SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE
PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR ALL
MAKING SDG 11.2 A REALITY

The Agenda 2030 includes a specific Goal that aims at making cities and communities inclusive and sustainable for persons in vulnerable situations and with disabilities (SDG 11). In particular, SDG target 11.2 sets to provide by 2030 "access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons".

The 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) also includes various provisions related to the issues covered by SDG 11, particularly on making cities and human settlements inclusive for persons with disabilities and that public transport must be accessible on an equal basis with others. The New Urban Agenda also commits to improve road safety, public transport and transport infrastructure for persons with disabilities.

Today 15% of the world population are persons with disabilities; an estimated 1 billion persons with disabilities who will be living in towns and cities by 2050[1]. The lack of inclusive mobility system participates in denying persons in vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities, the opportunity to get to school or university, have decent employment, reach health care services, and in general engage in public life. In most developing countries, 9 out of 10 children with disabilities do not go to school[2] and 80% of persons with disabilities of working age and willing to work are unemployed[3].

The work around SDG 11 has the potential to promote implementation of a wider range of CRPD articles and SDGs, relating for example to decent employment, improved health or inclusive education (e.g. indeed, getting to the school building is often a prerequisite to get education).

1 WHO/World Bank, 2011; The Inclusion Imperative: Towards Disability-inclusive and Accessible Urban Development.
2 UNICEF, (2015) Global Initiative on Out-of-school children.
3 International Labour Organisation (2007) The Employment Situation of People with Disabilities: towards improved statistical information.

EXPANDING ACCESSIBLE
PUBLIC TRANSPORT (SDG 11.2)

Accessibility has been one of the main concerns for operators and authorities of public transport. The sector has made significant efforts to improve performance, increase mode share that can have huge accessibility and environmental benefits through transit avoided carbon, offer a quality service to all of their passengers, and ensure that 'no one is left behind', for example by integrating the newest technologies to address accessibility issues. Low-floor buses are perhaps the most visible example.

Flexibility is crucial in meeting the accessibility challenge in cities, as context and needs are disparate. While in some areas, access to financial support for operators to modernise infrastructure might be difficult, lack of realistic regulations might be a constraint for others. These specificities did not prevent countries from around the world from adopting legislations to help remove the barriers to accessibility, but these legal frameworks can reach their full potential only if all stakeholders, including national, regional and local governments and civil society who are working hand-in-hand to implement the best solutions locally are involved.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING
BOTH SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY
FOR AN INCLUSIVE URBAN MOBILITY[4]

1.35 million people die every year because of road crashes and 90% of these causalities happen in developing countries[5]. SDG 11.2 specifically recognises the importance of having access to a safe and sustainable transport system based on a backbone of public transport, which in turn will help improve road safety, as travelling by public transport is ten times safer per mile than travelling by car[6]. Road safety is also at the core of SDG target 3.6, which aims at halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents. Expanding public transports also contributes to achieve both SDG 11.3 and SDG 3.6.

While improving road safety and enabling accessibility alone will not break down all barriers, it is a central factor to realising the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others. It is therefore crucial to link accessibility and safety: without road safety for all, cities cannot be completely inclusive and accessible. Through SDG Target 11.2, all countries committed to achieve this, notably for people in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

Clearly, the resources needed to make urban environments safe and inclusive for everyone are relatively modest compared to the enormous cost in lost lives, road traffic injuries and their consequences, and to the cost of keeping vulnerable groups excluded from life opportunities.

4 The study "Making cities inclusive: safe mobility for persons with disabilities in developing countries", published by Humanity & Inclusion, addresses and analysis the topic of safe and inclusive mobility and highlights the links between mobility and road safety, access to education, access to employment, and Disaster Risk Management.
5 WHO, "Global Status Report on Road Safety", 2018.
6 http://www.vtpi.org/safer.pdf

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MORE ACCESSIBLE AND SAFER SUSTAINABLE

The following recommendations are addressed to national governments so that they can help finance and facilitate local level action.

STRENGTHEN POLICY FRAMEWORKS, BASED ON EVIDENCE AND THROUGH PARTICIPATIVE PROCESSES

- Promote an integrated approach to safe and inclusive mobility; notably by expanding public transport that considers safety and accessibility as mutually reinforcing elements and essential components of a broader strategy to ensure equal opportunities and achieve sustainable, inclusive development.

- Facilitate the participation of all groups represented in the city, including persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, in the design, implementation and monitoring of local and national policies and projects on urban mobility, in line with article 33 of the CRPD. Cooperating with Disabled Persons' Organisations can help to improve the user experience.

