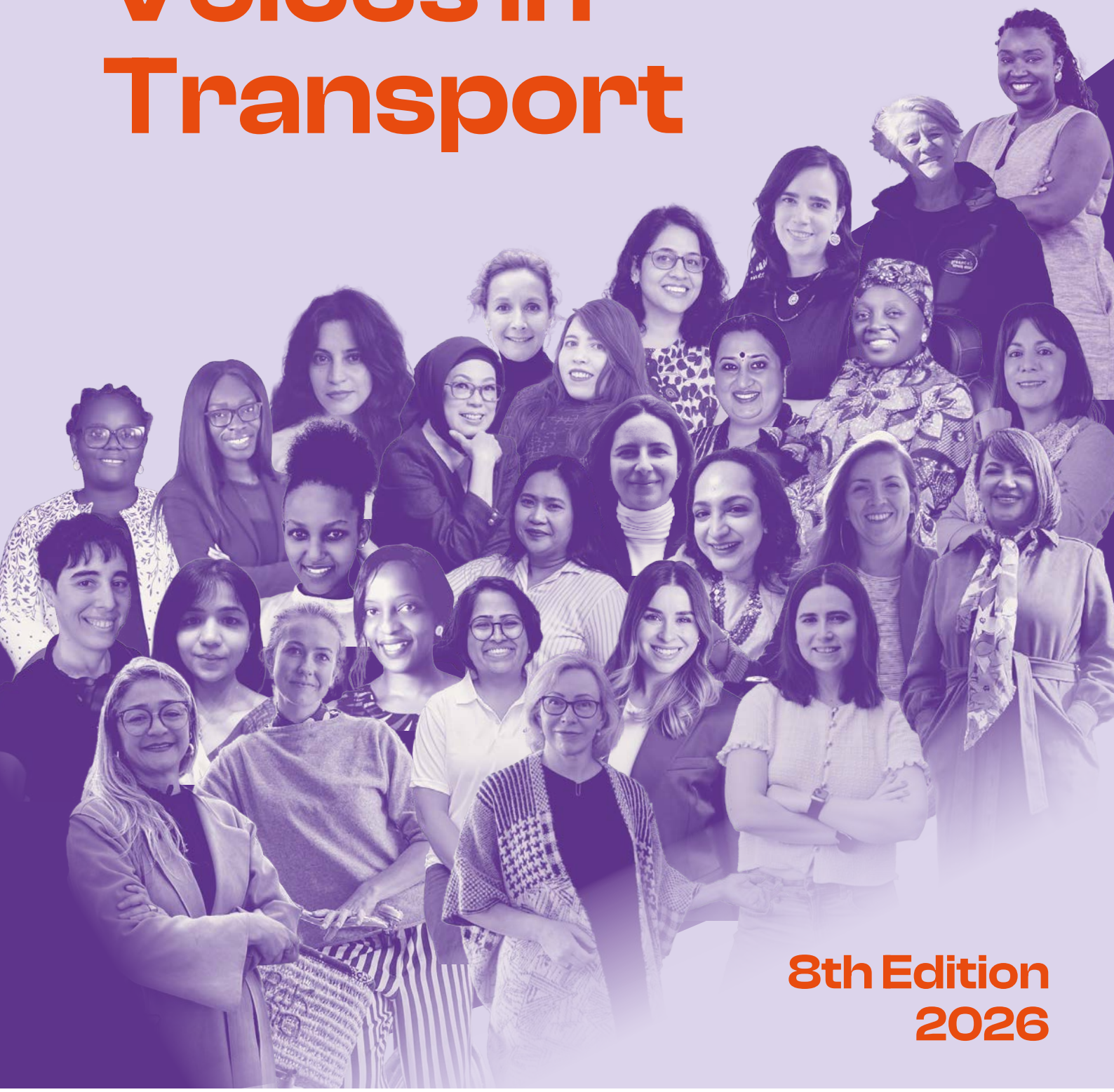
Remarkable Voices in Transport



8th Edition 2026

Women Mobilize Women

Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative

On behalf of

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

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Welcome!

Welcome to the eighth edition of the Remarkable Voices series. Since 2019, this collection has introduced readers to the people moving transport and infrastructure forward – one edition at a time, each through a different lens on the sector and the changemakers driving it.

This year, that lens is business. In the pages that follow, you will meet women who founded, financed, and now lead the companies that deliver mobility on the ground: social enterprises and start-ups, cooperatives, established operators, and global firms alike.

We invite you to read these stories not as a ranking, but as a portrait – a snapshot of what the sector begins to look like when the people building it reflect the people who depend on it. We hope their work stays with you.

Happy reading!

Design of Remarkable Feminist Voices in Transport 2023

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Foreword

Across the world's largest companies, women held 6.6 per cent of chief executive posts last year, a record high. In transport and supply chain firms, the pipeline narrows as it rises: women fill roughly a third of entry-level roles and around 17 per cent of senior executive and managerial positions. Among public transport operators and authorities, about a quarter of senior managers are women. Across transport and storage as a whole, women hold some 12 per cent of jobs, and fewer than 9 per cent in Asia and the Pacific. Among those who own transport companies, chair their boards and decide where capital goes, the share is smaller still.

Those numbers describe who is in the room when the sector makes its decisions. They shape the vehicles that get built, the routes that get planned and the workplaces that get designed, and they cost the industry talent it says it cannot find.

Since 2019, seven editions of the Remarkable series have carried more than 200 profiles, spanning electric mobility, feminist transport policy, women transport workers organising through their unions, and young leaders. This eighth edition of the Remarkable Voices series turns to business.

Working with the private sector matters because that is where mobility is delivered. In most of our partner countries this means far more than start-ups. It means the minibus and paratransit operators who carry the majority of urban passengers, family-run freight and logistics firms, bus companies, workshops and garages, importers and assemblers, co-operatives and social enterprises, port and rail concessionaires, and the banks, leasing companies and investors behind them. Public policy sets the frame, and these firms run the service that people experience. The scale of the transition compounds this. Electrifying fleets, building depots and charging infrastructure and modernising rail need investment far beyond what public budgets can carry. Companies also determine who is recruited, trained, promoted and kept. Companies also determine who is recruited, trained, promoted and kept.

The women in this edition work across that whole spectrum. They engineer batteries for electric motorcycle taxis in Kampala, map charging networks in Abuja, lead freight and express logistics in Ecuador, run electric public utility vehicles in Manila, build greener logistics out of Jakarta, and rebuild the bicycle trade as mechanics and workshop owners in Cagliari.

We are proud to launch this edition at the TUMI Conference in Berlin. My thanks go to the Women Mobilize Women team at TUMI for bringing this edition together, and above all to the women who agreed to share their stories with us.

