Baseline Survey Report on The Status of Vulnerable Groups in Makueni County Public Transport

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Government of Makueni County

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Flone Initiative.

Flone Initiative is a women-led Pan-African organization working to create safe, sustainable, and accessible public transportation spaces for women and vulnerable groups in Africa by influencing behavioral change, generating knowledge, and building movement.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BVG	Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe
CBS	Chief of the Order of the Burning Spear
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plan
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
Jr.	Junior
KeRRA	Kenya Rural Roads Authority
KURA	Kenya Urban Roads Authority
NCPWD	National Council for Persons With Disabilities
NMT	Non-Motorized Transport
NPS	National Police Service
NTSA	National Transport and Safety Authority
PT	Public Transport
PTO	Public Transport Operator
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
WHO	World Health Organization

FOREWORD

Public transport is more than just a means of movement—it is a lifeline that connects communities, fosters economic opportunities, and enhances social inclusion. In Makueni County, we recognize the critical need for a public transport system that equitably serves all citizens, especially those most vulnerable.

This baseline survey, conducted in partnership with Flone Initiative and supported by Heinrich Böll Stiftung has come at a very crucial time as it coincides with the amendment of the Roads Act 2007 to have more inclusive pathways addressing the needs of all the road users. It provides a much-needed analysis of the challenges faced by vulnerable groups in accessing and using public transport in Makueni and lays a foundation for transformative action to make our transport system more inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the needs of all users.

The findings presented here are not just data points; they reflect lived realities and the aspirations of our people. They call upon us as policymakers, stakeholders, and communities to work collaboratively in designing solutions that uphold the dignity and rights of every citizen.

As a county government, we remain steadfast in our commitment to implementing this report's recommendations. Through strategic interventions, we aim to address systemic challenges, enhance safety and accessibility, and ensure our public transport system becomes a beacon of fairness and inclusivity.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Flone Initiative for their partnership in this important endeavor and to all stakeholders and citizens who contributed to this survey. Together, let us build a public transport system that reflects our shared values and propels Makueni County toward a future of equity and opportunity for all.

Mutula Kilonzo Jr. CBS

Governor–County Government of Makueni

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The completion of this baseline survey on the status of vulnerable groups in Makueni's public transport system marks a significant milestone in our efforts to create an inclusive and equitable transport sector. This report is a testament to the power of collaboration and the commitment of various stakeholders to address the challenges faced by marginalized members of our community.

First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Flone Initiative for their partnership and unwavering dedication to this important project. Their expertise and insights have been invaluable in bringing to light the barriers experienced by vulnerable groups and shaping evidence-based recommendations for improvement.

Special gratitude goes to the Heinrich Böll Stiftung Foundation for their support throughout the research project.

I also wish to recognize the contributions of the survey participants, including commuters, transport operators, and community representatives, whose voices and experiences have enriched this report. Your willingness to share your perspectives has provided the foundation for informed decision-making.

To the staff of the Department of Transport and other county departments who supported this process, your hard work and commitment have been instrumental in ensuring the success of this initiative. I also acknowledge the leadership of H.E. Governor Mutula Kilonzo Jr. for his vision and unwavering support in advancing policies that prioritize equity and inclusion.

This report challenges us to reimagine public transport as a space where everyone can travel with dignity and safety, regardless of their abilities or circumstances. As a department, we are committed to implementing the recommendations presented here and working collaboratively with stakeholders to achieve a transport system that meets all of our needs.

Together, let us continue striving for a Makueni County where public transport is a driver of empowerment and opportunity for every resident.

Eng. Peter Nyamai,
County Executive Committee Member,
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Public Works and Energy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The baseline survey report on the status of vulnerable groups aimed at bridging the data gap in addressing the needs of vulnerable groups in Makueni County public transport system. By gathering insights into the challenges faced by the vulnerable groups and the opportunities that exist to have a safe, inclusive, accessible and equitable public transport in Makueni County, it then lays a foundation for proposing evidenced-based and actionable recommendations that can be implemented by various stakeholders in the public transport system. This executive summary has provided a summary of the report by highlighting the objectives, the methodology, key findings and the recommendations.

Objectives

- ▶ To assess the status of vulnerable groups in Makueni County public transport system.
- ▶ To assess the existing social, technical and policy structures supporting inclusivity in public transport in Makueni County.
- ▶ To assess the status of women public transport operators in Makueni County.
- ▶ To assess the role of key industry players in the promotion of inclusive public transport in Makueni County.

Research Methodology

The research utilized a descriptive analytical approach where quantitative data was collected through surveys administered to commuters and public transport operators, qualitative data obtained from key informant interviews (KII), focused group discussions (FGD) for older persons and persons with disabilities and empathy mapping for the children.

Key Findings

1. Barriers to Accessibility

The survey revealed that some of the hindrances to inclusive and accessible public transport in Makueni include; lack of accessible infrastructure, insufficient streetlights, inadequate Non-Motorized Transport infrastructure provisions and important signage obstructions.

2. Safety and Security in Public Transport Systems

Safety and security in public transport in Makueni County is a huge concern, with women having to adjust travel patterns and behaviour, persons with

disabilities and older persons having to limit their journeys. Additionally, children having to put up with a public transport system that in many cases expose them to safety and security risks.

3. Gender Inclusion in Public Transport Workforce

From the findings, only 4% of the public transport operators are women with the remaining 96% being men. This underrepresentation is as a result of lack of fear and insecurity, job difficulty, societal norms, lack of skills and trainings, lack of confidence and limited opportunities. These factors create significant barriers for women seeking to enter or advance in Makueni's public transport SACCOs, resulting in their continued underrepresentation.

4. Inclusivity Gaps in Policy and Practice

There exist gaps in the implementation and practice of policies in Makueni County including Makueni County Transport Policy, 2022, Makueni County Sexual Harassment Policy,2022 and Makueni County Gender Policy, 2020. Some of these policies addresses inequalities across sectors of the county with an aim for progressive economic development.

Without proper implementation and monitoring, existing policies and guidelines have failed to meet the intended impact on the safety and accessibility of public transport for vulnerable groups.

5. Roles of Stakeholders

Key stakeholders have initiated various initiatives to support inclusivity in Makueni public transport. However, there are various challenges, such as budgetary constraints, infrastructure vandalism, poor interdepartmental collaboration, and road reserve encroachment that hamper the implementation of these initiatives and programs.

Recommendations

1. Civic Education and Public Awareness

This aims to bring behavioral and mindset changes in Makueni County public transport, especially towards vulnerable groups and marginalized people. This can be achieved through information campaigns in various bus stations and other transport hubs, advocacy campaigns through advocacy messages in matatus, bus stops and bus stations, workshops and forums, chief barazas and partnerships with CSOs.

2. Stakeholder Collaboration and Policy Implementation

The approaches to ensure stakeholder collaboration and policy implementation include involving vulnerable groups in decision making, implementation of existing policies, strengthening stakeholder collaboration, adopting public transport code of conduct and a public transport policy among others.

3. Inclusive Infrastructure Design and Safety Measures

This has been recommended to include installing traffic calming elements next to schools, including accessibility signs where pedestrian signs are located, adopting universal design principles for public transport vehicles and infrastructures to enhance accessibility for example providing ramps, elevators, tactile paving, priority seats for vulnerable groups and low-floor buses.

4. Law Enforcement

Strict enforcement of existing traffic laws and regulations; boda boda regulations, NTSA Act 2012, Traffic Act CAP 403 etc. Enhancing reporting mechanisms on harassment incidents and dedicated gender desks at police stations in Makueni County and strengthening law enforcement capacity through training on inclusivity in public transport will also improve the understanding of law enforcement agencies when addressing public transport operators and handling vulnerable commuters.

5. Gender Equality and Disability Inclusion

This includes striving to meet ⅔ gender rules in the public transport workforce and promoting women in public transport through leadership mentorships, professional development, personal development trainings, economic empowerment and mobilization for partners' support.

6. Educational Institutions and Children's Safety in Schools

Some of the recommendations on enhancing safety and security of children include ; Implementing the provisions of Safety Standard Manual-Schools as Safe Zones, schools debates on the importance of inclusivity especially in public transport systems and introduction of "walking school bus" to help children navigate busy roads. Schools which are important avenues for social gender constructs can be used for gender mainstreaming and disability inclusion.

CHAPTER ONE:
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

Makueni County located in the southeastern part of Kenya has a population of 987, 653 (2019 census) with 489,691 males (49.5%) and 497,942(50.5%) females. The County has an average population density of 186 persons /km², with Kilungu Sub–County recording the highest population of 395 persons per km² and a projection of 426 persons per km² in 2025 and Kibwezi Sub-County recording the lowest of 63 persons per km² and a projection of 68 persons per km² in 2025. Makueni County headquarters are situated in Wote town, which hosts both the County Government of Makueni head offices and the National Government County Offices. Wote town is located 130 km from Nairobi City. Makueni covers the second largest distance of the highway after Nakuru and ranks second in the country in terms of road accidents, after Nairobi.

In Makueni County, just like many rural counties of Kenya, public transport[1] is an essential part of everyday life. It facilitates movement of people to important services, provides access to markets, educational institutions and healthcare facilities. In spite of this significant role, public transport in Makueni County in many cases fails to sufficiently cater to the needs of the vulnerable

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[1] Public Transport means a group transport system that facilitates the movement of people and goods from one point to another. The system must be designated and utilized by members of the general public as a transit service.

groups including women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons. The vulnerable groups face unique challenges ranging from discrimination, safety and security concerns, harassment, physical barriers while accessing public transport services etc. This could potentially limit their full economic participation.

Makueni is predominantly a rural county that depend heavily on road transport services which include matatus, boda bodas, probox[2] , *mitumba*[3] and maruti vehicles[4]. However, lack of inclusive policies, implementation of existing policies and poor considerations for mobility needs limits the ability of vulnerable groups to access public transport services efficiently and safely.

Section 5 Part 2 of the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 spells out the role of county governments in enhancing transport infrastructure in their respective jurisdictions. The government of Makueni County has mandated this role for the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Public Works and Energy. The department works in collaboration with other departments, national governments, road authorities and development partners in improving the road network connectivity in the county. Through these collaborations, improvements in road connectivity have increased from 7867.1km in 2016 to 12,869.21 km as per the Kenya Roads Board Register of 2018. This was achieved under the implementation of Sustainable Road Improvement Program and Community Driven Development program which involved road openings, rehabilitation and maintenance of county road networks (CIDP 2023-2027). Additional road networks of 6,992.68km under the updated roads register, 2023 of class D,E,F,G and Gu yet to be approved.

Problem Statement

Public transport plays a crucial role in ensuring mobility for individuals, facilitating access to work, education, healthcare, trade, and social engagements. However, vulnerable groups, including women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities (PWDs), face substantial barriers that hinder their access to safe, reliable, and inclusive public transport. These challenges not only restrict their freedom of movement but also constitute a form of discrimination, which is contrary to the principles of equality and non-discrimination enshrined in The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 (Articles 27 and 54).

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2 Probox is a 5 seater van grouped under the county government as a private vehicle.
3 Mitumba vehicles which are second-hand vehicles imported to Kenya through the port of Mombasa and then transported to their owners to the other parts of Kenya traversing the county through the highway as the main means of public transport.
4 Maruti vehicles are 5 or 7 seater passenger service vehicles and light commercial vehicles used to transport passengers or goods in many Kenyan urban areas.

To achieve a public transport system in Makueni County that is safe, accessible, and inclusive for all, it is critical to assess the policies, systems, and structures governing the sector. Such an assessment will inform effective interventions by the government, private sector, and civil society organizations aimed at addressing the mobility needs of vulnerable groups. Despite the importance of this issue, there is a significant lack of data on the status of these groups within Makueni County's public transport ecosystem. This data gap has led to insufficient responses to their mobility needs, further exacerbating inequalities in access to essential services.

This baseline survey seeks to bridge this gap by examining the barriers faced by vulnerable groups in the context of their work and commuting needs, and providing evidence-based recommendations that will support the development of a more inclusive, equitable, and constitutional public transport system in Makueni County.

Significance of the Study

The findings from this baseline survey are intended to inform policymakers, policy implementers, transport operators, and other stakeholders about the gaps and opportunities in creating a more inclusive public transport system. By identifying the key barriers faced by vulnerable groups, this study will contribute to the formulation of strategies and interventions that promote inclusive, accessible and equitable public transport systems in Makueni County.

Objectives

Main Objective

This research aims to assess the status of vulnerable groups in Makueni County public transport system.
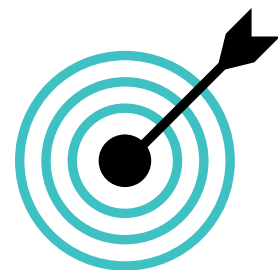
Specific Objectives

- ▶ To assess the existing social, technical and policy structures supporting inclusivity in public transport in Makueni County.
- ▶ To assess the status of women public transport operators in Makueni County.
- ▶ To assess the role of key industry players in the promotion of inclusive public transport in Makueni County.

Research Scope

The baseline research was limited to three sub counties of Kibwezi West, Makueni and Kaiti. In Makueni sub county, Wote municipality represented

the administrative capital of Makueni County and so the travel patterns of commuters coming for government services, markets, educational institutions, healthcare services etc from all over the county would paint a picture of the challenges and experiences of vulnerable commuters in Makueni County public transport. Emali town within Kibwezi West sub county sits along Mombasa road, which traverses over 150 km across Makueni County and is also the commercial hub of the county. In Nunguni, Kaiti sub county, documenting the experiences and challenges of rural commuters was essential in coming up with the interventions of how to promote accessibility and inclusivity for the vulnerable groups.

The baseline research target was limited to women commuters and operators, older persons, persons with disabilities and children.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review has looked at what has been written on public transport, vulnerable groups, challenges faced by the vulnerable groups while navigating through public transport. In addition, it also looked at some of the best practices supporting accessibility and inclusivity of vulnerable groups in public transport systems globally, regionally, locally and within Makueni County.

According to the Makueni Gender Policy, gender inequality in Makueni County is a major obstacle to the socio-economic and political development of its people. The socio-economic development of the County is dependent on the full utilization of its human capital i.e. both women and men. The County Government realizes that the continued marginalization and under-utilization of women, who constitute 50.5% (Kenya Population and Housing Census 2019) of the County population, is a major obstacle to its rapid socio-economic development. In Makueni County, development planning has not been adequately integrated to respond to gender, youth, persons with disabilities and other diverse needs that are unique to these groups. Quite often, these groups have been excluded from decision-making processes, and their needs have not been articulated well.

According to the Makueni Transport Policy[5], the transport sector in Makueni County is faced with several challenges including: poor coordination of actors in road safety management, inadequate county capacity, poor public transport regulation and limited control of the existing transport SACCOs and bus parks especially along the Nairobi-Mombasa Highway among others.

In its commitment to mainstream gender in various sectors, the Government of Makueni County continues to advocate for the adoption of affirmative action in development programmes and processes. In addition, the Makueni County Vision 2025, Makueni County Spatial Plan and Makueni CIDP 2018-2022 are emphatic on the important role played by sound management and coordination of the transport sector in fostering social, economic development and ensuring inclusive growth of the County.

Despite the fact that the County has committed to mainstreaming gender across all sectors, there still exists gaps that hinder efforts towards attainment of equality and greater participation of women and equal access to development resources and distribution of benefits.
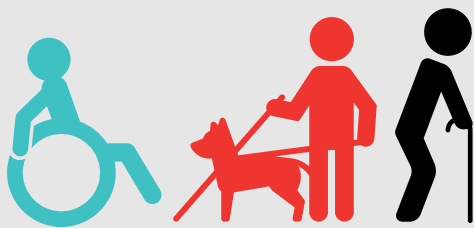
Persons with disabilities and the Older Persons

According to the WHO, an estimated 16% of the global population is persons with disabilities, and the prevalence is on the rise due to the higher risk of disability in the aging population. Kenya's Population and Housing Census, 2019 reported that 2.2% (918,270) of the population have a form of disability with women constituting 57%(523,883) of all persons with disabilities. According to the Makueni County Statistical Abstract, 2023, persons with disabilities account for 36,369 with females making up 59%(21,472).

Kenya has adopted the UN definition of older persons as 60 years or over. The Kenya's 2019 census reported that 6% (2.7 million) of Kenya's population are older adults with females making up (55%) in comparison to males (45%). Physical, social, and attitudinal environments are facilitators or barriers to full economic participation and access to services.

Globally, the covid-19 pandemic highlighted some of the gaps in bridging vulnerable groups accessibility and inclusion in public

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5 Machakos County Transport Policy:
https://makueni.go.ke/sandbox/site/files/2023/05/Makueni-County-Transport-Policy.pdf

transport. Persons with disabilities and older persons face multiple challenges when accessing public transport. For example, Nairobi public transport statistical evidence research conducted by UN Women[6] showed that women older than 55 years were significantly more likely to experience accessibility problems (26% compared to 2.4% of the 18 to 24 age group (and 11% respectively for age groups 35-44 years and 45-54 years).

Countries have adopted and implemented universal design principles which ensures that public transport systems are usable by all people, regardless of their age, ability, or status. The Transport for London, a local government body responsible for transport within London, has adopted universal design principles across its transport network, making significant changes such as low-floor buses, accessible train stations, and clear signage.

Women

The Public transport industry faces the challenge of gender equality, multiple research has shown that in the current transport systems, there are significant gender-differentiated mobility patterns characterized by unequal access to transport facilities and services. Women are generally underrepresented in the sector both in its operation and decision-making, for example, a survey conducted on 300 matatu workers in Nairobi revealed that only 22% of respondents were women and 60% were men (Spooner, 2018).In Machakos, only 39% of the public transport workforce is comprised of women with only 0.01% of the public transport SACCOs being led by women (Flone Initiative & Global Fund for Women, 2021) a clear indication that the public transport industry is still male-dominated.

Women's mobility needs and patterns are rarely integrated into transport infrastructure design and services, and female users are often victims of harassment and assault. To improve safety and reduce harassment in public transport systems, Mexico City have implemented women-only buses and taxis, a move aimed at increasing women participation in urban life.

Atenea buses in Mexico City are exclusive for women during peak hours, reducing harassment and improving comfort[7]. Women only transportation

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6 Statistical evidence and women's use and experience of public transport in Nairobi, 2021
7 Women-Only Transportation: How "Pink" Public Transportation Changes Public Perception of Women's Mobility

services can only be positive if only it has the potential of changing the root causes of violence against women in public transport. However, if women-only buses and taxis are used to alleviate harassments and other violence against women, then it may never force commuters to recognize the deeply embedded gender inequalities within public transport. Based on the findings, this research will propose civic education aimed at mindset and behavioral change to help bridge this gap of gender inequality in public transport.

Locally, Flone Initiative, has targeted programs for women transport operators focused on attraction, retention and advancement of women in the industry. The program include training on defensive driving, boda boda riding, basic first aid, sexual and gender-based violence, helmet wear etc. Upscaling of this program will ensure that more women are attracted, retained and advanced in the public transport sector.

The Makueni county recognizes that the socio-economic development of Makueni is dependent on the full utilization of human capital, with gender inequality being a major obstacle in achieving this (Makueni County Gender Policy, 2020). Development planning has not been adequately disaggregated to respond to gender. Makueni County Transport Policy 2022 outlines how transport is critical in achieving the county's sustainable development goals. However, the sector is riddled with challenges such as poor integration of different transport modes, inadequate designated parking areas, and limited traffic segregation. The need to foster appropriate, safe, inclusive, accessible, and sustainable transport solutions is imperative in the attainment of this goal.

Children

According to the WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, Road traffic injury remains the leading cause of death for children and young people aged 5-29 years. In the face of the rapidly growing vehicle fleet, road safety is a current concern, especially for children who are the most at risk. According to the 2022 police national crash records, most crashes occurred along the northern corridor. To develop effective interventions, it is important to factor in user behavior, for example, based on video data collected at 38 Black spots locations in Nairobi, only 24% of pedestrians use the designated crosswalk when available, and pedestrians may fail to use the allocated crosswalks

because drivers may fail to stop at these locations making them unsafe for crossing. (NTSA, 2023-2027).

Globally, some cities have adopted children safety training to public transport operators. Specifically, in Berlin, BVG trains public transport operators on child safety when using public transport including how to identify kidnapped or lost child. Additionally, Japan's integrated school bus systems provide dedicated buses that operate during school start and end times. In New York City, *"the watch for children"* campaign encourages drivers and passengers to be more aware of child commuters, including guidance on helping children safety cross the roads and getting off buses.

