



ADDRESSING TRANSPORT INEQUALITIES IN GLOBAL SOUTH CITIES



19 - 21 May 2026

The University of Manchester

Conference Report

INTRODUCTION

Context

Transport shapes access to jobs, education, healthcare and opportunities but too often the voices of those most affected by transport disadvantage are missing from the decisions that matter. Addressing Transport Inequalities in Global South Cities set out to address this challenge.

The International Network for Transport and Accessibility in Low Income Communities (INTALInC) provides evidence to ensure that everyone has the right to affordable, safe, clean and reliable mobility resources, with a particular focus on meeting the accessibility needs of low income, urban populations in the global south. Over the last 10 years, INTALInC has developed a substantial body of research and a global community of researchers, policymakers, planners, and civil society organisation working on these issues.

Urban mobility for many low-income people is characterised by exclusion and inequality. As cities grow, particularly within urban and peri-urban settlements, accessibility is increasingly constrained by underdeveloped mobility options that exacerbate poverty. New transport infrastructure is too often defined and instigated by top-down policymaking, driven by international funding priorities and the interests of urban elites, leaving marginalised groups with little influence over the decisions shaping their everyday mobilities.

Despite growing policy recognition of these issues, opportunities for academic debate, cross-regional learning and dialogue with



Photo: INTALInC field trip, Cape Coast 2017

urban policymakers remain limited. The conference, **Addressing Transport Inequalities in Global South Cities**, was convened to address this gap, bringing together members of INTALInC's global network with the support of the University of Manchester Hallsworth Conference Fund, the Volvo Research and Education Foundations (VREF), the Research England International Science Partnership Fund, the University of Cape Town, Columbia University Climate School, the Partnership for Research on Informal and Shared Mobility, Walk21, the University of York, Stockholm Environment Institute, Norwegian Centre for Transport Research, UCL and the University of Western England.

Context

Conference aims

Addressing Transport Inequalities in Global South Cities aimed to:

- Explore how emerging geopolitical influences and development policies affect the mobility choices of marginalised populations in global south cities, including how shifting priorities in financial aid and development investment might shape the future of everyday mobilities.
- Bridge the gap between high level policy frameworks and the everyday mobilities of marginalised communities, ensuring policy interventions are responsive to lived experiences.
- Examine how bottom-up mobility research can be embedded in policy interventions that prioritise people-centred, accessibility-focused solutions, including how alliances between research, policy and civil society can support grassroots led transformations.
- Build and extend cross-regional networks and alliances, with a particular emphasis on the participation of early career researchers and actors based in the global south, to support south-to-south knowledge exchange across multiple policy and planning disciplines.

More broadly, the conference aimed to shape policy development, promote social justice (SDG11) by framing transport poverty as a dimension of social inequalities, extend INTALInC's existing networks, and test practical applications of new, people-centred approaches to mobility policy that could be advocated for and scaled up through INTALInC's network.

Conference at a glance



47 Delegates

2 Thematic workshop strands

13 Poster presentations

15 Countries across five continents

8 Keynote presentations

12 Next generation scholarships

OVERVIEW

Addressing Transport Inequalities in Global South Cities brought together 47 delegates from across Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America. It took place at the University of Manchester Core Technology Facility from Tuesday 19 May 2026 to Thursday 21 May 2026.

The programme combined keynote presentations, thematic workshops and poster presentations fostering interdisciplinary discussion and networking. Participants identified opportunities for future collaboration, while early career researchers were supported through dedicated scholarships.

“ It was a wonderful workshop and I think very important in setting research agendas and facilitating stronger networks. ”

- Jacqueline Klopp, Columbia University

Thematic focus

The conference centred on the everyday mobility practices of low-income urban populations in the global south, examining how poverty and policy intersect in the lived realities of these communities. It explored how emerging geopolitical and development frameworks are shaping mobility choices and accessibility needs and used people-centred methodologies to reframe transport policy and planning discourse.

The programme combined two strands of parallel workshops interspersed with keynote presentations, structured around four broad strands.

- **Mobility practices in the global south:** keynote presentations examining everyday mobility and spatial accessibility to work, education, healthcare, food and mobilities of care.
- The **redevelopment impacts** of slum upgrades and transport interventions on people living in informal settlements.
- **Policy response:** panel discussions bringing together researchers, development organisations and NGOs to examine the gap between evidence and policy.
- **Policy into practice:** workshops translating research into practical recommendations for policy.