Daphne Groß-Janssen
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Editorial

It is tiring, as a woman, to always have to fight. We fight for space, we fight for the time to be heard, and we fight to be seen as someone worth thinking about in the first place. We fight because we are angry at how the world treats us. We are angry at being harassed without ever being asked, and angry that a world already unfair to anyone identifying as a woman is more unfair still to those with less income, less social standing, or a disability. Around one in five women lives with a disability, and worldwide women hold roughly two thirds of the legal rights that men do.

The streets were not originally meant for us to walk. Neither were the buses, the depots, the workshops or the boardrooms of the transport industry, where women still hold around 12 per cent of jobs. We keep moving anyway, because we will not stand still and watch the world treat us as less valuable on account of our gender, age, ability, ethnicity or background.

The fight has been long and tiring, and it has become more urgent. Machismo politics is rising, and the closing of feminist spaces and the dismantling of feminist policies have been more direct and deliberate this year than at any point in decades. Long-standing commitments were weakened in international forums, and funding for gender equality work fell sharply. It has also been a year of women refusing to accept that. Movements in West Africa, southern Africa and Europe defended laws that others had already written off as lost, and several of them won.

The fight is tiring, and it becomes worth it when we get to see other women thrive. Women leading companies and founding start-ups are seeds that grow, and they remind us that yes, we can still change the system, and yes, we are not alone in this.

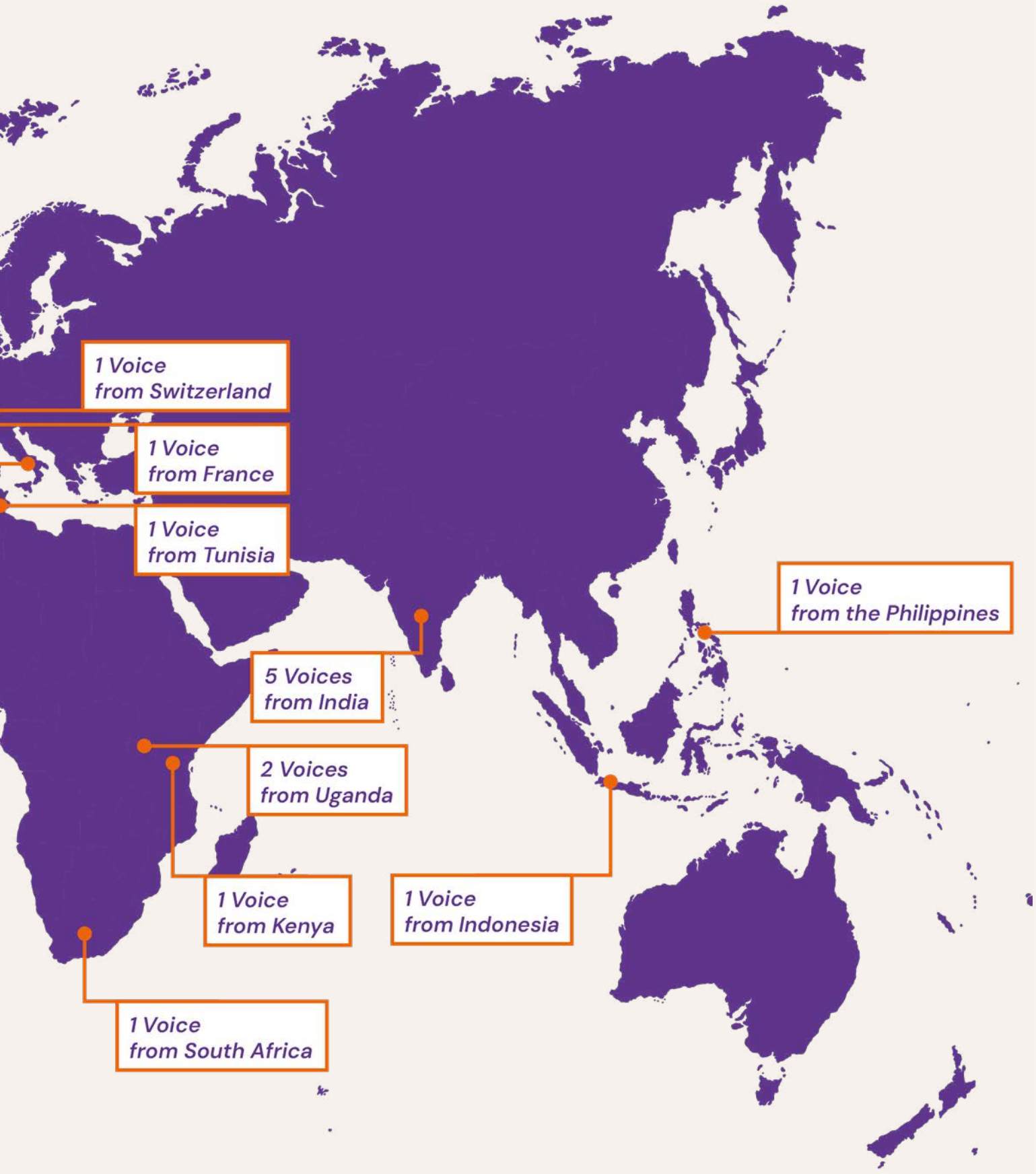
The same refusal shows up in business, where the doors are held shut more quietly. Around two thirds of women-owned businesses in developing economies are underserved by financial institutions, and women-owned enterprises in Africa face a financing gap of some 42 billion dollars. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rate of women's entrepreneurship in the world, and last year fewer than one in ten venture dollars invested across the continent reached a company with a woman among its founders. The women in these pages built what they built anyway, mostly without that money.

Thank you to the women on these pages and beyond, for breaking through your own barriers and for showing us, and the girls watching, that it is possible to bear fruit in the fight.

The Women Mobilize Women Team

Women Voices

from the world



Amiene **van der Merwe**

Amiene is a mission-driven entrepreneur in sustainable mobility with over 30 years of experience in peace and democracy programs, rural development, and transportation. She is the co-founder and Managing Director of The Green Cab, a women-led South African eco-mobility company founded in 2009. She has represented women entrepreneurs internationally, shaped global debates on gender and mobility, and led The Green Cab's transition from low-emission transportation to electric micromobility.

Managing Director

Organisation
The Green Cab

City, Country
Cape Town , South Africa

"Transport became a vehicle for me to offer women dignified livelihood opportunities that, in turn, make them less vulnerable to abuse."

She returned to South Africa after post-graduate study and co-founded an NGO delivering Peace and Democracy Education to youth leaders in the early 1990s.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

My entry into transport is highly personal due to a childhood teenage experience. I was trapped, relying on my sexually abusive teacher for free transport on account of not being able to afford school bus fare.

