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# An overview of the PAK – Lahore Transportation for Employment Project

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**ADB-ITF: Consultations on Gender Equality in the Transport Sector**  
June 17, 2021



# Roadmap

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- Broader context
- Gender dimension
- Ongoing research involving ADB
  - RCT on labor supply impact of constraints on women's mobility
- Conclusion

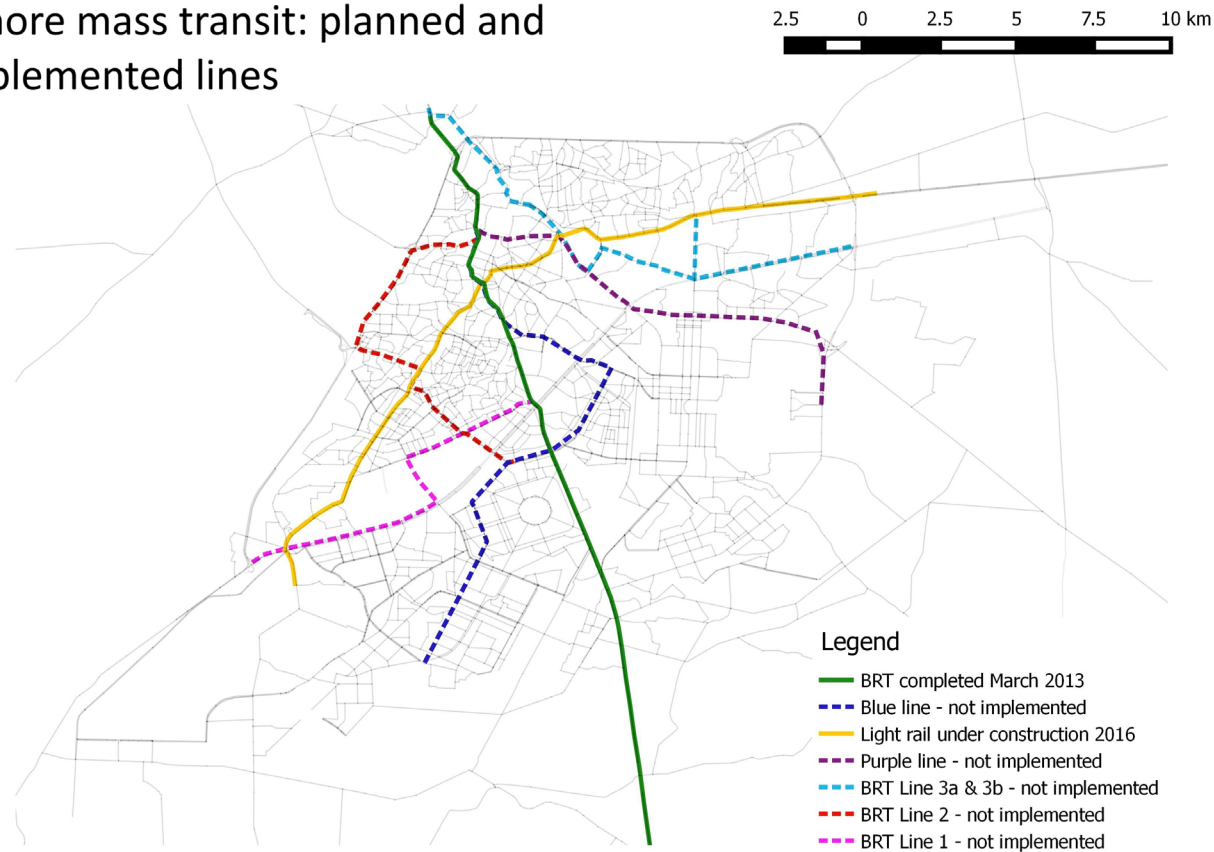
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# 2007 transit plan - shelved 2008 with political change and thought dead in the water

Lahore mass transit: planned and implemented lines



# 2012-2013: government built Metrobus (green line)

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- With upcoming election, government picked up old plan and rapidly constructed first line:
  - Bus rapid transit with dedicated overpasses
- Visible physical investment unlikely to be reversed
- Second line from plan built 2016-2020

# Research

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- Within this broader context, the Center for Economic Research in Pakistan has partnered with multiple institutions (ABD being one of them) to engage in several research projects related to transport with a gender dimension.
- The collection of rich household- and establishment-level microdata underpins this ambitious research agenda.