The literature review shows the need for Makueni County to improve and strengthen inclusivity and accessibility in Makueni County public transport. It points out the challenges that vulnerable commuters face and the gaps in policies formulation and implementation and infrastructure that must be addressed. The county's vision and strategic plans acknowledge these challenges, however, the literature review shows that there is still a long way to go in terms of implementations of these inclusivity interventions programs and policies. The findings from this research therefore, should inform evidence-based recommendations with an aim of creating a more accessible, inclusive and equitable public transport system in Makueni County.
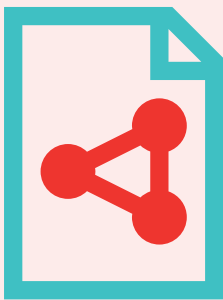
Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework will serve as a way to conceptualize and structure the baseline survey outlining key objectives and the relationship between them. It provides linkages to concepts of the baseline research namely, gender inclusion, accessibility, inclusivity and policies effectiveness.
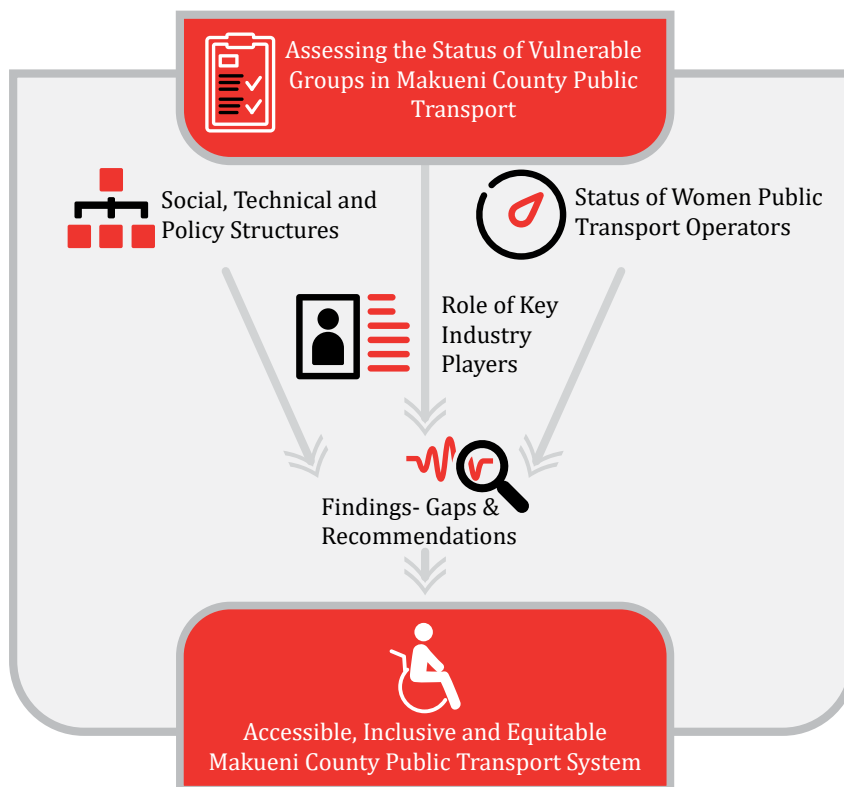
Figure 1:Conceptual Framework

Legal Instruments and Policy Frameworks

Table 1:Legal Instruments and Policy Frameworks

Scope	Legal/policy provision	Institution	Linkages to the research
Global	**Sustainable development Goals(SDGs 2030)**	**United Nations**	The Sustainable Development goals promote the agenda of equality, inclusive, and accessible transport: SDG 5 advocates for gender equality SDG 9 calls for countries to develop sustainable, resilient, and inclusive infrastructures. SDG 11 is aimed to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."

	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.		Article 9 of the Convention requires States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural area.
	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women(CEDAW)		Article 11 of the convention requires that State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment to ensure, based on equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:
National	The Constitution of Kenya 2010	**National Government**	Article 10 (2) (b)highlights human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination, and protection of the marginalized; as one of the national values and principles of governance. Chapter four of the Bill of Rights highlights the right to equality and freedom from discrimination. It requires the state not to discriminate against anyone directly or indirectly on any basis, such as their age and disability. Article 54(1)(c) provides that a person with any disability is entitled to reasonable access to all places, public transport, and information.

	The Traffic Act cap 403	National Transport and Saety Authority	The Act is a comprehensive legal framework governing road traffic regulations. It outlines rules and regulations for vehicle registration, driver licensing, road safety measures, and traffic control. The Act specifies offenses and penalties related to traffic violations, such as speeding, drunk driving, and careless driving. It also addresses the duties of drivers and pedestrians, the management of road infrastructure, and the enforcement powers of traffic police. The Act aims to ensure road safety, order, and discipline on Kenyan roads.
	The persons with disabilities act of 2003	National Council for Persons with Disabilities	Recognizes that persons with disabilities are entitled to barrier-free and disability-friendly environments that enable them access to buildings, roads, and other social amenities.
	Updated Integrated National Transport Policy, 2024	Ministry of Transport	The policy aims to promote gender equity in transport by increasing agency awareness, integrating gender concerns, cooperating with gender-focused organizations, and ensuring inclusiveness for vulnerable groups.
	National Policy on Gender And Development Policy, 2019	Ministry of Public Service Youth and Gender	For Kenya to achieve inclusive growth and sustainable development, it must address gender disparities by mainstreaming gender in key sectors, ensuring equal opportunities, eliminating discriminatory practices, and economically empowering women and men.

	National Gender and Equality Commission Act, 2011	Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Affirmative Action	The commission aims to promote and ensure gender equality, principles of equality and non-discrimination for all persons in Kenya as provided for in The Constitution of Kenya 2010 with a focus on women, persons with disability, youths, children, older members of the society, minority and marginalized groups
County	The Makueni County Climate Change Act, 2022	The Government of Makueni County	This act provides for the establishment of county climate change steering committee, proper public sensitization preceding the launch of any climate response program, plan or project.
	Makueni County Transport Policy	The Government Of Makueni County	The policy framework prioritizes road safety, infrastructure development, and maintenance, reducing urban congestion, improving sector efficiency and reliability, and ensuring environmental sustainability. The Makueni County Transport policy aims to address these challenges with sustainable solutions to promote broad social and economic development.
	Makueni County Youth Policy 2020	The Government Of Makueni County	This policy is based on the understanding of youth needs and abilities in being a resource that can spur development as well as social and economic growth at the county level. It is also based on the realization that youth are faced with many challenges in a rapidly changing world that mainly take the form of technological, economical, social, cultural and environmental factors.

	Makueni County Sexual Harassment at workplace Policy	The Government Of Makueni County	This policy will endeavor to create a working environment free from sexual harassment, where all county officers and stakeholders are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.
	Makueni County Gender Policy	The Government Of Makueni County	This policy provides a framework for stakeholders to address gender inequalities across all sectors of the County, aiming for efficient and equitable development. It promotes a sector-wide approach to meet the population's unique needs, translating constitutional equality and non-discrimination mandates into sustainable gender mainstreaming strategies and legal reforms.

METHODOLOGY
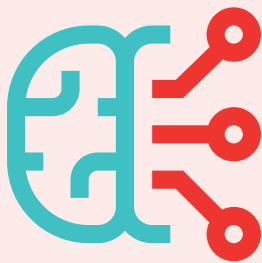
Model

The baseline research was designed using a model that responds to commuters' and workers' principles to public transport.

Commuter approach

The approach focused on the Universal Design model intended to promote accessibility of public spaces and services by all, based on human rights principles. Victoria Transport Policy Institute (2021) defines accessibility as "people's overall ability to reach desired services and activities (together called opportunities), and therefore the time and money that people and businesses must devote to transportation. Accessibility is the ultimate goal of most transportation planning." The accessibility elements include mobility, geographic proximity, transport system connectivity, affordability, convenience, and social acceptability.

- ▶ **Accessible:** The degree to which the transit services achieve individual and community mobility goals.
- ▶ **Available:** Effectiveness for users: service quality
- ▶ **Affordable:** The ability to meet the demand given existing resources
- ▶ **Accommodative:** The degree to which the transport service meets the passenger needs. Enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities
- ▶ **Safe:** Provide a Safe and Secure Environment.
- ▶ **Reliable:** The degree to which the transport service meets the passenger needs

Workers approach

The approach was guided by the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Career Cycle Approach for women in transport[8], which illustrates the following career cycle stages;
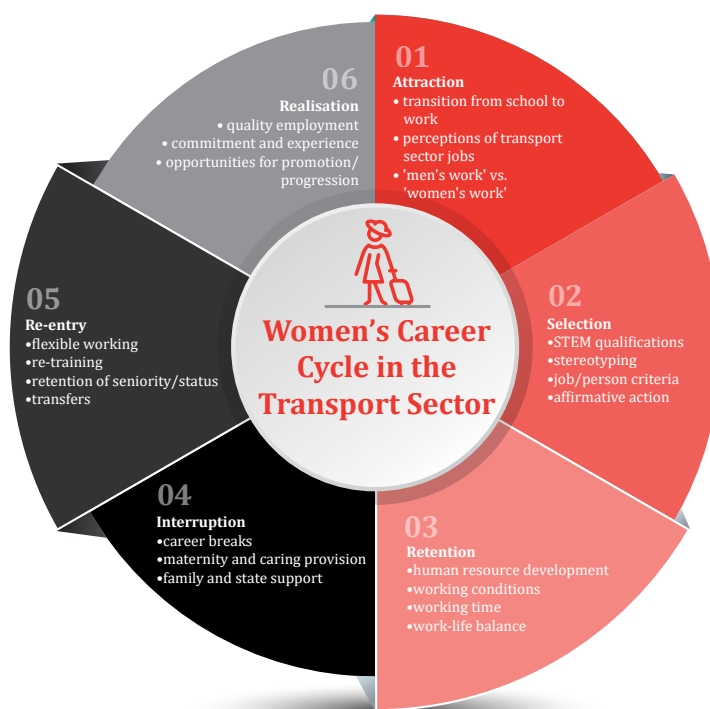
Inclusion Criteria

To ensure inclusion during the research, the following strategies were employed.

- ▶ The research utilized research assistants who have experience in collecting data/engaging women commuters, women operators, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons.

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8 Working Paper No.298 on promoting the employment of women in transport sector

- ▶ Consent forms from schools for children were obtained.
- ▶ The research questions adopted the Washington group of questions[9] taking care not to stereotype persons with disabilities and older persons.
- ▶ Safe spaces were utilized during the data collection exercise.
- ▶ A sign language interpreter was utilized for the group of persons with hearing impairments.
- ▶ During the Focus Groups Discussions, accessible venues closer to the participants were used for the interviews.
- ▶ Proxy respondents, for example, aide caregivers of persons with severe disabilities, were requested to support those who cannot communicate.
- ▶ The aides who accompanied the respondents were also facilitated.

Research Design

The research utilized a descriptive-analytical approach where quantitative data was collected through surveys administered to commuters and public transport operators, qualitative data obtained from key informant interviews (KII), focused group discussions (FGD) for older persons and persons with disabilities and empathy mapping for the children. This was to provide a detailed understanding of the issues faced by different vulnerable groups.

Research Sampling

The research targeted responses from key transport policy makers/ implementers from National and county governments, public transport SACCO Managers, operators, owners, boda boda riders and focus group discussion

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9 The Washington Group on Disability Statistics developed a standard set of universal questions on disability to use in censuses and surveys. These questions identify and measure disability across multiple domains of functioning and enable the comparison of data.

for older persons, persons with disabilities, and children and questionnaire surveys for women commuters.

Sample Size

A total sample of 354 disaggregated as 109 women commuters, 102 PTOs[10], 2 schools of 61 children, 31 older persons, 36 persons with disabilities and 15 County, National government departments and agencies and Civil Society Organizations working with and supporting vulnerable groups in Makueni County.

Data Collection

The research adopted a mixed methods approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The research focused on the result areas based on the objectives of the baseline survey. Additionally, the research utilized secondary data extracted from previous publications, national and county government records and other relevant documents.

The research team developed detailed survey questionnaires based on indicators in the project objectives. Information was gathered from key informants such as relevant national, county departments and civil society organizations, religious leaders and SACCO officials. A half day training session was conducted for research assistants to acquaint them with the project objectives, clear understanding of the target and the scope of the survey as well as the survey tools and methodologies. Data collection was done through *Survey Monkey* that allowed real time relay of information.

The research team held a debrief session with the research assistants to go through the undocumented experiences on field and importance of the research.

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10 PTOs means public transport operators including drivers, SACCO office clerks , conductors, touts(-makangas), mechanics, stage attendants, loaders and boda boda riders

The data collection activities were disaggregated as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Data Collection activities

Tools	Target	Target Reached	Main Focus
Commuters survey	Women commuters in Wote, Nunguni and Emali bus stations and boda boda stages	109 women commuters	Travel patterns, Prevalence to Harassment,reporting mechanisms on harassment incidents and Recommendations on inclusive public transport in Makueni County
Operators Survey	PTOs including drivers, conductors, touts(makanga), stage attendants, SACCO office clerks in Wote, Nunguni and Emali bus parks and boda boda stages	102 PTOs	PTOs understanding of accessibility and inclusivity in public transport, PTOs perception of safety and security issues for children in public transport, how SACCOs ensure safety and security of children in public transport, PTOs roles in promoting accessibility and inclusivity in public transport, why PTOs think there is inadequate representation of women in Makueni Public Transport etc
Empathy Mapping Children facilitation guide	Primary Schools	30 students from AIC Malivani Primary School 31 students from Emali Township Primary	Children's understanding of road signs and road guidelines, Role of school in ensuring children safety, Children's needs in public transport, what children say, think and feel about the roads they use to school

Focus Group Discussions	Older Persons and Persons with disabilities in Wote, Nunguni and Emali	Those with mobility challenges,visual impairment/ blind, hearing impairment,cognitive disabilities and caregivers	Older persons and persons with disabilities experiences, challenges and recommendations on public transport
Persons with disabilities facilitation guide Older persons facilitation guide		3 groups of older persons & 3 groups of persons with disabilities in Wote, Nunguni and Emali	
Key Informants Interview Department specific questions	Internal departments & External departments	Internal Departments of gender, cooperatives, transport, lands and urban planning, municipalities, Trade & Education External NTSA, NPS-Traffic, Religious Leaders, NCPWD, KURA/ KeRRA, SACCO Managers, CSOs	Valuable feedback on existing policies, policy gaps, programs, vulnerable groups inclusion in PT and policy structures supporting inclusivity

Public Transport Respondents by Occupation

Table 3: Public Transport Respondents by Occupation

Occupation of PTOs	Gender	Number of Respondents
Boda boda riders	Male	40
	Female	1
Drivers	Male	35
	Female	0
Conductors	Male	15
	Female	0

Touts	Male	3
	Female	0
SACCO Office Clerks	Male	0
	Female	1
Stage Attendants	Male	5
	Female	2

Data Quality Management

To ensure quality of the data, the research team undertook extensive monitoring and support to the research assistance, providing daily briefs with the different teams. Each team was allocated team leaders who provided on-spot guidance to the research assistants and the respondents if there was any part of the questionnaire which was not clear to ensure completeness of the questionnaire.

Data coding, cleaning and analysis

During this process spelling mistakes were corrected in raw data then organized texts in a format that is easier to analyze. The research team read through responses to get general understanding of the themes. Initial coding was done which involved assigning labels/ codes to the meaning segments of the responses. Once labels were assigned, the team grouped them into broader categories, reviewed the grouped codes to ensure they are consistent, distinct and adjusted or merged themes as needed.

To quantify qualitative data, counts were done to find how often each code or theme occurred. This helped in turning open-ended surveys into actionable insights.

Research Limitations

The research was limited to road transport only to propose stronger technical, policy and social recommendations that will help advance connectivity and mobility needs of the people. Additionally, the research recognized the need for intermodal integration with the County Spatial Plan 2019-2029 having a transport strategy that proposes improvement of intermodal connectivity between the railroad corridors, airstrips and road networks.

Other research limitations included:

▶ The research was limited to assessing the status of women professionals and commuters, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons.

▶ The research was limited to public transport systems hubs within Kaiti, Makueni and Kibwezi West Sub-Counties.

4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

A multi-stakeholder approach was used to gather insights from policymakers and implementers, public transport operators, women commuters, persons with disabilities, older persons, and children. The findings highlight the status of different vulnerable groups, the status of women public transport operators, existing social, technical and policies supporting inclusive Makueni County public transport, the gaps and the role of key industry players in promoting inclusive public transport in the county. The findings also provide foundation for developing targeted interventions to enhance inclusive and equitable public transport in the county.

Status of Makueni County Public Transport

A thorough understanding of Makueni County public transport provides context for identifying the challenges faced by vulnerable groups as they navigate this system.

The public transport in Makueni County is divided into different modes of rail, air and road transport. These modes of transport facilitate movement of people to important services, providing access to markets, tourist attraction sites, educational institutions, healthcare facilities etc. The Standard Gauge Railway network in Makueni County is 177 kms with three terminal points in

Emali, Kibwezi and Mtito Andei and the meter gauge rail stations in Mtito Andei, Kibwezi, Makindu, Emali, Sultan Hamud and Ulu facilitating the movement of people and goods across the county. In terms of air transport, the County has two airstrips; one at Makindu and the other at Kilaguni , with the latter majorly used by tourists visiting Tsavo West National park(Makueni County Transport Policy 2022).

The county adopted the hubs and spokes model in the Makueni County Spatial Plan (transport strategy 2019-2029)[11]. This model helps in improving efficiency, by reducing the number of connections needed between similar locations and enhancing connectivity, by linking rural areas to major social, economic, political and religious activities.

Road transport is the main mode of transport in Makueni County with 14,240.1km of road network. Out of this, 7,876.1 km of classified and 6,364 km of unclassified road networks. Additionally, an approximate 202km of class A road (Mombasa road) cutting through the county. The vehicular traffic includes approximately 1000 vehicles passing through the county everyday. There are over 22 registered matatu SACCOs in Makueni County with other vehicles that are unregistered and operating illegally.

Distribution of routes operated in Makueni public transport by Public Transport Operators

From the findings, most public transport operators in Makueni county are long distance operators with commuters traveling to different destinations such as Machakos, Kitui, Nairobi and Kajiado counties. Short commute patterns within the towns (19.2%) were mostly done by boda boda riders.
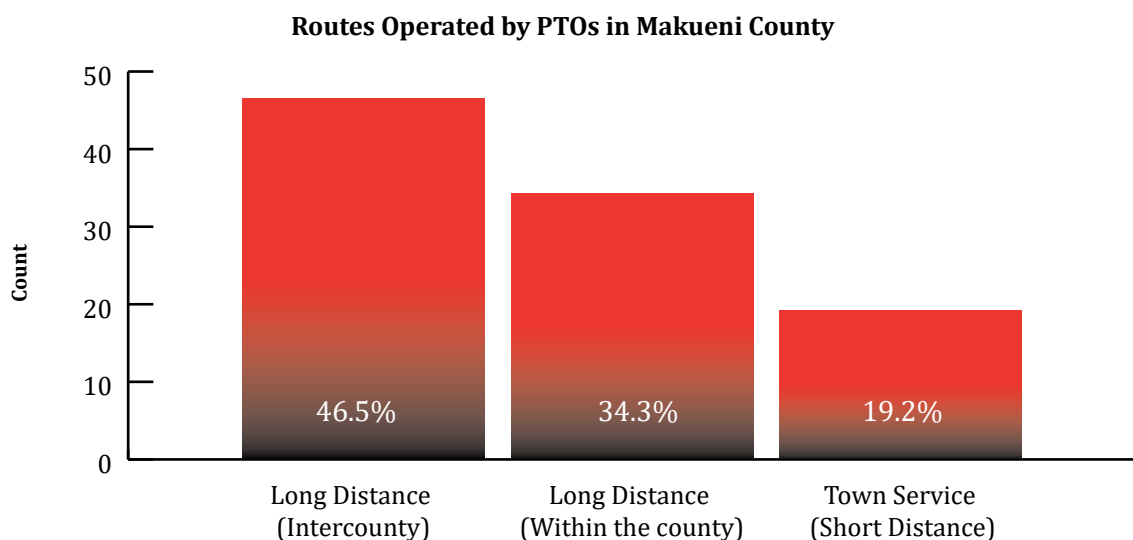

Routes Operated by PTOs in Makueni County

Image: 1: Routes operated by PTOs

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11 Makueni Spatial Plan(Transport Strategy 2019-2029

Description of Makueni County Public Transport by Public Transport Operators

The baseline findings from PTOs description of Makueni County public transport indicate that; 20.4% of the PTOs believe that the public transport is reliable, that it operates on time and is dependable. This facilitates daily routines of commuters to work, healthcare, school and other services. On the other hand, 14.2% of the PTOs believe that the public transport system is accessible. This indicates the physical ease with which people can access public transport services, both in terms of availability of vehicles and proximity to bus stops and boda boda services.