Gender-based violence in South Africa has reached epidemic proportions and transport became a vehicle for me to offer women dignified livelihood opportunities that, in turn, make them less vulnerable to abuse.

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

To stay true and committed to the mission to put women in the driving seat... even when it is hard and tempting to simply accept the status quo that lead to our gross under-representation in the mobility sector. This meant practicing patience and accepting that it would slow down business growth.

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

Future-proof your business through incorporating sustainable practices – such as choosing new energy vehicles that power from renewable sources; to driving gender-equitable opportunities that ensure inclusion and social change.

What is your ultimate goal?

For working in the mobility sector in South Africa to become an aspirational career option for women and for us to be more equitably represented in the e-hailing sector in particular.

Furthermore for electric mobility to become ubiquitous, not only to drive down emissions, but offering a compelling total cost of ownership advantage.

Camila **Ramos**

PhD Candidate

Organisation
University of Oxford

City, Country
Oxford, United Kingdom

Camila Ramos is a PhD candidate at the Transport Studies Unit, University of Oxford, researching access, poverty and social equality in transport. Trained in civil engineering in Chile under Juan Carlos Muñoz, later the country's Transport Minister, she previously worked at the WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities and the Inter-American Development Bank, and holds a master's degree from MIT under Siqi Zheng. At Oxford, she is supervised by Tim Schwanen, whom she calls her biggest influence.

She decided to dedicate her career to transport while standing through a two-hour rush-hour commute on Santiago's packed route 502 bus.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

I decided to dedicate my career to urban transport while stuck on Santiago's 502 bus, a long east-west route, during a brutal peak hour: two hours standing in a hot, packed bus. I remember thinking, "how do people travel all the way to Cerro Navia and still have time to see their families? Someone should do something." Then it occurred to me that someone could be me. I'd had the privilege to study transport, and with that comes a responsibility to give back.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change?

It can be hard to be, more often than not, the only woman in the room. The glass ceiling is difficult to break, and in many cases it lives mostly in your own head, as a woman in transport. I've met wonderful men who became my biggest mentors and cheerleaders, and I'm grateful for their support. My dream is to eventually bring more women into transport and city planning, and help them believe their opinions and experience matter as much as any man's.

"The glass ceiling is difficult to break, and in many cases it lives mostly in your own head, as a woman in transport."

Carolina Martínez **Cuellar**

Carolina Martínez Cuellar is General Manager of Bogotá's Operadora Distrital de Transporte. She is best known for her work at La Rolita, the city's public bus operator, where she helped overturn the idea that women in transport belong only in administrative roles – putting women behind the wheel, leading technical teams and holding operational responsibility. For her, leadership has no gender, and diversity is a strategic advantage rather than a quota. She measures success by the doors she opens for others.

General Manager

Organisation
Operadora Distrital de Transporte S.A.S

City, Country
Bogotá, Colombia

"Today, La Rolita does not simply hire people – La Rolita creates a life project for every person who works here."

Under her leadership, La Rolita put women in Bogotá's driver's seats and technical teams – roles the sector had long reserved for men.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change?

Working in a historically male-dominated environment has been challenging, but it has also been an incredible opportunity to demonstrate that leadership has no gender. In the transportation sector, women were traditionally associated primarily with administrative roles. At La Rolita, I had the opportunity to help change that perception and demonstrate that a woman can lead operations, make strategic decisions, and deliver results in a sector as demanding as public transportation. What has mattered most to me has not been to "make a place for myself" because I am a woman, but to open doors so that many other women could enter, grow, and be recognized for their talent.

What support was indispensable for your career development?

The most essential support throughout my career has undoubtedly been trust. The trust of those who gave me opportunities to take on increasingly greater challenges, but also the trust of the teams I led and the people who believed in a vision, even when it meant doing things differently. Throughout my career, especially at La Rolita, I learned that no one achieves great results alone. My peers and colleagues played a fundamental role: they were fellow travelers, allies, constructive critics, and, at many moments, great teachers. I especially value the women who were around me. We paved the way together.

Dang C. **Tirante**

General Manager

Organisation
GET Philippines Inc.

City, Country
Metro Manila, Philippines

Dang C. Tirante is General Manager of GET Philippines, one of the country's pioneering electric mobility companies, running 113 electric public utility vehicles with 300 targeted by the end of 2026. Her commitment to public service began at the Taguig local government. Coming from outside the transport sector, she built her expertise alongside drivers, mechanics and dispatchers. She frames modernization as restoring dignity to drivers, not only cutting emissions.

“The most effective leaders are those who listen, learn, and understand the realities on the ground before making decisions that affect people’s lives. ”

She grew up with three brothers and is now raising three sons, which she credits for how naturally she holds her own as the only woman in the room.

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility if everything turned out the way you imagine.

My ultimate goal is to see a Philippines where public transportation is so good, reliable, safe, comfortable, and efficient that people choose it, not because they cannot afford a car, but because they genuinely prefer to use it.

For me, the measure of a successful transportation system should not be how many people can afford to buy their own cars. My vision is almost the opposite: I don’t want the poor to aspire to own cars just to escape an inadequate public transport system. I want to build a system so good that even the rich would choose public transportation.

Daniela Flores **Ramirez**

Independent Consultant

City, Country
Mérida, Mexico

Daniela Flores Ramirez is an independent consultant based in Mérida, Mexico, working at the intersection of energy and electric mobility. She entered the sector while assessing the energy feasibility of Yucatán's first electric bus route, and went on to lead its electromobility area with a team that was around 90 percent women. She now helps electrification projects across Latin America become technically viable, financially sound and genuinely inclusive.

"We should not aim simply to have more women in transport; we need more women designing projects, making technical decisions."

Daniela built and led Yucatán's electro-mobility team almost entirely of women, proof the sector runs better with them in it.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

I entered mobility almost by chance. My background was in energy, and I was invited into a project in Yucatán to implement the state's first electric public transport route. I quickly realised that an electric mobility project is also, fundamentally, an energy project.

It isn't enough to select an electric bus; you need to understand how much energy the operation requires and how vehicles will charge. That became the core of my work: bringing energy and mobility together.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

When I led the electromobility area in Yucatán, I intentionally built a team that was around 90 percent women, involved directly in design, planning and operation, not just supporting roles. That diversity added real value to our work.

We shouldn't aim simply to have more women in transport. We need women designing projects, making technical and investment decisions, and leading organisations, until it's no longer remarkable for a woman to be in that room.

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

One of my bravest decisions was accepting my first electromobility project without previous experience in transport. I relied on people who had years of experience, learned from them, and contributed what I knew from energy. That combination became one of our greatest strengths.

I'd tell my younger self: you don't need to know everything before taking on a new challenge. Entering a field as an outsider lets you ask different questions, and those questions can lead to better solutions.

