

# World Bank's new toolkit on making urban transport better for Indian women

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**In news**— The World Bank launched a “Toolkit on Enabling Gender Responsive Urban Mobility and Public Spaces in India” recently.

## **About the toolkit-**

- It aims to suggest ways to make public transport in Indian cities more inclusive of women's travelling requirements.
- The toolkit emphasises on the importance of integrating a gender lens in transport policies and infrastructure, making various recommendations on interventions that can help make urban transport safer, especially for women.
- It brings together 50 case studies of best practices and efforts from across the world, along with a special inculcation of the Indian context.
- It contains practical tools that can inform a wide set of policymakers as well as private or community-based organisations.

## **Four pillared approach-**

The World Bank suggested a four-pillared approach to help address prevailing issues in urban transport for women. They are:

### **1st approach-**

- There has to be greater effort made to understand the on-ground situation with a gender lens.
- Gender blind planning and infrastructure development leaves major gaps that specifically impact women but are

often not overtly visible.

- The first step to addressing these gaps is to better identify what they are.
- Any new transport policy or infrastructure development must be preceded by an honest evaluation of issues concerning women.

## **2nd approach-**

- Once prevailing issues are identified, policies and development plans must reflect the concerns of women.
- For this to happen, there must be more women in key institutions in charge of decision making. Until such time women are not adequately represented, their needs are always likely to be secondary.
- Thus key to actually inculcating a gender lens in public transport planning and development is involving and giving authority to more women stakeholders in the first place.

## **3rd approach-**

- The toolkit emphasises on building gender sensitivity and awareness among service providers through mandatory programmes and community action.
- Everyone from the bus conductor to local beat constables must be aware of concerns that women have and how to address them.

## **4th approach-**

- It says that investment has to be made in better infrastructure and services with a focus on women-friendly design.
- While increasing services and strengthening infrastructure is a good idea in general, if such development is made from a specific gender lens, it is far more useful.
- For example, while creating new bus stops is good, it

would be even better if these bus stops were designed to be level with the floors of buses, adequate lighting, SOS buttons, and well-maintained washrooms.