GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN TRANSPORT SECTOR IN ADB[1]

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This paper will give an overview of gender issues in transport sector (for the sake of convenience, it will focus on roads and road transport), and examine how such gender issues in transport sector can be addressed under the policy context in ADB and the opportunities and challenges in responding to gender issues in project designs. In the end, it will give some recommendations on the way in which gender mainstreaming can be further facilitated in transport sector investment of ADB.

1. Key gender issues in transport sector in Asia[2]

The largest pitfall in many of the transportation development projects is that those who design the project assume that if infrastructure is provided, everything else will follow - transport services would follow and people would be able to access goods and services, and be able to improve their own lives. The key starting point to understand gender issues is to realize that mobility and accessibility is more complex and would need more holistic analysis. We should also recognize that the issues are different even among women, depending on their age, ethnicity, religion, class and occupation.

The purpose of travel and travel pattern between women and men are different. Both women and men travel for leisure, work as well as migration. But women travel more than men for water and fuelwood collection, food gathering in the forest/ fields, for shopping as well as sending children to schools and taking them to hospitals. Studies show that women travel for shorter distances more frequently, and combine trips (eg. Shopping on the way back from picking up children from home; or combine trips to the field with collecting fuelwood, water and edible plants).

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[1] The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Asian Development Bank, or its Board of Governors or the governments they represent.

[2] This section is based on Law 1999; Leinbach 2000; World Bank 1999; Knowles 2006; Porter 2002; Fernando and Porter 2002, and the author's experience.

Women's mobility can be more restricted than men because women need to stay at home longer to attend to household chores; because of safety issues; in some societies women are not expected to travel alone; because women tend not to drive, limiting the time and place/ distance that she can travel alone. **Availability of mode of transportation** can affect women and men's mobility differently. Women tend to use public transportation more than men, and women tend to walk more than men. In some societies, some means of transportation is prohibited for women. For example, in Bangladesh, motorbikes are prohibited for women, and women are taught that they will not be able to bear children if they ride motorbikes (Goetz 2001). Because men tend to use motorized transport while women walk, when transporting goods, women tend to hand carry/ back carry, which can affect their health. Although women from poorer families would face less restriction in mobility, they will face more **safety problems** compared to their more affluent counterpart (eg. Street vendors need to travel while dark and face more danger in the dark while travelling).

Transportation services often do not service the route that women's task require to travel. Often public transportation is provided for the purpose of serving the people going to work, while travel for shopping and other purposes is not taken into consideration. Women's travel to the field and water/ fuelwood fetching is often not taken into consideration in transportation design. The physical design of transportation services can make women's travel awkward when they do not accommodate ease for women to travel with children or to allow women vendors to travel with their large luggage.

Affordability of the means of transportation can also be an issue. Often poor women, especially poor women headed households, would not have money to purchase their own vehicle (eg. Motorbikes, cars, trucks), and even if the family buy these motorized vehicles, they are often used by men in the family. High price of fuel and cost for public transportation also would deter women from travelling, especially when the family members consider her travel as non-essential. This often happens, since household chores that women are engaged in are perceived as non-productive, thus not important.

Such gender differences in access to transportation and in mobility patterns would create gender differences in women and men's ability to capture opportunities created by roads and road network improvement. They will have different access to market, access to information and linkages with other people outside the community. Study in Laos showed mixed migration pattern with the improvement of roads – some villages saw women migrating more and other villages saw men migrating more after the improvement of highway (Khumya 2009).

Studies have shown that girls' education improves with better road connection, health care access become better for women and children, women increase their frequency in visiting relatives and strengthening their social network (see, for example, Matin et al 2002), and women enjoy time saving to juggle their multiple responsibility by shorter travel time, and also because men start to take up some of the tasks that women used to do because of the introduction of motorized vehicles. But at the same time, women can lose their income since men take over the

marketing (eg. Bihar, India in Rao 2002) and all these benefits can be different among different women.