Diana **Gómez**

CEO

Organisation
Lola

City, Country
Medellín, Colombia

Diana Gómez is CEO of Lola, an electric cargo-bike logistics company in Medellín. After ten years in the financial sector ended in a company-wide layoff, she moved into electric bikes almost by accident, first as a city tourism venture, then into cargo-bike freight tackling deliveries and congestion. Eleven years on, Lola transports goods and handles supply and stocking for businesses across the city, one of Colombia's most active urban-freight fleets.

After ten years in finance, a layoff sent her into electric bikes by accident; eleven years on she runs Medellín's cargo-bike delivery fleet.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

I spent ten years in the financial sector, working in commercial roles at a brokerage firm. When a major layoff let me go, I knew I wanted to change my life but didn't yet have a clear path.

I found my way into electric bikes almost by accident, first as a tourism venture, then through a cargo-bike freight project tackling deliveries and congestion, one already running in Europe and now being explored for Medellín. That was the turning point: eleven years of learning how much better urban movement can become once you really look closely at it.

"Don't overthink before you act. Perfection isn't the goal its day-to-day experience is what teaches you how to improve."

Dimpu B. **Chindappa**

Dimpu B. Chindappa is a transportation engineer and certified road safety auditor with over 13 years delivering large-scale infrastructure across India's national highways, railways, PWDs, municipal corporations and irrigation departments. The daughter of an autorickshaw driver, she worked alongside him in early childhood – an experience that fuels her drive to design safer, more inclusive cities. She founded The Mobility Agenda Foundation, RASTEP Future Roads and Drivonaut, all based in Bengaluru.

Founder and Trustee

Organisation
RASTEP Future Roads / The Mobility Agenda Foundation

City, Country
Bengaluru, India

"A socialist at heart... and a pragmatic capitalist who understands the need for economic sustainability."

What prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

As the daughter of an autorickshaw driver, I learned resilience and empathy while working alongside him in early childhood. Those formative years fuel my fire for designing safer, more inclusive cities – a passion that led me to start The Mobility Agenda Foundation, RASTEP & Drivonaut. My journey balances the rigor of project delivery with a deep commitment to social impact.

I proudly wear two hats: a socialist at heart, guided by equity and compassion, and a pragmatic capitalist who understands the need for economic sustainability.

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility if everything turned out the way you imagine.

At The Mobility Agenda Foundation, we understand the complex challenges of mobility, accessibility, and safety and are committed to providing solutions to organizations to build safe, accessible, and inclusive roads.

The daughter of an autorickshaw driver, she worked beside him as a child – and now founds companies designing safer roads across India.

Doreen **Orishaba**

“Take the leap, even when you don’t have everything figured out. When it feels most scary, that’s when you should jump.”

Chief Product Officer

Organisation
BasiGo

City, Country
Nairobi, Kenya

As Chief Product Officer at BasiGo, which she built from the ground up in Rwanda, she leads Engineering, Product & Technology Development, as well as New Market Development. BasiGo provides Electric Buses as a commercially alternative to the conventional diesel bus. Doreen possesses a proven track record of successfully leading pilot projects for Electric Buses in East Africa.

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

I thank God that I made the decision to go to start BasiGo in Rwanda, from scratch – from zero buses, no office, no staff, no charger, no charging depot to a thriving electric mobility business that is EBIDTA positive in just 2 and a half years.

What support was indispensable for your career development?

First, mentorship – having leaders who have always believed in me, challenged me, and helped shape my growth.

Second, early exposure – experiencing Ford Motor Company’s vehicle assembly line and Product Development Center in Michigan, alongside the rapid evolution of e-mobility in Asia, broadened my perspective and shaped the direction of my career.

When Kiira Motors in Uganda built an electric car from scratch in 2011, her dream to make electric mobility a reality in Africa began.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

I feel like I've found my place and made my mark, and I've been fortunate to work alongside incredibly supportive colleagues throughout my career. I honestly can't remember walking into work or entering a room and thinking, 'Oh, I'm the female here.' I've largely been able to show up simply as a professional, focused on what I bring to the table rather than my gender. That's something I value and would want to preserve – an environment where women don't have to be constantly conscious of being women in a male dominated space, but can simply belong, contribute, lead, and be recognized for the value they bring.

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility if everything turned out the way you imagine.

To build a circular, resilient, and affordable clean-energy ecosystem for electric mobility in Africa, where the value of an electric vehicle is no longer a debate but the norm; Very quiet roads – where every bus behind you is electric, the truck ahead of you is electric, and so is every other passenger car after you.

"That's something I value – an environment where women can simply belong, contribute, lead, and be recognized for the value they bring."

Cantal **Bakker**

Cantal Bakker moved from Amsterdam to Marrakech in her mid-twenties, bicycle in tow, to start a project no one thought would work. It became Pikala Bikes, a non-profit that promotes cycling in Moroccan cities while employing and training local youth. Pikala runs a mechanics workshop and cycling lessons, and funds its social work through a thriving eco-tourism model – guided bike tours led by young Moroccans it has trained as professional guides. It tackles youth unemployment and urban air quality at once.

Founder

Organisation
Pikala Bikes

City, Country
Marrakech, Morocco

"If I want to do something crazy, now is the time. What's the worst that could happen?"

She arrived in Marrakech with one week's experience of the country, no contacts, and her own bike – and built Pikala into a lasting institution.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

On her first visit to Marrakech, Cantal borrowed a bike from a local – there was no rental in the city then – and everything changed. "As soon as we started cycling, the people of Marrakech interacted with us, and eventually we were no longer seen as tourists.

Finally, I felt the freedom I'd been looking for during my whole stay." But she also saw pollution from mopeds, and young people idle on the streets. In that gap she saw potential: a bicycle project that could give tourists something special and fund opportunities for locals.

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

She arrived with no connections to Morocco, having spent just one week there. "I thought, if I want to do something crazy, now is the time.

What's the worst that could happen? My project fails and I go back to Holland – so what?" The doubters only fuelled her: "Whenever someone said the idea was ridiculous, my motivation and ambition only grew, and I wanted to prove them wrong." Through 2015 she researched Morocco and even learned to repair a bike herself.

Faith **Kileo**

Battery engineer

Organisation
ZEMBO Motorcycles ltd,

City, Country
Kampala, Uganda

Faith Kileo is a Battery Engineer at Zembo Motorcycles in Kampala, designing lithium-ion systems and battery-swap networks for electric motorcycle taxis. She learned the trade beside her father, a self-taught battery and solar technician in Moshi, then studied electronics engineering in Dar es Salaam and battery management systems online with the University of Colorado Boulder. Her focus is second-life batteries and technology built for real African road conditions rather than laboratory ones.

