toilets in the stations.”

5.6 FACILITIES

Access to toilet facilities and sufficient break time are persistent problems for workers in public transport, causing particular difficulties for women. Several of the rail sector interviewees in Bangkok reported a shortage of toilets, in some cases having to use the same toilet as passengers, giving rise to concerns about cleanliness. Where toilets are shared with passengers, this is a particular problem in the case of metro drivers who only get a 10-minute break, and therefore may have insufficient time to use the toilet. One of the Bangkok Sky Train women drivers believed that lack of toilet breaks had caused her health problems:

“Sometimes, I want to go to the toilet but I haven’t finished my duty, so I have to hold it until I complete my shift. I was diagnosed with cystitis twice since working here for 18 years. It was a painful moment, I urinated blood.”

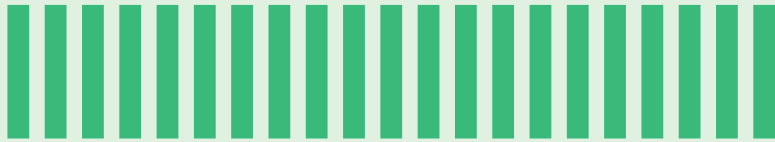
Woman train operator, Bangkok

Even though the TransMilenio system in Bogota was built fairly recently, in 2000, it was not designed to include toilets in the stations. Instead there are informal agreements to use the toilets of small businesses located near the station, although the

arrangements are not always successful due to the fact these businesses open after TransMilenio operations start and close before TransMilenio operations end. Thus when new transport systems are introduced, this is an opportunity to improve on existing facilities for workers and passengers. In Nairobi, most toilets are privatised and users pay for use. Additionally, there are no free clean water points and workers have to buy water or carry it from home, causing additional expenses for workers. Indeed workers spend up to 18 per cent of their earnings on access to water and sanitation services.⁵⁰ Plans for the BRT infrastructure include provision of basic services at various terminals, which should include toilet and clean water facilities for workers as well as public transport users.

“ In Nairobi, most toilets are privatised and users pay for use. Additionally, there are no free clean water points and workers have to buy water or carry it from home, causing additional expenses for workers. Indeed workers spend up to 18 per cent of their earnings on access to water and sanitation services.”

⁵⁰ Kamau, A. and Alfors L. (2017). Impact of WASH Deficits on Labour Productivity in the Informal Economy Nakuru Report, Kenya. WIEGO/IIED Collaboration on Water and Sanitation in Informal Workplaces. Draft report.



6. THE INTRODUCTION OF **NEW** **TECHNOLOGY**



“ Undoubtedly some technological innovations, such as automatic ticket vending machines, have led to loss of jobs. This research indicates that this has primarily been among informal workers. ”

Technological change has affected public transport in all the cities in this study, although the pace of change has varied. Technology has changed ticket selling functions, as well as vehicle operation, bringing both benefits and challenges for workers. This section examines the changes that have been introduced in relation to ticketing and fare collection, and in driving work, and considers the prospects for further automation and the possible implications for workers. It also highlights the importance of training so that women workers can benefit from equal access to decent jobs brought about due to future innovations in technology.

6.1 TICKETING

Undoubtedly some technological innovations, such as automatic ticket vending machines, have led to loss of jobs. This research indicates that this has primarily been among informal workers. For example, the introduction of the BRT system into Mexico City included self-service ticket machines, whereas previously minibuses provided services on most of the routes covered by BRT, and women commonly operated as co-pilots (usually partners of the drivers) or as those collecting fares, all working informally. As a result of the introduction of BRT routes, many informal workers lost their jobs.

On the other hand, where workers affected by automation are unionised, this can protect jobs through agreements to redeploy workers to other roles. In the case of ticket sellers affected by the introduction of self-service ticket machines on light rail in Mexico City, workers were transferred to office positions or to jobs as ticket machine facilitators. Some of them reported improved conditions at work:

“Now I just help users who do not know how to use the machine. At the beginning there were a lot of people who need my help, but now, I stay most of the time free, I do not need to deal with stressful situations anymore. Usually I just work a lot when there is a football match, when the demand is very high and they need our help.”

Woman worker, light rail, Mexico city

In fact, additional positions were created by the introduction of self-service ticket machines, working for an outsourced company that assists users with problems such as blocked cards. This is a job undertaken mostly by women, and while the outsourced company may not offer the same working

conditions, it does offer flexible schedules that suit some women, such as those studying or with childcare responsibilities.

Evidence from other cities showed a passenger preference for staff over automated ticket machines and information systems, with continuing staff presence needed, especially when the technology does not function effectively. Station workers on the BRT system in Bogota reported that passengers preferred to come to staff to recharge their payment cards rather than use automatic charging devices:

“Most people don’t like to use the machine because it doesn’t confirm the charged amount, and also because users have to do a long process to request a refund if the machine swallows up the money, so they feel upset. People are not educated enough to use the machines.”

Woman worker Recaudo Bogota S.A.S)

While the employer interviewee from the Bogota BRT system believed that the automatic charging machines resulted in improved work conditions, most of the women workers at Recaudo Bogota S.A.S felt that they increase their burden at work by having to help users that cannot manage them, in addition to their regular work duties. Furthermore, they found an increased likelihood of conflict with passengers when the machine does not work properly (see box on ‘Resisting further automation of Transmilenio in Bogota’).

Similarly in Bangkok, passenger preference for staff over machines was found. Customer service positions had been reduced, accompanied by the hiring of outsourced workers on temporary contracts and the provision of information machines. However the only remaining full-time employee of the rail company in

this role reported that passengers prefer staff contact:

“The information kiosk never helps me (laughs). The passengers hardly use it. It is a waste of time. Sometimes they can’t find what they’re looking for. Asking is faster, they will get the answer immediately.”

Woman customer service position, rail, Bangkok

The technology itself has also thwarted attempts to automate. On the Mexico City subway there have been three attempts to automate ticket sales, but according to a worker, the machines tend to break down or users are uncomfortable with the technology. Prepaid cards were introduced in 2012, but these are recharged by ticket sellers, rather than a self-service machine. Also in Cape Town the system of integrated payment cards, MyConnect, has not been as effective as promised, as there are few outlets that provide charging facilities, and it has resulted in high costs to the city. The company, Lumen Technologies, originally contracted to run the IT system for the control centre that monitors the MyCiti bus services, had their contract terminated early in 2015 because of underperformance.

Cape Town is currently seeking to introduce an ‘open’ system, which would involve a number of different independent service providers developing their own products to make payments, for example using apps on cellphones, bracelets, bank cards and so on. The

city also wants to introduce an integrated ticketing system for payment across trains, buses, taxis and the MyCiti system. These technological developments are likely to have an impact on the employment of women as the majority of cashiers currently are women.

“Evidence from other cities showed a passenger preference for staff over automated ticket machines and information systems, with continuing staff presence needed, especially when the technology does not function effectively.”

In Nairobi politics rather than technology prevented the introduction of cashless payment in 2014.^{51,52} An attempt by the government, in partnership with the public transport operators and the banks, to introduce cash-lite, cashless fare payment cards was intended to remove cash payments to curb corruption and root out cartels. However it failed due to resistance from some public transport workers associations and vested interests of banks. The cash-lite government-owned multi-purpose social card has been re-introduced (the Huduma card) for payment of government services including commuter fares.⁵³ Cashless payment had been supported by the transport unions on safety grounds, as making drivers and fare collectors less

⁵¹ Kubania, J. (2015). Nairobi commuters in for a surprise cashlite. Daily Nation, accessed at <https://www.nation.co.ke/news/Nairobi-commuters-in-for-a-surprise-cashlite-Monday/1056-2617214-tr1ju1/index.htm>

⁵² Nairobi Business Monthly (2015). Cashless PSV fare system spawns new jobs for youth. Accessed at <http://www.nairobibusinessmonthly.com/cashless-psv-fare-system-spawns-new-jobs-for-youth/>

⁵³ Kang'ethe, K. (2018). Kenyans can now pay for government services using Huduma prepaid card. Accessed at <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/business/2017/01/kenyans-can-now-pay-for-government-services-using-huduma-prepaid-card/>.

liable to theft and corruption. Unions also argued that with card payment all the money gets to the company, unlike with cash, so they would have more money to spend on improving working conditions. Some operators do allow customers to pay through mobile phone platforms like the Safaricom Mpesa, Paybill services and Ejjipay, although most operators still use cash payment.

Other health and safety benefits from cashless payment would include the removal of heavy coin trays. Ticket vending machines had been introduced in a previous round of automation on Bangkok's rail and metro systems, but the need to carry heavy coin trays from the machines has been the cause of back pain among fare collectors. In response to union demands, the company eventually provided back support belts.

“ Furthermore, staff find that the machines can increase conflict with passengers when they do not work properly.”

“ Unions also argued that with card payment all the money gets to the company, unlike with cash, so they would have more money to spend on improving working conditions.”

RESISTING FURTHER AUTOMATION OF TRANSMILENIO IN BOGOTA

Bogotá's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Transmilenio has introduced an integrated card payment system for all Transmilenio and SITP services. Cards are bought and recharged at stations using Dispositivos de Carga Automática (Automatic Charging Devices, or ACDs); self-service machines are provided or recharging may be done at ticket counters. However according to ticket collection staff at Recaudo Bogota S.A.S – the company contracted to run ticketing operations at the Transmilenio bus stations – it is clear that passengers prefer to use staff rather than machines for card purchase and charging, finding it quicker and easier. Furthermore, staff find that the machines can increase conflict with passengers when they do not work properly.

Indeed the Veeduría Distrital (Inspection Office), the overseeing institution, has identified administrative inefficiencies with Transmilenio's services and its contractors. Consequently, it developed recommendations, which included the need to recruit more workers, particularly in the activities of ticket collection due to the volume of users.

Interestingly Recaudo Bogota S.A.S refers to itself as a technology company, and sees its workers in the future as supporting the ACD machines. Vivian Acosta is a ticket counter worker and head of SintraRecaudo, the union that represents Recaudo Bogota S.A.S workers. She reported:

"In a recent meeting with a manager [of Recaudo], they implied that they are going to implement such a device at every station. Then, for example, only one worker would be needed to control access to the station and to help users charge their card using the machines (ACD). As a part of a pilot plan to evaluate how this would work, Recaudo Bogota S.A.S ordered workers at certain stations to charge the cards outside the ticket counter, with a manual device, exposing them to the risk of being robbed or losing money."

