

MDB-SPONSORED WORKSHOP: WOMEN'S VOICE, AGENCY AND
PARTICIPATION
JUNE 2014

Survival of the Fittest

*constraints to freedom of movement
using public transport in Kathmandu*

This is not an ADB material. The views expressed in this document are the views of the author/s and/or their organizations and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank, or its Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. ADB does not guarantee the accuracy and/or completeness of the material's contents, and accepts no responsibility for any direct or indirect consequence of their use or reliance, whether wholly or partially. Please feel free to contact the authors directly should you have queries.

CONTEXT



KATHMANDU

60% population increase in last decade

400% increase in vehicles

5,300 public transport vehicles

High level of women participation in workforce

Study period: October- November 2013

Secondary data review.... Conundrums??

Mixed methods primary data collection

- **Participant observation**
 - **Questionnaire for public transport users (470 women and men)**
 - **Conversations (165)**
 - **Focus Group discussions**
 - **Key informant interviews**
- 
- A series of white diagonal lines of varying lengths and thicknesses are positioned on the right side of the slide, extending from the middle towards the bottom right corner.

Problem 1: Overcrowding



80% women & 70% men
noted as main concern

‘People in a hurry... that’s the problem’

- ▶ Smaller size, physically less strong suffer most

‘men grab women when it is overcrowded’

- ▶ Opportunistic pickpockets and touching

Problem 2: Personal insecurity

**33% women & 16% men
noted as concern**



- ▶ Fear and experience of pickpockets, accidents and sexual harassment
- ▶ Women aged 19-25 nine times as likely as men of same age to note insecurity
- ▶ 1 in 4 women who noted insecurity as concern had experienced 'inappropriate touching'
- ▶ 1 in 10 men

Coping

- ▶ 96% women stated they prefer to stand or sit next to another woman
- ▶ More than half women stated they avoid standing/sitting next to *middle aged men*
- ▶ 9% women cf 17% men experienced pickpockets , women better at protecting their belongings
- ▶ Kick, elbow, use open pin, looks, 'tell off'
- ▶ Stay near front/near driver
- ▶ Ignore
- ▶ Do not involve police because '*part of the problem*', takes too long and no guarantee of confidentiality
- ▶ Not a crime but **lack of social norms**

Problem 3: Unsafe driving

18% surveyed indicated concern

34% women and 27% men concerned about safety and comfort.

'micros are like paper elephants. They are so fragile and dangerous'



- ▶ Young and inexperienced *'reckless'* drivers
- ▶ Risks related to competitive speeding
- ▶ Not stopping fully
- ▶ Rushing off
- ▶ Not stopping at bus stops
- ▶ Unstable tempos

Problem 4: after dark



***'Avoid walking alone at night
and keep to well lit main roads
where possible'***

Metropolitan Police Advice

**Men and women noted they feel most
insecure after 8pm**

Lack of street lighting

Insufficient security patrols

Problem 5 : Travelling with children

'Do I want to put my child's life at risk?overcrowded and unhygienic'



- ▶ Not safe
- ▶ Frightening
- ▶ Unhygienic
- ▶ Constrains choice of day care
- ▶ Constrains time for travel
- ▶ Sometimes buses refuse to take

▶ Often mentioned by women but a problem for men with small children too

Need for whole journey approach

e.g. enclosed or covered-in advertising hoardings '*very unsafe*'



Reserved seats??

'The three reserved seats for women on all public transport is a Government of Nepal regulation, but you and I know it does not really work'

Less than 4% surveyed indicated that it was a good idea.

Equity and rights (especially younger women)

'Does not address societal attitudes and norms which permit harassment', Action Aid, 2011

'Reinforce gender divisions and role of women as potential victims' Harrison 2012

RIGHT TO TRAVEL SAFELY ON ALL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Not necessarily generalizable....