Image: 2: PTOs Description of Makueni County PT

In summary, Makueni County public transport is viewed positively by PTOs but there are areas of improvement for example in accessibility and accommodating diverse user needs.

Public Transport Operators Distribution by sector and occupation

With road transport as the focus, our findings from the operators survey indicate that public transport sector in Makueni County is mainly dominated by matatus (45.5%), Boda Boda (41.4%) and Probox at (10.1%), maruti (2.0%) and taxi (1.0%). Each of these plays a critical role in meeting the transportation needs of the county's residents and provides employment.

Matatu at 45.5% are the backbone of public transport in the county, especially for the long-distance travelers. Boda boda(41.4%) serve as convenient and flexible means of transport. In particular, it facilitates movements of people and goods in rural areas and within short distances in the town centers.

The public transport sector in Makueni County provides a wide range of employment opportunities, contributing significantly to the local economy. The sector employs boda boda riders, drivers, conductors, SACCO office clerks, mechanics, touts(makanga), stage attendants etc.

PTOs Distribution by Sector
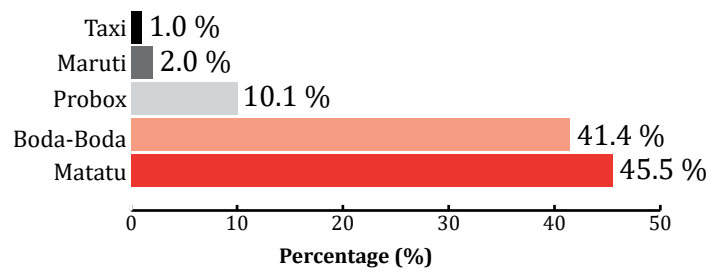
Image: 3 PTOs Distribution by Sector

Public Transport Operators Occupation
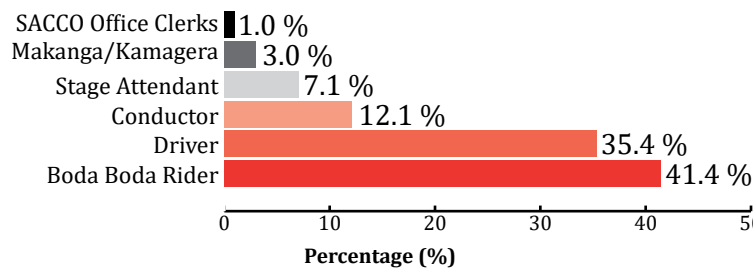
Image: 4 PTO Distribution by Occupation

The findings clearly indicate that Makueni county public transport is a source of employment and mobility, however, to ensure that the sector is inclusive and accessible to all vulnerable groups, targeted interventions are needed. The efforts by the County Government of Makueni and key stakeholders should focus on improving accessibility, providing financial subsidies such as subsidized fares for vulnerable groups and enhancing safety and security.

Distribution of the average daily earnings and the number of years worked in the public transport sector

The exploratory findings show that 61.6% of the PTOs earn between Ksh. 500-1000, 17.2% earning between Ksh. 1000-1500, 13.1% earning less than Ksh. 500 while only 3% earning above Ksh. 2000. These daily earnings are likely sufficient to cover basic needs but may not provide significant financial stability especially with the ever-changing economy.
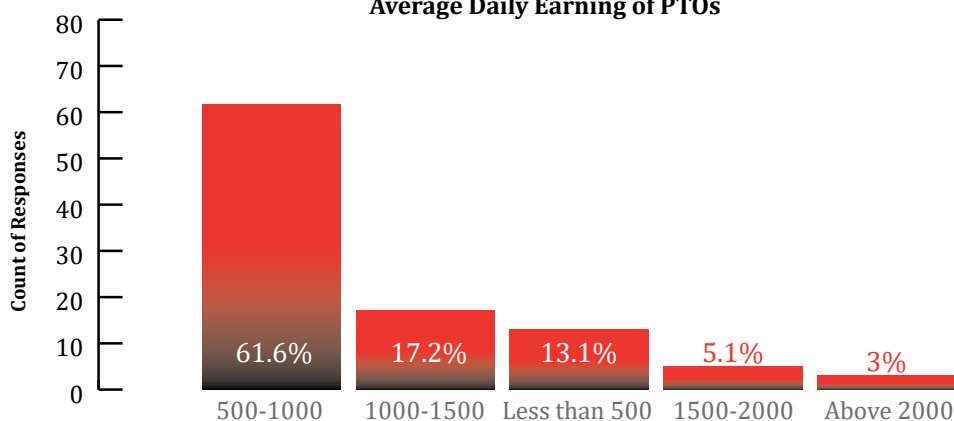
Image: 5:Average Daily Earnings of PTOs

Years Worked in Public Transport
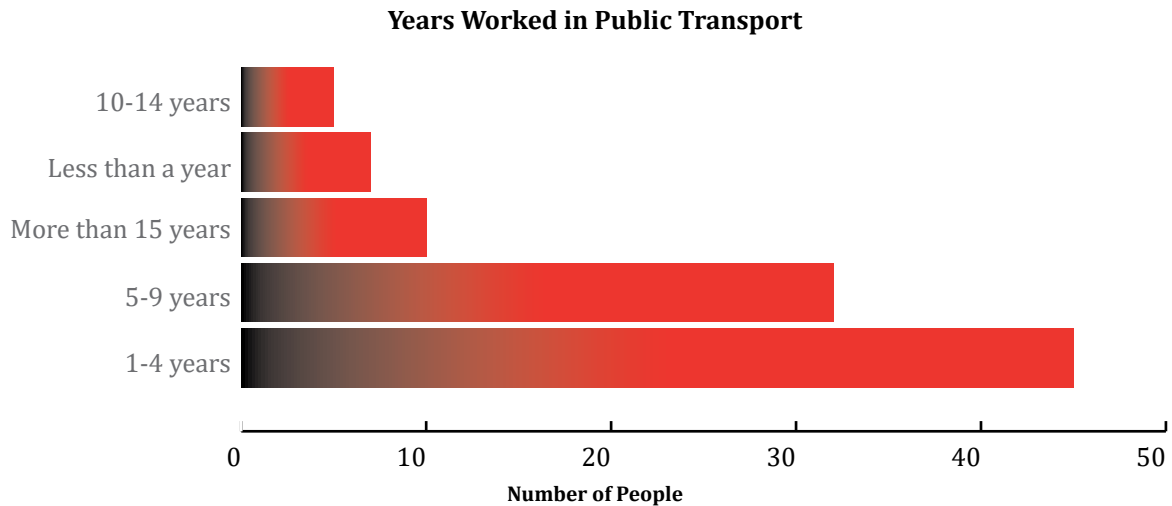
Image: 6:Years Worked in PT

From the bar plot above, most PTOs (45%) work for 1-4 years in the sector indicating that the sector is perceived as a transitional job rather than a long-term career. This high turnover rate could be as a result of a challenging work environment including issues of safety and insecurity, harassment and lack of job security. The interventions therefore should be aimed at improving retention and working conditions in the sector.

Preferred means of transport in Makueni County

Matatus are the most preferred means of transport by commuters in Makueni county at 52.3% followed by boda boda at 24.8%. Other means of transport available are probox at 11.8%, maruti at 2%, tuk tuk at 1.3%, taxis at 4.6%, Non-Motorized Transport at 1.3% mitumba vehicles at 0.7%. This preference is informed by the following factors; availability, affordability, convenience, reliability, accessibility, safety and accommodative. These findings from the commuters' survey correlates to the operators' survey findings on the dominant means of transport in Makueni County.

The bar plots below show the distributions of these preferences.
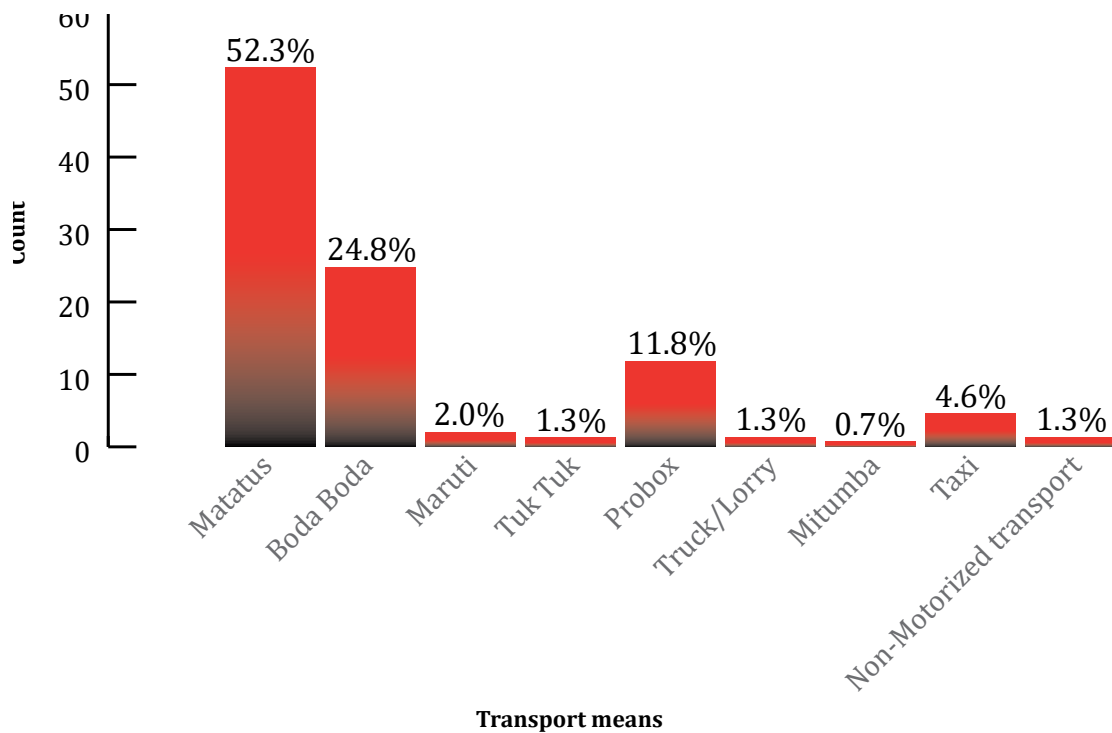
Image: 7:Most Preferred Means of Transport

What Informs Your Means of Transport?
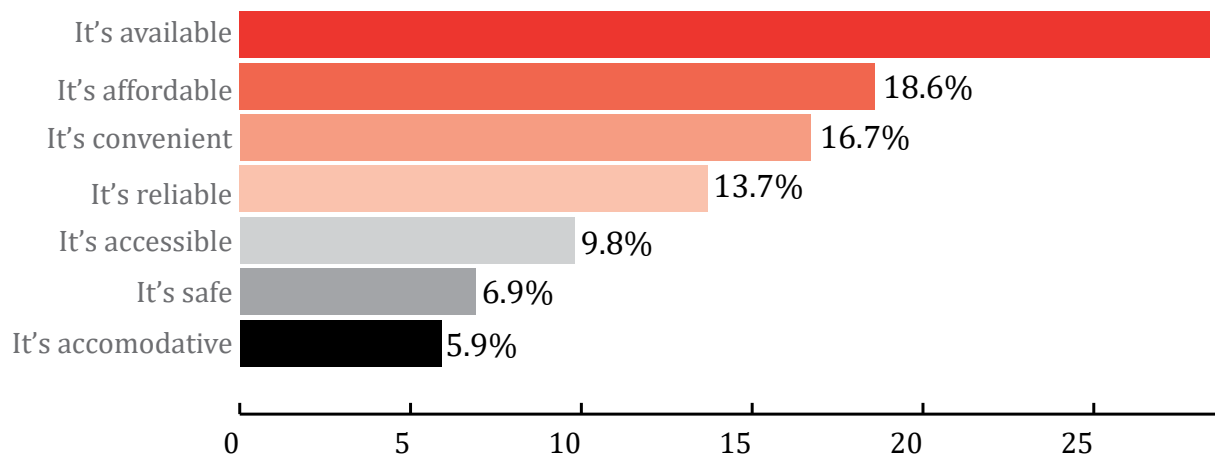
Image: 8:What Informs your means of Transport

Frequent commuters in Makueni County Public Transport

The survey findings revealed majority of commuters in Makueni County public transport system are women contributing to 83.8% of frequent commuters, 15.2% men, and 1.0% children. This frequency in travel by women is attributed to activities such as going to the markets, attending social events, spiritual events, going for healthcare services, work and other obligations.
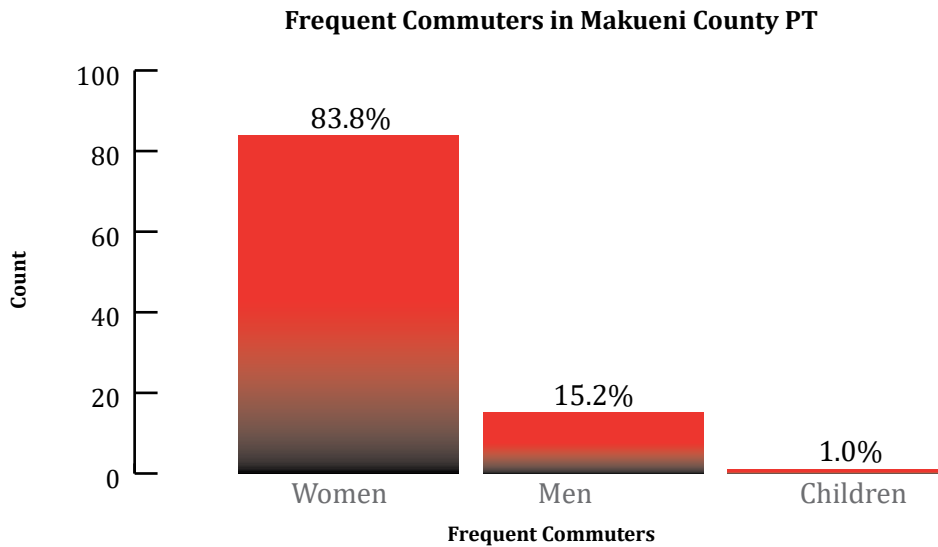
Frequent Commuters in Makueni County PT

Image: 9:Frequent Commuters in Makueni PT

Frequent Commuters among Vulnerable Groups
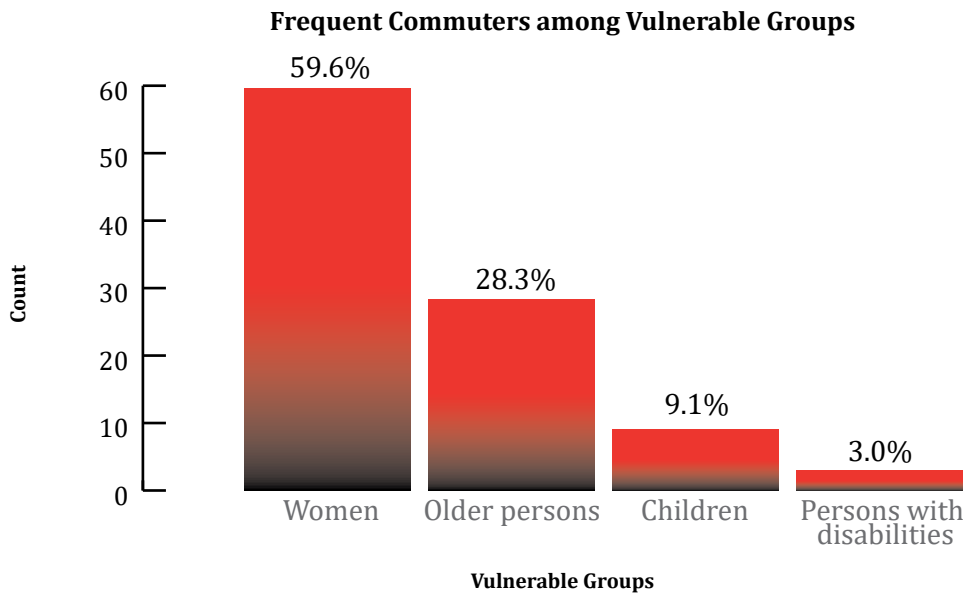
Image: 9:Frequent Commuters Among Vulnerable Groups

The high proportion of women commuters in Makueni County underlines the importance of gender-responsive public transport policies and services. Interventions aimed at improving safety, affordability, accessibility, and inclusivity for women and other vulnerable groups will not only address their specific needs but also enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the public transport system.

The frequent travelers of the vulnerable groups are 59.6%, older persons at 28.3%, children at 9.1% and persons with disabilities at 3.1%. By recognizing the commuting patterns and unique challenges faced by vulnerable groups, Makueni County can create a more equitable and inclusive public transport network for all users.

Objective 1: The Status of Vulnerable Commuters in Makueni County Public Transport

The detailed understanding of Makueni County public transport provided above laid foundations for the below findings for the status of vulnerable commuters in Makueni County public transport.

1. Women Commuters

Women travel patterns

The survey findings revealed that women's preparation patterns in Makueni county are multifaceted. The preparations before traveling involve personal grooming, performing household chores, picking out what to wear where choice of clothing is influenced by community expectations rather than personal preference and spiritual considerations consisting of praying before leaving their homes. Women commuters were quoted to saying *"do household chores and pray", "Self care and my dress code is determined by outside community not my desire"*

Factors to consider before leaving the house

The age distribution of women commuters and the factors they consider before leaving the house is captured in graph below. The word cloud below highlights the key considerations that influence their travel decisions.

Age Distribution of Commuters
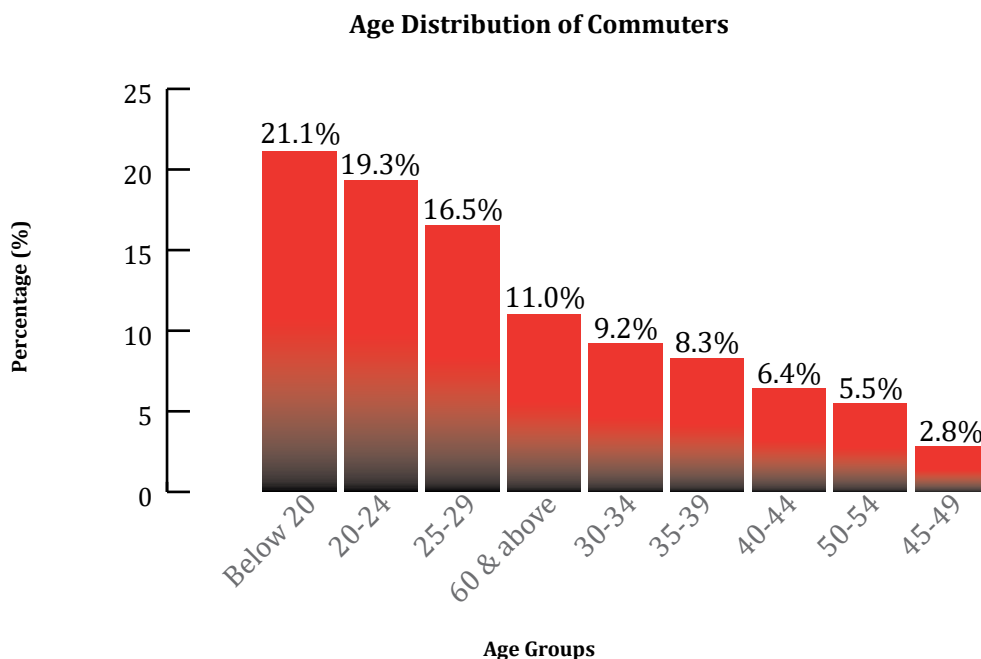
Image: 11:Age Distribution of Commuters

Take medication
Ensure there is fare
Time and distance
My safety
Dress code
Ensure there is enough food left
Mobile phone
Weather conditions
Amount of luggage
Identity documents

Image: 12:Women Considerations Before Leaving the House

While tailoring public transport interventions in Makueni County, it is important to understand the travel behavior and patterns of women; traveling alone versus traveling in groups. The survey findings show that 53.6% of women commuters prefer traveling in groups because they feel safe, its cheaper (cost-sharing), group dynamics involving going to churches, *chamas* etc, caregiver support especially to persons with disabilities and older persons. 46.4% of the women commuters prefer traveling alone because it's comfortable, they feel safe and traveling to work as indicated below.