“What I would like to keep seeing and see much more of is women taking their chances in engineering.”

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility if everything turned out the way you imagine.

If everything turned out the way I imagine, East Africa wouldn’t only consume battery technology but build and understand it – with our own research capacity, our own engineers, and second-life batteries giving communities affordable power instead of ending up as waste. Every boda rider would earn more and breathe cleaner air. Every technician, even in a small workshop like my father’s, would have intelligent tools they can actually understand and trust. And a young girl watching her father work would know, without doubt, that this field has a place for her too. That is the world I’m working to build.

Faith first learned how to repair batteries from his father’s small workshop in Moshi, even before having any formal training.

Najjiba **Katesi**

Najjiba Katesi is Director of AfricroozE Uganda Limited, an e-mobility company she founded after a decade advocating for bicycle access in rural Uganda. Known locally as “the bicycle woman,” she began her career at FABIO in 2013, distributing bicycles that helped women reach healthcare, markets and school. She now works to make electric mobility affordable and inclusive, while pushing policy that puts women’s realities at the centre of transport design.

Director

Organisation
AfricroozE Uganda Limited

City, Country
Kampala, Uganda

“Over the years, people have come to call me ‘the bicycle woman’. I wear that name with pride because, for me, a bicycle has never been just a bicycle. It represents independence, access and opportunity.”

More than 20 "FABIO babies" were born safely because their mothers had a bicycle waiting when nothing else could get them there in time.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

It began in 2013 when I joined FABIO, distributing bicycles to communities near Jinja. I remember seeing a mother carrying firewood on her head, a baby on her back and a jerrycan in her hand, carrying the weight of her household. I asked myself how different her life would be with a bicycle. That was the moment mobility became personal to me.

During COVID-19, bicycles became a lifeline. We had more than twenty 'FABIO babies,' born to mothers who reached health facilities because they had a bicycle when other transport wasn't available.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change?

Cycling still carries stigma for women in parts of Uganda, and I've had to prove I belong in a space where there are assumptions about what women understand about technology and business. But women experience mobility differently. Transport shouldn't only be designed around speed and distance but also carrying capacity and safety.

What I want to change is the idea that mobility is a man's space. I want women not only using mobility solutions, but designing, selling, repairing, financing and leading them too.

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

The bravest decision I made was not to give up. Many people saw the bicycle as primitive, something outdated, not something a woman should ride or build a career around. But I had seen what it could do: help people reach markets, schools and clinics.

I'd tell my younger self: keep going, keep fighting for what you believe in, even when others cannot yet see what you see. The thing people question you for may become the very reason you're able to inspire others.

Juanita Concha **Rivera**

Juanita is an engineer with more than 20 years of experience in mobility and transportation infrastructure projects, leading, structuring, designing, implementing, and optimizing programs and projects related to sustainable transportation and clean mobility. She holds a master's degree in construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Rail Systems and built up the public transportation operator "La Rolita."

Director General

Organisation
ART Movamos Región

City, Country
Cali, Colombia

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

Very early in my career, I understood that a road or a transport system is not simply physical infrastructure. It is a connection between people, territories and opportunities. Over time, I realized that mobility is almost like an X-ray of society: it reflects inequality, access to education and employment, and even people's everyday dignity.

That is what ultimately made me choose this field. I realized that through mobility I could combine my passion for engineering with something that has a direct impact on people's daily lives, especially those who face the greatest mobility barriers.

"Mobility is almost like an X-ray of society: it reflects inequality, access to education and employment, and even people's everyday dignity."

“Don’t be afraid of being different, of speaking up, or of taking your place at the table. The sector needs your technical knowledge, but it also needs your perspective and your voice.”

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change?

Working in a traditionally male-dominated sector has certainly been challenging, especially when I was a young professional. I had to earn respect through my work, commitment, and results, day by day. But that experience also made me stronger. It taught me that you do not have to change who you are to succeed in a demanding environment. You have to know your value, listen, learn, work hard, and be willing to take responsibility. What I would like to change is that women should not have to work twice as hard to prove that they belong at the table. I would like future generations of women to enter this sector feeling that leadership is naturally open to them. So, what I would like to see more of is precisely that: more opportunities, more mentorship, more diverse leadership teams, and organizations where women’s talent is not only welcomed but given the opportunity to transform the sector.

What is your ultimate goal?

My ultimate goal is to contribute to building cities and regions where mobility is not a barrier to opportunity.

I imagine a future where people can move seamlessly across cities and municipalities, without feeling administrative boundaries. Where public transportation is integrated, sustainable, accessible and reliable, and where different modes, buses, railways, bicycles, walking and new technologies, work together as one system.

But my vision goes beyond transportation itself. I would like infrastructure and mobility to become strategic tools for creating more inclusive, competitive and sustainable territories.

I would like us to have institutions capable of thinking beyond political terms, with the governance, financing and technical capacity to sustain a vision for decades. Infrastructure should not simply respond to current demand; it should help shape the cities and regions we want to build.

If everything turned out the way I imagine, mobility would connect people not only to places, but to opportunities: education, employment, healthcare, culture and a better quality of life.

Kety **Piras**

Kety Piras is founder, CEO and head mechanic of Cycle Hub in Cagliari – a repair workshop, cycle-parking hub and training academy – and the city's Bicycle Mayor within the global BYCS network. In 2021 she founded the non-profit Donne in Bici e Micromobilità, whose Raggiosas Bike Ride won a European Commission recognition award for mobility in 2026. A certified bicycle-mechanic and cycling-mobility specialist, she is passionate about elevating the mechanic's trade and empowering women in technical work.

Founder & Head Mechanic

Organisation
Cycle Hub

City, Country
Cagliari, Italy

"The bravest decision I made was to bet on myself: turning my path into an innovative business by opening a mechanical workshop in an industry where women are almost invisible."

Her historic role model is Maria E. Ward, whose 1896 guide Bicycling for Ladies argued that mastering bike mechanics was women's route to freedom.

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

First, bring hands-on, practical expertise to the table. Include mechanics, educators, grassroots advocates, and women from day one of project planning – not as an afterthought or a formality.

Second, design for the most vulnerable user, not for cars. If an infrastructure isn't safe, intuitive, and accessible for a woman, a child, or an elderly person, it is simply bad infrastructure.

Third, stop treating active mobility as a luxury or a 'green hobby.' Bicycle mechanics and human-scale transport are primary infrastructure for public health, economic dignity, and urban care.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

Working in a male-dominated field often means having to prove your technical competence twice before being taken seriously. At first, there's almost always skepticism – the assumption that you are there 'by chance' or that you don't know the job inside out. My response has always been technical precision: when you put your hands on the bike and solve the issue with expertise, skepticism turns into respect. What I would like NOT to experience anymore is the subtle paternalism – that sense of surprise when a woman performs a complex technical job flawlessly.

