Women’s access to public transport in Greater Cairo

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Congestion is steadily increasing

Most people spend 2+ hours in transport daily

60% of trips are made by public transport

Image: Mohamed El-Shahed via Al-monitor.com
Cairo’s public transport

- **Metro**: 35 seats
- **CTA**: 35 seats
- **Minibus**: 26 seats
- **Microbus**: 14 seats
- **Volkswagen**: 9 seats
- **Van**: 7 seats
Overcrowding
Long waiting time discourages use of public transport
Poor conditions at public transport terminals
Bus rapid transit (BRT)

- Enclosed and secure stations
- New, clean, high-capacity buses
- Pre-board payment with smart cards
- Rapid boarding
- Dedicated bus lanes
- Pedestrian and cycle access

Dar es Salaam
After: Cleaner, high-capacity buses carrying 200,000 passengers/day; trip time from 2 hours to 45 minutes
Western Corridor

- 41.5 km
- 34 stations
- 119 articulated buses
- 3 terminals: Giza Square, Metro Faisal, & Industrial Rd
- 1 depot: Industrial Rd
Surveys performed

Frequency-Occupancy Gender counts
Count of passengers on each vehicle, distinguished by gender – 5 locations

Operator Interviews
Assess the level of gender sensitivity awareness among existing public transport operators

Public Transport Terminal Survey
Capture men and women’s travel patterns and preferences – 481 commuters

Focus Group Discussion
Capture information on level of safety within catchment area of proposed BRT corridor -49 participants.

Online Travel Pattern Survey
Online Survey to capture women travel patterns & safety concerns – 2,500 responses

Physical Assessment Survey
Examine current state of streets & public spaces
Focus group discussion
Cairo
Women’s travel patterns

25% of public transport passengers are women.

Over 80% of women surveyed faced harassment at some stage of their journey.
While the majority of trips by men were work-related, women had more varied purposes.
• Bus and paratransit services are stuck in traffic
• Frequent transfers also lead to additional delays.
• 70 percent of passengers transfer at least once to finish their trip

The majority of women using public transport spend **2 hours or more in their daily commutes**

- **14%** 31-59 min
- **6%** 0-30 min
- **22%** 1-2 hr
- **58%** >2 hr

When I arrive home, I am so tired that I cannot do anything anymore.

**I do not get tired from working—I am exhausted by the trip.**
Overcrowding increases the rates of harassment

- Service irregularity leading to infrequent service
- With overcrowding there’s also a risk of theft

Women cite overcrowding and lack of designated spaces as the main reasons behind harassment and lack of security.

Percent of women rating the mode as insecure:
- Bus 35%
- Microbus 18%
- Walking 13%

Some individuals take advantage of the crowd to harass you.
Operator attitudes & behavior

“You may also ride a microbus and be harassed by the driver or even by one of his friends sitting beside him.”

“We keep telling the drivers to please slow down to secure our lives, but they won’t listen!”

Cairo
Recommendations
• Planning for public transport with the users in mind
• Inclusive station and terminal designs
• Streets for all: Women, children, and persons with disabilities
• Mix of uses, more visibility
• Policy reform
• Campaigns against harassment
• More women in transport operations and planning roles
Adequate bus fleet and women only compartments

- The Cairo metro already has women only sections
- A bus fleet that matches the demand is also key in avoiding overcrowding.

**Women-only compartments are linked to improved safety**

90% of women believe public transport should have separate sections for women
Inclusive station and terminal designs
Streets for all: women, children, and persons with disabilities

Proposal for Faisal St, Giza
Mixed land use to improve security

“The presence of shops gives us a sense of security.”

“If ... I were harassed by anyone in the street, the first people I could resort to are shop owners.”

“On the main street, people are going and coming and it makes you feel secure. But our street is a different case.”

Cairo
More women in transport operations and planning roles

Equity, diversity, and inclusion ensure responsiveness to the needs of women.
Campaigns against harassment

The need for safety and security for women should be communicated to public transport operators, commuters, and the general public.
Thank you

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