Improved roads and higher mobility of people also mean that there will be more outmigration. Remittances and lack of people working on the farm would lead to changes in the livelihoods and thus the control of resources among women and men. Road development can cause not only resettlement but also lead to changes in value of land. Those with less negotiation power, especially women, might be more vulnerable to losing land owing o the increase in value of land. The changes in movement of people and goods can also change the way women and men perceive space, and thus the places where they are able to go will change. For example, easier access to cities and borders can make women feel psychologically able to move (Khumya 2009).

2. Opportunities and challenges for gender mainstreaming in ADB's strategies

The strategy 2020 spelled out the five core specializations, namely, (i) infrastructure; (ii) environment, including climate change; (iii) regional cooperation and integration; (iv) financial sector development; and (v) education. Infrastructure continues to be one of the most important areas of investment for the years to come. Ending poverty remains an overall goal, and the strategy is to achieve this through strengthening of market-based economies through expanded investment and trade. Regional economic integration is seen to be the most effective strategy to achieve this goal.

It is important to note that Strategy 2020 recognizes that there will be people who might be excluded from the process, and calls attention to the need to address their problems. GMS regional cooperation business plan also refers to the need for "soft aspects of cooperation". These provide the policy basis to focus on integrating gender equality in transportation sector development. The Strategy 2020 further explicitly declared that ADB will promote gender equity and foster women's empowerment, both economic and social, direct and indirect.

Reflecting its policy to promote gender equality, ADB developed quite sophisticated country gender assessment reports. In the overall country strategy and program, there is a section on gender mainstreaming where the gender assessment reports are reflected. However, when it comes to the transport sector assessment, gender equality is rarely mentioned, and recommendations from the country gender assessment reports are seldom reflected, although occasionally, issues of women (especially in the context of HIV/AIDS and trafficking) are included. At the same time, it is noted that ADB has set safeguards policies and operation guidelines against involuntary resettlement, indigenous people, as well as on environment. Although these do not specify gender perspective, it can be used as an important tool to ensure that no negative gender impact occurs as the result of the investment.

Many of the transport sector strategies refer to poverty reduction and inclusive growth as part of their objectives[3]. Noting the proven connection between poverty and gender equality, such objectives will mandate transport strategies to include gender mainstreaming. However, even though one of the major objectives of transport sector development is poverty reduction and inclusive development, this is not reflected in the sector outcomes indicators. Sector outcome indicators are limited to only those directly related to the physical construction of roads, such as highway traffic, traffic fatalities and reduction of travel time. It is suggested that in order to reflect and monitor the objective of transport sector development adequately, we need to include indicators such as its effect on employment (how many employment for women and men has the road construction created; how many small contractors – owned by women and men – were involved); access to schools (girls and boys enrollment to schools); access to hospitals/ health care centers (for example, ratio of pregnant women who received antenatal care, etc.); and effect on economy that benefits the poor (for example, number of small businesses run by women and men); time saved for women to fetch water/ fuelwood.

Some transport sector evaluation reports do recognize that there is a need of "road +", acknowledging that better rural roads are a necessary but not sufficient condition for poverty reduction.

> Experience from the case studies shows that rural roads alone are not enough in tackling poverty. The poor face fundamental deficiencies in their assets to take advantage of better opportunities that a rural road may bring and, therefore, need support to capitalize. This suggests that integrated projects are needed to tackle poverty effectively (Hettige 2006:35).

There is more room to expand integrated approach in the transport strategies, which will ensure poor women and men to benefit from opportunities created by road development. The Gender Plan of Action 2008-2010, analyzed that the reason why country gender assessments are not integrated or implemented is because there are few staff in the projects who are able to appreciate the usefulness and relevance of CGA. The same report also pointed out the lack of statistics to be used in transportation planning and other infrastructure development.

3. General observations on approved loans in transport sector

Some of the 2008 approved loans in the transport sector were reviewed, and below are general observations from the project documents.

