



INVITATION TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN WRITING A THINK PIECE

ON GENDER-INFORMED MOBILITY PLANNING AND POLICY: STATUS, BARRIERS, WAYS FORWARD

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION
15 MAY 2022.

The Volvo Research and Educational Foundations (VREF) programme on “Mobility and Access in African cities” (MAC) is currently providing opportunities for researchers at SSA universities to write short “think pieces” on specific themes that have strong relevance for achieving sustainable mobility and equitable access in African cities. In 2021 VREF commissioned two think pieces within the MAC programme, see www.vref.se.

At this time, VREF would like to commission a scholar who is based at a SSA university to write a think piece on the theme of “Gender-informed mobility planning, governance and policy in African cities: status, barriers, ways forward.” Through this invitation, VREF welcomes expressions of interest (EoI) for a commissioned work on this theme.

Deadline for submission of an EoI is 15 May 2022.

1 . BACKGROUND , PROBLEM FRAMING

An important policy goal in many Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) cities is to provide equitable access to safe, affordable and accessible transport systems for all user groups, including women. Recent research has, however, shown the multiple challenges that heterogeneous groups of women (especially poor women) often face in their everyday travel, including limited accessibility, inadequate infrastructure, and sexual harassment or other safety issues. Some studies have also described how gender-informed transport planning and policy could potentially be shaped, as well as indicated concrete examples of “best practice” in urban planning and policy processes in which gender issues are explicitly addressed.

Many urban transport systems in SSA continue, however, to be planned and configured in ways that are inadequate, exclusionary or discriminatory from a gender perspective. In many areas, transport policies, plans and programs do not sufficiently address the specific travel patterns and needs of many women users, nor the problems that poor women, in particular, face in their everyday travel. Among else, it has been pointed out that many infrastructural decisions are made solely on the basis of efficiency goals, while other important dimensions such as gender are often overlooked.

It is clear that there remain many barriers to achieving inclusive, gender-informed policy and planning for urban mobility in African cities. There is a need for more in-depth understanding of factors that contribute to the current situation in the form of e.g. traditional planning cultures and processes that do not include gender considerations, lack of understanding of gender issues among urban planners and decision-makers, insufficient political commitment to strengthen gender-informed infrastructural planning, or lack of resources.

Thus VREF would like to gain more in-depth knowledge, perspectives and reflections on these and related issues by commissioning a "think piece" in this area within the framework of its "Mobility and Access in African Cities" (MAC) programme.



2. WHAT IS A "THINK PIECE" ?

By "think piece" is meant a text in which the researcher (or a small team of researchers) not only discusses state-of-the-art research, and societal challenges and opportunities within a specific area, but also reflects upon their implications, based on her/his/their own research expertise, experiences and perspectives. Rather than carrying out new empirical work, the researcher/s should focus on providing an open and informed discussion of the issue(s) at hand, where the emphasis is more on reflective, thoughtful, exploratory analysis than is the case with "traditional" scientific texts. The researcher/s also has considerable scope for identifying the issues that she/he/they will discuss. The think piece can be relatively short (20-40 pages) and should be accessible to non-experts in the field. The ambition is that each "think piece" will stimulate further debate and explorations among researchers, students, practitioners and other stakeholders with interests in urban mobility and access.



3 . CURRENT THINK PIECE - FOCUS

The overall purpose and scope of the proposed "think piece" on gender-oriented urban mobility planning and governance in SSA urban areas is:

- to describe the current situation ("status today") with regard to **gender-informed planning and policy processes within specific urban contexts in SSA**, i.e. to discuss the extent to which gender considerations are currently included in transport policy and projects;
- to reflect on barriers or problems that might influence the capacity to include, **institutionalize and sustain gender dimensions in transport infrastructural plans, policies and projects**;
- to suggest possible "ways forward" toward **building greater understanding of gender issues in transport planning and policy**, as well as **strengthening planning processes, institutional structures** and approaches toward more **gender-inclusive planning and policy in urban mobility**.

The "think piece" might focus on analysis and reflection on the ways in which gender issues have been handled in concrete infrastructural projects in SSA cities; research-based reflections on how urban planners and decision-makers in transport infrastructures handle gender issues in their everyday practice; reflections on the results of comparative studies in these areas; thoughts on how to build greater understanding and consideration of gender issues in transport policy and planning.

It is envisioned that the current "think piece" on gender-informed transport planning and governance in SSA cities will primarily have a qualitative orientation. The results of the work will be published by VREF within its "Mobility and Access in African Cities" programme, and be launched at an online event (such as a MAC Research Forum.)



4. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST - GUIDELINES

VREF invites scholars who are based at universities in SSA to submit an expression of interest for a commissioned think piece on “Gender-informed mobility planning, governance and policy in African cities: status, barriers, ways forward” as described above. Scholars are encouraged to develop and describe an idea for the think piece with a focus and content that reflects their own research perspectives and results within the general framework of this invitation.

VREF is flexible with regard to the length of the commissioned work but envisions that the work will result in a think piece of approximately 20-40 pages, depending upon the scope of the work. VREF will fund 1-2 think pieces in this area, each with a maximum budget of 50,000 SEK (approx. 4,800 Euros).

The think piece may be authored by single researchers or small teams of researchers.

The expression of interest (maximum 2 pages excluding appendices) should briefly describe the following about the proposed think piece:

- › Background and framing (e.g. including relevant previous research that informs the work); context and challenges of the issues to be addressed;
- › Purpose and scope;
- › Approach (e.g. working methods and program of work that will be applied);
- › Expected outcome, including contributions to new knowledge;
- › Participating scholars (work leader and possible other scholars);
- › Appendices: cv’s of participating scholar (s)



5. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Expressions of interest should be submitted by e-mail to secretariat@vref.se and received no later than 15 May 2022.

VREF will inform all applicants on the outcome of the process before 15 June 2022.