Although there are currently no detailed plans for the introduction of further automation of the transport system, the contract between Transmilenio and Recaudo Bogota S.A.S indicates that it should be developed when necessary in order to get the defined levels of service. The issues of technology and automation have been discussed by SintraRecaudo, to find alternatives that could include negotiating the relocation of workers to other areas, such as administration or even as drivers. However progress is slow, partly because Recaudo Bogota S.A.S has not been able to find suitably reliable machines for expansion. SintraRecaudo established itself as a union specifically to fight for the concerns of Recaudo's primarily women workforce (see box on 'SintraRecaudo organising women in Bogotá'), and it will continue to address their concerns and resist any job losses.

“ Previously, with the minibuses, women used to control the bus schedule, but this was not a formally recognised role, therefore they were not employed on the new systems. Moreover, the ITS includes automated passenger counting, another informal role sometimes undertaken by street vendors, often women.”

6.2 DRIVING

It is believed that a number of technological innovations have improved the job of driving for women, such as the introduction of power steering, CCTV security in cabs directly linked to the control centre, and cashless fares. However there are also some negative aspects noted by the research from Cape Town. Despite having security cameras, it can take a long time for security to respond, so a lone woman driver may still be at risk from a male passenger at night. In addition, cameras increase the possibility of management surveillance of workers. Furthermore, the fact that fare collection is no longer the responsibility of drivers can affect job grading, and ultimately wage rates. There is also a concern about the design of the new MyCiti buses, which do not have an external driver's door as the traditional buses had. This means that drivers use the same door as passengers, which may create a security issue.

Further developments in automation include traffic monitoring systems, intended to improve the service by monitoring and responding to congestion and other traffic incidents. In Mexico City an intelligent transport system (ITS) was introduced to provide service improvements on company-operated buses and the BRT system. Previously, with the minibuses, women used to control the bus schedule, but this was

not a formally recognised role, therefore they were not employed on the new systems. Moreover, the ITS includes automated passenger counting, another informal role sometimes undertaken by street vendors, often women.

As with other forms of technology, though, workers reported that the technology is not always reliable, which can result in passenger frustration and anger, often directed at drivers. In Bogota TransMilenio and SITP buses contain “logical units”, which send information on the distance between buses, enabling central controllers to regulate the service. However, according to drivers interviewed, the monitoring is inefficient:

“Sometimes I had to get off the bus since users were going to hit me because it took a long time to do the route I was on. I had to get off the bus and ask a colleague who was driving behind me for help.”

Woman SITP bus driver, Bogota

“Logical units” are also used to send messages to drivers, and for drivers to report technical faults. But according to a driver, they are told to keep driving when a fault has been reported, and face fines if they do not continue to drive the bus.

In Cape Town the real-time traffic management system has also not yet resolved many technological issues, so it will not be extended imminently, according to a company informant:

"When drivers are able to put in their block number and that then shows up at the control centre, the transport management centre (TMC); and they can see the drivers, they can track the driver for schedule adherence and they are able to communicate with people in the saloon through the microphone. And even the TMC is able to come back and give you information on route changes or deviations because any, if they pick up that there might be any social unrest or civil unrest or something, have to deviate the drivers. I think when they get to that phase we are not going to need as many supervisory staff. That phase is, well the city wanted that to be part from the start. We are now in year six and we are ... we are not even at a place where all the hardware is working and without just your... connections like your Wi-Fi and that type of stuff. The software that you need to sort out. So we're not even there yet. So I don't think that within the next five years that there's going to be any changes to the technology that is going to impact the employment... at least."

Manager, BRT vehicle operating company,
Cape Town

In Nairobi a simpler, cheaper and more accessible mobile phone-based method is used by some companies to provide traffic updates, especially during peak hours to ensure that their vehicles do not get stuck in the traffic, via mobile platforms such as WhatsApp.

“ Unions have an opportunity to lobby for the inclusion of women already working in public transport in the BRT training in line with Kenya’s 2010 constitution gender inclusion and affirmative action strategy. ”

6.3 TRAINING

In Nairobi interviewees were optimistic about the potential for the new BRT system to provide opportunities for women’s employment. It is anticipated that BRT will shift women’s work from the informal sector and provide formal and secure jobs for women, and reduce the number of working hours and precarious nature of women’s work. Jobs will be created for women drivers and conductors, as well as in ticketing, booking, cleaning, mechanical maintenance, accounting, customer relations, marketing, and information, communication and technology (ICT) and app management roles. Technology should therefore create jobs, as observed by a platform company manager:

“Technology does not lead to job loss because it is managed by people not robots. In my opinion, no jobs will be lost.”

Cab company manager, Nairobi

The new system should create opportunities for women to take up formal jobs in IT. However, the women will only benefit if they will have the necessary skills, and therefore training is crucial.

However of the women workers interviewed in Nairobi only six out of 29 had so far had additional training either as a driver, in business administration, accounts or basic security management. Concerns about lack of training were raised by women in transport on a training course provided by the Flone Initiative (which works to end violence against women and girls in public spaces), who believed that they might be considered unqualified for BRT jobs.

“ At times though, interviewees noted that the Employment Equity Act and the need to have a more representative, diverse workplace has resulted in unintended consequences. An interviewee from SATAWU argued that at times women were promoted too quickly and set up for failure. The necessary training and capacity building was not done and when the person was promoted and then made a mistake, they were quickly caught out and dismissed. This illustrates the importance of adequate training and on-the-job experience. ”

Discussions with the Nairobi Metropolitan and Transport Authority confirmed that there will be training for BRT workers on BRT operations. The training will be undertaken in partnership with the National Transport and Safety Authority, therefore unions have an opportunity to lobby for the inclusion of women already working in public transport in the BRT training in line with Kenya's 2010 constitution gender inclusion and affirmative action strategy.

In Cape Town, a training strategy was adopted to increase women driver numbers on MyCiti by one of the vehicle operating companies, TBART. It was noted that women were less likely to have the necessary driving licences so they decided to use sponsored learnerships from the Transport Sector Education and Training Authority to train women to get licences. Learnerships are allocated on a ratio of 80:20 women to men. According to an interviewee, the proportion of women working as duty bus drivers is now just under 40 per cent. While some of the women were previously unemployed, some had been employed as drivers in other contexts, where heavy duty licences were not required, such as in tourism. This represents a shift from previous recruitment patterns of employing taxi drivers, who were predominantly men.

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THE PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRIC BUSES IN MEXICO CITY

A project to introduce a new bus corridor on Eje 8 Sur (one of the arterial roads into the city), running only electric buses with bicycle lanes alongside, is being extolled for its environmental and economic development benefits. The project is the first of several bus corridors envisioned to operate with electric buses only. The proposed “zero emission” corridor is 22km long and would serve an estimated 160,000 daily trips.⁵⁴ The plan contains ambitions for urban development and densification along the corridor. The electric buses would replace concession-operated buses that currently run throughout the route, but the plans pose a potential threat to the return of trolleybuses to that corridor that already has the required infrastructure. The corridor development started in 2014 and in 2016 the C40 Cities Finance Facility awarded up to “\$1m for technical assistance.”⁵⁵ Currently, feasibility studies are ongoing.

The project is shaped by a dominant narrative of “sustainability” and “modernisation”. According to a transport expert interviewed, the project “has a cosmic or magic vision because it integrates everything: clean technologies, sustainable mobility (bike-bus lanes), road safety and urban development.” It intends to be “zero emissions, zero noise, zero accidents...”, bringing an “opportunity to beautify and modernise the city, so people will no longer need to be in old buses that reflect delays.” Associated with this vision is a model of operation by companies in partnership with government, with the transfer of owner-


operated buses to feeder routes, which would produce better and more efficient services for passengers.

This dominant narrative, however, ignores the perspective of formal and informal workers, and in relation to gender, emphasises the benefits for women as transport users rather than workers. The feasibility assessments being undertaken are focused on technical aspects, and the research found no existing assessments of the impact on workers, either positive or negative. The project does, however, acknowledge some unresolved issues about battery disposal, and the considerable investment required that demands complex financial models.

Workers are concerned about the future of their jobs. First, new buses are likely to have new technologies for fleet management such as CCTV, vehicle location and passenger counters. Those changes are a threat to informal workers in roles such as controlling bus schedules and attracting users, many of whom are women, as well as street vendors who will not be able to get on the buses to sell. Another change will be the transformation from owner-operated into company-operated sub-contractors. Owner-operators will be replaced, or at least transferred to the feeder routes to the new system. New transport companies such as those created for the BRT tend to resist the creation of trade unions. The introduction of private companies lacking pro-worker approaches

⁵⁴ <https://www.c40cff.org/mexico-city-eje-8>

⁵⁵ https://www.c40.org/press_releases/press-release-bogota-and-mexico-city-to-receive-up-to-1-million-each-in-technical-support-for-low-carbon-resilient-transportation-infrastructure



into electric buses, is one of the biggest fears for trolleybus workers. Even if modern trolleybuses are considered for use in the corridor, existing workers are worried about relocation to precarious working conditions, or unfamiliar new technologies. Past experience has shown, for example with the award of electric taxis to STE in 2013, that new workers may be hired outside of existing collective agreements. Furthermore, there may be threats to existing workers from sub-contracting or outsourcing that worsens their terms and conditions or removes them from coverage under union-negotiated agreements.

For women workers the main threat is the automation of fare collection. Most women trolleybus employees (55 per cent) work in operation support and money collection. While automation would remove fare collection jobs, some of these women have labour union protection as ATM union members and would be transferred to other jobs. However women working in operation support as supervisors and station managers, without union protection, would be likely to lose their jobs.

However, the introduction of electric buses can also open up opportunities for women as new roles emerge. Currently there are no women driving trolleybuses as the job is said to require strong physical efforts to pull down the trolleys and some men have lost fingers doing so. Electric buses are said to be safer and easier to operate, having automatic systems to raise and lower

trolleys, 'at the touch of a button'. With investment, new designs of trolleybuses could also become easier and safer to operate.

The ATM union has run a successful campaign to support trolleybuses under threat, under the banner 'Lets save the trolleybuses'. This has mobilised many women, including young women, contributing new ideas for how to run the campaign. The campaign highlighted the sustainable potential of electric trolleybuses, given new investment, their relative affordability compared to the high potential costs of the electric bus corridor, and the public's affection for trolleybuses. The main campaign tool was a survey of passengers, which identified massive public support for trolleybuses among male and female users. Having information about the level of public support for trolleybuses was vital in engaging passengers as the main supporters of the campaign and making it highly visible.