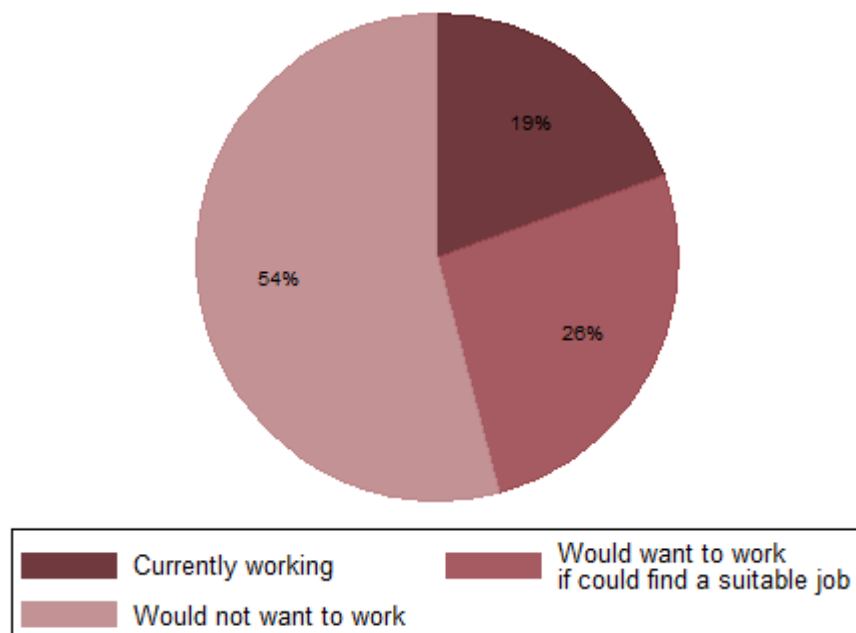
# Roadmap

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- The broader context
- **The gender dimension**
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In many conservative contexts, few women work outside the home, but many would like to

Ever-married women, urban Punjab



Source: 2006-7 Pakistan DHS; urban Punjab subsample



# Women are more constrained than men by physical mobility due to safety and social norms



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# Ongoing research involving ADB

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1. Working paper on “Women's mobility and labor supply: Experimental evidence from Pakistan” by Erica Field and Kate Vyborny, expected in 2021
2. Policy brief on “Facilities in the Pakistani workplace: a gendered perspective,” by Elisabetta Gentile, Alieha Shaheed, and Kate Vyborny (tentative), expected in 2021
3. Working paper on job search and gender in Lahore, by Elisabetta Gentile, Nikita Kohli, Nivedhitha Subramanian, and Kate Vyborny, expected in 2022

# RCT on labor supply impact of constraints on women's mobility

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- There is an abundant literature on constraints to women's mobility (due to safety or social norms) affecting women's access to education.
- This study endeavors to quantify the effect of mobility constraints on labor market outcomes
- Shed light on potential economic benefits of policies enhancing women's mobility: safer streets, high-quality public transport

# Challenges

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1. Make the entire journey safe and acceptable
2. Thousands of possible firms, each with small probability of a job match – eliminate mobility constraint to many places
3. Identify effect of safety/acceptability separate from cost
4. Include in sample women who are not working or searching because of mobility constraints
5. Ensure participants understand what jobs they can reach
6. Women may be willing to work but not get jobs for other reasons; researcher may not observe choice set and supply decision

