

# Gender- and Income-Specific Inequalities in Accessing Mobility: A Comparative Study of Kenya and Laos

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## Background

- Mobility determines access to education, healthcare, and employment. Mobility inequalities reinforce wider social exclusion and health disparities.
- Globally, **women and low-income groups** travel shorter distances, face safety risks, and spend more time commuting.
- This study compares **Kenya and Laos**, two culturally distinct countries, to determine which mobility barriers are **structural** (universal) and which are **context-specific**.

### Key Question:

How do gender and income shape access to mobility in Kenya and Laos?

## Methods

- **Laos:** 547 respondents (Nov 2024–Jan 2025)
- **Kenya:** 1,016 respondents (Mar–Jun 2023)
- Both surveys examined **gender, income, licence & vehicle ownership, travel patterns, and attitudes**.
- Statistical comparisons used **Z-tests and T-tests**; results visualised as percentages for comparability.
- AI tools supported clarity and code generation only; all analysis and interpretation by the author.



Figure 1: Process Diagram

## Results

### 1. Licence & Vehicle Access

- Men more likely to hold licences in both countries
- Income gap significant, especially in Kenya  
**Low-income women = least mobile group in both contexts**

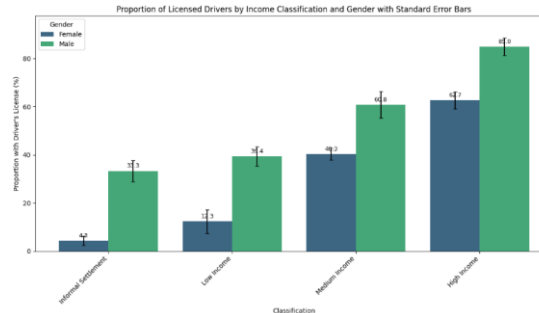


Figure 2: Kenya Gender-Income Licence Status

### 2. Travel Distance & Speed

- Women and low-income groups travel **shorter distances at slower speeds**  
**Structural barriers in Kenya; social/time-role constraints in Laos**

### 3. Safety & Cost Perceptions

- Kenya: women **spend more on taxis** due to safety concerns
- EV awareness and perceived suitability **lower among women and low-income respondents** in both countries  
**Safety & affordability drive choices more than preference**

Gender	Public transport unsafe (Agree/Strongly agree)	Public transport unsafe (Disagree/Strongly disagree)
Male	1002.24	1077.50
Female	1361.66	954.03

Figure 3: Kenya Monthly Taxi Cost by Gender and Public Transport Safety

## Discussion

- Across both contexts, **women and low-income groups remain least mobile**.
- **Kenya:** Inequalities sharper; weak public transport and safety concerns restrict women and poorer groups.
- **Laos:** Motorcycles mitigate income barriers but reinforce dependence on less safe modes.
- **Intersectionality:** *Low-income women* experience the greatest disadvantage.  
**Mobility inequality is both a transport and a social justice issue.**

## Policy recommendations

- **Kenya** – improve safety, reliability + affordability of public transport; harassment monitoring; targeted license schemes (low-income women); expand parking and infrastructure.
- **Laos** – inclusive public transport options; women's licence schemes; improve rural mobility infrastructure
- **Cross-country** – subsidise low-income access to mobility; promote EV awareness; integrate mobility into health, education, and social inclusion policy agendas

## Conclusion

- Mobility is a **gateway to opportunity**.
- Addressing gendered and income-based transport inequalities is essential for equitable access to health, education, and employment.
- **Without inclusive mobility, social equity and sustainable development remain out of reach.**