

An Asian perspective of safe accessibility for all in rural transport and rural transport infrastructure



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Structure of the presentation

1. Background and mobility and safety issues of the disabled and the elderly
2. Is Rural Transport Infrastructure safe for the disabled and the elderly?
3. Addressing the issues of safe mobility in inclusive transport.

Rationale



- People with Disabilities (PwD) constitute around 10 per cent of the world's population i.e. 650 million (World Bank) and are one of the most disadvantaged groups.
- 80 per cent of the disabled population lives in developing countries and they are among the poorest of the poor (UNDP)
- PwD face broad exclusion from education, economic activities, health care, social and political life, all of which contribute to them being among the poorest.
- Reasons for their exclusion are many but accessibility in terms of affordable and disabled-friendly transport is a crucial issue.

Rationale Continued...



In the rural context of developing countries:

- There is a limited availability of conventional transport facilities and paved roads
- Hence, the rural communities are compelled to use Prara-transit modes/Intermediate Means of Transport mostly packed to capacity with minimum safety concerns of the passengers.
- A study carried out in India by Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) under the IFRTD Networked Research on Mobility & Health (access to health) has revealed that >>>

Accessible Transport and Health of Persons with Disability in Rural Areas of India”

(see www.mobilityandhealth.org)



- Physical inaccessibility of transport facilities
- people with locomotor disabilities, rarely travel or move out of their houses and are thus, excluded from social and employment opportunities among others.
- The study demonstrated that people with disabilities do not travel not only due to physical inaccessibility of transport facilities, but also, due to existing negative attitudes of transport operators.
- Percentage of the elderly population (over 60 yrs) in Sri Lanka will be 30% of the total population by 2020.

The Result is...



- PwD, especially, disabled women cannot become a part of the country's productive labour force and exercise their rights.
- This disadvantage would also affect their children's education, economic opportunities, and employment prospects.
- 90 per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school (UNESCO)
- Generations will be affected by this exclusion as the disadvantage passes from parents to their children.
- Additionally an estimated 386 million of the world's working-age people are disabled (ILO) making unemployment among the disabled as high as 80 per cent in some countries

Issues of Rural Infrastructure



- The engineering designs of rural roads, foot and trail bridges, bus stops, railway stations etc have not considered the needs of the PwD and the elderly.
- Footpaths are dangerous during rainy season as they become slippery. They will cause fatal injuries such as spinal chord injuries for those who carry loads on their heads and back. Local authorities haven't looked in to these aspects of rural infrastructure at all.
- PwDs and persons who assist them, living in rural areas with limited accessibility face severe difficulties.

Lack of Transport services



Nepal



Issues in Pictures



Sri Lanka



Marasinghe Sri Lanka

Issues in Pictures



India



Courtesy – Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) South Asia

Issues in Pictures

Badly maintained roads



Nepal



Rural Transport services



- Disabled and elderly friendly inclusive transport services are not available in the developing countries even with the conventional transport modes like buses and trains.
- In the rural context either transport services are not available or will have alternatives such as IMTs. These IMTs are not safe even for normal passengers and Pwd and the elderly cannot travel in them.
- Most modes of transport do not have inclusive access and appropriate seating arrangements for PwD making them really unsafe and their disability may lead to further complications.

Issues in Pictures

Source of pictures: Kit Mitchell



Cuba



Mozambique



Thailand



Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa

Issues in Pictures



Nepal



Bangladesh



India

Issues in Pictures

Source of pictures: Kit Mitchell



Bus entrances are not easy for passengers

Zimbabwe

Issues in Pictures



Cuba

Courtesy Kit Mitchell

Issues in Pictures



India

Courtesy – Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) South Asia

Issues in Pictures



India



Courtesy – Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) South Asia

Lack of Transport services



Nepal

What needs to be done



Infrastructure

- Designs of roads, foot bridges and other transport infrastructure should incorporate the needs of PwD and the elderly.
- Improvements done and awareness made on safety at local level administrations. (e.g. Head loading on slippery slopes, alternative local invention of foot bridges in the absence of technical knowledge etc).
- Work out a sustainable road maintenance system at local levels.
- Use of Road signs and follow accepted guidelines to provide inclusiveness to transport infrastructure at provincial and rural levels.
- Alternative infrastructure for loading, unloading of passengers with disability at bus stops and railway stations