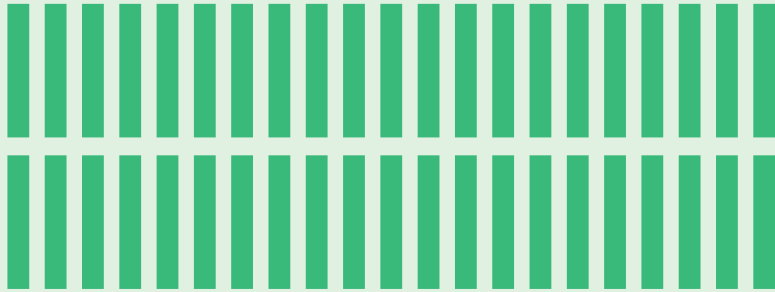
Given that the electric bus project is supported by the government in partnership with significant funding from international agencies, there is an important opportunity for trade union campaigning and involvement as a key stakeholder to influence policy for workers. This should include objectives for the inclusion of women in all roles.

CAPE TOWN: FROM BRT TO IRT

Cape Town realised that they would not be able to replace as much public transport with the BRT system as they had initially envisaged. This meant that MyCiti, the BRT system, would play a smaller role within the Integrated Rapid Transit system (IRT). The reasons included: the high cost of infrastructure required for fully dedicated bus lanes and stations; the fact that Cape Town, like other cities in South Africa, is low density and therefore has low passenger numbers on some routes; the effects of spatial planning under apartheid with black populations concentrated in townships outside the city centre; and the fact that trains and minibus taxis continue to be the cheapest and most used forms of transport for the majority of people.

For these reasons, the city made some changes in the way it rolled out MyCiti. In the second phase it was decided to use existing bus stops and infrastructure, rather than build new facilities as had occurred in the first phase. This has the effect of perpetuating the perception that MyCiti is for middle class users, with the smart stations and dedicated lanes of phase one confined to middle class areas. A multi-modal/hybrid system was accepted, to complement the BRT buses, and there are plans to take over the operation of trains also, in order to provide an integrated system. The city transport authority is promoting competition between the vehicle operating companies (VOCs), which it sees as the way to achieve long-term efficiency in the system.

The number of women drivers employed in the BRT system is higher than the number of women drivers in the minibus taxis, trains or legacy buses. So if the BRT is a smaller component of the IRT system, it is likely that this will have an impact on the overall number of women employed, particularly in jobs like drivers and regulators. In effect, it strengthens the continued male dominance in the taxi sector.



7. PLATFORM WORK IN URBAN TRANSPORT



“ The forms of employment relationships that platform companies imply also present a massive challenge to worker rights and organisation, that some trade unions have been challenging in different legal jurisdictions. Yet ride-hailing taxi companies such as Uber are promoting the benefits of platform working for women, claiming that such forms of work provide access to flexible employment opportunities and greater economic empowerment.”

The rapid growth in platform taxi services around the world represents a major challenge to the way that urban transport, and especially traditional taxi services, have operated until now. The forms of employment relationships that platform companies imply also present a massive challenge to worker rights and organisation, that some trade unions have been challenging in different legal jurisdictions. Yet ride-hailing taxi companies such as Uber are promoting the benefits of platform working for women, claiming that such forms of work provide access to flexible employment opportunities and greater economic empowerment. This section examines the extent of platform taxi working in the five cities, including among women, and considers both the opportunities and risks from platform working.

“ While it is difficult to estimate the numbers of women working as drivers for platform companies, it appears that the numbers are increasing. Over the past year, the number of women working for Grab in Southeast Asia has soared by more than 230 per cent. ”

7.1 THE EXTENT OF PLATFORM DRIVING WORK

Ride-hailing taxi firms are expanding in all of the cities in this study, with the exception of Bangkok. Uber withdrew from operating in Thailand in 2018, following a declaration from the Department of Land Transport in November 2014 that Uber was illegal, alleging that Uber vehicles were not properly registered in Thailand, the charging methods were not valid, and that Uber drivers were not properly licensed.⁵⁶ However platform companies still operate, as Uber’s operations in the area were taken over by existing platform company Grab, which also provides food and other delivery services. Under the Grab banner, GrabTaxi operates a regular taxi service where passengers can hail cars through a mobile phone application. In addition private vehicles operate through GrabCar (similar to the Uber model), and there is a motorbike taxi app, GrabBike. However GrabCar and GrabBike are not yet licensed to operate in Thailand: as personal vehicles they are not registered by the Department of Land Transport for this purpose. As in other countries, there is also resentment from existing car and motorbike taxi

service providers, who do not want Grab to play a role in public transport.

The legal position for platform operators is also not clear in Bogota. Uber entered Colombia in 2013 and has approximately 83,000 drivers. However Uber, and other more recent platforms like Cabify, Picap and Beat, do not have a clear legal status, because the provision of a transport service by a private car is not legal in Colombia. Drivers can receive fines, have their car withdrawn and their driving license suspended for six months. Uber still dominates the ride-hailing market in Bogota, but recent platforms such as Picap (mainly for motorcycle services) and Beat have better pay percentages for drivers. However there were concerns that these may be initial conditions to attract drivers, which typically change as the platform grows.

Mexico City, however, is said to be Uber’s busiest global city, with 50,000 drivers,⁵⁷ operating since 2013. There are several other companies operating private taxis via platform apps, although Uber remains the largest: Cabify started in 2013; CityDrive in 2016; and Laudrive and Didi began operating in 2017 and 2018 respectively. Two other companies operate a business

⁵⁶ Wikipedia, retrieved 9 August 2018; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uber#Thailand>

⁵⁷ Lehr 2017

model employing both taxis and private cars – Easy Taxi, since 2013, and Taxify, from 2017. In addition three Mexican-owned firms – Urban, Jetty and Bussi – run collective taxi services using shuttles or vans on specific routes. Usually, they connect people from remote neighbourhoods to core financial districts. Laudrive is distinctive in having only women drivers and providing services for women riders (see box on ‘Laudrive: women driving women in Mexico City’).

In Cape Town the two main companies involved in platform work are Uber and Taxify. A third company, Cabbi, operates only in Johannesburg. Uber started in Johannesburg in 2013 and quickly spread to other main cities including Cape Town, with around 4,000 drivers currently. Taxify started operating more recently and a 2017 estimate is that Taxify has taken 15 per cent of the market from Uber. Uber and Taxify mainly introduce competition for the metered taxi services, rather than for public transport.

Several platform companies operate in Nairobi, including Uber, Taxify, Little Cab, Pewin, Fone Taxi, ShareCab, Mondo, Nyumbani, and Ubabi Vanpooling. While no official figures yet exist on the number of

drivers, current efforts to document these workers involve the creation of a database that segments Nairobi into zones. Workers will be assigned a sticker containing the driver’s unique code to be displayed on the vehicle to identify them. Current estimates of the number of drivers range from between 10,000 to 25,000. Workers fall into three categories: workers, who drive but do not own the vehicles; driver partners, who own and drive their vehicles; and partners, who are owners of vehicles but do not drive them, instead employing drivers.

While it is difficult to estimate the numbers of women working as drivers for platform companies, it appears that the numbers are increasing. Over the past year, the number of women working for Grab in Southeast Asia has soared by more than 230 per cent, with the distance travelled by women drivers increasing by more than 570 per cent from January 2017 to January 2018, indicating confidence from women about choosing this work.⁵⁸

There are also increasing numbers of women drivers entering platform work in Nairobi, with an estimated 10 per cent of drivers now being women. In Little Cab,

⁵⁸ Grab (2017) Women outside the box, accessed 9 July 2018 from <https://www.grab.com/th>.

for example, there are around 500 women drivers out of about 5,000 drivers in all. In Pwini, the number is smaller, at 20 out of 700 registered drivers.

Although there are no available data on the numbers of women Uber and Taxify drivers in Cape Town, it is widely believed that they are overwhelmingly male. Out of a total of 4,000 Uber drivers in Cape Town, an academic researcher in 2016 was told by several informants that there were only about 100 women drivers.⁵⁹ Many Uber drivers in Cape Town are nationals from other African countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Uganda, DRC, and Angola.⁶⁰

There are no official figures on numbers of platform drivers in Mexico City, and therefore no figures for women drivers. However estimates from informed interviewees put the rate of women's participation in the private platform operators at eight per cent, in the two combined taxi and private operators at five per cent, and zero per cent among collective transportation drivers. This latter lack of representation may be due to the objective of hiring operators of current owner-bus operators, thus replicating existing patterns of male-dominated jobs.

While regulatory frameworks may constrain the expansion of platform working in some contexts, there appear to be business arguments for increasing participation by women drivers, based on customer demand. As section 5.4 indicated, the safety of women passengers is a major concern. In Nairobi Little Cab

offers its customers a choice of a man or woman driver and about 52 per cent of Pwini customers are women. Research in Bangkok found that women drivers are often seen positively by users, and interviewees reported that most passengers are surprised to find a woman driver, while foreigners were often impressed to see a woman driver. The very reason for the establishment of the women-only company Laudrive in Mexico City was to offer security to both women passengers and drivers (see box on 'Laudrive: women driving women in Mexico City').

Digital platforms also employ office-based workers, where representation of women is often high. In Nairobi, the women to men ratio in administrative jobs is 1:1 in Little Cab, while in Pwini, women represent 70 per cent of staff in accounts department. In Bogota it was reported women workers in the administration of platform companies receive training in gender issues, alongside their male colleagues, and in leadership skills development to support them into management positions. Such training is not available to drivers.

⁵⁹ Geitung, I. (2017). Uber drivers in Cape Town: Working conditions and worker agency in the sharing economy. Masters thesis, Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo.

⁶⁰ Makelane, H. & Mathekga, J.M. (2017). Radical Innovation, Uber-hailing transport and its impact: A Case study of Uber business in Cape Town, South Africa. IN International Journal of Advanced Research 5 (10)



LAUDRIVE: WOMEN DRIVING WOMEN IN MEXICO CITY

Laudrive emerged in 2015-16 with the aim of providing a safe taxi service for women users and workers in Mexico City. The company gained momentum after a widely reported incident in which a male driver of another platform company sexually assaulted and killed a woman user. The rate of app downloads increased exponentially. The basic premise of Laudrive is that all drivers are women, as are all riders. As a safety strategy for women drivers, male riders cannot hire a car, but after 20 good ratings of a woman user, a man may be permitted to accompany her.