(1) Feasibility studies and assessments

It has been noted that in some projects (ex. Papua New Guinea Highlands Region Road Improvement Investment Program; Timor Leste Road Sector Improvement Projects), gender analysis was carried out during the feasibility study stage. Consultations with women were done through focus group discussions, and gender issues were identified,

[3] For example, Cambodia and India's transport sector strategies are explicit about these issues.

such as women's time and work burden, safety issues in public transport, women's lack of means of transportation and higher need to use public transportation, high maternal mortality rate, importance to safe drinking water, nutrition, issues of domestic violence, higher incidence of HIV/AIDS among women compared to men. When gender analysis is carried out, gender disaggregated data was also collected. Some projects such as Cambodia's Road Asset Management Project introduced benefit monitoring, which covered seven areas reflecting gender concerns, such as access to work, schools, markets and social services, jobs created during construction and maintenance, and income per capital

However, not all projects would have such gender analysis in the initial stage of project formulation. At the same time, in many cases country gender assessments are not referred to, gender analysis and monitoring done but still linking that to the project design and implementation is a challenge.

(2) Preventing negative impacts from road development

In several projects that were relatively more gender sensitive than others included components on HIV/AIDS, road safety and human trafficking. These are incorporated to minimize the negative effect on women and men from road development. The repeated incorporation of HIV/AIDS component in transport projects show the possibility of developing a transport sector projects into more integrated development projects that will be more able to respond to the multiple needs of poor women and men. It is important now to go beyond HIV/AIDS and other do-no-harm projects and explore approaches that can ensure poor women and men to be able to make use of the opportunities that are created by transport development and reduce disparities.

(3) Component for promoting gender equality

Some projects try to increase employment opportunities especially for women through labor-based rural road construction. For example, Cambodia Road Asset Management Project introduced a quota for women to benefit from road construction work. Many of the social components including gender components are funded by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, such as violence against women and road safety, ensuring women's equal access to safe transportations services, skills training for women, etc.

In some other project, social components including gender equality are included in one of the many tasks of consultants. Although this is seen as an effort to back stop technically the gender mainstreaming process, in order to ensure that gender equality is focused, it would be more desirable if the project specifies that gender experts are included in the design and monitoring.

4. Lessons learned and recommendations

(1) Include gender indicators in transport sector roadmap

Since the objective of transport development is poverty reduction and inclusive development, sector outcome indicators need to reflect these objectives. Indicators can include employment for women and men has the road construction created; involvement of small contractors – owned by women and men; access to schools; access to hospitals/ health care centers (for example, ratio of pregnant women who received antenatal care, etc.); and effect on economy that benefits the poor (for example, number of small businesses run by women and men); time saved for women to fetch water/ fuel wood. Specific gender indicators appropriate for the country can be identified by referring to country gender assessments.

(2) Collection of gender disaggregated data and gender statistics in transport sector

One of the largest obstacles in effectively incorporating gender equality issues in transport sector is the general lack of gender disaggregated data and gender statistics that can be used for planning. It is important that transport sector identify the needs for data and statistics and work with national statistics offices to improve the statistics available for planning.

(3) Ear marked support for gender equality and gender mainstreaming and involvement of gender experts.

The support by Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction enabled transportation projects to include social components, which also contributed to addressing some gender concerns. Such ear marking of resources would better ensure gender concerns to be integrated. However, JFPR does not seem to be fully integrated into the main project. In order to respond to gender needs better, it is recommended that allocation been made from the main project budget to implement gender-related activities.

For technical assistant, gender experts need to be appointed specifically rather than having the task of monitoring gender equality included under the TOR of non-gender specialists. In a CIDA supported project in Vietnam, even though the project objective did not explicitly mention gender, gender equality was addressed in the design, implementation and evaluation of the project thanks to the involvement of gender experts throughout the life of the project and gender mainstreaming assigned as an explicit function of the project manager (Turner and Spitzner 2007).

(4) Importance of gender analysis at the onset of the project

In order to integrate gender equality and strengthen gender mainstreaming in the project, it is essential to conduct an adequate gender analysis at the feasibility assessment and design of the project. The gender analysis that has been conducted in Timor Leste can

serve as a model for gender analysis for rural roads sector. Country gender assessment needs to be reviewed for possible gender issues, and gender expert(s) need to be assigned to facilitate the gender analysis process to identify gender issues in the particular sector and particular area/ community. One study showed that even along a short highway, the effects from road construction is very different across communities[4]. Therefore, a gender analysis for each place, and analysis disaggregated by ethnicity, race, age and class will be necessary to design a socially inclusive project. Gender analysis will enable the project to target their support better to ensure road development will have equitable and inclusive development effect.