Traveling: Alone vs Group
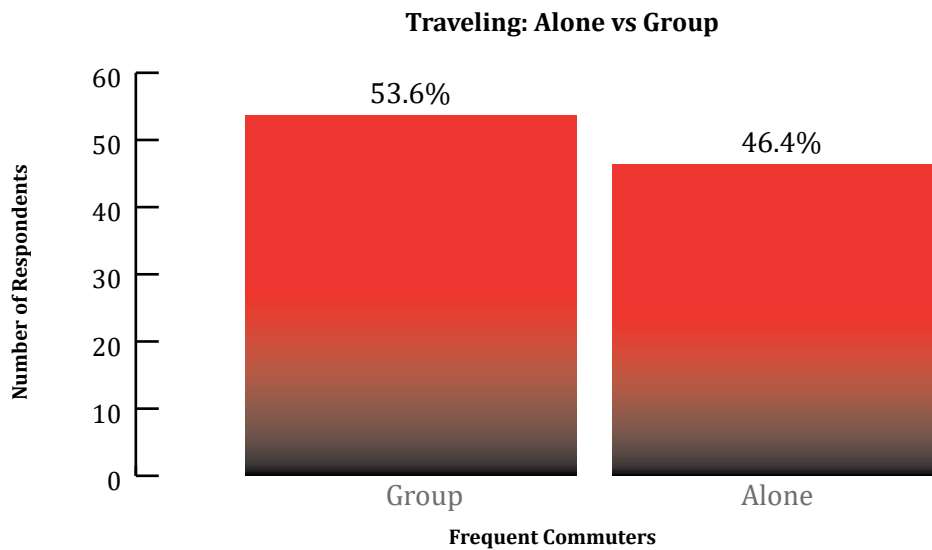
Image: 13: Percentages of Traveling Alone Vs in Group

Reasons for Traveling Alone vs. in Groups - Makueni County Public Transport
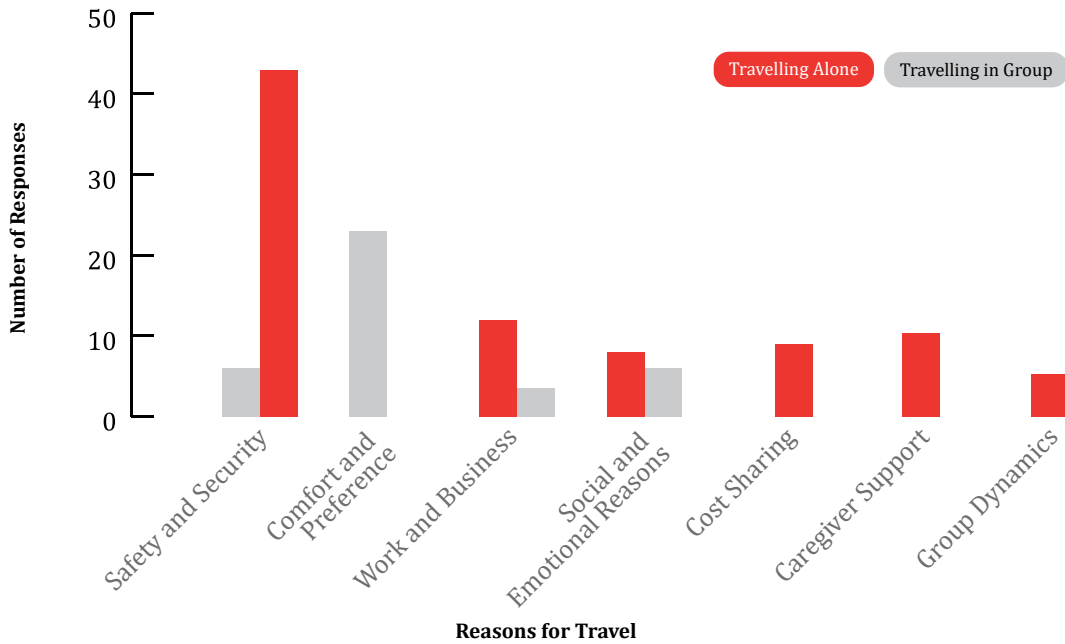
Image: 14:Reasons for Traveling Alone vs in Group

Women commuters are normally accompanied by friends, children, parent, luggage, caregiver, persons with disability and spouse.

Women as primary caregiver often accompany children to schools, churches and other events.

Most preffered means of transport
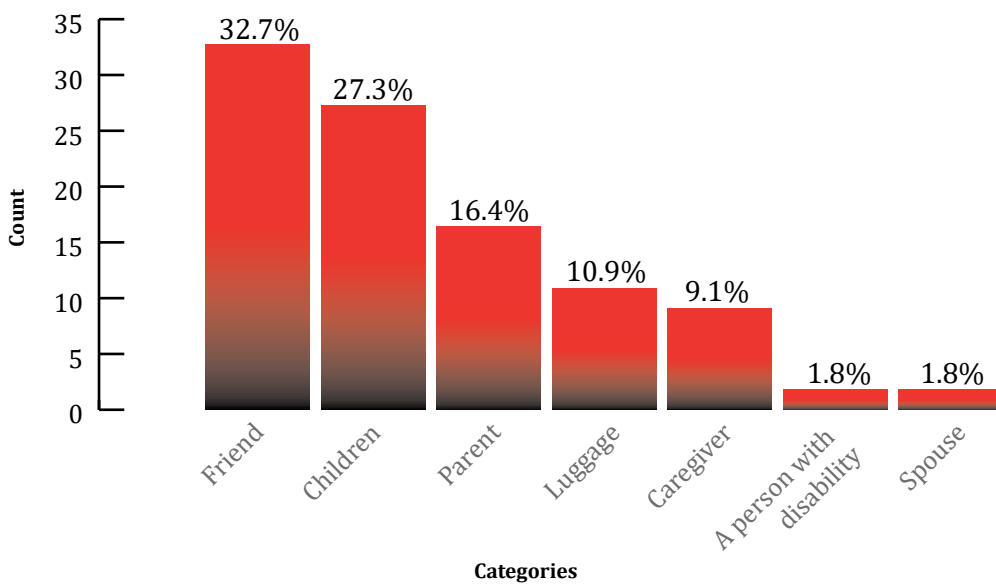
Image: 15:Who Accompanies Commuters while Traveling

Commuter Frequency and Average Travel Time in Makueni County

From our findings, the majority of commuters in Makueni County public transport spend an average of 2-4 hours on the roads in a day. This travel time likely reflects the average distance between homes and key destinations such as markets, workplaces, health centers and schools, as well as the dependence on public transport options that may involve waiting times or multiple transfers.

Outlier numbers such as 8 and 10 hours represent commuters with special needs like persons with disabilities and intercounty commuters. Individuals with mobility challenges in Makueni County often experience longer travel times due to the lack of accessible public transport. They encounter difficulties boarding or alighting, or require additional support that extends their overall journey time. Commuters traveling between counties, either for work or accessing essential services, typically cover greater distances, leading to longer travel times. Poor road infrastructure, limited transport options, or lengthy waiting periods can also contribute to these extended hours on the road.

31.2% of the commuters use public transport in Makueni County once in a week with only 11.9% using it daily. Makueni County being largely in the rural areas, many residents do not need to commute daily. Weekly use of public transport may be linked to visits to markets, accessing health services, *chamas* or attending church or social events. The visualization in form of the line graph and horizontal bar chart below shows the average travel time and how often commuters use public transport in Makueni county.

Average Time Spent on the Road by commuters in Makueni PT
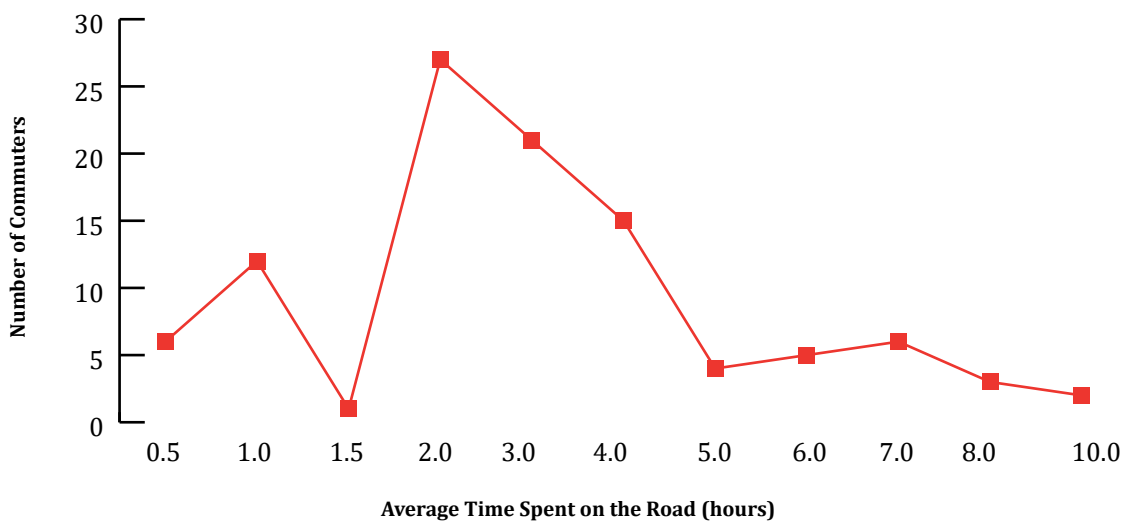
Image: 16:Average Time Spent by Commuters on the Road

How Often Do You Use Public Transport
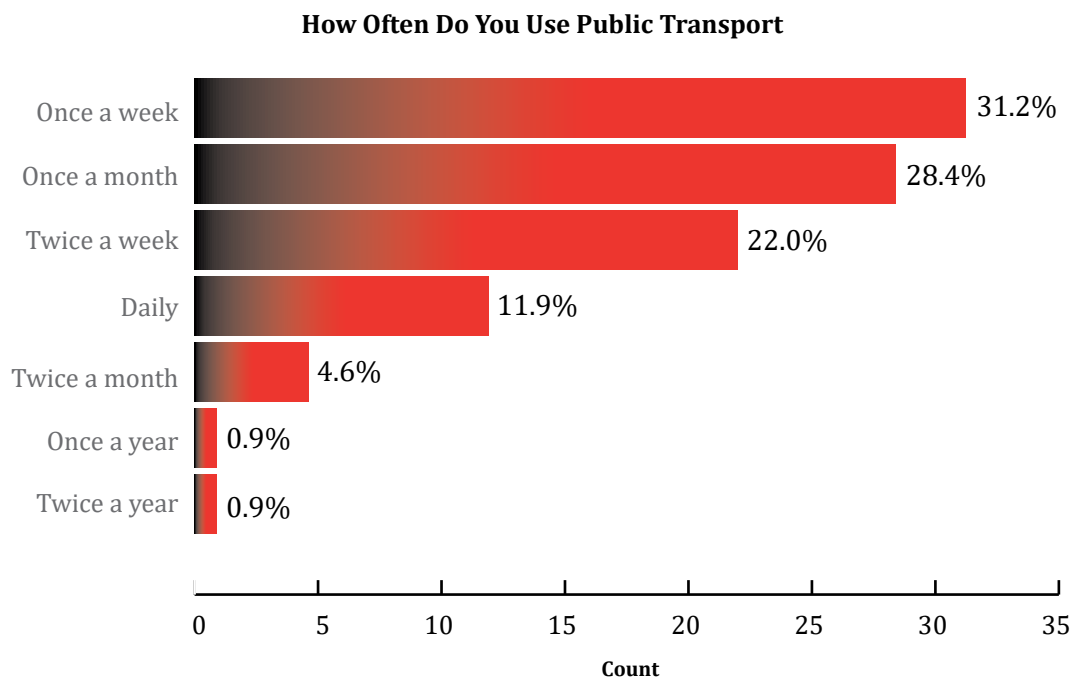
Image: 17:Frequency of Use of PT in Makueni County

Sexual Harassment Prevalence in Makueni County Public Transport.

Commuter's Understanding of Harassment

The findings on commuters' understanding of harassment in Makueni County public transport revealed a range of perceptions, with 21% associating it with forceful actions, 20% with abuse and intimidation, 10% with unwanted behaviour, 21% with rudeness and disrespect and 8% recognizing its emotional impact. However, 20% of women commuters have no understanding of what harassment is. Some of the women commuters said *"being overcharged after settling on a certain fare", "no idea", "i have no idea what harassment is".* This lack of understanding can be attributed to several factors such as lack of awareness, normalization of harassment and cultural norms shaping women's understanding of harassment making them not identify these actions as harmful.

Commuters Understanding of Harassment
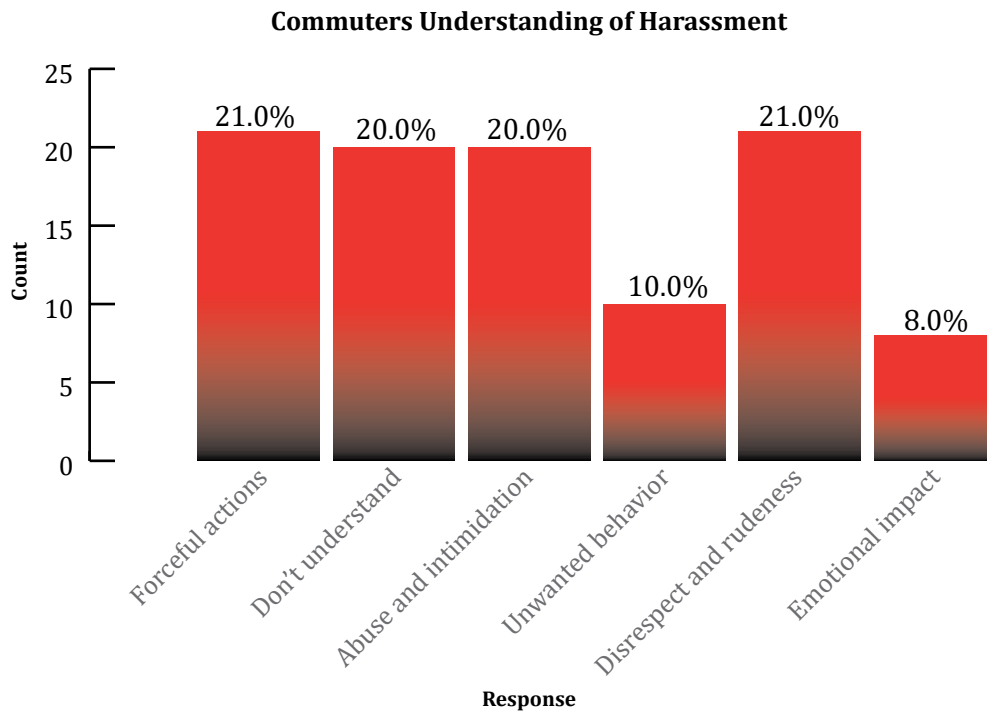
Image: 18:Commuters' Understanding of Harassment

The bar plot visualization above, highlights commuters' lack of understanding of what harassment is. To bridge this gap, it is important to implement public awareness campaigns, to define harassment clearly and provide examples of behaviors that should not be tolerated.

Forms of harassment in Makueni County Public Transport

The findings gathered from the survey point to the following forms of Harassment in Makueni County; physical, verbal, economical, psychological and sexual harassment. The most prevalent form of harassment in Makueni County public transport is verbal harassment at 41%, physical harassment at 21%, economical harassment at 19%, sexual harassment at 13% and psychological harassment at 7%. Public transport and overcrowded places often provide avenues for verbal harassment because of the short interactions and lack of enforcement of a code of conduct.

Sexual harassment, though less prevalent as compared to verbal and physical forms, is significant due to power dynamics between men and women in public spaces. Lack of awareness, poor reporting mechanisms, often allow this form of harassment to occur. This is shown in the bar plot below.

Forms of Harassment experienced in Makueni PT
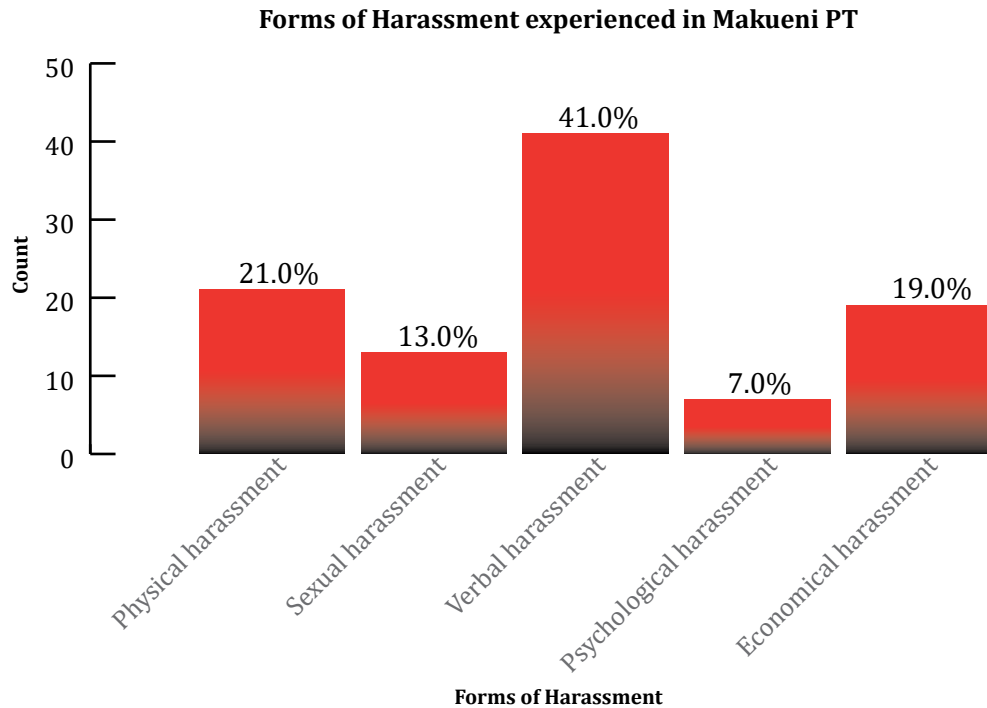
Image: 19:Forms of Harassment in Makueni PT

Sexual Harassment Incidents in Makueni County Public Transport

A portion of the commuters narrated encounters with harassment perpetrators in Makueni County public transport saying *"I was sexually assaulted in a vehicle while travelling to school", it happened in a matatu while we were traveling using Mutongoi matatu. The conductor of matatu sat on a woman's thighs without her consent. The lady started crying out and was forced to alight on the way before we reached destination"*

The prevalence of these behaviors in Makueni PT underscores the need for stricter regulations and public awareness campaigns to address these issues.

Commuters experiencing/witnessing sexual harassment in Makueni PT
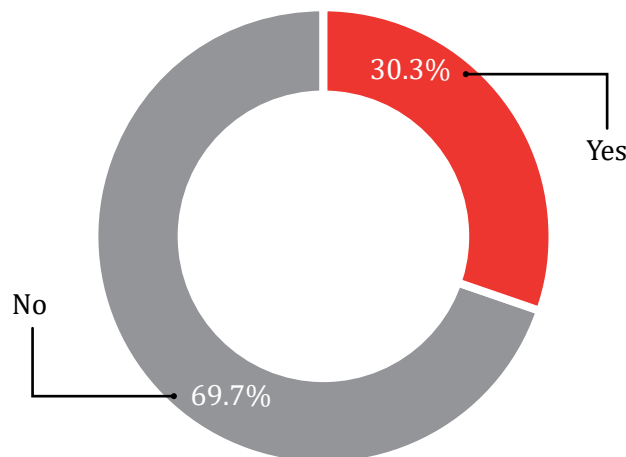
Image: 20: Commuters Experiencing/Witnessing Sexual Harassment in Makueni PT

Timing and Locations of Harassment incidents

The women commuters who had an understanding of sexual harassment, reported to have experienced sexual harassment incidents in the evening (36.8%), 30.5% in the afternoon and 32.6% in the morning. Furthermore, 59.0% of harassment incidents occur inside the vehicle, likely due to the confined spaces and close proximity in the vehicles. The bus park accounts for 31.0% of incidents, where large crowds and lack of proper oversight create opportunities for harassment. Harassment at parking lots (2.0%) and along pedestrian walkways (8.0%) is less common, but these areas still present risks, particularly when they are poorly lit or isolated.