- Pay special attention to specific and diverse mobility needs, emphasising the importance of safe and accessible mobility towards equal participation of all to ensure that 'no one is left behind'.

- Strengthen disaggregated data collection methods and support research on barriers to and the cost/gains of accessibility, safety and inclusion. Also support research on the effects that mobility and transportation infrastructure have on the access of marginalised groups to services, and other opportunities, like employment.

- Effectively monitor and report on the impact of national and local policies relating to safe and accessible mobility. Utilise SDG target 11.2 and indicators set out in SDGs and in the New Urban Agenda, through the lens of the CRPD, to create synergies between the different reporting processes.

- Engage in multi-stakeholder dialogue and share knowledge and experiences on accessible urban mobility and public transport at all levels, and bring these issues further up on the global agenda, in different policy sectors, and as part of international cooperation strategies.

TRANSPORT

REMOVING THE BARRIERS TO ACCESSIBLE MOBILITY, VIA CONCRETE MEASURES

⦿ Adopt a holistic approach to accessibility, i.e. promote a safe and accessible urban environment based on Universal Design Principles, providing accessible features for persons with a wide range of impairments, which represent cost-effective and efficient measures to enhance rapidly safety and inclusion.

⦿ Ensure that public procurements include requirements on both safety and accessibility for projects relating to mobility infrastructure or technology, and ensure ex-ante and ex-post assessments of both safety and accessibility for these projects.

⦿ Among the transportation mix in cities, promote and expand in priority affordable, safe, accessible and reliable public transport that meet the diverse range of needs required by persons with disabilities.

⦿ Provide training for government staff, urban planners, engineers, public transport authorities and operators on universal design on how to cater for the needs of passengers with disabilities, including those with non-visible impairments.

⦿ Encourage the development of ICT solutions to accessibility challenges, such as enabling passengers with disabilities to send pick-up requests to informal bus operators via SMS or an app, in particular in the context where there are no designated bus stops.

⦿ Develop university curricula in urban planning and design that include training on accessibility and disability inclusion principles, especially Universal Design concepts.

⦿ Enable the conduct of safety and accessibility audits to identify, and eventually eliminate, the situations that are not compliant with accessibility standards. Audits be based on a participatory approach with the aim of involving all stakeholders concerned and consider the mobility chain as a whole, from the private space to the public space.

CASE STUDIES

ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR EMPLOYMENT, SENEGAL

In Dakar, a Humanity & Inclusion's (HI) program running since 2014 has been working to increase access to employment for persons with disabilities, including by improving safe and accessible urban mobility that allows a greater number of workers with disabilities to travel from home to work. Thanks to successful engagement carried out by HI in collaboration with local Disabled Persons' Organisations, public bus transport has been gradually improved. With stronger political leadership, the national policy on accessible transport was improved. Dakar's largest bus operator agreed to increase the number of buses that have ramps and priority seats for persons with disabilities, and to train bus operator staff in the different needs of passengers with a range of disabilities. Noticeably, the bus company went further and hired 25 persons with disabilities to sell tickets. Other initiatives for safer and accessible transport in Dakar include the phasing out of the 'cars rapides' (rapid buses), the colourful but old and dangerous minibuses from the 1960s and 70s and replace them with a safer and more accessible fleet of buses. This offers another opportunity to address the mobility needs to persons with disabilities such as access from bus stops onto buses, prioritised seats and audio and visual information on the route.

Source: HI

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY
TO TRANSPORT, BRAZIL

The aim of the Line 4 project was to build a state of the art driverless metro system in Sao Paulo that links all lines together and therefore is a key line for facilitating interchanges. Accessible features were designed during the planning phase, with consideration of accessibility extending beyond the vehicles and stations to the surrounding areas. Accessibility features include tactile paving to alert people with visual impairments of hazards and provide directional assistance; clear signage (tactile in some locations); modern clear lighting; well trained staff who are able to provide assistance; escalators and lifts, doors between the trains and the platforms; a minimal gap between the train and the platform, priority seating for persons with reduced mobility; fare gates (not turnstiles), including wider ones for persons using wheelchair; and trains that are fully connected so that passengers can move around freely within them. The addition of extra accessibility features is thought to have only minimally raised the costs of the project, but it is felt that the benefits to persons with disabilities and the wider population are high.

Source: World Bank

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

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THIS REPORT WAS CO-PREPARED BY HUMANITY
& INCLUSION AND THE UITP SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELPING TO MAKE
PUBLIC TRANSPORT MORE SUSTAINABLE
AND THEREBY THE WORLD

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