



PRESS RELEASE

Safety and Security in Public Transport a Major Concern for Most Women in Nairobi

Although more than 80 percent of women in the capital city have witnessed harassment in the form of verbal or other forms of emotional abuse, while using public transport, less than 10 percent report the incidents.

Nairobi, 15 December 2021 - UN Women, Kenyatta University (KU) and the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) today launched a report on *Women and Public Transport in Nairobi*.

State Department for Gender (SDfG) Secretary for Gender Ms. Faith Kasiva was Chief Guest at the launch of the study, which was conducted under the auspices of *Women Count* - UN Women's global flagship programme on gender data and statistics, and in partnership with KU Women's Economic Empowerment (KU-WEE) Hub and SEI.

"Africa is the world's fastest urbanizing continent. However, the expansion of adequate transport infrastructure has not kept up with the growth of its cities. This has significant implications for gender inequality", said Ms. Kasiva in her keynote remarks.

Gender mainstreaming in urban transport infrastructure and services planning as well as provisioning is very important as women and men's transport needs and use patterns differ.

The *Women and Public Transport in Nairobi* study, the first of its kind for Kenya, identifies the public transport needs of women and the obstacles they face in accessing and using public transport. It aims to promote gender-responsive policymaking and influence decision-making towards gender equity in this essential service.

The study finds that although more than 80 percent of women in the capital city have witnessed harassment in the form of verbal or other forms of emotional abuse, only a paltry 7 percent reported the incidents. Furthermore, very little or no action is taken against the perpetrators.

"Only 1 percent of the actions taken after incidents of harassment led to the perpetrators being apprehended", said Maureen Gitonga, Programme Specialist Gender Statistics at UN Women Kenya.

"Harassment, including sexual and emotional abuse while using public transport, may hinder women from accessing and fully exploiting economic opportunities and from providing or enjoying social services," said Gitonga.

The findings highlight the need for measures to protect women commuters from continued victimization or harassment by *matatu* conductors/stage marshals and fellow male passengers.

"Women commuters should be supported to report these incidents and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in public transport provided with legal and psychosocial support", said Prof. Judith Waudo, KU-WEE Hub Leader.

The *Women and Public Transport in Nairobi Report* is the culmination of efforts of UN Women, KU and SEI in collaboration with the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing, Urban Development and Public Works, the National Transport and Road Safety Authority (NTSA), and the Nairobi Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (NaMATA).

The study is part of a series in East Africa. The findings of a related study for Kampala were launched in early December.

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