

Accessibility

Definitions

The ease of reaching destinations. The degree of ease with which it is possible to reach a certain location from other locations. One aspect of accessibility specifically concerns people with reduced mobility, disabled people, elderly people, families with young children, and the young children themselves: all of whom should have easy access to urban transport services and the right of access to facilities and services.

Context and Policies

Accessibility planning aims to ensure that destinations remain within easy reach and seeks to maintain the viability of diverse and plentiful transport choices, particularly non-motorised transport, public transport and paratransit. Accessibility is evaluated based on the time, money, degree of comfort and risk required to reach destinations (or "opportunities"). Individuals often think of it as convenience, that is, the ease with which they can reach what they want.

Improving accessibility for the disabled

If international targets on poverty reduction are to be reached then efforts must be made to reduce the isolation of disabled people. Improving their mobility and physical access to livelihood opportunities needs to be a priority. Disability and poverty are closely linked in many developing countries: for example, people with disabilities can suffer from poorer schooling and low levels of employment often as a result of a lack of access made worse by mobility issues.

Issues

Accessibility is difficult to measure because it is affected by the quality of various transport modes and land use factors (for example, employment accessibility must take into account the number of suitable jobs residents can reach within a reasonable commute time, by travel options that are adequately comfortable, affordable and safe).

Actions

Undertaking 'accessibility audits' identifies barriers to accessibility. Audits can be carried out through GIS-based mapping of socio-demographic information, data on deprivation and car availability in relation to public transport routes and the location of services; along with consultation with local communities and liaison with frontline professionals and providers of services.

Accessibility resource appraisals identify the best value-for-money solutions for tackling accessibility barriers. Accessibility Plans set out how to improve access to employment, learning, health care, food shops and other services of local importance, particularly for disadvantaged groups and areas.



Resources

Documents

- **Brazil Accessible: The Brazilian Urban Accessibility Program of the Ministry of Cities**, 2006, Renato Boareto, Ministry of Cities (Brazil)
- **Cities, Mobility and Accessibility: A Summary of the 4th International Conference on Future Urban Transport**, 2009, Pia Carlson, Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (Sweden)
- **Enhancing the mobility of disabled people**, 2004, Christo Venter, Joanne Sentinella, Tom Rickert, David Maunder and Anand Venkatesh, Overseas Road Note 21, TRL Limited (UK)
- **Making the Connections: Final Report on Transport and Social Exclusion**, 2003, Social Exclusion Unit, London (UK)
- **Urban Design and Environmental Management Implications of Corridors**, 2003, G. Jordaan, Proceedings of the 22nd Southern African Transport Conference, Pretoria (South Africa)
- **Urban Transport Policy as if People and the Environment Mattered: Pedestrian Accessibility the First Step**, Madhav G Badami, McGill University (Canada)

Presentations

- **Accessibility and Social Inclusion in India**, 2006, Lalita Sen, Texas Southern University (USA)
- **Structuring Urban Travel Demand**, 2007, H.M. Shivanand Swamy, CEPT University, Ahmedabad (India)

Recommended Links

- **Accessibility planning (UK)**

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For further information

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