Mixed schools

Relaxed relationships

‘ It is not boys who are the problem- we tease them, shout back, can deal with them..... It is the men we are supposed to respect as ‘uncles’ who are the problem... we can’t deal with them’

Complex systems require locally adapted solutions

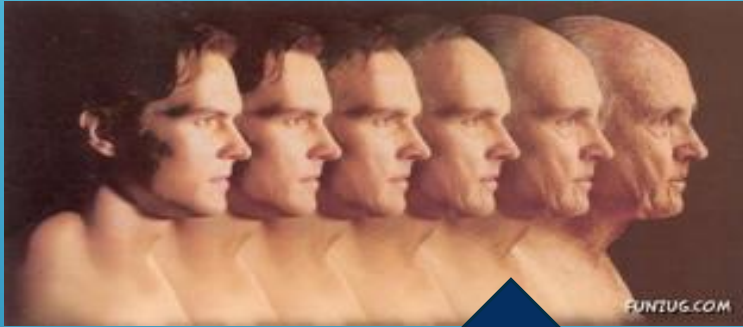


Holding bars
More standing space
Facing seats
Perspex partitions

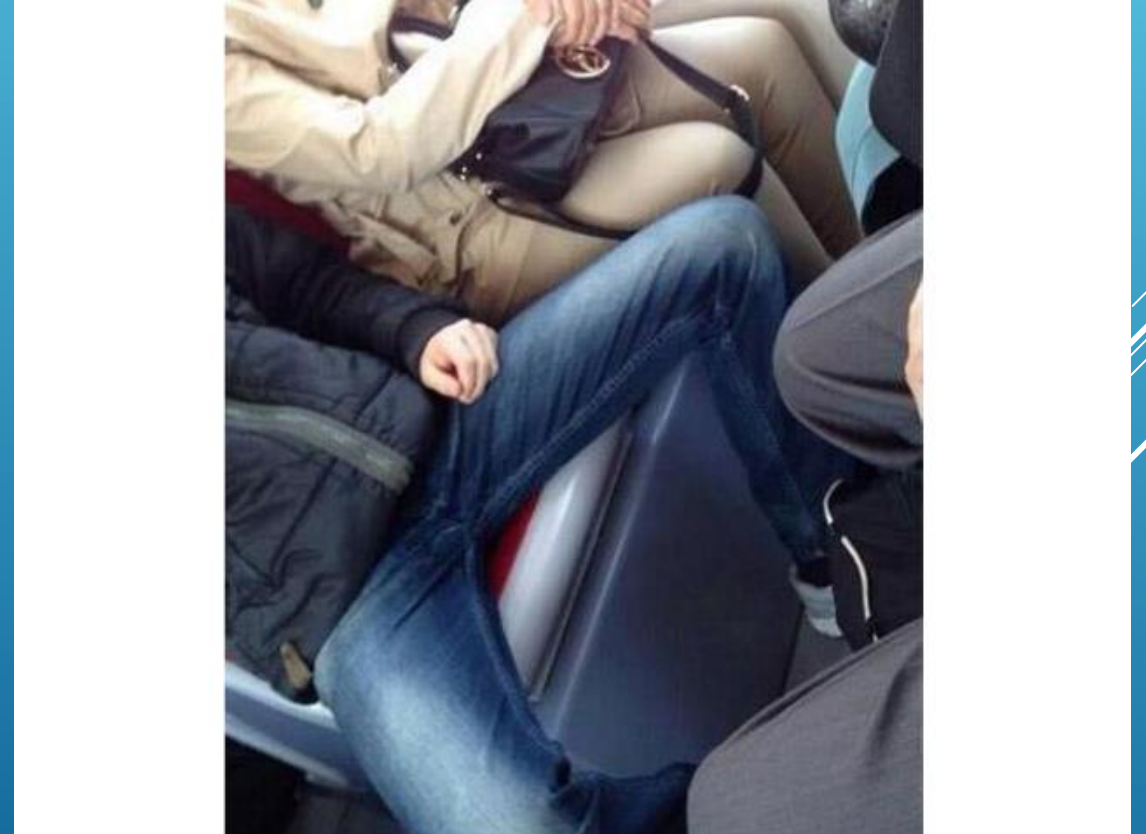
undisputed and will be backed up
by 'bystanders'



Who is the harasser?



Turkeys twitter campaign





THANK YOU

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2014/03/17/gender-public-transport-in-nepal>

VIDEO: Survival of the Fittest in Kathmandu

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTqh1kAMp-U>

Several white lines of varying lengths and slopes are positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide, creating a modern, abstract graphic element.