



SAFE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women using public transport in Harare, Zimbabwe

Empowering women in promoting safe, accessible and gender-responsive public transport

Project overview:

Many women in Harare, Zimbabwe, depend on public transport to meet their mobility needs, and yet, accessing public transport and public spaces comes at great risk of gender-based violence. The violence ranges from leering looks and offensive gestures, to unwanted touching and sexual assault. In 2014, a video of a woman stripped naked at a bus station by a mob of men went viral in Zimbabwe. Women's organisations lobbied for the police and key policy makers to take action but, in the end, only one of the 10 men involved was arrested. A deep fear of violence on public transport continues to inhibit women in Harare from accessing vital public transport services.

The program is facilitating dialogue with women and with minibus operators, drivers, conductors and touts, on how to treat women with dignity and respect and to take issues of women's safety into consideration when operating transport services. The program is also engaging policy makers and law enforcement to ensure new gender-responsive and protective policies, practices and laws are put in place for the prevention and punishment of violence against women and girls.

Some of the key project activities and outputs:

Through a network of women volunteers and local partners, this project supports urban women to understand and promote their rights to a safer city and influence policy-makers to implement gender-responsive laws and services. This is being achieved through:

- Supporting women in public awareness-raising on passenger and women's rights;
- Producing information and educational materials, in solidarity with women's campaigning and advocacy efforts;
- Setting up reporting hotlines and facilitating legal aid and potential redress for women who have experienced violence or rights violations;
- Facilitating dialogue with law enforcement, policy-makers, and public transport operators to address issues of violence and passengers' rights.

Project duration:

April 2018 - March 2019

Supported by:

The Intrepid Foundation

In partnership with:

ActionAid Zimbabwe

Location:

Harare and Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe

Project objectives:

- Increase awareness of women's rights
- Strengthen women's voices in raising issues, reporting violence, and promoting their rights
- Engage policy makers and law enforcement for more gender-responsive laws and services

Impact:

Through this project, the mobility of women and girls will be enhanced by reducing the inhibitors to using public transport. Improved mobility will support greater participation of women and girls in economic, educational, social and political opportunities.



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