Khadija **Jallouli**

Founder and CEO

Organisation
HawKar

City, Country
Tunis, Tunisia

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

I always had difficulties moving long distances every day since my universities and school. I needed to find a solution first for me and then that I discovered that it's not just me it's an issue for everyone, a challenge for everyone and that's discriminating since if you can't move freely outside you can't be included in the society, that's how HawKar came the name. We are now making products like an electric car for people with disability that is directly accessible in wheelchair.

What would you tell a woman in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

Don't let things block you because you are a woman. Of course, environment is important that people support you to go forward and just do it.

What advice would you give your younger self?

If you want to start anything in your life that is important: I learned to don't take myself too seriously when I worked on something because if you take yourself too seriously you are afraid to fail and it's very important to fail if you want to learn and go forward. So you need to fail a lot so you don't be afraid to go ahead.

She chose the name HawKar to reflect the freedom of mobility symbolized by the hawk, a bird that can fly freely wherever it wants. By combining "Hawk" and "Car", she created the name "HawKar", representing the company's vision of giving people greater freedom, independence, and mobility.

What is your ultimate goal?

My vision for HawKar goes beyond simply creating a car for people with disabilities. My goal is to improve the lives of people with reduced mobility and make mobility accessible to everyone. The idea is that people can have the vehicle they need and customize it according to their individual requirements.

Rather than taking an ordinary car and adapting it for people with disabilities, HawKar wants to do the opposite: start with a vehicle designed for people with disabilities and make it possible to transform it into different types of vehicles. I also hope to make the standard chassis open source so that people can build the car they want, while HawKar can provide assistance with customization or production.

"It's important to really tackle the disability subject in a global way. I hope to inspire everyone in the audience to take actions and involve everyone to find the right solutions for everyone."

Lina **López**

Executive Director

Organisation
Despacio.org

City, Country
Bogotá, Colombia

Lina López is a Colombian urban mobility and city planning expert with an MSc from University College London and over a decade of experience leading sustainable transport initiatives. As Executive Director of Despacio.org, she leads a 16-person multidisciplinary team across mobility, urban development, gender, and healthy cities. Her career spans roles with C40 Cities, the World Bank, and Medellín's municipal government, driving impactful public space and cycling projects.

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

Always focus on user experience before other aspects, mobility is about people, not about the vehicles or the technology. These are instruments to help solve the problem, but the goal is to build cities and systems that allow everyone to move with dignity and comfort, no matter their gender, age, race or physical characteristic.

It is our job to be aware of others, of the inequalities they face and to always deliver the best mobility solution for the most vulnerable person.

"I would advise my younger self to believe in what she knows."

Lina expanded Medellín's Bike Share System by 53 stations and added 10km of bike paths as Cycling Policy Coordinator.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

During the seventh semester of my career, I was awarded a scholarship for a one-year internship at TU Delft University in the Netherlands. From the first moment I traveled by train, from the airport to The Hague, the place that became my home for one year, and seeing hundreds of cyclists traveling around the city.

That image changed the way I used to think about mobility. In the Netherlands it took me just five days to decide to buy an urban bike. I was not only amazed by the bike infrastructure but also by the fantastic public transport system and the great coverage it had. I even was able to go to different cities and other countries by train. So a question emerged "Why was I so dependent on the car to move in my city?" "Why can't we have the same mobility alternatives that a country such as The Netherlands provides?". Once I went back to Medellín, my home city, along with two colleagues from college, we decided to do something to change some of the reality of the mobility system. We designed and implemented the first public bike sharing system in Colombia.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

To me it is quite shocking to see the confidence men have in themselves, and the way in which they attribute to only themselves the achievements that occur thanks to the work of teams, in comparison to women, who normally are more objective about this. For me it has been easy because I tend to understand others perspectives, and also I had the fortune to work with men that are constantly evolving. However, behaviors such as men speaking directly to men and ignoring women's presence in discussions, is still very frequent. What I have learnt is that we, as women, need to raise our voices without waiting for men to be silent or agree. It is necessary to change the way we feel about giving our opinions. I have never been afraid to bring my ideas to the table, no matter the consequences, because the only consequence I care about is enriching the transport perspective, and this is done by listening to all the voices, especially those that have always been ignored.

Mahak **Agrawal**

Mahak Agrawal is Head of India at Riding Sunbeams, building the country portfolio from scratch to integrate solar energy across railway corridors. An urban planner with a Columbia master's in environmental policy, she has worked on climate and mobility across the Netherlands, the US, and South East Asia; from the Center on Global Energy Policy to global climate campaigns spanning 40+ countries. She also runs All Bits Count, her own practice bridging art, science and behavioural insight to make climate action legible.

Country Head (India)

Organisation
Riding Sunbeams

City, Country
Delhi, India

"I got lucky, and I'll call it what it is, a mix of luck, curiosity and privilege in getting to move across the traditional route rather than stay locked into it."

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

I haven't personally experienced strong gender dominance in mobility or the sectors I've worked in. That changed somewhat when I took on the India portfolio for Riding Sunbeams, where I was told railways was a male-dominated sector and several people had advised against hiring a woman for the role. They hired me anyway. The job is challenging, but mainly because of

its scale, not my gender. What matters more to me is changing the tendency to judge people before they've had the chance to show what they can do.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

It started the boring way every urban planner starts: volume counts, traffic surveys, standing on a road with a clicker counting cars. Nothing romantic about it. The real shift happened in 2012–13, when I was assisting the Government of India's Ministry of Rural Development on national housing policy. That work took me into disaster situations in north eastern India, looking at women's mobility in those contexts, and that is where mobility stopped being a planning exercise on paper and became something about who gets to move, when, and how safely. Nobody teaches you that in a planning curriculum.

Do you have, or did you have, a role model who influenced you to fight for what you are doing now?

My grandmother, Amma, more than anyone. She ran a household on what would now get called sustainability principles, nothing wasted, everything repaired, and she never treated that as scarcity, she treated it as competence. I lost Amma a bit too soon in life, and learnt much about her via my mother.

My father spent his 40-years of career in public service, so I grew up watching how slow, unglamorous institutional work actually is, and

She dropped out of both engineering and medical school in a single year. Three respectable paths abandoned for urban planning, which paid off.

that infrastructure never moves on charisma alone. Between the two of them I picked up the combination that this field actually needs: stubbornness for the long haul, and enough grace to survive the wait.