Although the company is not unionised, Laudrive has been keen to differentiate itself from other platforms by offering better working conditions:

- The platform seeks to grow alongside their workers. Aware that drivers lack social security benefits, the company trains them and insists on the importance of saving for retirement. Workers have other training courses available on-demand (for example, on the detection of breast cancer).
- Drivers are not automatically blocked or disconnected on the basis of negative customer reviews. When users complain about the service, the worker is consulted to get a fuller picture. They only disconnect users when problems become repeated. For skill-based problems, Laudrive provides extra training. The company has found that this approach produces good results in overcoming challenges.
- Laudrive believes that digitalisation should have some limits to avoid dehumanization. The company is keen to give their Laudys (drivers) personal attention, not a machine-based answer. This is possible while the fleet remains small.

The company has around 300 women drivers, which limits its access to finance to expand. The business model also introduces further important challenges:

- It only targets half of the potential market, or less, considering that women have less access to economic resources and technologies.
- Access to women's labour is also constrained by unpaid caring responsibilities, which also limits hours of work and therefore levels of earnings. Moreover, insecurity deters women to work at night when demand can be higher.
- Some women are less likely to use technology successfully. Hence, they need to invest in training for digital usage.

Despite these limitations, the Laudrive example represents a model that helps to overcome some of the problems of platform taxi driving for women, particularly around safety issues. The company also seeks to offer a better model of employment than some other ride-hailing platforms, with greater concern for its workers. While this is possible with a relatively small workforce, it remains to be seen whether this could continue if the firm grew. A further area for potential development would be the involvement of trade unions as representatives of workers. It will be interesting to see whether the Laudrive model becomes a blueprint for platform driving in other cities.



7.2 OPPORTUNITIES AND BARRIERS FOR WOMEN PLATFORM DRIVERS

7.2.1 Flexibility and working hours

One of the main reasons given by women for entering platform work was the flexibility of work schedules, supporting the findings of the survey of Uber drivers by the International Finance Corporation discussed in section 2. In Nairobi women found that platform work offers flexible jobs, with the additional benefit that women drivers do not have to look for passengers. A woman driver observed that:

"...in this job, you can start and close at any time you want. Ni bidii yako (it is your ability to work hard), it is not like the matatu work where you have to start early and close late."

Woman platform driver, Nairobi

Similarly, women interviewees in Bangkok reported both flexibility of working hours and additional income as the reasons for choosing this work. Providing an additional income source was also a key reason for women drivers interviewed in Bogota, who fell into two broad groups: women seeking to return to work after having a family, and students and other women seeking to supplement their income. Joining is easy since the registration process is straightforward and there are no exclusionary requirements in terms of gender or age.

However research from all cities confirmed that not all women benefit equally from the opportunities provided by platform work. Experience from Mexico City suggests that middle class women benefit the

most: women from the lower middle class tended to benefit from the additional income, but were not the sole breadwinners, typically working an average of five hours a day. They are normally young women, frequently with children, for whom platform working provides an extra income and independence. Upper middle class women tend to enter ride-hailing as owners of two or more cars, usually in charge of the fleet, and they hire men to drive. They often also have another job, usually in high positions in the private or public sector, or are entrepreneurs.

“ One of the main reasons given by women for entering platform work was the flexibility of work schedules. ”

In contrast, working class women in most cities gain the least benefit from platform work, particularly those needing full-time work. They work under precarious conditions with low earnings and must work for at least 12 hours to gain enough income to survive. Similar conditions were observed in Cape Town, where the research found that Uber drivers have to work very long hours to make enough income to survive, with most driving about nine to 12 hours every day. And in Nairobi, heavy competition among platform workers as different companies under-cut each other as they compete for passengers has resulted in low incomes. Platform workers, including women, must work for long hours of up to 15 or 18 hours to earn sufficient income. Information obtained indicated that several platform workers had been involved in accidents, some fatal, due to fatigue.

However women drivers may not be able to work such long hours due to family responsibilities. A key informant noted that:

“...the hours of work are not favourable for women drivers especially at night. Also some clients, both male and female, request male drivers at night for security reasons. They feel more secure when driven by males at night.”

Cab company manager, Nairobi

“ working class women in most cities gain the least benefit from platform work, particularly those needing full-time work. They work under precarious conditions with low earnings and must work for at least 12 hours to gain enough income to survive. ”

“ As well as unequal access to vehicle ownership and loans or finance to buy a car, women face a gap in technology usage and ownership compared to men. ”

7.2.2. Access to vehicles and technology

A key issue for platform drivers, consistent with previous research findings, is that of car ownership. Interviews confirmed that the possibility of a reasonable income depends on access to car ownership, since renting a car is not always profitable. But women have less access to vehicles: in Bogota 28 per cent of households that have a male head have at least one vehicle available, compared to 13 per cent of households with a woman head. Therefore, there is less availability of vehicles for women head of households. Similarly in Cape Town women generally have less access to finance in order to buy a car suitable for driving for Uber, which requires a car that is no older than a 2013 model. Findings from interviews in Mexico City confirm that women are less likely overall to be owner drivers and therefore platform work offers most benefits in increasing access to employment for middle class women who possess a car or have access to one via a family member, but not for all women.

As well as unequal access to vehicle ownership and loans or finance to buy a car, women face a gap in technology usage and ownership compared to men. However stark differences exist between lower and higher educated women, according to figures from Mexico. Whereas 96 per cent of higher educated women have a mobile phone, 90 per cent have a smart phone, and 88 per cent have internet access, the respective figures drop to 65 per cent, 50 per cent and 45 per cent for women with lower educational levels.⁶¹

⁶¹ Mexico City Future of Work for Women in Public Transport draft report for ITF, August 2018.

“ Women drivers in all cities reported concerns about safety and security, with many wary of working at night, which affects their earning capacity, losing out on potentially higher earnings from night working.”

7.2.3 Safety

Women drivers in all cities reported concerns about safety and security, with many wary of working at night, which affects their earning capacity, losing out on potentially higher earnings from night working:

“If it is late, it starts to feel like it is dangerous. I have to be careful of drunk passengers. The income would be lost at night.”

Woman Grab driver, Bangkok

A woman driver in Bogota commented:

“I do not go out to work at night. It is common to hear from other drivers about thefts at night. You may have the availability and want to do it, but for fear I prefer to avoid working nights.”

Woman platform driver, Bogota

Security fears are exacerbated in Bogota by the irregular legal status of platform work, where because this form of work is not currently legal, women do not feel able to make legal complaints or ask the police for help in case of danger. This presents a further barrier for women to becoming a driver using digital platforms. While the ride-hailing apps contain tools to promote user safety, these do not always apply to drivers. The option of sharing travel information with

an acquaintance, for example, is only for riders. The Uber platform has a cross-reference system with the possibility of choosing the destination area of the next trip up to three times a day, however, none of the interviewees in Bogota said they knew about this function. One woman Uber driver said: “Sometimes you prefer to cancel the trip than to do the service for safety reasons.” Beat and Cabify, on the other hand, offer the option of accepting the ride with advance knowledge of the destination. However, the coverage is not as extensive as that of Uber, which makes these platforms less attractive for drivers.

In Nairobi, taxis used by platform workers are fitted with an SOS button which workers can press in case of attacks by customers or if they are in distress. However, the alert is received by private security companies hired by the cab companies and the response may be slow. Some women workers indicated that they decline to take the passenger if they are suspicious or feel insecure, however they fear this may create an impression that women drivers are unreliable.

To address safety concerns, some platform drivers in Bogota and Mexico City are voluntarily using an application called Zello, which works similarly to a walkie-talkie, through which they have an internal and easily accessible communication channel between drivers in case of an emergency. Women drivers in Bangkok reported that they use groups through

social media platforms such as Facebook and LINE messenger to keep in touch. WhatsApp groups are also used by drivers to communicate with each other, however one driver in Bogota said:

"There are few women participating in the WhatsApp group. I think sexism predominates, starting with ourselves, suddenly one feels a bit inhibited because there are more men than women in the group."

Woman Uber driver, Bogota

This comment suggests that the masculine workplace culture that has traditionally excluded women from male-dominated transport jobs may be extended into the virtual world via tools that are intended to offer support to drivers.

“ The masculine workplace culture that has traditionally excluded women from male-dominated transport jobs may be extended into the virtual world via tools that are intended to offer support to drivers. ”

On the other hand, women drivers in Mexico City created a WhatsApp group for women workers in which they share their car and personal picture (as they do not know each other in person). They have developed a series of codes known only to women drivers. Each day they share their live location in the group and if they are victims of crime, harassment or other situation, they enter the code and the drivers who are nearby come to assist them, as recounted by this driver:

"You will be thinking it is dangerous for the driver, maybe the guy has a gun, but once we were nine women, near Santa Fe, we all made a square with cars and started doing the horn sound. She parks and the guy ran away!"

Woman platform driver, Mexico City

Further suggestions for improving safety and security arose in interviews in Nairobi. One proposal was to link the SOS buttons installed in cabs described above to police security systems, so that in case of attack, the signal is received at a police station that is within a two kilometre radius of the driver. In a similar fashion to the driver support systems described in other cities, another suggestion was to network the drivers so that when anyone presses the SOS button, the signal is received by other drivers who might be able to respond more quickly than the police or other authorities. However both options require negotiation

“ We already have about more than ten people that have been robbed at gunpoint as a result of cash trips. We already have women Uber drivers that have been raped because of cash trips. How many people have to be raped and killed and assaulted before cash transactions on Uber is stopped?”

Uber Drivers Guild Representative

with the authorities. First, to send a signal to the police, the platform companies must be willing to negotiate with the authorities and the police would need to install and support such systems in police stations, and provide staff to monitor drivers' movement for safety and security. For the second option, platform workers would need to negotiate with the authorities to assure them that they would be civil in the way they respond to distress calls and to ensure that incidences of false panic do not occur. This concern was raised by the ministry of transport authorities in discussion with platform workers because of previous experience with motorcycle riders who harass and sometimes burn vehicles when their members are involved in accidents.

While platform apps allow drivers to block passengers who cause problems, such as perpetrators of sexual harassment or those who refuse to pay, this does not prevent them from registering with another app where they may repeat the same behaviour. This then requires the various digital platform companies to work together to address the security and safety concerns affecting platform workers jointly, and to devise a mechanism across platforms for blocking customers who constantly fail to pay or violate the workers.