Commuter Harassment Cases by Time
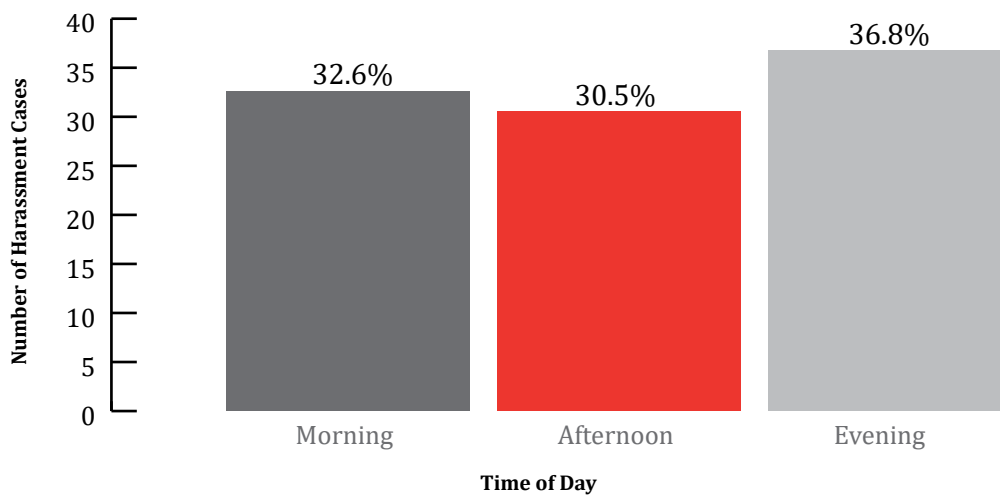
Image: 21:Time of Harassment Incidents

Commuter Harassment Location Distribution
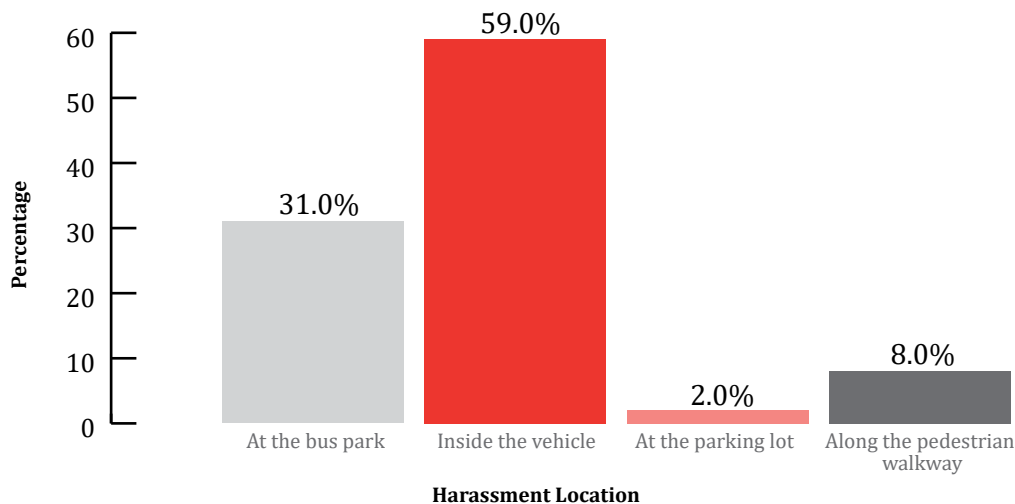
Image: 22:Location of Harassment Incidents

Perpetrators of the Harassment incidents and victim's reaction

From the findings, 58.1% of the perpetrators are known individuals with 41.9% being unknown individuals. For context, the known perpetrators of

harassment incidents included drivers, conductors, known commuters, touts(makanga) etc. Comprehensive strategies around anonymous reporting, increased surveillance and monitoring, training to PTOs can help address this.

61.9% of women commuters kept quiet when they were harassed, 22.7% walked away, 8.2% retaliated, 5.2% reported to SACCO. Commuters might have kept quiet because they feared retaliation or the behaviour is normalized.

Harassment Perpetrator Distribution
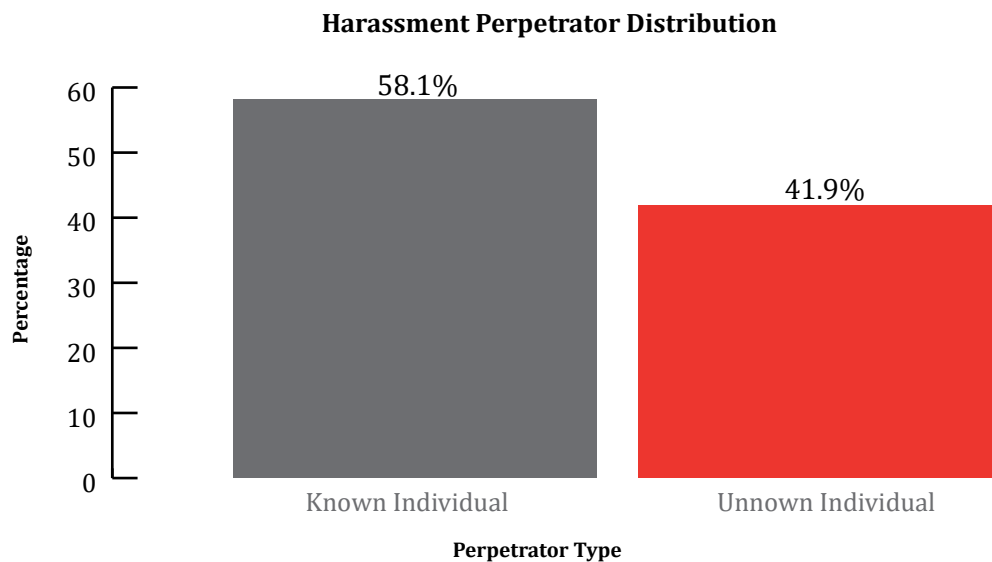
Image: 23:Distribution of Harassment Perpetrators
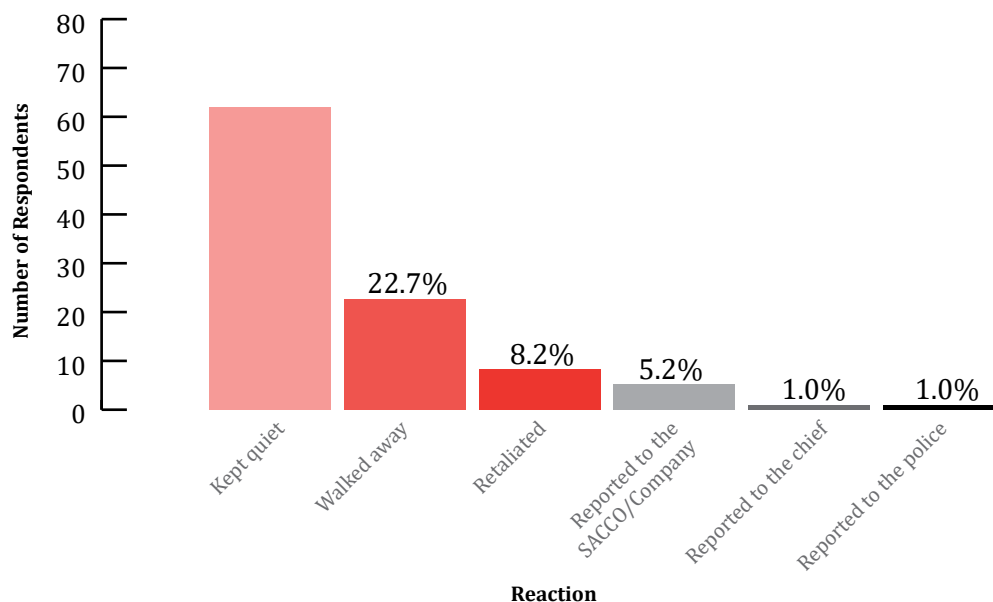
Image: 24:Commuters Reaction to Harassment Incidents

Emotional impact and public reaction to harassment

Some respondents felt happy and excited when they experienced or witnessed harassment incidents, which call for more research. This would suggest normalization of this behavior, with some not recognizing the line between

flirting and harassment. Informed and empathic community that recognizes harassments as serious issues need to be fostered.

Feelings Experience by Commuters and Witnesses after Harassment Incidents
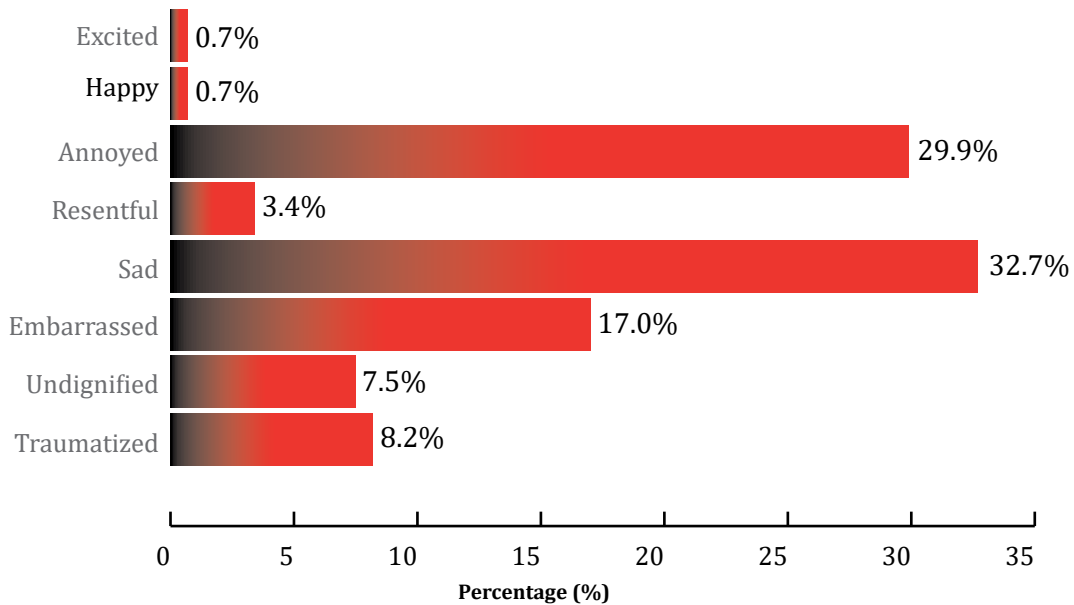
Image: 25:Commuters Feelings after Harassment

People Reactions to the Perpetrator
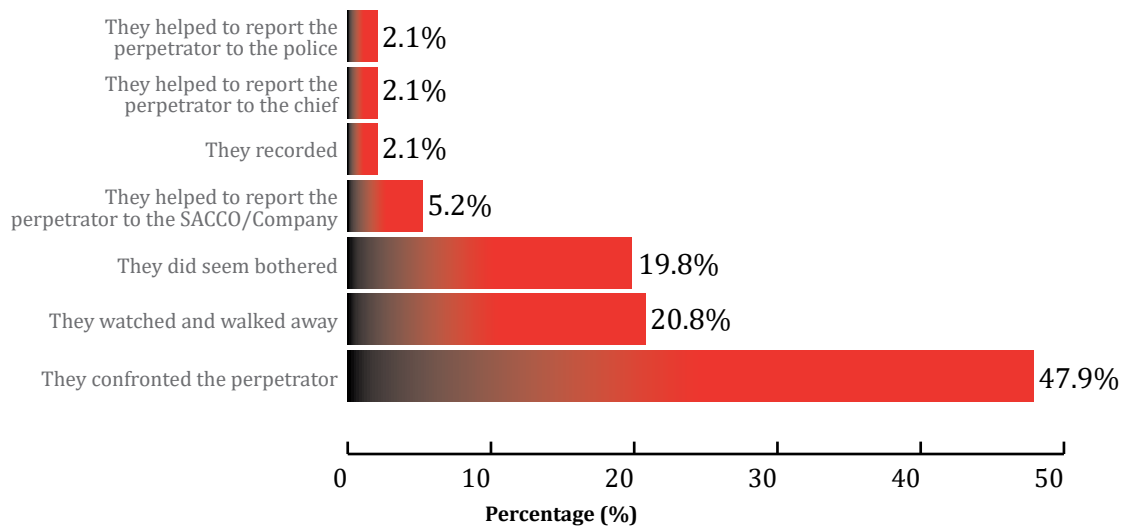
Image: 26:People's Reaction to Harassment Perpetrator
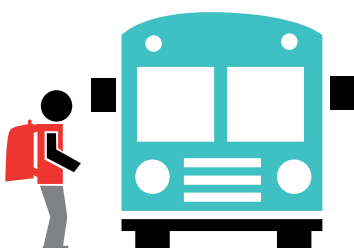
2. Children

Children commuting patterns

On average, school-going children in Makueni County leave their homes at 5 a.m. and arrive at school at 6 a.m. During these hours, it is normally dark, and there is little human traffic along the roads. The highest

percentage of students walk to school. Due to fear for their safety, parents, siblings, or caregivers usually escort them. When returning home, the children usually walk in groups with peers, which provides a sense of security. For children who rely on motorized transport, a majority use matatus and boda bodas. Those who use Matatus spend an average of Kes. 50. With seats not being guaranteed for children in a matatus, the journey is uncomfortable and unsafe for them. Notably, children who use bodaboda occasionally wear adult helmets, but none of them wear reflective jackets. On the other hand, students in boarding schools are normally picked up by parents while some are dropped off by school buses, or use matatus; indicating socio-economic differences. From the assessment, it was evident that safety among the children was a concern in Makueni County due to the continued pattern of children requiring adult or peer accompaniment while heading to and from school.

Children and Road Safety Awareness

a. Knowledge of Road Signs

The children demonstrated a strong understanding of road signs, particularly the pedestrian crossing. This knowledge is attributed to the strands in their school syllabus that focus on road safety. While using pedestrian crossings, most motorists respect the children's right of way, particularly due to their numbers. However, some motorists fail to yield, creating potential hazards.

b. Awareness and Use of Road Infrastructure

From the empathy mapping exercise conducted, most students know how to cross the road, which was attributed to the road safety education they received. However, with no road signs or traffic guidelines crossing roads safely remains a safety issue. Few students had used footbridges, which indicated a lack of such infrastructure in their areas or a limited understanding of how they could enhance safety.

c. Cycling Habits

Many students stated that they had been riding bicycles at home, in fields, or on roads. While some stated to have been wearing helmets, the majority would not wear reflectors, increasing their invisibility and safety, particularly in low-light conditions. This behavior presents risks in the absence of designated cycling lanes and proper safety measures.

Challenges faced by children while commuting

- ▶ **Pedestrian crossing visibility:** Some of the pedestrian crossings utilized by the students on a daily basis are faint, inhibiting its visibility by motorists and student pedestrians.
- ▶ **Signage obstruction:** Important school direction signages had been

obscured by nearby businesses, reducing their visibility to the motorists. Clear, unobstructed signage of the school is important for ensuring the safety of the children and other pedestrians where motorists are expected to slow down.

▶ **Limited and lack of NMT infrastructure:** The lack of cycling lanes poses a significant threat to the safety of students who walk or ride bikes, making it more difficult for them to avoid traffic. They are forced to share the road with motorized traffic, increasing the likelihood of accidents.

▶ **Insufficient Lighting:** With no or nonfunctional street lights, especially in sparsely populated areas, the darkness during their early morning and late afternoon commutes increases the danger of road accidents due to reduced visibility for both pedestrians and drivers.

▶ **Lack of adherence to road signs:** While the absence of road signs and traffic guidelines creates a hazardous situation for children who walk to and from school, disrespect to the guidelines put in place has doubled the challenge in Makueni County. Boda boda operators, while convenient, often disregard safety regulations. Many lack proper training, licenses, or safety equipment, such as helmets or reflective gear. This unregulated nature of boda boda services poses a significant risk to child passengers.

Operators Perception on Children's Safety Issues in Public Transport

Operators Perception of Children Safety Issues

Category	Percentage
Late arrival to destination	2.1%
Kidnappings	3.2%
Physical assaults by conductors	2.1%
Reckless driving	2.1%
Not holding on riders	4.2%
Overloading	2.1%
Poor road conditions	3.2%
Forgetting parents numbers	5.3%
Luggage misplacement	5.3%
Getting lost	9.5%
Lack of awareness of danger	13.7%
Fare hikes	11.6%
Peeping through windows	13.7%
No issues	22.1%

Percentage (%)

Image: 27:Operators Perception of Children Safety Issues

Public transport operators perceive peeping through the window, fare hikes, lack of awareness to danger, getting lost, luggage misplacement, forgetting parents' numbers, poor road conditions, overloading, kidnappings, reckless driving etc. as some of the children safety issues in public transport. To mitigate these safety issues, operators should use safe school routes, better accountability by PTOs for children passenger properties, continuous performance assessment for drivers by SACCOs in collaboration with NTSA.

Overally, these safety and security issues can be addressed through a combination of public awareness campaigns, collaboration between public transport operators and regulatory and enforcement authorities and leveraging on the use of technology.

3. Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities

The insightful discussions with persons with disabilities and older persons highlighted the challenges they face while commuting in Makueni county public transport. It is also important to note that older persons are more vulnerable to mobility impairments, cognitive impairments and mental health challenges as compared to other commuters.

Challenges faced while using Makueni County public transport

▶ **Bad language from PTOs:** Older commuters and commuters with mobility challenges often report verbal abuse and rude behavior from transport operators.

▶ **Inaccessible infrastructure at bus stations:** Most bus stations within Makueni County public transport lack accessible infrastructure to accommodate older persons and persons with disabilities.

▶ **Lack of empathy when handling older persons and persons with disabilities:** Public transport operators and other commuters often show a lack of empathy when assisting older persons and those with disabilities, leading to neglect or mistreatment. This can make the commute stressful and challenging for these groups.

▶ **Overloaded vehicles:** Vehicles are often overloaded as they are used to transport both agricultural goods and passengers, which compromises safety and comfort.

▶ **Lack of transport options:** Certain areas, such as Nunguni, experience a shortage of reliable transport options which leads to increased waiting times at boarding stations. This limits mobility and access to essential services like health care, markets and important .

▶ **Irregular fare structure:** the absence of standard fare pricing in Makueni public transport often makes planning for journeys difficult for older persons and persons with disabilities.

▶ **Longer travel times due to the bad conditions of the roads:** Many roads in Makueni County have potholes, erosion as a result of landslides and inadequate maintenance.

▶ **Frequent landslides isolating communities;** Makueni is a commonplace for landslides; damaging roads and cutting off people from important activities.

Objective 2: The Status of Women Public Transport Operators in Makueni County Public Transport

The workers approach utilized in this research, under methodology section, and adopted from International Labor Organization career cycle approach for women in transport which aims to foster gender inclusivity and advancement for women in the transport sector. This study's objective is to understand the status of women in the PT sector in Makueni, how to attract more women, retain them and advance them in the sector as an alternative way of earning a living.

Number of women in Makueni public transport system.

In Makueni County, the number of women working in the transport sector is very low. From the findings of our survey which had 102 public transport operators, only 4 were women who are disaggregated as stage attendants (2), boda boda rider (1) and SACCO Clerk (1). Notably, all these women are based at Wote Bus Station, which is a more urbanized area in Makueni County.

This is represented in the pie chart below

Gender Distribution of PTOs
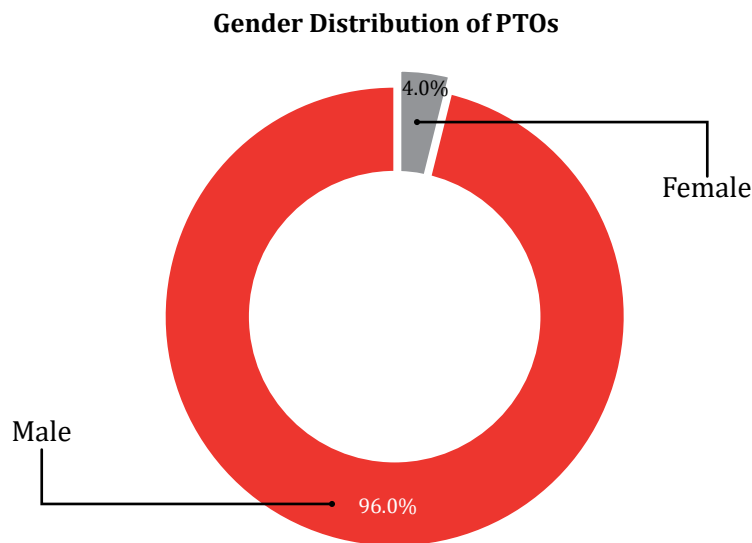
Image: 28: Gender Distribution of PTOs

Barriers to Women's Representation in Makueni Public Transport SACCOs

63.9% of SACCOs in Makueni County have no women workers while 32.0% have less than 10 women working for them. SACCOs with more than 10 women professionals are only 4.1%. This underrepresentation is attributed to the following factors;

- ▶ **Lack of interest:** The public transport operators in Makueni county perception is that women view the sector as male dominated, physically demanding roles, leading to low interest.