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

Dropping out of both engineering and medical school, in the same year. In India, that's not a career pivot, that's inches away from becoming a family disgrace. I'd actually been aiming for architecture and landed in urban planning instead, but even that felt like a wild deviation at the time, three respectable paths abandoned for one nobody in my family had a reference point for. I'd tell my younger self to worry less about how it looked from the outside. It turned out to be the only decision on that list that actually led anywhere.

María Paulina Romo **Mosquera**

President

Organisation
Grupo Entregas- Fedex Ecuador

City, Country
Ecuador

Having spent over a decade in a leadership role at Grupo Entregas and now as Senior Director at Metropolitan Touring, her focus is on leadership that embraces social responsibility and sustainable strategies. At Metropolitan Touring, they are committed to promoting equity and inclusion, which she considers fundamental to the progress of society and the tourism sector.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

Since August 2008, when I bought shares of Entregas, which was the first company of Grupo Entregas, I have been in the logistics world. As a result of our certification process as a B Corp. in 2022, it was a life-changing moment for me because it not only made me more aware of the negative impacts we could cause on the environment through transportation, but more importantly, made me start questioning how we can mitigate or reduce that impact without stopping doing business. Giving logistics a purpose in an empathetic and responsible way with the environment and society.

“I’ve always been motivated by being part of a greater purpose: contributing to society and making our communities more prosperous.”

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

I would tell my younger inner self that I thank her for always taking risks and trusting herself, and for not giving up even in moments of distress or starting over. Thanks for that.

What support was indispensable for your career development?

My unconditional friend and support at all times has been my partner and is now my husband. Boris has been a companion with whom we have shared this journey of entrepreneurship, we have complemented each other, supported each other in moments when no one believed in us, and today we see ourselves as partners who respect and value each other’s journey.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

I’ve always believed that statistics are neither positive nor negative; they are part of a story that can change when we take action. That is why, more than six years ago, we created the Courier School to change reality in two ways: by formalising courier work through a Diploma that combines technical training with soft skills such as CV writing, inclusion, disability and sustainability, and by encouraging more women to enter the profession and challenge unconscious biases.

So far, more than 400 people have graduated, and over 40% are women. For us, these numbers show that when we create opportunities and challenge assumptions, the story can change.

She has been part of the logistics sector since 2008 and helped drive Grupo Entregas toward more sustainable and responsible logistics after its B Corp certification in 2022.

Lois **Auta**

Lois Auta is Founder of Green Economy Logistics Limited (GEL) in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory. A wheelchair user, she entered mobility after seeing how consistently transport systems are designed without disabled people in mind, and now works to make electric vehicles accessible and affordable for women, young people and persons with disabilities. She counts former WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala among the role models who inspire her fight.

Founder/CEO

Organisation
Green Economy Logistics Limited (GEL)

City, Country
FTA, Nigeria

"Keep holding transport institutions accountable for inclusion, equity and accessibility for vulnerable groups."

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

The discrimination and under-representation of females especially women with disabilities in the transport sector is a huge problem.

We want to change the attitudinal barrier, infrastructural barrier, and institutional barrier from male dominated environment by moving from challenges to change in creating enabling transport environment for women and girls with disabilities to thrive independently and economically.

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

I would advice someone in the transport sector to be a problem solver, creative and innovative by developing solutions to the electric vehicle issues.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

Being a person with disability who uses a wheelchair to navigate from point A to point B, it is a big issue excluding people with disabilities when producing transport systems/products. This inspired me to join the field of mobility and infrastructure to move for change from exclusion to inclusion.

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

The bravest decision I did not make and would advise my younger self to make is to keep holding transport institutions accountable for inclusion, equity and accessibility for vulnerable groups.

What support was indispensable for your career development?

The support that was indespensable for my career development was the CLEAN TECHNOLOGY HUB(CTH) SHE SUSTAINS PROGRAM where competitions were done and I was one of the top winners with $1,000 and mentorship program where it opened many opportunities for me to thrive in the electric vehicle space.

Won $1,000 and a mentorship place in the Clean Technology Hub's SHE Sustains Program, which opened her path into the electric vehicle space.

Lucia **Probst**

Co-founder / CEO

Organisation
Amvi

City, Country
Monterrey, Mexico (currently based in Neu-Ulm, Germany)

Lucia is CEO & Founder of AMVI, a carpooling platform designed specifically for companies and institutions. AMVI aims to make shared mobility safer and more accessible by connecting people within communities they already belong to, while also helping reduce traffic congestion, emissions and the environmental impact of commuting.

"My bigger vision is to help create cities where moving sustainably feels natural, safe and empowering and where mobility becomes a way for people to connect, collaborate and create healthier communities together."

Lucia earned several awards, e.g. Xignux Challenge 2023 (1st Place), Digital Green Talents Awards 2024 and Heineken Green Challenge 2024.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

My mobility journey began as a university student in Monterrey, Mexico, where I experienced unsafe and fragmented mobility, traffic congestion and air pollution. As a woman, safety was a constant concern when using ride hailing and public transport.

I realized that many students were already making similar journeys and asked: what if we could connect people travelling to the same places within a trusted community? This idea became AMVI, a carpooling platform for companies and institutions that makes shared mobility safer and more accessible while reducing congestion and emissions.

My personal experience became a mission to create mobility that is sustainable, inclusive, community driven and safe, especially for women.

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility if everything turned out the way you imagine.

My ultimate goal is to create a future where mobility connects people and communities, allowing everyone to move safely, sustainably and affordably, regardless of gender, age or ability. AMVI is my starting point, showing how trusted communities, better public transport, safer walking and cycling, and smarter technology can make mobility more inclusive and empowering.

What support was indispensable for your career development?

My father has been one of my biggest influences. The idea behind AMVI had been part of our conversations for years, and his encouragement gave me the confidence to turn it into something meaningful.

Growing up, caring for the environment was part of everyday life. When I later saw the challenges of traffic congestion, air pollution and mobility in Monterrey, I felt responsible for asking what I could do about them.

Today, my father continues to support me and AMVI's mission. His belief in the idea gives me the confidence to keep going, especially when building something from scratch gets difficult.

Monalisha **Thakur**

Co Founder, CMO

Organisation
Tummoc

City, Country
Bengaluru, India

Monalisha Thakur is Co-Founder and CMO of Tummoc, India's first mobility super app, based in Bengaluru. Across more than 16 years in business, largely in workplaces with under one percent female representation, she built the discipline of judging people and projects on their own terms, not through the lens of gender. Alongside co-founders Hiranmay and Narayan, she has scaled Tummoc into a three-country business, including Nepal and Bangladesh, with 6.5 million-plus users in India alone.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

Honestly, nothing! It made me the person that I am. In my over 16 years of expereince, I have always worked at workplaces, with less than one percent of female population. It helped me take the conscious on working on my strengths as a female on any project and on seeing people not as genders, but beyond that. This decision eventually helped me in seeing even myself as an individual, not just as a female to achieve what I have in my life so far! I am grateful for that.