# Intervention: safe commute service



- Addressing Challenges 1 and 2: Making the entire journey safe and acceptable to many possible job matches
- Subscription based door-to-door “pick and drop” commute service
- “Pick and drop” provided by large companies; treatment extends to small firms
- Employee chooses to opt in and pay monthly subscription
- Two-sided randomization by neighborhood (firms and jobseekers)



# RCT design



- Addressing challenge 3: Identify effect of safety/acceptability separate from cost
- T vs. C, men vs. women: gender differences in mobility constraint
- Women:
  - T1: Female-only: safe, socially acceptable, convenient
  - T2: mixed gender: convenient
- Cross-randomized discount

# The importance of a representative sample

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- Many studies begin with a sample who are already searching
- Instead, this study starts with a representative listing of households and invite all members to sign up for a job search service; 10,000 signed up
- Starting with a representative sample addresses challenge 4: including in sample women who are not working or searching because of mobility constraints (i.e., latent labor supply)

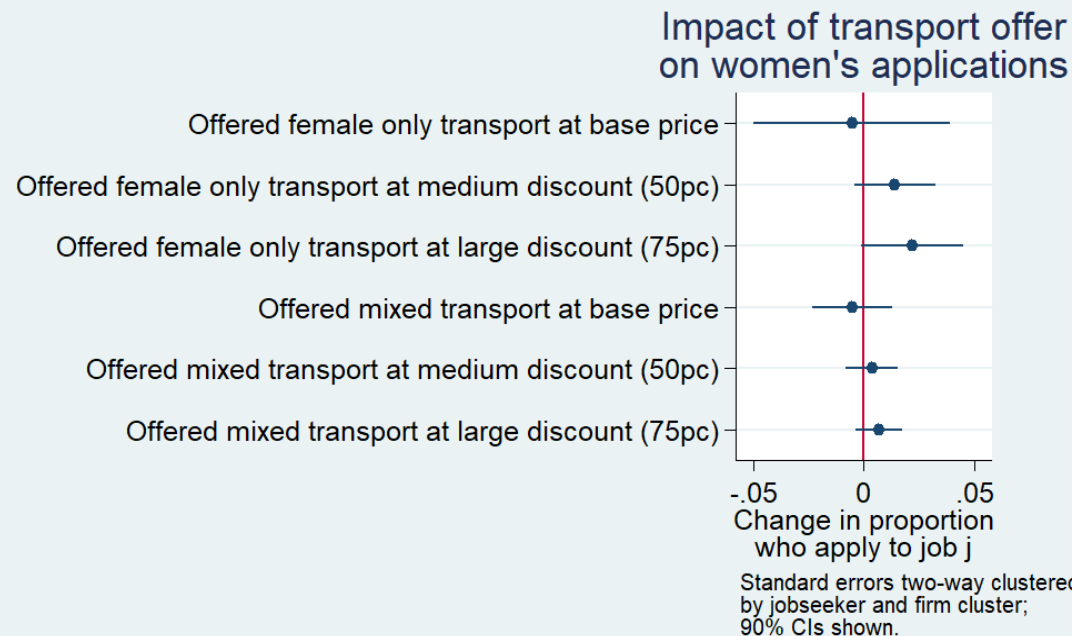


# Data generated by platform



- 10,000 respondents - male and female, all ed levels
- 500 firms post ads: sweeper to HR manager
- Candidate receives job announcement through SMS when he/she meets basic qualifications of a job and expressed interest in the occupation at signup
- First outcome of interest: Applicant  $i$  applies to job  $j$  (through call center)
- Administrative data on approximately 1,000,000 possible applications to date
- Ongoing surveys of firms and jobseekers to measure off-platform search and downstream outcomes

# Results to date



- No positive effect on men
- Subsidized female-only transport offer quadruples application rate for women
- Suggest social and safety constraint is key for women

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# Conclusion

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- Results suggest that in conservative contexts, social and safety constraint is key for women
- This is a rare case in which we have both internal validity (i.e., rigor of research approach) and *external validity* (i.e., policy lessons to implement in other similarly conservative contexts)

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The End

- Thank you for your attention