- ▶ **Fear/insecurity:** Being a very informal sector with little to no complaints address mechanisms in place, women are concerned about their personal safety in these workplaces.

▶ **Job difficulty:** Public transport roles such as conductors and drivers can be physically demanding requiring longer hours. This may discourage women, especially balancing care-giving and other family responsibilities.

▶ **Societal norms:** The traditional gender roles and societal expectations rooted in our culture more often limit women to domestic responsibilities, making careers in public transport undesirable.

▶ **Lack of skills/training:** Most women lack training and access to training opportunities needed for the public transport roles limiting their participation in these roles. This is also compounded by limited opportunities to access these trainings.

▶ **Lack of confidence and opportunities:** Due to societal expectations, women may lack confidence thus preventing them from venturing into this sector.

The below bar graph and the horizontal bar graph presents a visualization of these findings.

Distribution of Women working in Makueni PT SACCOs by Response

Image: 29:Women Working in Makueni PT SACCOs by Response

Reasons for inadequate Representation of Women in SACCOs
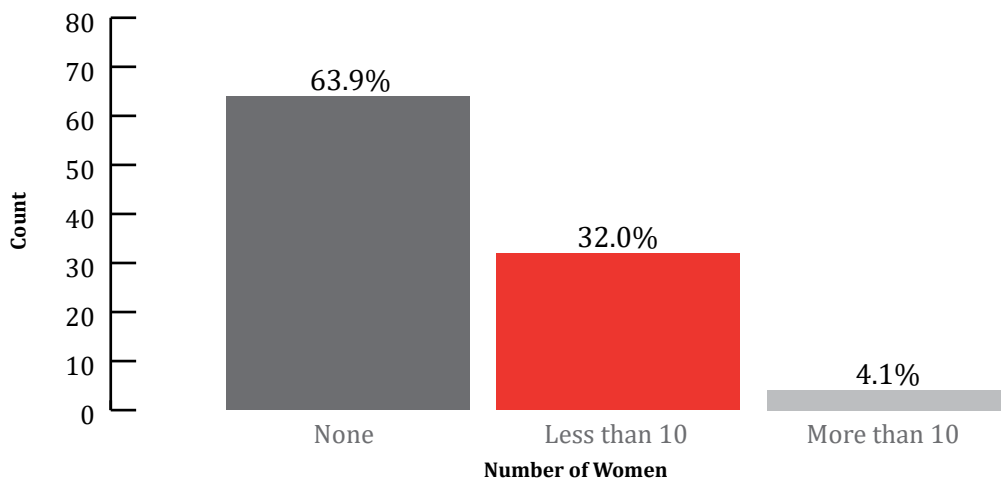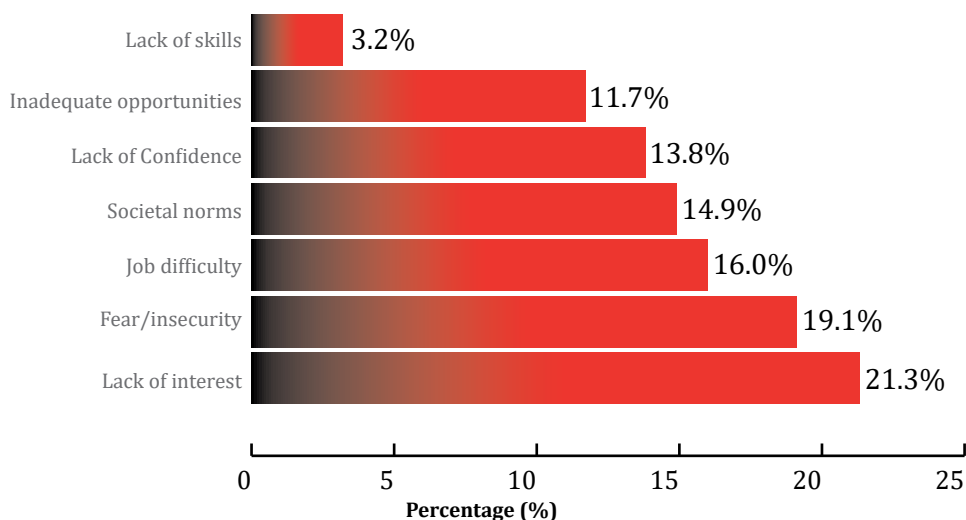

Image: 30:Reasons for Inadequate Representation of Women in PT SACCOs

The above factors create significant barriers for women seeking to enter or advance in Makueni's public transport SACCOs, resulting in their continued underrepresentation. Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, including training, awareness campaigns, and gender-inclusive policies.

Objective 3: The Role of key Industry Players in the promotion of inclusive public transport in Makueni County

At the center of key transport sector players are the public transport operators who include SACCO owners, SACCO managers, drivers, stage attendants, touts *(makanga)*, SACCO clerks, mechanics and conductors. These PTOs' understanding of accessibility and inclusivity, the different forms of harassment, presence or absence of reporting mechanisms and their roles in attracting women to the sector will act as the basis of promoting inclusive public transport in Makueni County.

PTOs understanding of accessibility and inclusivity in public transport in Makueni County

For the key industry players to promote accessibility and inclusivity in public transport, they have to have an understanding of what accessibility and inclusivity means. The horizontal bar chart below shows operators' perception and description of what constitutes an inclusive and accessible public transport.
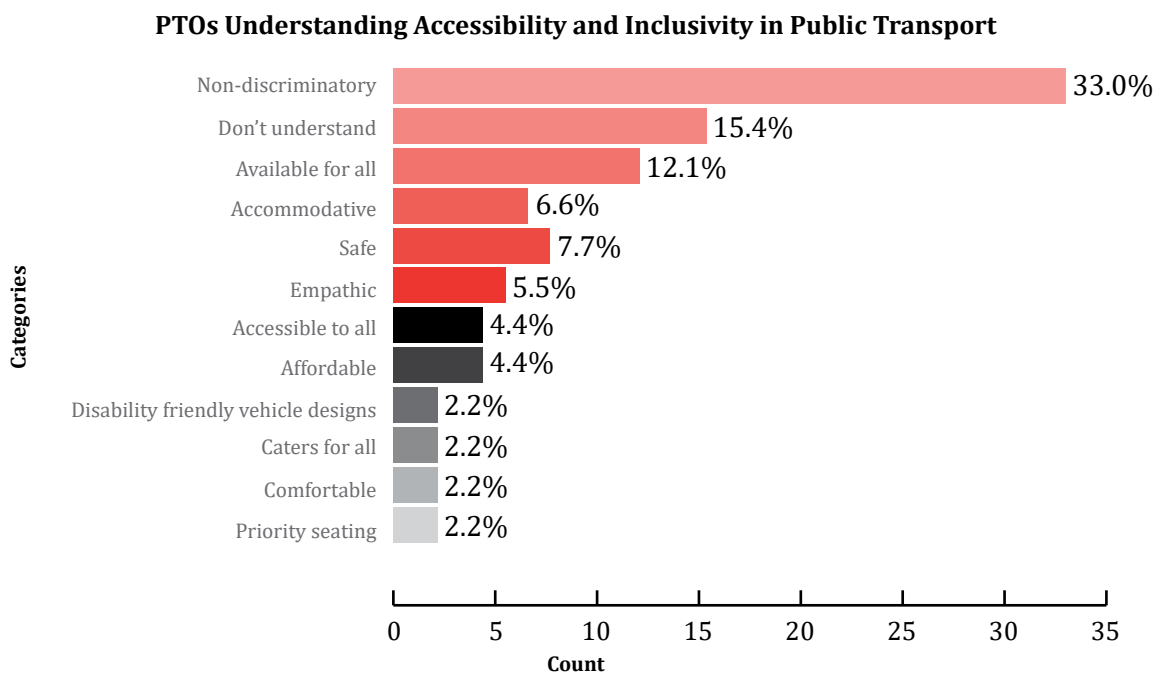
Image: 31:PTOs Understanding of Accessibility and Inclusivity

The largest portion of respondents believe that a non-discriminatory (33%) public transport is one that treats all passengers equally, regardless of their gender, age or any disability. This is in line with principles of social justice

where everyone has access to services without any bias. A significant portion of respondents (15.4%) don't understand the concept of accessibility and inclusivity indicating a gap in awareness and training of public transport operators.

Economic accessibility is key to inclusivity. A public transport system that is affordable allows individuals from different income levels to access essential services, making it inclusive for all people from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

The views expressed above reflect a broad understanding of accessibility and inclusivity and highlight the need to create a public transport that serves everyone. The views have also identified knowledge gaps hence the need for training and awareness efforts on inclusive public transport.

Forms of harassment and PTOs Understanding of Sexual Harassment

The different forms of harassment witnessed and experienced by PTOs in Makueni public transport include verbal, physical, sexual, psychological and economic harassment.

The most prevalent form of harassment witnessed or experienced by public transport operators is verbal(49.7%),physical(32.0%), economic(12.9%), sexual(2.7%) and psychological(2.7%).

The bar graph and the horizontal bar chart below show the different forms of harassment and the PTOs understanding of sexual harassment.

Forms of Harassment witnessed/experienced by PTOs in Makueni PT
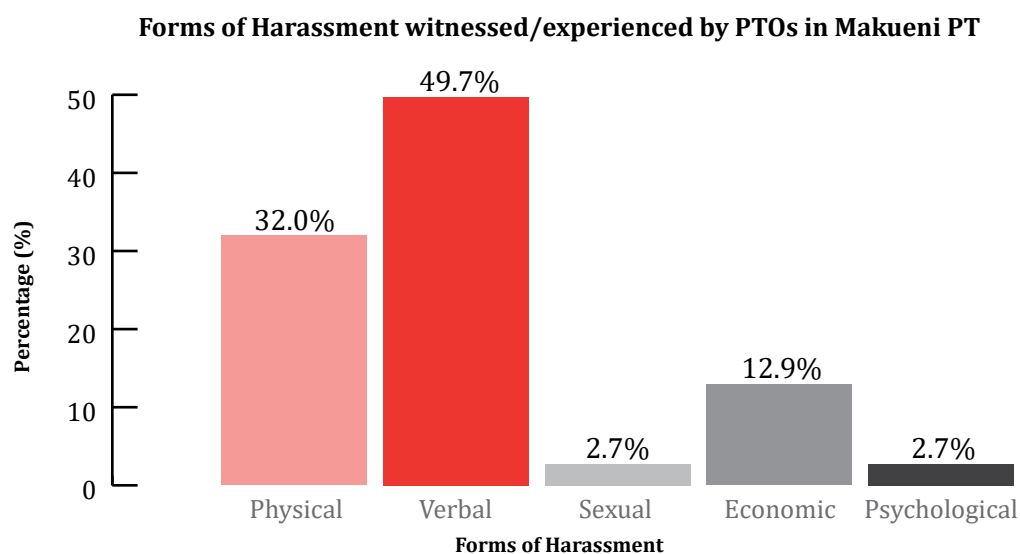
Image: 32:Forms of Harassment Witnessed/Experienced by PTOs

PTOs Understanding of Sexual Harassment
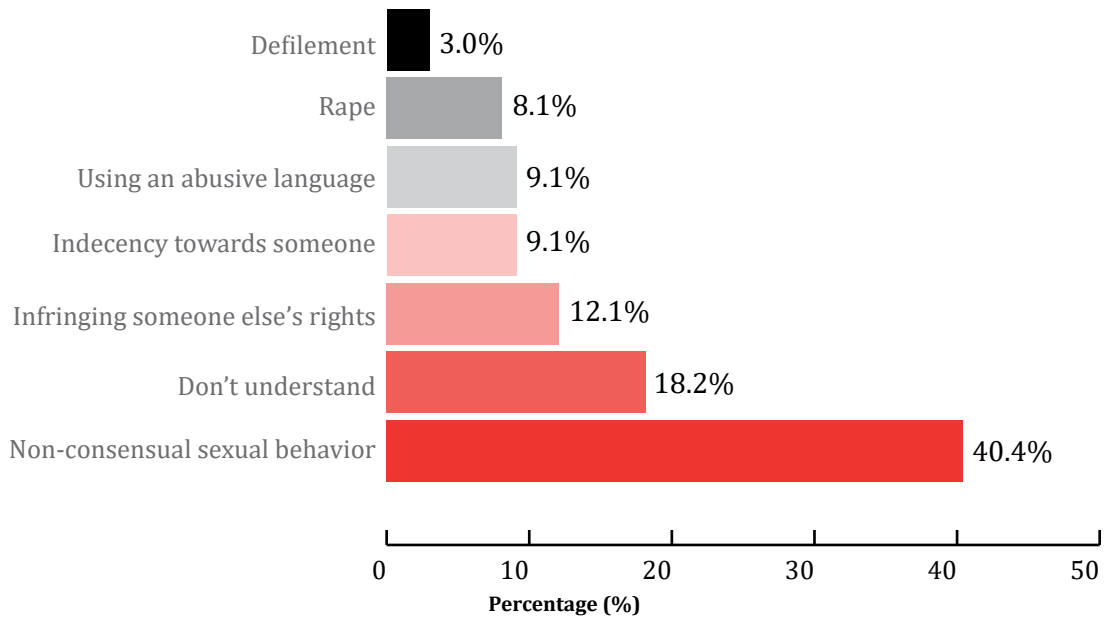
Image: 33:PTOs Understanding of Sexual Harassment

Majority of PTOs(40.4%) understand sexual harassment as non-consensual behavior, with 18.2% lacking understanding of what sexual harassment is. This is a serious gap in knowledge which could result in some operators engaging in or tolerating inappropriate behavior without realizing its impact.

Reporting Mechanisms and Channels

From the findings, a high percentage (41.9%) of operators do not report harassment in PT indicating lack of trust in authorities or normalization of harassment. There is also overreliance on drivers to report harassment incidents. Some drivers may not always witness the harassment. This overreliance limits the effectiveness of the reporting process and highlights the need for more accessible and diverse reporting channels.

Availability of Reporting Mechanisms on Harassment
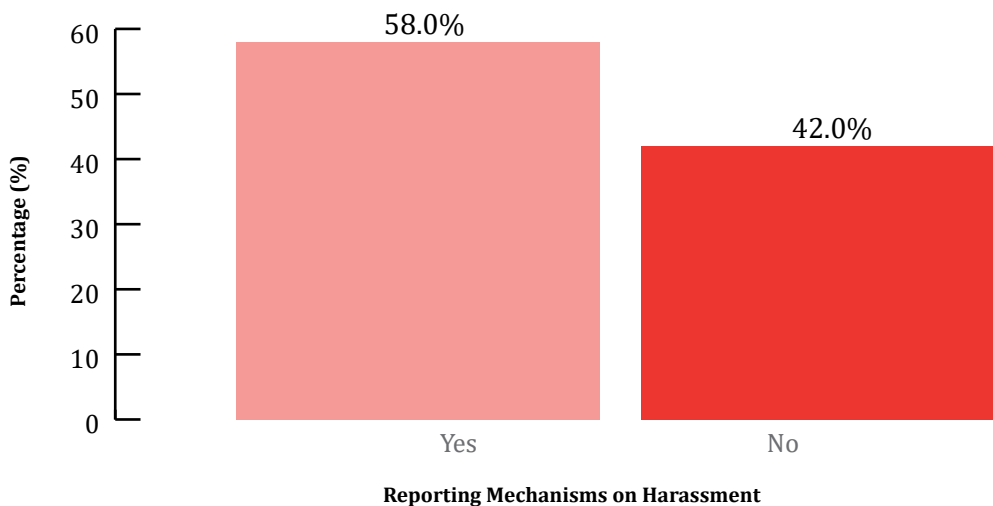
Image: 34:Availability of Reporting Mechanisms on Harassment

Reporting Channels on Harassment
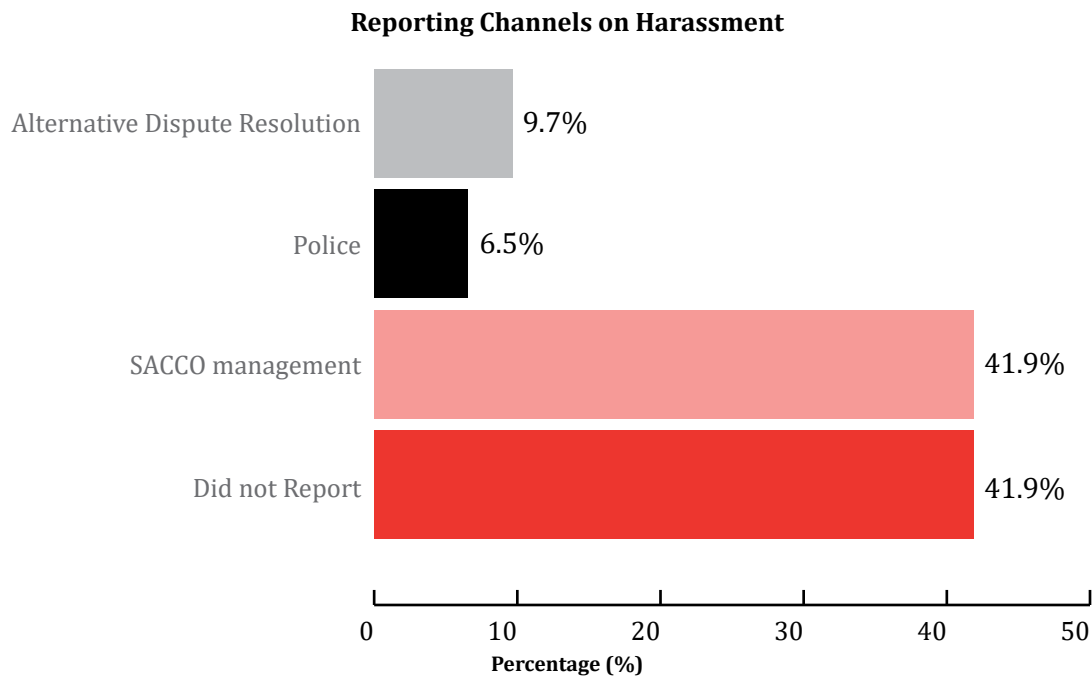
Image: 35:Reporting Channels on Harassment

Incident Reporting by PTOs: Where Were Reports Filed?

From the findings, 85.7% of the PTOs did not report harassment incidents in public transport, 14.3% of PTOs reported the incidents. This low reporting rate could be linked to an overreliance on drivers to handle reporting. 56.9% of the incidents were filed in SACCO Occurrence Book (OB), verbal reporting to the SACCO offices at 31.4% and reports filed to the police OB at 11.8%. The operators prefer reporting harassments to the internal SACCO guidelines possibly because the internal processes are perceived to be responsive. The informal reporting methods such as verbal reporting may not always be documented or followed up leading to justice not being served.

The bar plot below shows incidents reported by PTOs and where the incidents were reported.