(5) Gender training for transport sector staff

As the gender plan of action 2008-2010 pointed out, one of the obstacles for integrating gender concerns in transport sector is because of lack of awareness, understanding and skills among the staff in the projects. Capacity building for staff on gender mainstreaming needs to be done continuously.

(6) Collaboration with NGOs and women's ministries

In order to better reflect the different needs of local women and men, and to better reach out and link appropriately poor women and men with the opportunities with increased connectivities, transport sector needs to work together with local NGOs/ women's groups as well as government departments working on women's empowerment and social issues. These groups/ organizations will have better understanding and extension to the communities and knowledgeable of the power relations and practices, thus will have more insights into the obstacles that poor and the marginalized women and men will have in accessing opportunities.

(7) Project components to enhance gender equality/ gender mainstreaming

As is already noted in transport strategy papers, "road +" is needed to ensure the expected objectives of transport development are realized. There are several sub-sectors in transport sector, but here, some examples of "road +" are suggested for highway sector, rural roads sector and urban transport sector.

[4] In a highway at the Lao-Vietnamese border, in one village along the road, women were able to expand their businesses, benefiting from better connectivity. In another village along the road, both women and men ended up spending more time gathering non-timber forest product for sale, and had to take their small children out from school to allow them to accompany them to the forest. These children, as a result of the road construction, were deprived of their education opportunities. Another village along the road saw women's mobility reduce with road construction because they now had to stay at home to look after children and animals not to stroll out to the roads (see Kusakabe 2007).

Highway sector:

Support to link women and men to market: Highway development needs to be accompanied by support to link those who are not experienced in dealing with market to be able to make use of the opportunity. It needs to be noted that being incorporated into the market in a meaningful way and not just be exploited will require a long time (Rigg 2002). Social component of the project needs to be extended beyond the construction of the roads. Not only vocational training and credit and market support, but mentoring and coaching for several years are needed, beyond the period of road construction projects to allow people enough time to adjust their livelihoods.

Affordable means of transportation: Even if roads are constructed to health centers and schools, that does not automatically mean that women and men's access to these services will improve. Kunieda's (2007) regression analysis for 28 countries showed that rural access index[5] could explain 21 per cent of maternal mortality rate. Aside from the fact that there are a few outliers in the analysis, this result also shows that "road +" is need for decreasing MMR. Other community level studies showed that women are not going to health centers even when the service fee is for free because they cannot afford transportation costs[6]. Vocational training courses were not attended by remote village women because they do not have any affordable means of transportation[7]. Affordable and reliable means of transportation is necessary not only along the highway itself, but also along the feeder roads connecting villages to highways and other provincial roads. In Cambodia, they were experimenting community ambulance system, as well as transportation subsidy scheme at health centers. Although these strategies are not yet proven to be effective, exploring possible methods is needed.

Women's participation in designing of highway development: Noting the large impact of highway to communities nearby, consultations with local communities are necessary. The need for consultation is already recognized at ADB, as is reflected in the involuntary resettlement safeguards. Consultation, coaching and mentoring process during design of highway and the accompanying components can identify bottlenecks for the vulnerable people to benefit from roads and allow the project to rectify the imbalance at an earlier stage.

Rural/provincial roads sector:

[5] Kunieda (2007) used the RAI published by the World Bank. RAI shows "the proportion of the total rural population who live within 2 km or a 20-minute walk from an all-weather road" (p.59). She also noted that one of the problems of using RAI is that it considers only linear distance from the road and topography is not taken into consideration.

[6] For example, this has been expressed during the gender analysis of Land allocation for social and economic development project (LASED) in Cambodia (supported by the World Bank).

[7] See, for example, see Kusakabe et al. (2004).

Lessons learned and recommendations discussed under highway sector apply largely to rural roads sector. Below are some additional issues that are pertinent to rural roads sector, which might not be applicable to highway sector.