“ I very much appreciated the format of the event because it allowed for more in-depth discussion and meaningful exchange among participants. ”

- Conference delegate



Photo: Workshop, Enabling women and girls

Keynote highlights

Keynote presentations framed discussions from diverse global and disciplinary perspectives.



CARLY GILBERT-PATRICK
Secretary General, SLOCAT

Just Transitions: Unlocking people-centred mobility in a decarbonising world

Carly highlighted the key role played by collaborative organisations such as SLoCAT to shape agendas towards low-carbon transport. Across low and middle-income countries, people are already walking, cycling and using mini-bus taxis, yet this is rarely done with dignity. Carly called for a unified global goal for transport, with the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport providing the opportunity to move beyond advocacy to implementation.



STEPHEN OKOTH
Mukuru Integrated Waste Management

In conversation with Winnie Mitullah (University of Nairobi): Redevelopment impacts of transport interventions in Mukuru

Stephen spoke about his experiences of road upgrades in Mukuru, how road construction led to displacement and ways grassroots action sought to limit these impacts. While residents initially supported road construction projects, the development was used by the government to seize land. The outcomes of development have been mixed: while the roads have improved economic opportunities, this has come at the expense of housing, pedestrian infrastructure and residents' safety.



TANU PRIYA UTENG
Norwegian Centre for Transport Economics

Caring Cities: Reimagining urban futures through connected infrastructure, inclusion and everyday life

Tanu argued that despite new planning buzzwords, women's mobility needs remain systematically under-planned. Modelling from Malmo shows that if women adopted men's travel plans, car mode share would rise 17% and CO2 emissions by almost one-third. Gender-blind planning is also a climate issue. Tanu's 'caring cities' framework puts care, primarily associated with women's mobilities, at the centre of mobility planning.



JUAN CARASSCO
Universidad de Concepción

Food, Care and Spatial Accessibility: Research methods, evidence and public policies in Chile

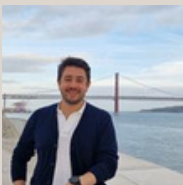
Juan presented research linking access to mobilities with diet, care and justice: Santiago metro stations double as food environments for low-income workers; care work, often invisible in transport surveys, falls disproportionately on women, especially solo caregivers with the lowest proportion of car ownership; and the cost benefit analysis of a new railway favoured higher income commuters' time savings over accessibility gains for low-income, car-less households nearby.



JACQUELINE KLOPP
Columbia University

Transitions, Technology and Transport Justice: Popular transport in turbulent times

Jackie presented the PRISM living-lab model, active in Mumbai, Bogotá, San José and elsewhere, which treats informal and shared transport as critical infrastructure requiring recognition, not formalisation. In Bogotá, this has meant working directly with collective taxi and bicitaxi operators to shift from harassment and enforcement-based regulation to collaborative safety governance amid growing political and economic turbulence.



DANIEL OVIEDO HERNANDEZ
UCL

VREF International Research Programme: Introduction to Walking Cities Lab

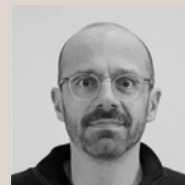
Daniel introduced the new Walking Cities Lab, funded by VREF, which grew out of the PRISM living-lab approach. The project will establish research hubs in Ghana, Brazil, India and Malta. The initiative aims to establish walking as a core transport and climate resilience issue, extending PRISM's recognition-based approach to informal mobilities into a dedicated focus on pedestrian infrastructure and safety.



JIM WALKER
Walk21

Mind the (Policy) Gap: Are evidence-based policies addressing transport inequalities?

Jim tracked walking and cycling policy across six dimensions: activity, safety, security, comfort, accessibility, and satisfaction. He pointed to the mismatch in Latin America and the Caribbean, where most national climate commitments reference climate action but only a small proportion actively reference active mobility.



TIM SCHWANEN
University of Oxford

Understanding Transport Injustice: Reflections and outlook

In the closing keynote, Tim argued that core concepts in transport justice research - accessibility metrics, rights-based frameworks, participation as procedural justice - carry assumptions rooted in colonial era thinking. Tim asked what it would mean if instead, we centre relational ethical traditions such as Ubuntu ('I am because we are') as a foundation for transport justice in the global south.

Workshops: Strand 1



Photo: Workshop, Enabling older and disabled people

The conference programme included two strands of parallel workshops, each exploring a different aspect of transport inequalities through common sets of guiding questions.