Did PTO Report Harassment Incident
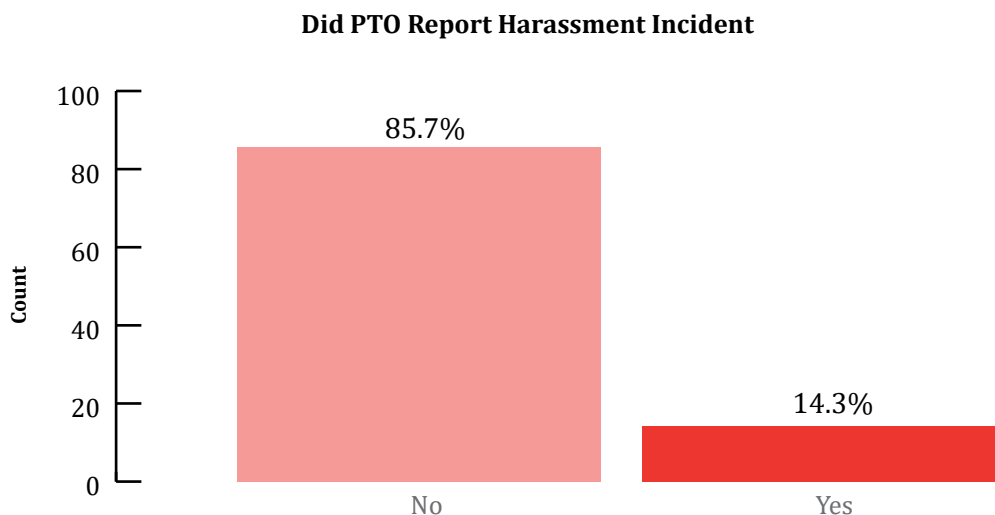
Image: 36:Did PTO Report Harassment Incidents

Where Harassment Incidents are Recorded
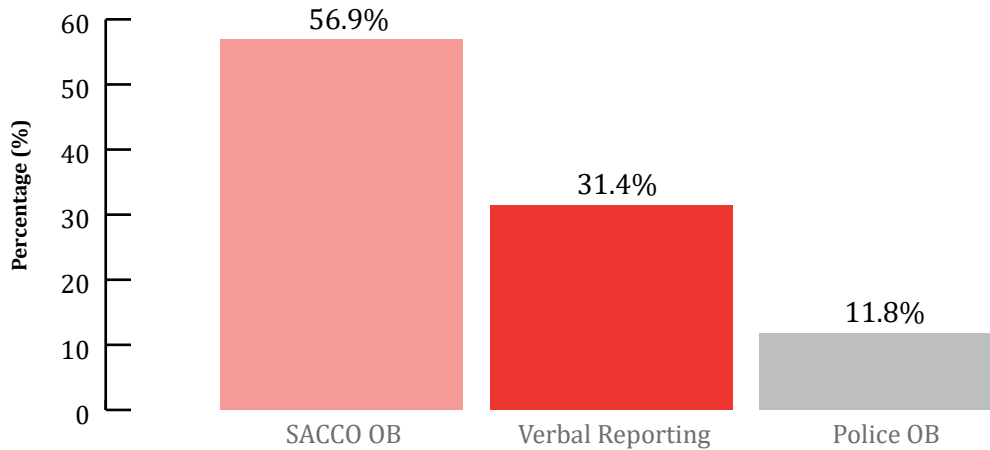
Image: 37:Where PTOs Reported Harassment Incidents

PTOs reasons for not reporting

The horizontal bar plot below shows the reasons why PTOs did not report the harassment incidents.

PTOs Reasons for Not Reporting Harassment
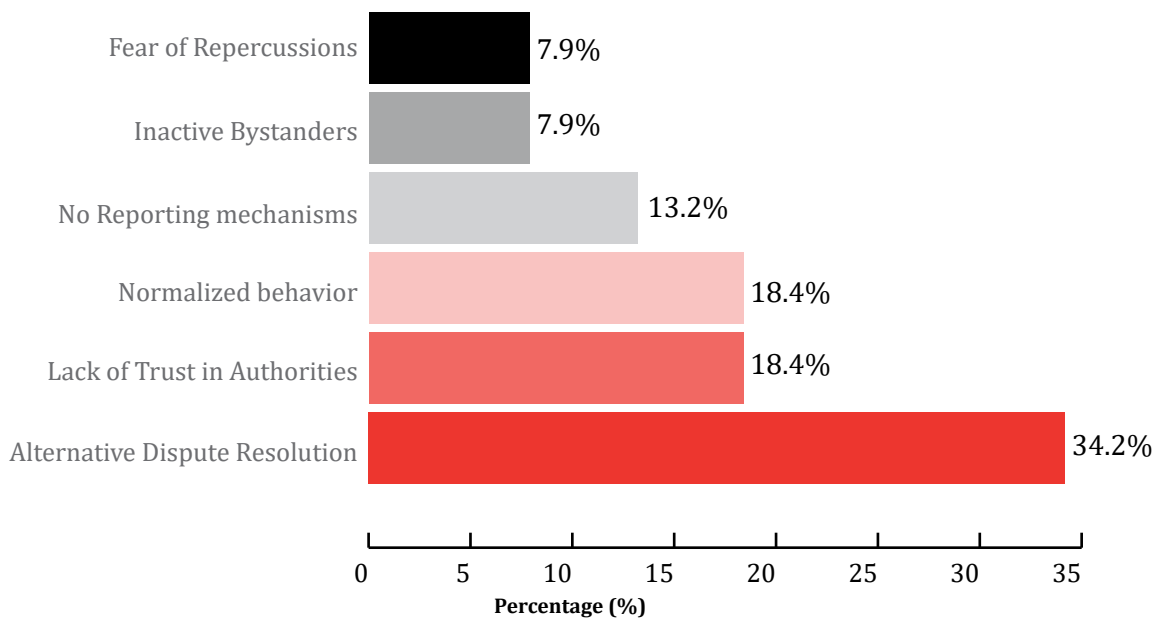
Image: 38:PTOs Reasons for Not Reporting Harassment Incidents

From the above bar plot, 34.2% of the PTOs resorted to alternative dispute resolution which include mediation, arbitration, fighting and forgiving the perpetrators. 18.4% did not report the harassment incidents because of lack of trust in authorities. One operator admitted *"I take it as normal and part of the job" while another said "long process of justice and lack of trust in the authorities"*. This lack of trust, as reported by some operators, could be as a result of past experiences where incidents reports were ignored. When operators believe that reporting incidents will not lead to justice, they are less

likely to engage with formal reporting mechanisms. This implies the problem of lack of trust is not addressed.

Measures Taken to Address Harassments in Makueni County Public Transport

Upon receiving harassment incident reports, most SACCOS in Makueni County(57.8%) suspend or dismiss PTOs who are found to have harassed commuters. 7.8% of the measures taken involve offboarding passengers who are causing trouble in the vehicle while 20.3% involve police while SACCOs document 14.1% of the incidents reported. There is a discrepancy in terms of how harassment by commuters are handled with PTOs feeling that it is one sided. One operator explains *"customer is the king"* which sometimes forces them to tolerate harassment from passengers. Here is a visualized horizontal bar plot of the various measures taken by SACCOs to address harassment.

Measures Taken by PTOs to Address Harassment

Measure	Percentage
Off-boarding violent commuters	7.8%
Documenting harassment	14.1%
Police involvement	20.3%
Suspension/dismissal	57.8%

Percentage (%)
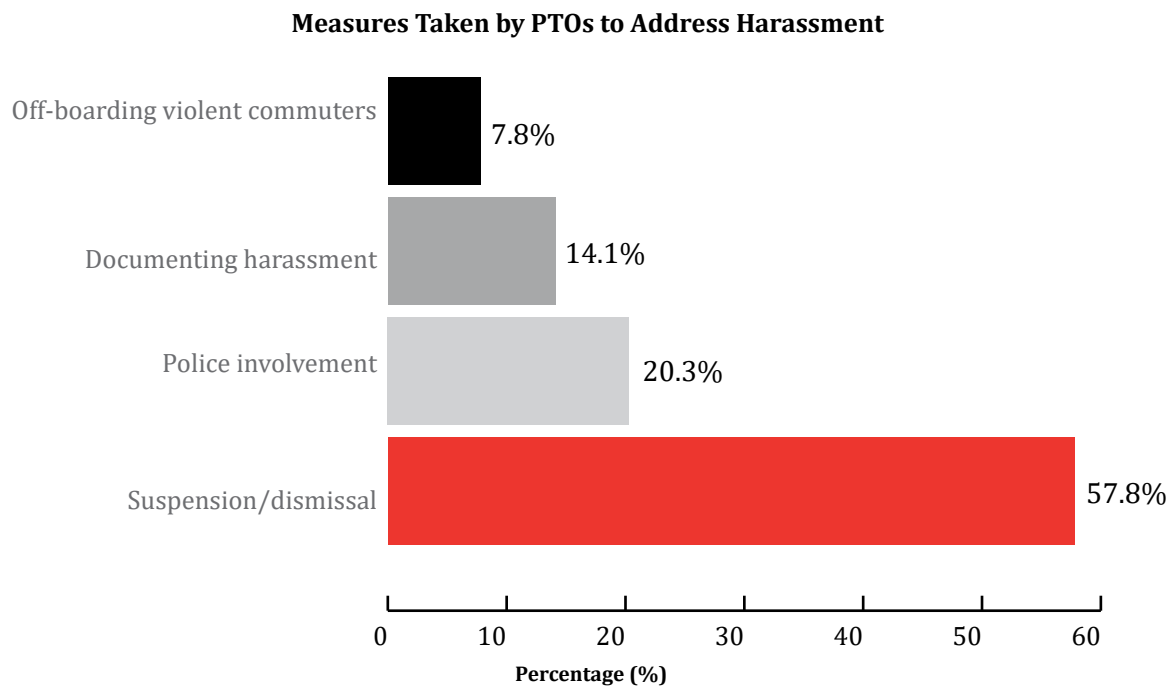
Image: 39:Measures Taken by PTOs to Address Incidents

The findings indicate the need for SACCOs to adopt training to the PTOs on how to handle passenger misconduct include conflict resolution methods and clear protocols when offboarding problematic commuters.

Public Transport SACCOs Documenting Harassment and Where Recorded

In Makueni County public transport, 50.5% of the SACCOs do not document harassment incidents with only 49.5% documenting. These records of the incidents are done in SACCO OB (56.9%), others doing verbal reporting (31.4%) and 11.8% to the police OB. Below is a visualization of the findings.

SACCO Documenting Harassment Incidents
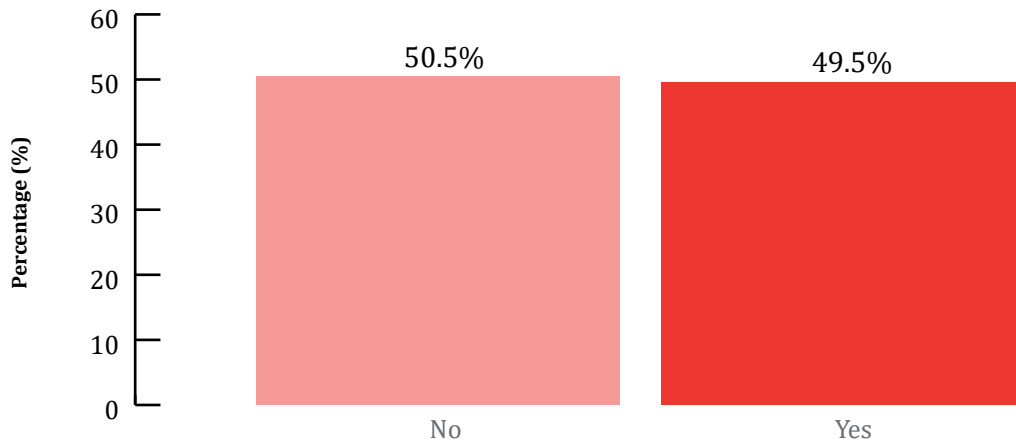
Image: 40:SACCO Documenting Harassment Incidents

Where Harassment Incidents are Recorded
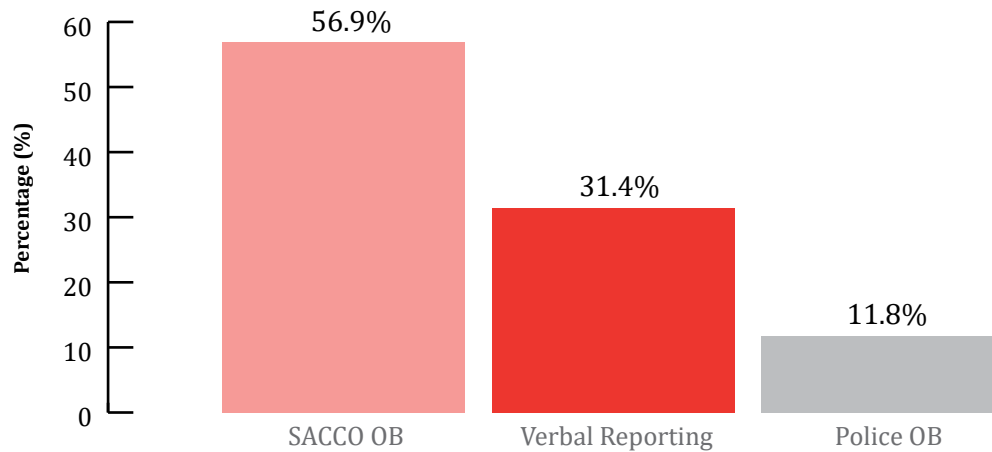
Image: 41:Where Harassments are Recorded

The visualizations above indicate a significant gap in the formal documentation of harassment incidents. Additionally, verbal reporting accounting for 31.4% may lead to more gaps in follow-up due to its informal nature.

Roles of Public Transport Operators in Attracting Women to the Sector

In male dominated sector, public transport operators in Makueni County attract women to join the sector through various ways. They do encourage them (38.1%) with some PTOs quoted saying *"ensure that they understand it's a job like any other and it's safe to operate","encourage them to join driving school to get the skills first, then join the business/probox"*, respectful treatment at 17.9% with PTOs quoted saying *"I ensure that I am polite and encourage them to pursue their dream" ,"handling them in a way that will make them feel comfortable"*, sensitization (9.5%) and training at 7.1% .

Significantly, 27.4% of the PTOs believe they have no role in encouraging women's participation. Some PTOs said *"I don't care", "I have no role", "There's*

nothing I can do because they are scared of the job". This reflects a perception that increasing women's representation is either unnecessary or outside their influence, which could hinder inclusivity efforts.

Overally, increasing participation of women promotes gender balance as well as contributing to a more and inclusive workforce.

Respectful treatment in a work environment and encouragement are positive steps towards a more equitable and inclusive public transport system. However, the belief that some PTOs have no role to play creates awareness gaps.

Initiatives like those organized annually by Newlot SACCO, where PTOs are encouraged to attend Annual General Meetings (AGMs) with their spouses, offer valuable opportunities for women to connect with others, form table banking groups, save, and invest in matatus and other businesses that complement public transport. These efforts help attract more women to the sector.

Trinity SACCO, operating from Nunguni, stands out as a women-owned public transport SACCO. This ownership model showcases the increasing role of women in leadership within the public transport sector, providing a strong example of how women can not only participate but also lead in traditionally male-dominated industries.
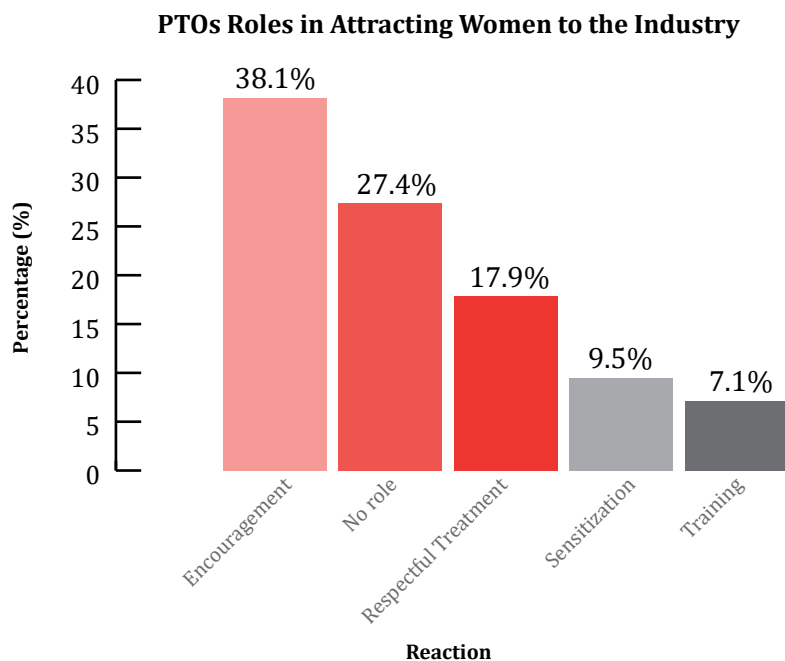
Image: 42:PTOs Roles in Attracting Women to the Industry

Measures Taken by Public Transport Operators in ensuring Children Safety

PTOs including boda boda riders ride at moderate speed to ensure the safety of children while commuting. Other ways through which PTOs ensure the safety

of children include carrying children after receiving parent's consent, closing matatu windows, allocating middle row seats to children, accompanying them home, observing vehicle capacity etc.

Below is a word cloud and a table with the counts of various ways PTOs in Makueni County ensure the safety of children.
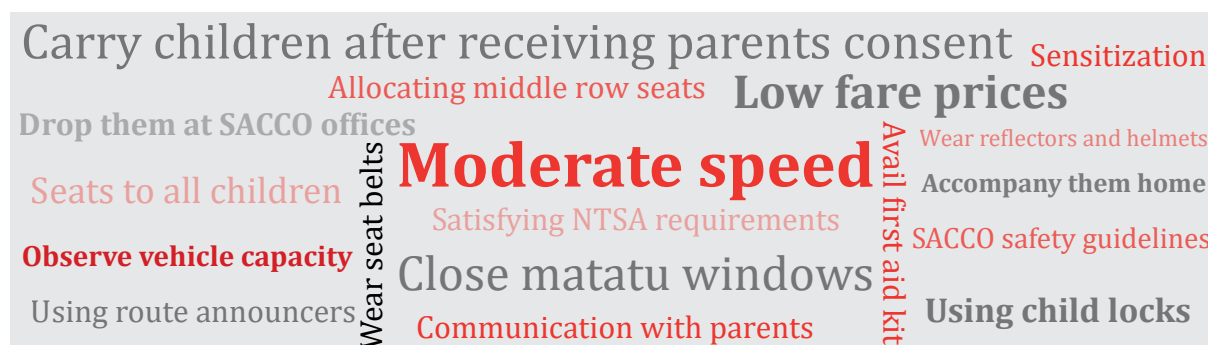
Image: 43:Measures Taken By PTOs in Ensuring Children Safety

Saftey Measure	Count
Moderate speed	30
Seats to all children	7
Accompany them home	6
Allocating middle row seats	5
Communication with parents	4
Wear seat belts	4
Observe vehicle capacity	4
Sensitization	3
Close matatu windows	6
Using child locks	3
Satisfying NTSA requirements	2
Carry children after receiving parents consent	6
Drop them at SACCO offices	4
Low fare prices	2
Avail first aid kit	2
SACCO safety guidelines	3
Wear reflectors and helmets	4
Using route announcers	4

Public Transport SACCOs Efforts Towards Inclusivity in Makueni County Public Transport

Public transport SACCOs bridge the gap of inclusivity by improving customer services (20.3%) at their boarding stations and along the routes, implementing internal policies and guidelines (31.9%), fair fare pricing (14.5%), sensitization

(11.6%), staff training (10.1%), care and respect (5.8%) and accountability and discipline (5.8%).

These efforts reflect SACCOs commitment to fostering a more inclusive public transport in Makueni County. By focusing on policy, pricing, training, and respect, SACCOs are working towards creating a safer and more accessible environment for all commuters, especially those from vulnerable groups.

The horizontal bar chart below shows the distribution of SACCOs efforts by percentages.