Alternatives



Gravity Ropeways in Nepal

Alternatives



Trail Bridges in Nepal

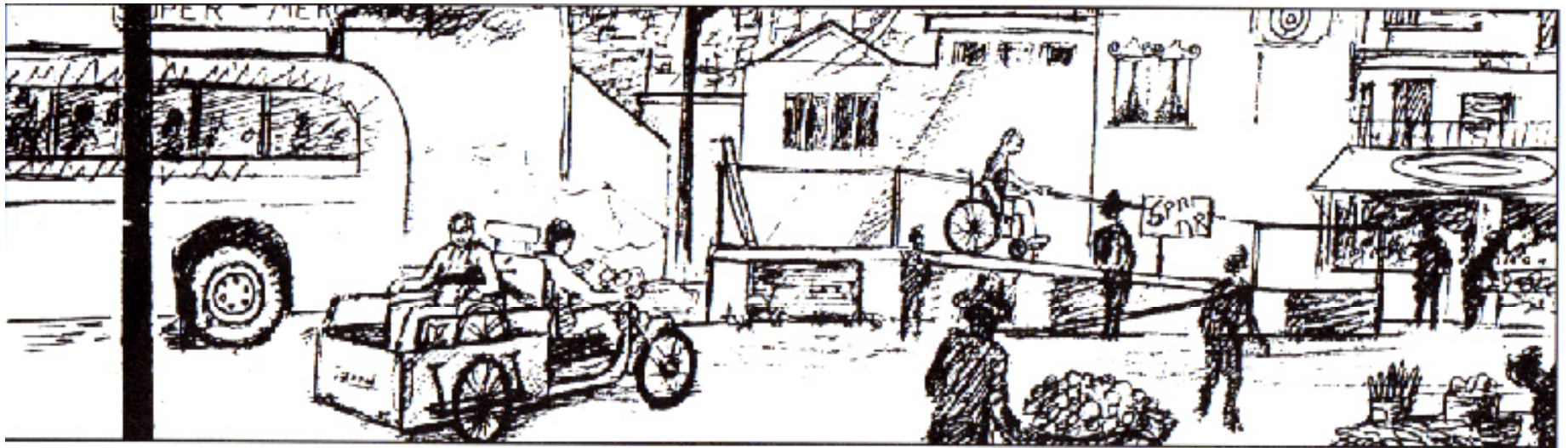
Alternatives



Disabled access friendly foot bridge – Galana River Bridge – Kenya

Courtesy: Chris Rollins-CEB Engineering <http://bridgingthegapafrika.org/galana/>

Alternatives



Artist's conception of a three-wheeled paratransit vehicle connecting with an accessible "key site" bus stop.

Courtesy Access Exchange International (AEI)

What needs to be done



Transport services

- Rural Transport Services in developing countries are not at all safe due to heavy demand and bad designs.
- Use of alternative modes of transport (Local inventions) do not consider safety factors but to provide a mode of transport.
- Usually these modes are not legally registered and not confirming to existing safety standards of the countries.
- Change of attitudes of Transport service providers towards the PwD.
- Fix support equipment for the PwD and elderly passengers inside the vehicles

Alternatives



Disabled friendly hand rail inside a tuk tuk – India –

Courtesy LCD South Asia

Alternatives



**Specially designed rickshaw for easy wheel chair loading
- India.**

Courtesy LCD South Asia

Alternatives



Ramp for Bus - Photo: Access Exchange International (AEI)

Alternatives



This test in South Africa of a prototype platform for use at key sites shows an alternative approach to access for wheelchair users

In this version, the bridge piece is mounted under the platform and put into place by the bus driver



photos courtesy of DFID (UK) and CSIR Transportek (South Africa).



As If They Were
YOUR FAMILY



Let's Respect Seniors,
Persons with Disabilities and
all Our Passengers



Thank you