A. NURTURING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Facilitators:

Regina Amoako Sakyi, University of Cape Coast
Gina Porter, Durham University

B. ENABLING WOMEN AND GIRLS

Facilitators:

Eda Beyazit, UWE
Tanu Priya Uteng, Norwegian Institute of Transport Research

C. ENABLING OLDER AND DISABLED PEOPLE

Facilitators:

Winnie Mitullah, University of Nairobi
Guibo Sun, University of Manchester

D. INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Facilitators:

Diana Mitlin, University of Manchester
Howard Cambridge, SEI, University of York

STRAND 1 GUIDING QUESTIONS

What are the main transport and accessibility challenges for the population group?

How do the issues change in different urban contexts?

How far are these issues recognised and addressed within policy and planning?

What more needs to be done to embed the needs and concerns of your population groups within transport and urban planning?

Workshops: Strand 2



Building on the first strand, these workshops examined the role of policy, governance and implementation of transport policy.

A. WALKING

Facilitators:

Jim Walker, Walk21
Daniel Oviedo Hernandez, UCL

B. POPULAR TRANSPORT

Facilitators:

Jacqueline Klopp, Columbia University
Sandy Mae Gaspay, University of the Philippines, Diliman
Ransford A. Acheampong, University of Manchester

C. ROAD SAFETY

Facilitators:

Marianne Vanderschuren, University of Cape Town
Chinebuli Uzundu, National Highways Agency
Samuel G. Odewumi, Lagos State University

D. MOBILITY GOVERNANCE

Facilitators:

Maria Nieto Combariza, UCL
Ariana Salas Castillo, Columbia University
Tim Schwanen, University of Oxford

STRAND 2 GUIDING QUESTIONS

How far does the sector already consider the needs of younger and older people, people with disabilities, women and residents of informal settlements within its policy and programmes?

What is needed for the sector to raise the profile of these travel needs and to reduce transport inequalities?

Are there specific examples of good practice you can draw on that could be adopted elsewhere?

How did these good practices come about?

Next Generation Scholars

In partnership with VREF, INTALInC awarded scholarships to support the participation of early career researchers based in the global south. The scholarship holders were:

Ana Ardila Pinto
**Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais,
Brazil**

Paschalin Basil
**University of Nairobi,
Kenya**

Jessica de Lima
**Universidade Federal de Alagoas,
Brazil**

Olayemi Dickson
**Obafemi Alowolo University,
Nigeria**

Siyabulela Forbosi
**University of Fort Hare,
South Africa**

Ish Kumar
**School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi,
India**

Caroline Matara
**Multimedia University,
Kenya**

Moses Mwale
**University of Johannesburg,
South Africa**

Gabriela Ochoa-Covarrubius
**ITESO,
Mexico**

Carla Qesada Alluin
**Centro Para Sostenibilidad Urbana,
Costa Rica**

Fathima Zehba
**National Institute of Technology, Calicut.
India**

Esther Zziwa
**University of Makerere,
Uganda**





Best Poster Award

Beyond A to B: Women's Everyday Mobility in Kochi, India

A qualitative and time-geographic study of low-income working women

Fathima Zehba M P

National Institute of Technology Calicut, India

BACKGROUND

- 1 Mobility shapes access to work, healthcare, and services
- 2 Women's travel patterns are shaped by care responsibilities
- 3 Low-income women rely on public transport and walking
- 4 Planning frameworks overlook lived mobility constraints

METHODS

- 1 Interviews with domestic and housekeeping workers
- 2 GPS tracking and activity-travel diaries
- 3 Time-geographic analysis (space-time paths, activity spaces)



Study Location

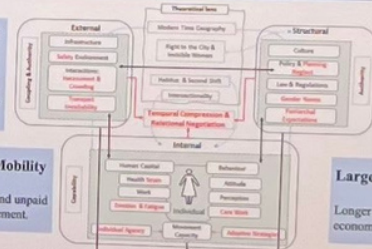
KEY FINDINGS

Mobility is Negotiated

Travel is shaped by work schedules, care responsibilities, and unreliable transport.

Time Poverty Shapes Mobility

Women combine paid work and unpaid care, compressing daily movement.