An organisation representing drivers in Cape Town has raised serious safety worries for all drivers due to cash payments being permitted, but which has additional dangers for women, as this respondent to an academic study reported:

“We already have about more than ten people that have been robbed at gunpoint as a result of cash trips. We already have women Uber drivers that have been raped because of cash trips. How many people have to be raped and killed and assaulted before cash transactions on Uber is stopped?”

Uber Drivers Guild Representative⁶²

Many of the issues raised in this sub-section need to be addressed by platform workers collectively raising issues, for example through bodies such as the Uber Drivers Guild in Cape Town and trade unions. Union efforts to organise platform workers are examined in section 8.4.

⁶² Geitung 2017, p.39



8. TRADE UNION STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN PUBLIC TRANSPORT WORKERS



“ Some platform taxi workers, including women, have begun to organise themselves in trade unions and other representative bodies in Cape Town and Nairobi.”

This section highlights the work that trade unions are doing to organise women workers in the public transport sector, and gives examples of where unions are successfully mobilising women workers to improve working conditions and resist threats to jobs in the face of further automation. However it also finds that there are issues of significant concern to women transport workers, such as the violence and harassment that they frequently face from colleagues and passengers, that unions are not adequately addressing. These failings have important consequences for trade unions' ability to protect current women transport workers, as well as their capacity to organise to defend jobs in the face of the future challenges from further automation. There is therefore much more that transport unions should be doing to attract, retain, mobilise and represent women public transport workers, as this section will show. The section concludes by showing that some platform taxi workers, including women, have begun to organise themselves in trade unions and other representative bodies in Cape Town and Nairobi.

8.1 WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN TRANSPORT UNIONS

Patterns of occupational gender segregation in the public transport sector are reflected in women's low participation rates in trade unions. In some cases women's union membership parallels their employment in the sector, such as in the SEETU union in Bangkok where women's membership is 28 per cent, slightly lower than their 30 per cent employment rate at Airport Rail Link. However at the State Railways of Thailand, the SRUT union only has three per cent women membership, compared to the 10 per cent employment rate among women. Similarly in Mexico City, while the electric transport company (STE) has a female workforce of 14 per cent, their union, the ATM, has only six per cent women membership.

In South Africa, union density in transport, storage and communications is 30 per cent, while in Cape Town, transport workers represent some eight per cent of all union members in the city. Women account for 15 per cent of members of SATAWU in the MyCiti vehicle operating companies in Cape Town, although union membership overall is greater in NUMSA. In Nairobi, where many transport workers are in the informal sector, therefore numbers are not available, it is believed that about a third of membership of the MWU are women.

Women's participation in union committees and structures is variable. In Mexico City we see that among unions representing subway (STC) workers, women account for 46 per cent of committee members of the SDITSTC, and 39 per cent in the SNTSTC. However they only hold 14 per cent of committee positions at the ASTM and 20 per cent at the ATM – the electric transport (STE) union. These unions also all have a women's secretary or officer responsible for gender issues.

“Patterns of occupational gender segregation in the public transport sector are reflected in women's low participation rates in trade unions. In some cases women's union membership parallels their employment in the sector.”

In South Africa, while SATAWU has a policy position to support gender parity in leadership positions, the national gender co-ordinator position has been vacant for the last three years and interviews report that there is no specific gender activity at head office or in the regions, and that the structures that might support action on gender inequality have been neglected. There is however acknowledgment from some in the union that a policy conference may be helpful, and that there is a need “to confront the issue of gender equality.” NUMSA's national gender position is also vacant.

In Kenya, TAWU, MWU and PUTON have women occupying national office leadership positions, as assistant secretary general, acting deputy secretary general, treasurer, organising secretaries, and also as branch chairs.

The impediments to women's participation are familiar to unions. Firstly, traditional gender roles and women's domestic responsibilities limit the time available for union activities. Secondly, union activism requires specific skills to navigate union structures, processes and politics, and due to structural inequalities that may exclude women from public life and higher positions in the labour market, they may lack knowledge and leadership skills. Thirdly, some women workers are not motivated to participate in unions, as they perceive that the union does not represent their interests (this is seen below in relation to tackling sexual harassment).

Unions have, though, consciously sought to present a more positive image to women workers through campaigns addressing their concerns. For example, the ATM union in Mexico City ran a campaign of publicity and training that aimed to educate men about respectful behaviour towards women, and to encourage women to identify the risk of abuse and disrespect. The campaign showed women members that the ATM supported them, however there were some negative reactions from male members, indicating that one campaign is insufficient to promote cultural change, but further phases and actions may be needed.

“ In Kenya, TAWU, MWU and PUTON have women occupying national office leadership positions, as assistant secretary general, acting deputy secretary general, treasurer, organising secretaries, and also as branch chairs. ”

In Bangkok, a strategy for recruiting members in the newly formed railway companies which are not unionised has involved matching union organiser demographics to employees. The ‘Mentor-Mentee’ strategy involves a team from the SEETU and SRUT unions of eight activists under the age of 40. Organisers are selected to match the target for organising, so where this is a driver, the union will send a driver to talk to them, also matching the target’s gender, dialect, age and interests where possible. The activists first seek to build trust with the workers before discussing their workplace problems. The word “union” is not mentioned initially, in order to avoid

victimisation or bullying by anti-union employers. A union interviewee said: “If we want to organise the workers, we need to understand the character of their work and their issues and to speak their language.”

In Bogota, women bus station workers have been successfully challenging their employer and gaining improvements in their conditions through their union SintraRecaudo, which has grown from 25 members in 2014 to almost 700 in 2018. It is soon to be merging with ITF affiliate SNTT, which will increase its capacity for organising and representing men and women members in Bogota’s public transport sector (see box on ‘SintraRecaudo organising women in Bogota’). With a union density of around 25 per cent within Recaudo, SintraRecaudo has higher rates than the drivers’ unions, where only about five per cent are union members because of the strong anti-union attitude of the operators.⁶³

Some women have decided to organise themselves outside of formal union structures, as the example of the MOM women taxi drivers’ organisation in Mexico City shows (see box on ‘The MOM women taxi drivers’ organisation in Mexico City’). Their strategies and demands may, nevertheless, provide insights for trade unions into how they could be supporting such workers.

⁶³ ITF, World Bank-Bogota TransMilenio Project draft report, unpublished.



SINTRARECAUDO ORGANISING WOMEN IN BOGOTA

SintraRecaudo was formed in 2014, two years after the awarding of the contract to Recaudo Bogotá to provide ticket sales and standardise payment systems across Bogota's bus sector. The union was formed with 25 workers and initially women's participation was not very high due to a disinterested male leader, with little training for women activists. However when he left things started to change in the union and membership increased massively from 320 to almost 700 members in less than a year. Union density is now around 25 per cent in the company. Women make up around 80 per cent of Recaudo's membership and are half the membership of the board of directors (six men and six women).

The woman Director Vivian Acosta puts the union's success down to its visibility as a campaigning and active force in standing up for employees' rights. The union defends workers from regular employer attacks, such as firing people and issuing disciplinary warnings. As a result the union claims to have improved working conditions and won better salaries. It has secured improved benefits such as 70 per cent fee discounts when studying a relevant technical or professional degree and discounts for the purchase of glasses, gained security improvements to prevent violence against workers, and achieved the protection of jobs. The union is visible to members through leaders making frequent visits to stations, organising worker mobilisations and meetings. Vivian Acosta explained the union's methods:

"There has been harassment from the company. The company doesn't want workers to show themselves and disclose the problems and issues in the media and to other companies. TransMilenio is all over the city. We have many different campaigns. We have been visiting the stations one by one, so we can approach

colleagues personally. We also use social media e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook. We have a space in all the stations where phone numbers are displayed in case colleagues need immediate support. We also have information from the union in the stations to help workers (men and women). We hold meetings where we tell them about all the different types of situations that take place in the company and that we have alternatives to defend them in case it is needed. Every day, Recaudo is firing people, giving people 'red warnings'. So we must make an extra effort to counteract these efforts against the workers."

SintraRecaudo has also increased its visibility and campaigning power by building alliances with different organisations. For example, they have made an alliance with the 'Alternativa Popular' (Popular Alternative), public-university students' organisation and with 'Unidos por la Movilidad' (United for Mobility), a citizens' platform that represents transport users in order to raise awareness of the problems faced by fare collection workers.

In June 2018, SintraRecaudo obtained the support of members for a merger with SNTT, a recognized transport sector union, in a process which has been led by the union's current Director Vivian Acosta. The merger is welcomed by SNTT fiscal Francisco Mora, who believes it will strengthen workers' capacity to organise industrially and build women's empowerment in the union.

The SintraRecaudo case is an example of progress in the inclusion of women in Colombian trade unionism, giving women a voice to raise issues at work and within their trade union. It also provides examples and role models of women in union leadership positions.

THE MOM WOMEN TAXI DRIVERS' ORGANISATION IN MEXICO CITY

MOM is an organisation of women taxi drivers in Mexico City created in 2012. It is made up of around 30 drivers, mostly from working class backgrounds, usually young single mothers or older unemployed women. Even though they commonly suffer gender discrimination and harassment in the job, driving a taxi allows them to make a living.

They have not sought institutional recognition, for example through trade unions. Based on their experience, forming unions in male dominated sectors is difficult. Firstly, most of the union efforts are focused on industries with a high women workforce rate. Secondly, bureaucratic processes and information is not easily accessible for people with low educational levels. Thirdly, pressures of juggling their workload and household commitments, especially for single parents, mean that there is little spare time for activism. However the organisation is open to partnership with unions that do not ask them to support leaders that they do not feel represented them adequately.

They have developed some strategies and demands to challenge gender inequality and support women who are at the bottom of the social pyramid. Some of their ideas are:

- To encourage users and co-workers to treat women drivers with dignity. Through activities such as role playing, male co-workers can understand the day-to-day situations that women face to help them see women as partners instead of competitors.
- In order to empower low-income women, there should be facilities to buy taxi concessions that are prioritised for the most vulnerable women workers. Currently, women work directly or indirectly for men, who have the economic resources to get franchises.
- In the face of the introduction of digital taximeters (tablets), MOM is demanding special training for women (old and young). General training sessions tend to be mainly attended by men, which can make learning difficult for women due to gender discrimination and gender norms.
- As women often start driving taxis at a mature age, they struggle to save enough for retirement when they are no longer able to drive. However, their experience can be valuable to younger entrants, therefore it would be helpful to form an organisation that employs retired drivers to provide advice and support to younger drivers.

“ I suffered from sexual harassment from a co-worker, I told my boss and he did not do anything. Then I was thinking of going to the union, but my female co-worker did that once, and the Committee told her she must learn how to behave with men first. It is always our fault. Do you think I will go to union activities after that?”