SACCO Efforts Towards Inclusivity
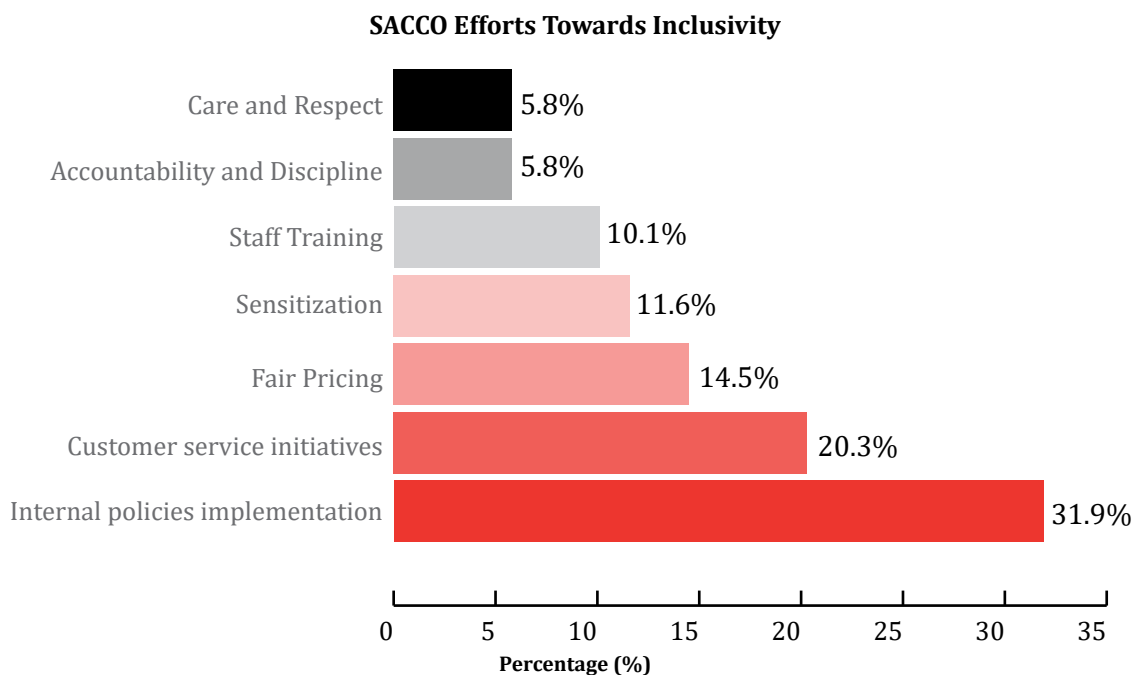
Image: 44:SACCOs Efforts Towards Promoting Inclusivity

SACCOs Role in Promoting Accessibility for Vulnerable Groups

SACCO promotes accessibility by promoting gender inclusion, fair treatment and equity, special assistance, sensitization, following traffic rules etc. Operators were quoted saying *"Ensuring safety and obeying the traffic laws", "encourage colleagues to observe the issues of persons with disability", "giving guidelines as the leader of the group on how to handle vulnerable people", ensuring no discrimination against commuters".*

Operators dedication to ensuring safety, promoting respect for persons with disabilities, and guiding colleagues on how to handle vulnerable commuters underscores the sector's efforts to eliminate discrimination and create an inclusive public transport in Makueni County.

Below is a horizontal bar chart of the roles SACCOs play in promoting accessibility for vulnerable groups.

SACCOs Role in Promoting Accessibility for Vulnerable Groups
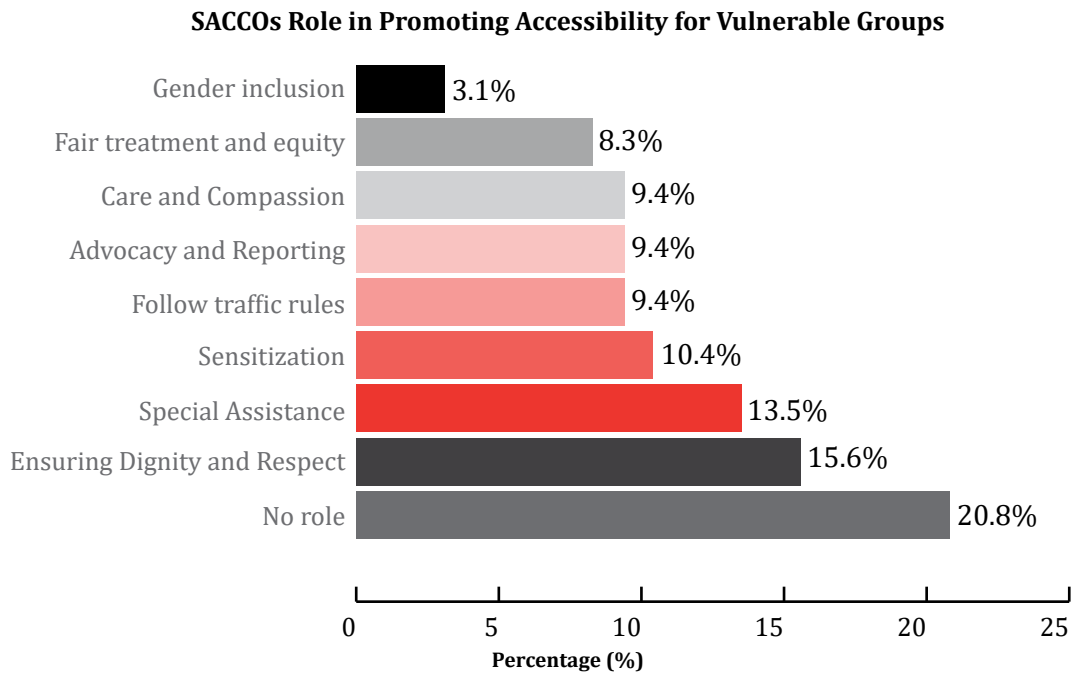
Image: 45: SACCOs Role in Promoting Accessibility for Vulnerable Groups

Objective 4: The Existing Social, Technical and Policy Structures Supporting Inclusivity In Public Transport In Makueni County

Commuters Understanding of Existing Policies

Most women commuters lack the general understanding of the various laws, policies and guidelines that safeguard their rights. Even closer, women commuters do not know guidelines, policies and laws which protect their mobility rights. This knowledge gap leaves them vulnerable, as they are often unaware of the protections available to them while using public transport services. Promoting education and awareness of these legal safeguards is essential for empowering women commuters and ensuring their safety and rights are upheld.

The bar graph below represents these findings.

Commuters Knowledge of Policies and Guidelines Safeguarding Rights of Women
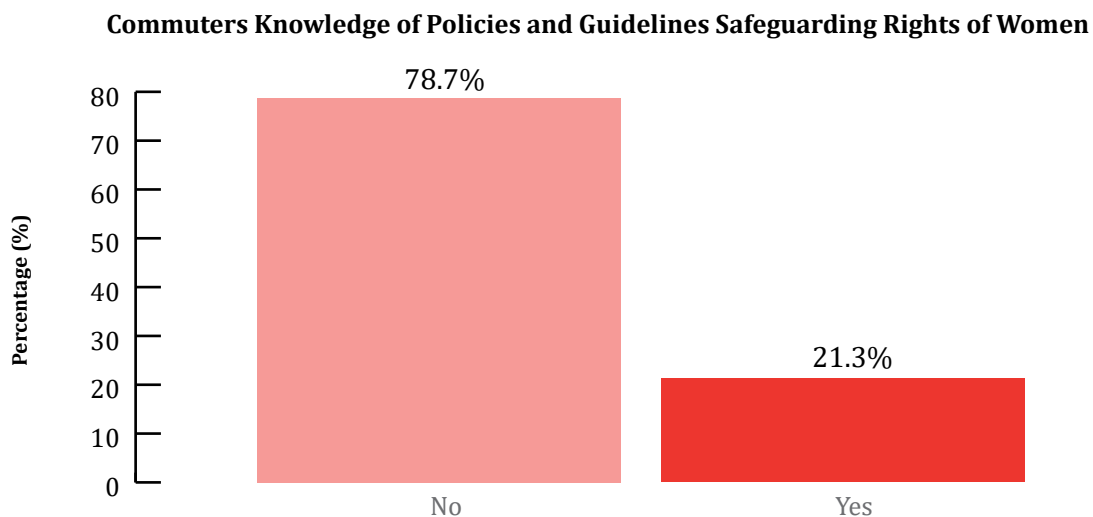
Image: 46:Knowledge of Policies Safeguarding Women's Rights

When commuters were asked about some of the issues that should be addressed in a public transport policy or code of conduct, they mentioned the following; abolishing touts *(makangas)*, respect for vulnerable groups in public transport, enforcing traffic guidelines, fare regularization, leveraging on technology to enhance inclusivity like using audio-visual announcement and intelligent transport systems for traffic management, civic education campaigns on behavioral and mindset change especially towards vulnerable groups and gender inclusion in public transport including creating a safe and accommodative environment for women workers.

Organizations that support vulnerable groups in Makueni County

Table 4:Organizations Supporting Vulnerable Groups in Makueni County

| Organization	Intervention area
Emali Dedicated Children Agency	Education, water, sanitation and hygiene, food security and livelihoods, child protection, health and nutrition
Youth for Sustainable Development Makueni Chapter	Governance, Food systems, Health and well being, education.
Jumuisha Initiative	Education, Climate Resilience and Community Development
Mobilization Agency for Paralegal Communities.	Democracy, good governance, advocacy, public engagement.
Makueni care	Healthcare
Federation of Women Lawyers	Legal Services
Mutono Community Based Organization	Child Protection
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Social Justice

Stakeholders Supporting Inclusivity in Makueni County Public Transport

▸ **Religious leaders** play a crucial role in promoting inclusivity by advising congregants on commuter-friendly vehicles and advocating for better transport conditions.

▸ **National Police Service**- Traffic Department leverage on national holidays to conduct road safety awareness campaigns. National holidays, such as public celebrations or commemorations, tend to attract large crowds, providing an ideal platform for reaching a broader audience with key road safety messages.

▸ **Makueni SGBV Policy**- County initiated gender-based violence Sensitization programs of anti-SGBV champions in every ward for capacity building on primary prevention and response to SGBV within the county.

- **The Government of Makueni County Vision 2025,** a long term development blueprint, talks about the development of the County Urban Transport Master Plan which was to guide the development of and management of urban transport systems within Makueni highlighting the importance of integrated planning, social inclusion, efficiency and accessibility and safety and security.

- **Agroforestry initiatives** by some CSOs in Kibwezi West. This initiative helps in environmental conservation helping in reducing the effects of floods which is prone in Makueni County. Gradually, helping in mitigating safety issues around crossing rivers and bridges especially for schooling going children.

- **Petitioning the County Government of Makueni** for road naming, erection of speed bumps and ensuring children safety while they are using the roads.

Challenges in implementing existing Social, Technical and Policy Structures Makueni County Public Transport (External Departments)

These are the findings from key informants interviews from external departments and organizations such as religious leaders, Kenya Urban roads Authority, Kenya Rural Roads Authority, National Council for Persons with Disabilities,National Transport and Safety Authority, National Gender and Equality Commission,NGEC, SACCO Managers and National Police Service Traffic Department.

- **Harassment Prevalence in Makueni County Public Transport which has been compounded by increase in number of unregistered SACCOs and the lack of effective reporting mechanisms;** These unregistered SACCOs often operate outside the formal regulatory guidelines, making it harder to enforce laws, policies, and codes of conduct that protect vulnerable commuters, like women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

- **Underreporting because of over reliance on drivers to report harassment cases;** In many instances, the responsibility of documenting and reporting harassment falls on the drivers, rather than the victims.

- **Persistent feeling of being less valuable and worthy among the vulnerable groups** especially persons with disabilities leading to a reluctance to report incidents of harassment or discrimination.

- **Inadequate financing is a major barrier to implementing inclusive policies and infrastructure improvements;** Without sufficient funds, it becomes difficult for county government and transport authorities to develop and maintain infrastructure that accommodates the needs of vulnerable groups.

Challenges in implementing existing Social, Technical and Policy Makueni County Public Transport (Internal Departments)

These are the findings from key informants interviews from external departments and organizations such the departments of gender, infrastructure and public works, cooperatives, trade, lands, urban planning and climate change and education.

▶ **Inadequate Road Networks;** Inadequate road networks limit the accessibility of many public transport. This hinders commuters' movement from one area to another and creates operational difficulties for public transport vehicles in Makueni County.

▶ **Vandalism;** acts of vandalism such as damaging the road infrastructures and other line utilities such as power lines, communication lines, sewer lines especially during demonstrations, results in costly repairs which degrades the overall quality of transport services.

▶ **Encroachment;** This results from unauthorized structures infringing on road reserves. Encroachment often leads to traffic congestion, increases the risk of accidents, and makes it more difficult to implement road improvements.

▶ **Non-Inclusive Vehicle Designs, surveillance and reporting mechanisms;** Most public transport vehicles and other infrastructures are not designed with inclusivity in mind. These include lack of essential features like ramps, spaces for wheelchair users, low floor vehicles, handrails making it difficult to travel safely and comfortably. However, Makueni County is making efforts towards bridging this gap for example the provision of ramps in Nunguni bus park toilet and ramps in government departmental offices.

▶ **Budgetary constraints;** Inadequate financing is a major constraint in implementing policies and projects aimed at improving public transport infrastructure and safety.

▶ **Poor interdepartmental collaboration especially for departments with overlapping responsibilities;** public transport being a multifaceted sector involves collaboration with different government agencies, business owners, representatives of community and other relevant stakeholders. This manifests itself in lack of communication, duplication of efforts and programs and overall gaps in service delivery. Strengthening interdepartmental collaboration is crucial for ensuring that departments with overlapping responsibilities work together efficiently, share resources, and achieve common objectives. This will result in improved accessibility and inclusivity for people in public transport especially for the vulnerable groups.

Gaps in Implementation of Existing Policies in Makueni Public Transport

- **The Makueni County Transport Policy 2022,** yet to be implemented and up for review in 2024 is an internal document meant to improve transport efficiency and fostering socio economic development of Makueni County.

- **Makueni County Sexual Harassment at workplace policy** which endeavors to create a working environment free from sexual harassment only addresses harassment issues arising from county staffs. No address mechanisms or policy for workplace harassment outside county departments.

- **Makueni County Gender Policy 2020**-purposed to create a framework for streamlining equal and equitable involvement of men and women in Makueni County so as to promote inclusive socio-economic development. This is yet to be implemented.

Overall, there is a significant gap between the development of policies and their enforcement. Without proper implementation and monitoring, existing policies and guidelines fail to create the intended impact on the safety and accessibility of public transport for vulnerable groups.

5

RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The following evidence-based recommendations aim to promote a more inclusive, accessible and equitable public transport system in Makueni County. These recommendations highlight the importance of interdepartmental collaboration, strategic investment in both hard and soft infrastructure, and continuous civic education campaigns. To ensure successful implementation, the recommendations have been organized according to the key departments responsible for advancing inclusivity in the public transport system in Makueni County. With public transport being a multifaceted sector, the recommendations provided will require strong collaboration among various stakeholders to bring them to life and create an inclusive, accessible and equitable public transport in Makueni County.

1. **General Recommendations**

   ▶ **Civic Education campaigns, community workshops** on behavioral and attitude change towards vulnerable commuters. This can be done through information campaigns in various bus stations and other transport hubs, advocacy campaigns through advocacy messages in matatus, bus stops and bus stations, school and youth engagements on the importance of inclusivity in public transport systems, workshops and forums, chief barazas and partnerships with CSOs.

   ▶ **Motorist Sensitization;** Educate motorists about the importance of yielding to pedestrians, especially children, at pedestrian crossings.

▶ **Improving Stakeholder Collaboration;** Foster stronger collaboration between government departments, transport authorities, and community stakeholders to create a unified approach to addressing the challenges in public transport.

▶ **Implementation of existing policies** supporting accessibility and inclusivity in public transport.

▶ **Implementation of policies that promote equality and non-discrimination through the implementation of the National Gender & Development Policy and the County Gender Policy** focusing on the ⅔ gender rule, affirmative action and training for PTO on gender mainstreaming to enhance the contribution of women in the public transport workforce. There is also a need to fully implement the Disability Policy(2003), Employment Act (2007), the Sexual Offences Act(2006) and the Children Act (2022), frameworks that safeguard the rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

▶ **Inclusion** of vulnerable groups in **decision making processes** related to public transport by sending invitations to accessible public participation forums and other community engagements.

2. Government of Makueni County

Here are the recommendations for the Government of Makueni County through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Public Works and Energy;

▶ **Adoption of a public transport code of conduct and public transport policy** outlining the guiding principles and ethical standards of inclusive public transport within Makueni County.

▶ **In line with the Government of Makueni County Vision 2025,** develop a county urban transport master plan to guide the development and management of urban transport systems within Makueni, highlighting the importance of integrated planning, social inclusion, efficiency and accessibility, and safety and security.

▶ **Implement increased security measures, such as lighting, surveillance cameras, and dedicated support services,** at transport hubs to protect vulnerable passengers from harassment and violence.

▶ **Develop and implement a sectoral plan for public transport in Makueni County,** focusing on inclusive infrastructure, including designated lanes for non-motorized transport (NMT) and pedestrian walkways.

▶ **Reintroduce SACCO awards competitions** to incentivize safety and good service delivery in public transport.

▶ **Broader responsibilities for enforcement officers** beyond revenue collection, such as ensuring road safety, reporting overloading, and addressing misconduct by public transport operators.

▶ Through the department of education, **introduce practical lessons on road safety in schools** implemented under the supervision of a teacher(s).

▶ Work jointly with public transport SACCOs to set up **consistent and affordable fare** rates for persons with disabilities who use public transport services.

3. **National Council for Persons With Disabilities**

▶ In collaboration with public transport SACCOs, offer **disability mainstreaming** in public transport operations and management.

▶ **Fasttrack** provision of assistive devices to applicants to better address their mobility needs.

▶ **Advocate** for disability friendly public transport system in Makueni County.

> Through disability mainstreaming department, **lobby** for budget allocation to help achieve its objectives.

4. Schools

> **Introduction of 'walking school bus'** who is typically one or two adults helping children cross busy urban roads in the morning and when they leave school.

> Implement <u>Safety Standards Manual-Schools as Safe Zones</u>[12] requirements under transport strategies for safe school zone

> Implement practical lessons on road safety; including road safety animations.

> **Acquisition and implementation** of safe school buses in partnerships with Government of Makueni County and other stakeholders.

> The school buses to clearly display on the outside the name, address and telephone number of the school.

> **Advocate** for safe school zones as provided for in the <u>safety standards manual for schools in Kenya</u>

5. National Transport and Safety Authority

> **Reviving Usalama Barabarani Program**- Reflecting bag covers for school-going children for schools located along major highways.

> **Enforcing traffic guidelines** e.g installing speed detectors on all highways and urban roads to ensure compliance with traffic guidelines, scale up Intelligent Transport System to monitor traffic in all built up/ urban areas areas in Makueni County, strengthening law enforcement capacity through trainings on inclusivity, targeted enforcement programs to boda boda riders to ensure compliance such as helmet wear, licensing and adherence to traffic rules.

6. National Police Service-Traffic Department

> **Promotion of anonymous reporting** at designated points in bus stations and NPS offices as well as a functioning hotline dedicated for sexual harassment incidents.

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12 Schools as safe zone- A legally designated, identifiable physical space around the school that is a conducive environment for school children's safety.

▶ **Enforcing traffic guidelines, e.g., Targeted enforcement programs for boda boda riders to ensure compliance, such as helmet wear, licensing,** and adherence to traffic rules.

▶ Establishing and operationalizing **gender desks** in police stations.

▶ Strengthening law enforcement capacity through training on inclusivity in public transport.

7. Civil Society Organizations

▶ **Agroforestry initiatives** to help mitigate the impacts of floods and river erosion.

▶ **Collaborate** with public transport stakeholders on projects to improve accessibility and inclusivity in public transport, such as joint training programs or community outreach initiatives.

▶ Involve other public transport stakeholders in your **calendar of activities** to offer technical support to vulnerable and marginalized rural areas on inclusive public transport**.**

8. Kenya Urban Roads Authority & Kenya Rural Roads Authority

▶ In collaboration with key stakeholders;

▶ **Install traffic calming elements** around school zones (tabletop crossings, speed limit signs, school zone signs.

▶ **Include accessibility signs** where pedestrian crossings are located.

▶ **Pedestrian Crossing Maintenance,** especially next to schools and in urban areas

▶ **Inclusive Design:** Adopt universal design principles for public transport vehicles and infrastructure. Refer to the Street Design Manual for Urban

Areas in Kenya, which aims to mainstream best-practice street designs that support sustainable modes of transport and improve safety for vulnerable road users through the promotion of universal access designs, gender-sensitive designs, and children's safety streets.

9. **Public Transport SACCOs**

▸ **Training for Public Transport Operators (PTOs):** In collaboration with other key stakeholders, provide mandatory sensitivity training for drivers, conductors, SACCO clerks, stage attendants on how to treat vulnerable groups with respect. Topics on identifying kidnappers and child traffickers in public transport, gender sensitivity, disability awareness, and empathy can be addressed through interactive workshops led by experts in these fields.

▸ Ensure that Public Transport **SACCO guidelines** are in place and implement them effectively.

▸ Display of **fare charts** with destinations in matatus and bus stations.

▸ Gradual transition to **accessible vehicles** with low-floor, environmentally friendly and priority seating for vulnerable groups.

▸ Liaise with other stakeholders on programs to **attract, retain and advance** women in public transport operations.

▸ Labeling **priority seats** for passengers with disabilities and other vulnerable groups like older persons, expectant women, and those who are ailing.

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Notes

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