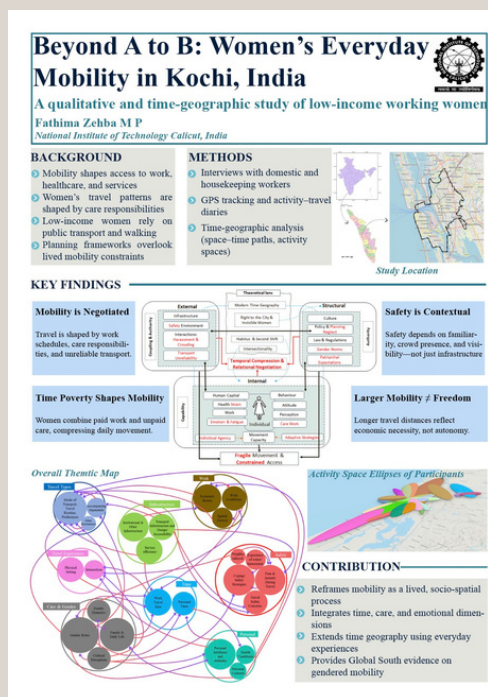
Safety is Contextual

Safety depends on familiarity, crowd presence, and visibility—not just infrastructure

Larger Mobility ≠ Freedom

Longer travel distances reflect economic necessity, not autonomy.

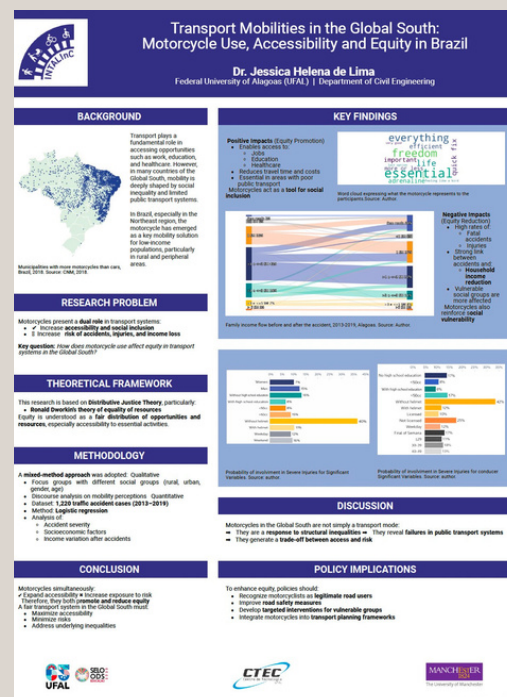
Next generation scholars presented posters showcasing their work. Submissions were judged by Jane Summerton (VREF) and Marianne Vanderschuren (University of Cape Town).



WINNER

Fathima Zehba, National Institute of Technology, Calicut

Beyond A to B: Women's Everyday Mobility in Kochi, India



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Jessica de Lima, Universidade Federal de Alagoas

Transport and Mobilities in the Global South: Motorcycle Use, Accessibility and Equity in Brazil

“ It was particularly encouraging to see all the young researchers, particularly young women, who are doing such interesting things with insightfulness, determination and passion ”

- Jane Summerton, VREF

OUTPUTS



The conference has generated a range of resources to support ongoing research and policy engagement.

PRESENTATIONS

Recordings of keynote speakers' presentations.

SLIDES

Presentation slides from keynote speakers.

URBAN MATTERS

A short review of the conference published in the Manchester Urban Institute blog.

FILM

A short film capturing highlights from the conference and delegates' reflections on discussion and future actions.

CONFERENCE WEBPAGE

All our resources in one place.

Additionally, conference contributors, including keynote speakers and next generation scholars are exploring an opportunity to publish conference proceedings in Elsevier Transportation Research Procedia.

FURTHER READING

[INTALInC background and joining information](#)

[PRISM: Partnership for Research on Informal and Shared Mobility](#)

[Volvo Research and Education Foundations](#)

[Walk21](#)

[Walking Cities Lab](#)

REFLECTIONS

Overall the conference was successful, and the workshop format, built around group discussion rather than one-way presentations was widely credited by attendees as central to that success.

The depth of engagement resulted from 10 years of relationship building and research with low-income communities, policymakers, planners and frontline NGOs across Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia and drew on INTALInC's network of over 400 members. The conference would not have been possible without the support of partner organisations in both the global north and south.

What next for INTALInC?

Since the conference, INTALInC has become a formal partner of the PRISM and Walking4Cities international research programmes, and is contributing to the GLOCON paper review process for PRISM. Conference contributors are also working towards a joint, open access publication. Together, these next-steps will keep the cross-regional, people-centred approach that shaped this conference active well beyond our time together in Manchester.

“ It was a wonderful opportunity to engage with scholars, senior researchers, and practitioners working on transport inequalities in the global south ”
- Conference delegate



Photo: INTALInC Fieldtrip, Makoko, 2017