Woman light rail worker, Mexico City

8.2 TACKLING VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Earlier sections of this report have highlighted the prevalence of male violence towards women workers, including sexual harassment. It is therefore vital for unions, in their efforts to both defend and increase women’s employment in public transport, to tackle the issue of violence towards women effectively. This report finds examples of where this is happening, but also varied practice across unions, with some evidence that trade unions may not be taking the issue seriously enough at all levels.

While many trade unions have policies on tackling sexual harassment or on negotiating agreements with employers to address the issue, women still report negative experiences when complaining of sexual harassment to union representatives in some unions, as recounted by a worker from Mexico City:

“I suffered from sexual harassment from a co-worker, I told my boss and he did not do anything. Then I was thinking of going to the union, but my female co-worker did that once, and the Committee told her she must learn how to behave with men first. It is always our fault. Do you think I will go to union activities after that?”

Woman light rail worker, Mexico City

“ While many trade unions have policies on tackling sexual harassment or on negotiating agreements with employers to address the issue, women still report negative experiences when complaining of sexual harassment to union representatives.”

A male bus union representative in Cape Town admitted that, although there has been extensive harassment of train drivers, including the rape of a woman driver, the union has not yet formulated an effective strategy to deal with it. The union is, though, very aware of the safety of women bus drivers, especially when they start work very early and leave late, and does try to demand that workers are given transport to their doorsteps.

COSATU is part of a coalition of organisations called Unite Behind that has been campaigning to improve the state of the trains in Cape Town, including addressing violence. It has raised a number of demands in relation to the state of the public transport system in its section 77 notice to the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), which provides the legal basis to build a protected mass strike around political and social demands. The section 77 notice asks questions about what is being done by government to address violence, as well as

raising questions about equitable access to transport for those in poorer and black areas.

As noted earlier, NGOs in both Nairobi and Cape Town have been campaigning and carrying out training on tackling sexual harassment of women passengers and workers. In Nairobi the Flone Initiative involved the PUTON and MWU unions in the training, while the NGO Sonke Gender Justice is working with SATAWU in campaigning to address the sexual harassment and violence experienced by taxi passengers in Cape Town. While some district authorities have introduced policies to tackle sexual harassment suffered by passengers, such as in Bogota, this has not addressed the sexual harassment experienced by women workers. There is therefore scope for unions to join public authorities or NGOs in addressing women's rights as passengers in order to improve the environment for women workers, in a mutually reinforcing message of zero tolerance of sexual harassment for all passengers and workers.

“ The union is, though, very aware of the safety of women bus drivers, especially when they start work very early and leave late, and does try to demand that workers are given transport to their doorsteps. ”

Some unions have established women's committees that represent women workers' interests. For example, the MWU in Nairobi has a women's committee that can deal with complaints from women, including sexual harassment. In one case the union planned to discipline a male driver who was accused of physically violating a woman conductor. However she agreed to settle the matter informally with the perpetrator, highlighting the difficulties for women of dealing with matters formally, especially when they have to continue working with the perpetrator.

In Nairobi the SACCOs are responsible for dealing with cases of harassment reported to them. The SACCOs serve as the point of contact with the authorities and are held accountable for the behaviour of their members. As a result, they discipline their members who flout traffic rules or commit offences such as sexual harassment. They may suspend workers for up to three months for harassing women workers. During this time, the worker cannot get employment in any other SACCO and so cannot work formally. The role of SACCOs in enforcing discipline among workers in order to protect women workers is therefore key. They could devise tougher deterrent measures; for instance, the SACCOs could engage the criminal investigation department, which issues 'certificates of good conduct' to public transport workers, agreeing to submit records about workers found to have violated or harassed women workers or passengers, so that the department could refuse to issue certificates where violations had occurred.

8.3 UNION CAMPAIGNS ON FUTURE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Unions are keen to ensure that future innovations in public transport bring benefits to workers as well as passengers. This requires consultation with worker representatives at the early stages of project feasibility, design, planning and implementation. Unions have learnt lessons from the Bogota Transmilenio project, where transport unions were omitted from initial consultations over the design and implementation of the project, leading to major problems in the model adopted from the perspective of worker rights and conditions. It was only at a later stage of implementation that the ITF and SNTT became involved in trying to improve workers' rights. It was also shown in sections 6.1 and 8.1 above that the SintraRecaudo union has been successfully organising to protect the mainly women workforce in ticket sales, and is resisting the perceived negative effects of further automation that is unpopular with passengers and staff alike.

Unions have thus been mobilising the power of women workers and passengers in their campaigns to protect and improve public transport. A further example, described in the box on 'The proposed introduction of electric buses in Mexico City', is that of the "Save the trolleybuses" campaign, actively waged by the ATM union in Mexico City. Trolleybuses were put under threat by the proposals for an electric bus corridor, promising much-hyped environmental and economic development benefits. The union campaign highlighted the sustainable potential of electric trolleybuses, with new investment, their relative affordability in relation to the high potential costs of the electric bus corridor, and the public's affection for the well-used trolleybuses. The campaign successfully engaged many women, including young women, as

users of trolleybuses, who contributed ideas on how to run the campaign.

Given the political significance of the electric bus corridor project in Mexico City (see box on 'The proposed introduction of electric buses in Mexico City') and its anticipated social, economic and environmental benefits, as well as government support and funding from international agencies, there is a significant opportunity for trade unions to get involved in consultations and planning at the early stages, gaining recognition as representatives of key stakeholders in the project – the workers who will build and operate it. Such stakeholders should, of course, also include women workers, and policy could be developed to specify gender equality benefits from women's increased participation in good quality transport jobs across the occupational range.

“ However, the lack of training and skills among women public transport workers might limit their access to such jobs unless the necessary training and targets are contractual requirements for companies operating within the BRT system. ”

The introduction of BRT in Nairobi provides both opportunities and threats for men and women public transport workers. Given the predominance of informal working currently among matatu workers and stage workers, it is predicted that there may be opportunities for women to move into formal, decent and less precarious jobs within BRT. This includes jobs as drivers, clerks working within the ticketing stations, ICT specialists in control centres, off-board fare collection assistants, administrators, real-time monitoring, route

managers and as BRT service managers, time keepers and fleet managers. However, the lack of training and skills among women public transport workers might limit their access to such jobs unless the necessary training and targets are contractual requirements for companies operating within the BRT system.

To date, efforts to involve public transport operators in the planning of BRT in Nairobi, the first phase of which is due to start operation in December 2018, mainly involved the matatu owners and welfare associations. The public transport workers and their unions have not been involved. Indeed those who will be most affected by BRT, the matatu workers, had little knowledge about the plans. In a survey of 300 matatu workers in October 2017, more than 80 per cent had never heard of BRT or the plans to introduce BRT in Nairobi. Of those who had heard of BRT, 59 per cent thought that it was a good idea, although 42 per cent also believed that it would lead to a loss of jobs or decrease in income.⁶⁴

The transport unions TAWU, PUTON and MWU have been raising awareness among members about the incoming BRT system. Being informed is the first necessary stage in influencing change, but unions are critical of the government for providing insufficient information to enable workers to influence the implementation. A union interviewee said: "How can there be inclusion without information? The government is not involving public transport workers."

The union campaigns on BRT have boosted membership numbers, with many workers joining PUTON, TAWU and MWU due to the threat of job losses posed by BRT. The fears of informal workers are given

support by the results of the introduction of BRT in Bogota in which it was informal workers who lost jobs, although new formal jobs were also created. There have been no official attempts to assess the impact on workers of the introduction of BRT, although unions have called for this to be done.⁶⁵ The current research from Nairobi estimated that at least 80,000 transport operator and associated jobs would potentially be affected by the introduction of the BRT routes, based on estimated numbers of registrations with the roughly 200 SACCOs in the city.

“ When men take leadership in unions, they often do not engage on issues affecting women. They only do so if they are reminded, or when they know that there is someone in the audience who needs to hear such issues being discussed. If left on their own, men will not talk about women’s issues. ”

Male union representative, Nairobi

The Nairobi unions are therefore using the opportunity to train their members about the implications of BRT and to recruit members. But unions are aware that this window of opportunity for recruitment may not remain open for long, and members will only remain if they see the benefits through the unions’ active engagement and negotiation with the authorities. A union interviewee commented:

⁶⁴ Spooner 2018.

⁶⁵ The ITF commissioned a baseline report to estimate the potential impact on the matatu workforce from BRT in Nairobi, which called for more research to determine a more precise assessment of the impact on workers, see Spooner 2018.

“The unions are on the right path, but they need to understand that they are trading with people. They must convince people to join unions so as to fight for their rights... but they cannot hoard people. People come to the unions because they are not comfortable”

Male union representative, Nairobi

It is interesting to note that, in common with public transport campaigns in other cities in this study, the BRT campaign in Nairobi is largely driven and attended by women. Whereas only about one in 10 public transport workers are women, the women workers constitute around seven out of 10 participants in the BRT campaign. This indicates that women are more active in mobilising union members on this issue than men, and underscores the importance of capacity building of women in union leadership and advocacy. A union informant noted that:

“When men take leadership in unions, they often do not engage on issues affecting women. They only do so if they are reminded, or when they know that there is someone in the audience who needs to hear such issues being discussed. If left on their own, men will not talk about women’s issues.”

Male union representative, Nairobi

As well as building capacity within unions, several interviewees also thought that the introduction of BRT would empower women public transport workers through improving the public perception, acceptance and respect towards them. A male union informant commented:

“BRT introduction might change the public transport scenario with regard to safety and dignity, especially for women workers and users, and it might lead to better maintenance of public transport vehicles, that are predictable and with less pollution.”

Male union representative, Nairobi

However, the benefits all depend on the manner in which the system is implemented. There have been warnings that the BRT system could result in greater congestion on the other parts of the transport system, reducing trips and therefore earnings for the paratransit operators. Academic experts have argued that the introduction of BRT has the potential to introduce further chaos into the sector by entrenching two classes of users, with the poor being confined to the poorly maintained, slow moving public service corridors, while those who can afford to pay higher fares get quicker and better public transport services.⁶⁶ However, others are optimistic that the BRT introduction will reduce traffic congestion on the roads, leading to more trips being made by matatus and hence higher incomes.

These contrary views and predictions highlight the need for more information and discussion among public transport workers and the public. One woman public transport worker said:

“There is need to engage about the BRT in Kenya. The universities and the media should give information to the public about BRT. People should be given time to talk about BRT. This way it will gain acceptance.”