Labor-based construction of roads: The project in Cambodia showed a good example of how employment creation through road maintenance can be given to women to strengthen their employment options. Introducing quota for women is effective in ensuring that employment created will benefit women who generally would have limited employment opportunities. However, quota needs to be determined specific to the location. For example, in Cambodia, 25 per cent of the employment created was for women. Noting that in Cambodia, there is no taboo for women to work in public places and in construction work, having only one-fourth of the job created to go to women can be assessed as below average in terms of gender equal employment creation.

Creating business opportunities for women: Rural roads construction and maintenance can be further linked to promoting poor women's business opportunities. CARE's rural road maintenance program in Bangladesh reserved part of the income from road maintenance and trained/ supported women to utilize these earnings to start new business. They have been successful to the extent that 99.9 per cent of participating women started new business at the end of the project (Gajewski et al. 2007:10). Rural Infrastructure Development Project in Bangladesh not only included building women-only sections in local markets, but also organized labor contracting associations with landless or destitute women to be able to contract routine maintenance of project roads (Turner and Spitzner 2007). IFAD, in its rural road construction project in Cambodia, organized women's road maintenance group and allowed them to collect fees from road users and manage maintenance of the project roads.

Time savings for water fetching and fuelwood collection: Even for rural roads, it is often the case that inter-village roads or feeder roads are provided but not small paths to fetch water or collect fuelwood. Water fetching consumes much time for women, and better roads can reduce the time and workload of women. Transport sector needs to discuss with water sector to identify how best to improve access to water, either through road improvement or other ways of provision of water.

Security for women and girls: Even when rural roads are improved, women and girls' mobility do not necessarily improve because of concern for security. For example, schools are built and roads are improved, but some girls might not attend schools because of concerns for security and responsibilities at households. Providing dormitory for girls, childcare facilities at schools, affordable and safe public transportation, and community arrangements for group commuting can be ways to overcome the accessibility problem. These are necessary measures to be taken up in transport sector to ensure that the expected benefit by road construction will be achieved.

Women's participation in road design: In order to reflect women's needs in the design and implementation of road projects, it is important to involve women in the decision making of the road design and implementation.

At the same time, rural road projects can provide good opportunities to support women's political participation and visibility. In many local areas, road construction is a highly contested and visible project. Local women being in charge of such projects would challenge the stereotyped leadership roles that exist in many local communities. However, not all women are uncorrupt and capable of management. Support to establish a transparent system and providing women with management skills is necessary to improve women leaders' credibility as well as benefit the community through road construction.

Urban transport sector:

Again, most of the issues discussed under highway sector and rural roads also apply to urban transport sector. Below are some issues that are particularly applicable to urban transport sector.

Women's need for public transportation: Women tend to use public transportation more than men, especially noting that in many societies, men tend to use motorized vehicles more than women. Therefore, introduction of affordable, convenient and safe public transportation system should always accompany any transport development in the urban areas. Often urban roads are designed for the convenience of motorists and not the pedestrians and users of public transportation (such as investment focusing mainly on expressways and flyovers). In Jakarta, in improving their busway system, the government worked with an NGO to review the shortcomings of bus services, and as a result improved access ramps, waiting areas, easy pedestrian access and other facilities as well as introduced a quota of 30 per cent for women bus drivers (see Andaryati 2008). Women tend to take shorter journeys more frequently. There is a need to conduct a gender disaggregated mobility study before designing urban transport infrastructure and services.

Concerns for security: One of the largest challenges for women in urban mobility is security issue. Lighting of streets is necessary. Organizing community safety audit to identify blind spots where security is a concern can be routinely done. These require much organizing and time.

Urban transport development to improve access to social services: In some pockets of urban areas, solid waste collection services are not reachable because of narrow roads. Urban transport development needs to put priority to improving smaller alleys in facilitating residents to access social services, and not only on the mobility and accessibility across cities. Some roads are designed in such a way that it is too dangerous for children to cross, and that will create time burden especially to mothers who need to take children to and back from school.

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