



**General challenges  
across disabilities**

# Inaccessible public transport systems



General challenges faced by  
all children with disabilities



**Travel by public transport is a big challenge for people across disabilities.** Reliable access to public transport is a precursor for seeking education, employment, and social life.



General challenges faced by  
all children with disabilities



For many persons with disabilities, transport is a daily struggle that is all too real: public transport systems remain either completely off-limits or incredibly difficult to use for passengers with disabilities, turning even the shortest trip into a logistical nightmare.

**Public system includes bus and train services.**

**Some of the challenges faced are:**

- Inability to identify the correct bus /train to board
- Locating the bus/ train platform
- Getting on to the vehicle
- Inaccessible stations and bus stops



General challenges faced by  
all children with disabilities

# Impact

On a day to day basis inaccessible transport system causes:

- 1) Undue stress and anxiety
- 2) Board the wrong vehicle and reach an unintended destination
- 3) Undergo physical injury in trying to board the vehicle

At a broad level, this challenge impacts all aspects of their lives and perpetuates dependency and isolation



General challenges faced by  
all children with disabilities



# This is the story of Mohan and Gayathri...

Mohan was a sighted person till 10<sup>th</sup> standard. He started losing his vision due to retina pigmentosa. His wife Gayatri has been visually impaired from birth.

Both Mohan and Gayatri work at AIB, Madurai and have a sighted child.

# Using public transport is an ordeal for Persons with Vision Impairment

“I do not take a bus despite having bus pass as it is not really accessible. I prefer to travel in autos where the drivers are more supportive even though it works out expensive During long distance travel , accessing restroom facility is very difficult . Sighted people make use of the facility and are able to come back to bus rather quickly. We always fear that the bus will leaves us behind. Our phones are screen reader supported but in most of the buses we cant hear the screen reader because they play loud music”.

**Person with vision impairment**



General challenges faced by  
all children with disabilities

“Public transportation is especially important for our independence, productivity, and community participation since most of us are unable to drive a motor vehicle . Yet using public transport is an ordeal.”

## Challenges faced by VI:

1. Unable to identify our bus in time and very often miss it.
2. Many buses do not halt at the scheduled stop.
3. Once boarded, relying on others to call out the stop.

“There have been instance where we had to walk all through the train for the disability coach only to be told that it is in the other side of the train”.

## Challenge in using trains:

- Booking of tickets is a problem. Online booking is not accessible
- Accessing the right platform and the disability coach therein is a huge ask



# This is Pradeep...

Pradeep's limbs were affected by polio during his early childhood resulting in severe locomotor disability. He uses a wheelchair for internal mobility and tricycle for external mobility.

Pradeep is self-employed and runs a store for mobile and computer accessories in Delhi. He also gives tuitions to children in the mornings.

# Traversing City Roads in a Tricycle is challenging

“Some innovation to make the tricycle sturdier and to enable travelling over incline or travelling with weight without the fear of toppling over/getting pulled back will help.”



General challenges faced by  
all children with disabilities

## Challenge in carrying weight and travelling

I travel 20 km by my tricycle , from Sultanpuri to Nehru Place to purchase stock for my shop. Though I try to avoid flyovers in general , there are a few flyovers between Punjabi Bagh to AIIMS which are unavoidable since the alternate route is long and congested. I can not carry stuff more than 7 kg at one time because there is always a fear of toppling over while on the flyover. This is impacting my business since it is not financially viable to make repeated trips.

My business is not very lucrative. I am very keen to join a corporate. However, most interviews take place more than 30 kms from my house and it is difficult to move in my tricycle carrying the wheelchair . I can not take public transport independently and private transport is not an option since it is expensive.

**Challenge with  
battery operated  
tricycles  
distributed in  
medical camps**

“Some of my friends have received battery operated wheelchair from camps but I would not like to use it because the battery installed is of poor quality . It works out more expensive . Also battery runs out very fast and stops working randomly if it rains or gets too heated”.

# Some possible solution ideas:

1. We use google maps on our phone to check the street names as the bus approaches. This coupled with audio announcements installed in buses will enable persons with vision impairment to know when their destination has been reached.
2. Provide a system that helps person with visual impairment obtain the number of buses approaching the stop
3. Solar powered talking bus stops, especially in the metros that, upon pressing a button on the bus stop, gives audio information on bus times, bus routes etc.

# Some possible solution ideas:

4. System (hydraulic lifts or ramps) for persons on wheelchair to board the bus
5. The drivers / conductors should be sensitized to assist the person in boarding and embarking
6. Bus number should be in bold on the front side of the bus
7. Enforcing stopping policies and practices especially for buses that tend to not halt at the designated stops
8. Strict regulations / fine etc. should be imposed to deter people from occupying seats reserved for PwD

## Some possible solution ideas:

# Modifications in railway stations

1. Enlarged tactile maps explaining the entire outlay of the station including the different platforms will help
2. Help desks should be present at the entrance of especially large junctions
3. Tactile paths should be present for easy navigation
4. Railings should be put up at the end of platforms to prevent mishaps
5. Accessible Mobile applications to check status of bookings etc should be present
6. System (hydraulic lifts or ramps) for persons on wheelchair to board the train

# Some possible solution ideas:

## Modifications in trains

1. Systems to be installed in all trains to announce the name of the upcoming station.
  - Announcement should also specify the side on which the passengers should embark.
2. The attendants in the trains should be counselled to assist the persons with disability wherever possible.
3. The accessible coaches need to be made truly accessible . Ideally accessibility features should be incorporated in a section of each coach

# Helpful Readings

- Challenge faced by visually impaired person using transport

<http://alumni.media.mit.edu/~djain/media/Onboard/OnBoard.pdf>

- <http://urbanmobilityindia.in/Upload/Conference/98438ca2-fb04-4973-927a-4d1e7941b21f.pdf>