Woman public transport worker

⁶⁶ Rizzo, M. (2017). *Taken for a Ride: Grounding Neoliberalism, Precarious Labour, and Public Transport in an African Metropolis*. Oxford University Press

Consultation so far on BRT between government departments and the transport authorities has included discussion with public transport operators, such as the Matatu Owners Association (MOA), but their views will not necessarily coincide with those of workers. Research has pointed out, though, that in other cities, authorities have recognised that the inclusion of worker representatives in informal transport is essential to the successful planning and delivery of BRT, with examples of consultation with taxi drivers' unions in Ghana and South Africa.⁶⁷ Furthermore, authorities in Johannesburg engaged with taxi leaders at the start of the project, taking them to South America to visit TransMileno, and to meet with previously informal operators. Negotiations resulted in taxi drivers becoming shareholders in the bus operating companies contracted to run the BRT. This "gave the stakeholders a platform with which to advocate for themselves, in partnership with, rather than in opposition to, the city."⁶⁸

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⁶⁷ Spooner 2018

⁶⁸ ITDP (2018). BRT Planning Guide, cited in Spooner, 2018, p.27

8.4 UNION ORGANISATION OF PLATFORM WORKERS

There are enormous difficulties in organising platform workers who operate as independent actors under an employment model that does not offer face-to-face engagement with other workers or even the employer. Therefore it is no surprise that in Mexico City there is no organisation of platform drivers (although women taxi workers have organised themselves – see box on ‘The MOM women taxi drivers’ organisation in Mexico City’). In Bangkok, there are no unions organising in Grab. Similarly, in Bogota it has not been possible to organise platform workers, and according to the SNTT, it is difficult to even identify the drivers to try and recruit. This is made more difficult by the fact that only registered cars that are part of a company registered by the Ministry of Transport can legally operate taxis, meaning that the operation of Uber and other platform transport services do not comply with the existing law.

In Nairobi, about 420 digital platform workers joined PUTON in 2017 (see box on ‘Organising platform workers in Nairobi’) after initial efforts by digital platform workers to engage the platform companies in discussion of workers issues were dismissed on the grounds that they were too amorphous. Through PUTON, these workers engaged with digital platform companies such as Uber. In one instance, Uber deactivated the accounts of five women drivers for attending a union meeting. The union petitioned Uber, citing workers’ constitutional right to join unions and their accounts were reactivated. Uber also indicated that it had no problem with the workers joining a union. However other companies discourage their workers from joining unions.

Drivers in Cape Town also became organised after a number of Uber drivers found that they had been deactivated from the app by the company and in effect

could no longer work as Uber drivers in 2017. This led seven of these drivers, together with unions NUPSAW and SATAWU, to challenge their legal status as self-employed. As a SATUWU rep interviewed said, the union was keen to support the legal challenge, as Uber “seems to be an employer with no employees.”

“ There are enormous difficulties in organising platform workers who operate as independent actors under an employment model that does not offer face-to-face engagement with other workers or even the employer. ”

The drivers and unions took their case to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). They argued that they were in fact employers of the company and not self-employed drivers, and that by deactivating them from the app without any process having been followed, the company had in effect dismissed them unfairly. Thus the case was lost on a technicality, which unions believe gives them an opening. While the judge did not agree that an employment relationship between Uber SA and the drivers had been proved, the ruling left open the question of whether an employment relationship existed between Uber BV (the Uber parent company in the Netherlands) and the drivers (since Uber BV was not a party to the case before the court). It was for this reason that the award holding Uber SA to be the employer was set aside.

In deciding whether the company was in fact the employer, the CCMA Commissioner found that the drivers were subject to the control of Uber, were economically dependent on Uber, and were an

essential part of Uber’s services. The Commissioner found that, as much as Uber drivers can make a range of decisions about their work such as how many hours per day they work, what their starting time will be and so on, Uber exercised control over the drivers because it was the company that could suspend or deactivate access to the app. So even without direct or physical supervision, the company exercised control through technology. For this and other reasons, the Commissioner found that the relationship was an employment one.

The company took the CCMA findings to a review at the Labour Court. The Labour Court ruled in the company’s favour on a technicality, without having argued the merits of the case about whether Uber workers are employers or self-employed contractors. The technicality was that SATAWU cited Uber SA Technologies (Uber SA) in the case, whereas they should have cited the parent company, Uber BV, a Dutch company.

Uber and Taxify workers held various protests on common issues in Cape Town and Johannesburg during 2018, amounting to 200 vehicles in July. A common complaint is that Uber takes drivers off the system and in effect dismisses them. Protesters demands have included that Uber:

- take 15% and not 25% of their earnings for a trip because of rising fuel costs and their early hours of work;
- give them representation on the company board if it says they are “partners”;

- stop hiring more entrants as the roads are already “saturated.”⁶⁹

The issue of the employment status of Uber and other platform workers has been contested in other countries, including the UK, and is an issue that is likely to continue to raise its head in many countries, especially as these companies seek to expand. Questions of regulation and licensing will also continue to surface, with important implications for workers’ conditions, security and organisation, presenting many challenges, and opportunities, for trade unions.

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⁶⁹ In August 2018 New York became the first US city to cap the number of licenses for ride-hailing services such as Uber for one year, aimed at reducing traffic congestion and increasing driver pay. Retrieved 8 August 2018 from: <https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-uber-new-york/new-york-city-votes-to-cap-uber-lyft-vehicle-licenses-idUKKBN1KT2M3>

ORGANISING PLATFORM WORKERS IN NAIROBI

PUTON in Nairobi has recruited about 420 drivers working through platform companies into the union. Women have played an important part in organising efforts – for example in the resistance of the five women drivers to their deactivation by the platform company following their attendance at a union meeting, described above – and occupying national and local leadership positions within the union, for example in TAWU, MWU and PUTON. Furthermore women members have taken a key role in negotiations with the government and employers to improve platform workers conditions.

Union representatives were aware of the difficulties of organising in this sector, observing that platform workers may have less experience of, and therefore patience with, lengthy union processes, instead wanting to see immediate results. Thus platform workers and unions need clear and open communication to understand each other's concerns and limitations. Platform workers needs may be different, for example they may have more flexibility over timing for participation in daytime meetings, compared to other public transport workers with fixed schedule. It may be necessary to develop particular forms of organising, for example online branch membership, but it is important that different sorts of workers understand each other. An interviewee representing platform workers noted that:

"...the mother union should bring together the various branch members so that we know each other and understand each other's concerns."

Union rep, platform worker, Nairobi

The unions have successfully raised issues with Ministry of Transport officials about pricing control, workers' conditions and security and safety concerns affecting platform workers. On 7 June 2018 platform workers in PUTON from different companies submitted a petition to parliament demanding regulation of the sector and fair rules on pricing. Initially parliament declined to legislate on the petition until the relevant government departments dealt with the matter. PUTON, together with the Digital Taxi Association and Rideshare SACCO society, formed an ad hoc committee, the Digital Taxi Forum, to approach the Ministry of Transport. Several meetings were held, and at a meeting with the permanent secretary and the cabinet secretary and cab owners, the workers presented their grievance and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 11th July 2018, receiving global media attention, including the BBC and CNN. Together with PUTON officials, the digital platform representatives met the Parliamentary Transport Committee on 23 August 2018 and presented their petition in a meeting also attended by senior officials from Nairobi Metropolitan and Transport Authority (NaMATA), the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) and the Nairobi City County Government (NCCG).

Although only five platform companies attended the meeting, the MoU set the standards for all cab companies, currently registered and future companies. Women workers were well represented in the negotiating team, making up three out of the seven worker representatives.

Future discussions with all parties will define how the MoU is implemented and will address the operational issues outlined in the MoU and the petition. The issues it will address concern:

- Regulation of the online taxi industry: the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) Act which governs the transport sector does not cover the online taxi industry since this emerged after enactment of the Act. Digital platform workers were not included as stakeholders in formulation of this Act. The worker petition called for regulations that define what a cab company is, its roles, and how it operates and engages with drivers.
- Pricing: the MoU agreed that all companies should use the Automobile Association of Kenya (AA) approved rates. These are under review by the AA as it had not previously set rates for commercial taxis.
- Traffic regulation: the Ministry of Transport is in the process of reviewing the traffic Act. At the same time, the Traffic Amendment Bill 2017 is progressing, which will include the online industry. Platform worker representatives will be invited to a stakeholder meeting to discuss the draft and provide input; the issue of security is to be included in the regulation.

9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



The evidence from the research undertaken in the five cities for this report has confirmed that women continue to face gender segregation in the public transport sector, being concentrated into lower-paying and in some cases more precarious or informal positions. However the report has also highlighted patterns of change, with growing numbers of women entering the public transport workforce in some cities, such as Mexico City, as well as in South Africa. There are also indications that women are gaining greater opportunities to move into typically male areas such as drivers in new forms of transport systems such as BRT and expanding metro systems, as well as being attracted by the flexibility that platform taxi services can offer.

The development of new transport systems and technological change therefore has the potential to bring benefits for women public transport workers, for example in opening up new opportunities for work in

the formal sector and moving away from precarious informal work, in improving vehicle operation and safety to make driving work more attractive to women and in offering more flexible work hours and patterns through platform work.

But on the other hand, many of the jobs that women typically undertake have been affected by the automation of ticket sales, in some cases resulting in job loss, although where union agreements exist, relocation has occurred. Further automation of ticket sales and fare collection is likely, although progress in further roll out has been limited by technological, business and political difficulties, according to the evidence from this report. A further important point to emerge from the interviews with women workers in ticketing and customer service roles is the strong preference from passengers for human interaction over machine services, which are often slower or function poorly.

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Opportunities for training were highlighted as essential to ensure that women gain access to new jobs when transport infrastructure is introduced or upgraded. However, the research found that training was often lacking, for example in enabling women to gain driving licences or operate new technological systems. There were, though, examples of where national apprenticeship or sponsored learnership schemes were used to train women to get driving licences so they could apply for new jobs, such as on the Cape Town BRT. This measure aimed to address the male domination among drivers in the BRT, which replicated pre-existing patterns of gender segregation among taxi drivers. When BRT was introduced priority in recruitment was given to taxi drivers, who feared loss of work as a result of the new system. This was part of a strategy to ensure black economic empowerment, in compliance with South African legislation.

While there may be potential benefits for women workers in BRT systems, the model under which it is introduced, as a requirement of World Bank financing, insists on public-private partnerships, which introduces competition between vehicle operating companies and separation of local authority control and regulation from operation of services. The research from Bogota showed that this resulted in little monitoring of worker terms and conditions in each company by the organisation running the system, Transmilenio, with attention only paid to passenger service issues. However, Transmilenio negotiates the contracts with the operators, so could insist on terms that include decent labour practice requirements, but it does not do so.⁷⁰

The use of a model which requires the outsourcing of operational provision to private companies can also negatively affect women's employment in several ways. In cities such as Mexico City and Bogota women are more likely to be employed in public sector positions in public transport, therefore outsourcing could put such jobs at risk. Unions in Mexico City have found that when new, privatised systems are introduced, such as electric taxis, this is accompanied by inferior, non-unionised terms and conditions, thus they are fearful about plans for new electric buses. In Bangkok, women believed that jobs in the state-run rail operators offered better conditions. Moreover in Cape Town, the introduction of BRT involved a worsening of driver pay and conditions at the BRT operating companies in comparison to the private company GABS that had for many years run bus services in Cape Town. Women are employed in greater numbers (although still small numbers overall) as drivers in the new operating companies than in GABS.

⁷⁰ ITF, World Bank-Bogota TransMilenio Project draft report, unpublished.

The report has revealed that women public transport workers continue to face violence and sexual harassment from passengers and male colleagues in all cities, consistent with other worldwide research evidence. This deters women from undertaking certain jobs, for example driving jobs that require late night working or travel to unsafe parts of cities. However it was also seen that in the jobs that women regularly undertake, such as customer service and ticket sales positions, passenger violence and harassment is a regular occurrence.

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Interviewees felt that more needed to be done by employers to provide safe work environments, both in stations and for drivers. This can include the provision of safe transport to and from work for those on late and early shifts (which in some instances is provided for drivers but not ticket sales staff who also do early and late shifts) or design and technological solutions for bus and train cabs, including emergency alert systems, for example. The risks of violence and sexual

harassment for women drivers (and passengers) working for platform companies were also highlighted, with the result that women tend to avoid working in certain areas and during night times, thus losing out on some of the most profitable jobs. The report revealed that technology can be used to alert women drivers to dangerous clients, or in some instances to call for assistance from other drivers, and there may be more that can be done to develop consistent, widely accessible apps or systems to ensure that drivers are confident that they will receive immediate assistance in case of danger.

Laudrive in Mexico City was presented as an example of a women-only platform taxi company, where both drivers and customers are women, set up to provide a safe service for women. The company remains small and therefore finds it difficult to get access to further investment funds, and has a limited market share due to its decision to serve only women riders, who also have less access to economic resources than men. However, it represents a model that overcomes some of the safety issues for platform taxi drivers, as well as having better employment conditions than many of the ride-hailing platforms, and is one that could be adopted to provide an alternative form of platform driving employment for women in other cities. Given the widespread evidence of sexual harassment of both passengers and drivers globally, a women-only platform taxi service is likely to have significant appeal.

The issue of working hours is closely connected to safety as noted above, but also shapes the ability of women with caring responsibilities to participate in public transport work. While some public transport work offers flexibility, the research showed that split shifts could mean excessive work and travel hours, making such work impossible for many women workers. The evidence from the cities in this research supports claims that platform taxi driving work can

offer access to flexible employment opportunities for women, enabling them to balance work with other commitments such as family responsibilities or studying. However, these benefits may be more available to some women than others, for example to those who are not relying on this work as their sole household income, or those who have access to their own vehicle. For women who have to pay others for a vehicle, or who need to work very long hours to earn sufficient income – especially in cities with high competition from multiple platform companies and therefore downward pressure on earnings – the potential for exploitation is great.

Women public transport workers are organising within their trade unions to defend their jobs and improve their terms and conditions, as examples such as the organising of ticket sales workers in SintraRecado in Bogota, and the matatu and platform taxi workers in PUTON in Nairobi show. In Bangkok, recruitment strategies of SEETU and SRUT have involved gender and age matching of union recruiters to increase numbers of women and young people in the unions. Women trade unionists in the ATM have been actively campaigning to save the trolleybuses in Mexico City, working closely with community activists and passengers, often women, to build the impact of their campaign. Unions have also made links with NGOs on campaigns over sexual harassment in Cape Town and in Nairobi, revealing the further potential for alliances with community organisations and passengers to strengthen union campaigns on issues affecting both women public transport workers and passengers. In an example of a global alliance, in 2015 a coalition of global unions, including the ITF, their members and civil society groups, forced UN Women to disassociate

itself from a ‘strategic partnership’ with Uber linked to Uber’s plan to create a million jobs for women drivers that the coalition believed were likely to be insecure, ill paid, and potentially unsafe.⁷¹ The report also provides an example of women taxi drivers in Mexico City organising among themselves outside of trade unions to highlight the particular problems they face, and proposing some strategies and demands, which may offer insights for trade unions into how they could support such workers.

Trade unions are very aware of the challenges of organising platform workers, given the individualised and precarious nature of their employment. However the report has given examples of successful organising in Cape Town and Nairobi, where platform workers have joined existing public transport unions. In Cape Town, drivers have also formed into their own association, the Uber Drivers Guild. SATAWU supported drivers in challenging their legal status as self-employed, a case which was lost on a technicality, but which represents an important example of collective organisation in this sector. In Nairobi, the research found that women drivers were prominent in resisting their deactivation by Uber following their attendance at a union meeting, and played an important role in the organisation of platform workers in PUTON. The union has been able to put pressure on the government to address issues of pricing control, employment conditions and safety, and has agreed a Memorandum of Understanding on a process for progressing these issues with formal representation from unions.

The research has shown that unions in some cases are still not doing enough to attract or defend women public transport workers, with interviewees

⁷¹ ITF press release 20 March 2015, Union outcry causes rejection of Uber ‘Women’s jobs’ plan, accessed 18 September 2018 <http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/press-releases/2015/march/union-outcry-forces-rejection-of-uber-womens-jobs-plan/>

warning that some women do not believe that unions will take sexual harassment seriously if reported to them, or indeed members may be the perpetrators. Union strategies on tackling sexual harassment and violence towards women workers are often under-developed and need to be both widely publicised and fairly implemented to reassure women transport workers. Some examples of union training and awareness raising on issues of harassment and gender discrimination were shown, but these have typically been of limited scale and scope. Several women union leaders and activists who participated in this research highlighted that more needs to be done to build and strengthen women's leadership capacity within trade unions. Evidence from the research shows that in all cases where women are in leadership positions in the union, the specific issues facing women transport workers come to the fore and are addressed more effectively by the union. The visibility of women leaders also contributes to the recruitment of women public transport workers.

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Overall, the report has highlighted the important role of women in the public transport workforce both currently and in the future. It has provided material to ensure that gender issues can be included in

discussions about the future of public transport work in the face of technological change and further automation. It has revealed both the potential benefits and risks for women's employment of further technological innovation, and emphasised the significant role of public transport unions in ensuring that technological change is introduced in a manner that seeks to advance gender equality, rather than entrench or even exacerbate existing patterns of gender inequality and segregation.

“ The report has... emphasised the significant role of public transport unions in ensuring that technological change is introduced in a manner that seeks to advance gender equality, rather than entrench or even exacerbate existing patterns of gender inequality and segregation. ”

Some recommendations for how trade unions can progress gender equality in public transport in the face of technological change are presented below:



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Campaign to ensure that unions are key stakeholders in consultations on all new public transport infrastructure and extensions of existing systems from very early stages of discussion, that gender implications are included, and that gender impact assessments are provided and corresponding action is taken.
- Campaign to ensure that unions are key stakeholders in consultation on all new technological developments in public transport – including platform work – from very early stages of discussion, that gender implications are included, and gender impact assessments are provided and corresponding action is taken.
- Negotiate the inclusion of terms in contracts between BRT management organisations and operating companies that address decent work and labour rights, such as minimum wages, hours, facilities and include gender equality measures, such as sexual harassment policies, and promotion and training opportunities.
- Campaign for public transport infrastructure to include adequate facilities for workers and passengers, such as toilets and provision of clean drinking water.
- Ensure that relocation agreements and policy guidelines on job restructuring also cover jobs mostly done by women, such as ticketing, and not only for drivers.
- Highlight evidence that passengers prefer human interaction over machines, as well as recommendations from public transport inspection and monitoring organisations (ie Veeduria in Bogota) on the need for more workers in ticket collection and customer service and safety risks to passengers of cutting staff (link to work on preventing sexual harassment of women passengers).
- Negotiate promotion, training and retraining opportunities to support women of all ages into higher paid work, such as in driving, supervisory and management positions, and roles created by new technology.
- Negotiate working hours and shift patterns that accommodate women's and men's family responsibilities, and address safety risks of early and late shifts, for example by providing transport to and from work.
- Introduce policies and procedures to address sexual harassment perpetrated by union members; publicise policy among union members and women transport workers who are not members; train members on the policies and union representatives on how to support a case of sexual harassment.
- Develop campaigns in conjunction with employers to tackle passenger violence, making the connection between the provision of a safe environment for both passengers and women staff; and build coalitions with NGOs campaigning to end gender-based violence and/or safer public transport.
- Build women's leadership in trade unions through women's structures, networks and training that develops the capacity of women trade unionists to become active and play leadership roles.
- Campaign for policies to help address technology and gender inequality – at the workplace level, at government level and regulation, including making use of opportunities linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring that such discussions explicitly include labour rights and gender inequality.

ABOUT ITF

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a democratic, affiliate-led global federation of 670 trade unions in 147 countries, representing 19.7 million working women and men in all transport sectors. The ITF passionately campaigns for transport workers' rights, equality, and justice.

The ITF women's department works with the ITF women transport workers' committee, to support ITF affiliates to organise and mobilise more women transport workers and maximise our global influence and transport workplace power. Our aim is to strengthen their collective voice to win better conditions for women transport workers around the world. Key issues include gender-based occupational segregation, access to decent pay and jobs, and the right to work free from violence, sexual harassment and sexual coercion.

www.itfglobal.org

ABOUT FES

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is the oldest political foundation in Germany with a rich tradition in social democracy dating back to its foundation in 1925. The foundation owes its formation and its mission to the political legacy of its namesake Friedrich Ebert, the first democratically elected German President. The work of our political foundation focuses on the core ideas and values of social democracy – freedom, justice and solidarity. This connects us to social democracy and free trade unions. As a non-profit institution, we organise our work autonomously and independently.

www.fes-london.org



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