Co-founded Tummoc, India's first mobility super app, and scaled it to three countries and over 6.5 million users after 16+ years in the field.

“To take Tummoc across every nook and corner of the world and let this impact of ease of transport go viral! ”

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

I have always been the “Doer”! And I am proud of myself for that. I do not believe in wasting time over “who” and “what”, but, on “How” can this be done! Out of the many decision’s, Starting Tummoc, as India’s first & only super app with my partner, Hiranmay and Narayan and scaling it to 3 countries, with 6.5 million plus users only in India, has been one my biggest flex so far!

Do you have, or did you have, a role model who influenced you to fight for what you are doing now?

Surprisingly, I have always taken myself as the person against whom, I am competing. So, naturally, my role model also has also been me, especially when I achieve anything, surpassing all odds! It’s a beautiful journey indeed! Other than that, I do have taken bits and pieces from my mother, grandmother, Indira Nuyi, Ratan Tata, Nelson Mandela, etc., on how to be the change!

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

First of all, Thank you, that you decided to do this as it’s a huge problem, we all are facing day in and out, so glad that even you are a part of that community. The “more the merrier”! Solving a problem on transport, especially public transport, is like a marathon. So, don’t get impatient with your failures, because, you will, fail a lot!! However, once, you will solve this “real problem”, you will find thousands to millions of random people sending you blessings for the great work you are doing, and that will make all the hustle so worth it!! Here, you will not just make money, but you will make a “real impact”, which will add convenience and value into the life of millions on a daily basis!

Noémie **Bercoff**

CEO

Organisation
Urbanloop

City, Country
Lyon, France

Noémie Bercoff is CEO of Urbanloop. A lawyer by training, she spent much of her career at the Egis group, rising to deputy managing director of its 20,000-strong consulting arm and leading its rail and infrastructure divisions. Her guiding principle has always been the public interest: she was drawn to transport for its blend of public purpose, complexity and technical challenge, and its room to find solutions.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

The guiding principle behind my career path is the public interest. I have always wanted to work in a sector that benefits the public: transport, health, food or education. After gaining some initial experience in local government, I moved into the transport sector, which combines the public interest, complexity and technical expertise: I enjoy simplifying things, getting things done, experimenting and finding solutions.

Asked what support was indispensable to her career, Noémie's answer is disarmingly short: "My feminist husband." On changing the sector, she is just as direct: Never make concessions on competence and diversity!

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility if everything turned out the way you imagine.

It's simple in every sense of the word: changing the world, and introducing low-carbon, efficient and inclusive transport services.

Do you have, or did you have, a role model who influenced you to fight for what you are doing now?

Yes, my mother, my grandmother, my daughters, and women I met trought my career. But I often feel like a 'pioneer', and I'm taking the time to act as a role model for other women now.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

That's an interesting question. Sometimes it's rewarding to be the only one, to succeed despite the obstacles, with strength and perseverance. Often it's complicated; I feel like an outsider. The issue of women's progression to the highest positions is a real challenge. We are sometimes criticised, in general terms, for being too sensitive; I often say that sensitivity does less harm to a business than certain expressions of anger – which are generally more typical of men and much more widely accepted. What I'd like to change, and what I'm changing on a daily basis, is simply this: I'm recruiting women so that I'm no longer the only one. It's a very effective and simple solution.

"I'm recruiting women so that I'm no longer the only one. It's a very effective and simple solution."

Nurmaria **Sarosa**

Nurmaria Sarosa is Founder of Selaras Logistics and Chairperson of Women in Logistics and Transport Indonesia, based in South Jakarta. Across more than three decades in the sector she has come to see mobility as a driver of economies rather than a way of moving goods. She works on two shifts at once: the transition to greener logistics, and the space for women to lead it. Her aim is not a women's industry, but one where the question of whether women can lead no longer arises.

Founder Selaras Logistics

Organisation
Women in Logistics and Transport (WiLAT)

City, Country
South Jakarta, Indonesia

"I want the next generation to enter this industry not with the question, 'Can women lead here?' but with the conviction that 'Of course women can'."

After more than three decades in a sector widely seen as masculine, she says she never felt she had to become like a man in order to be heard.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

Having worked in transportation and logistics for more than three decades, I have learned that being a woman in a male-dominated sector does not mean becoming "like a man" to be valued or heard. Diversity, collaboration, leadership and the courage to make decisions are strengths that can drive positive change. What I want to change is the culture that makes women feel they must work twice as hard to prove themselves. I want future generations to enter the industry without questioning whether women can lead, but knowing that **of course they can**.

What support was indispensable for your career development?

For me, the most important support in career development is trust and opportunity: the chance to take on responsibility, lead, make decisions and prove your capabilities through results. Mentors, colleagues, family and community also provide valuable encouragement and perspective. But the best support is not simply opening doors for someone, but helping them become strong enough to open doors for themselves and others. That is why I now strive to support other women through mentoring, networks, leadership and growth opportunities, creating an environment where more women can succeed and help others succeed.

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

My advice is simple: don't wait for change, be part of it today. Transportation and logistics are undergoing major shifts in digitalization, decarbonization, electrification, diversity and inclusion. We should question established ways of working and ask whether there is a better, greener and more inclusive approach. Start with what you can control: reduce emissions, use technology and data more effectively, create equal opportunities, listen to younger generations and build workplaces where everyone can contribute.

Priya **Singh**

Co-founder / CBO

Organisation
Chalo Mobility Private Limited

City, Country
Mumbai, India

Priya Singh is Co-Founder and Chief Business Officer at Chalo Mobility in Mumbai. Trained in social work, she has always asked one question before taking anything on: how will this touch millions of lives? That question led her from building for individual car owners to reforming how millions experience public transport, from live bus tracking to digital payments, at a company built on the belief that cars alone could never solve mobility for a country as dense as India.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

I found the canvas almost by accident, in a spreadsheet. I have always asked myself: **How will this touch millions of lives?** While building a business around cars, I realized that cars could not be the answer for a densely populated, rapidly urbanizing country like India. We needed better public transport, especially buses, which can move more people using less space and resources. That realization became the foundation for Chalo: using technology to transform how buses operate and how people experience public transport. For me, mobility became an opportunity to solve problems not just for individuals, but for cities, communities and millions of people at once.

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility if everything turned out the way you imagine.

My vision is simple to say but hard to build: a country where taking the bus is a dignified, safe and rational choice, not something people are forced to use. I want women to feel safe waiting for buses, workers to spend less of their income and time on commuting, and cities to plan transport using real data rather than outdated assumptions. If we get this right, public transport can become the backbone of our cities, reducing congestion and emissions while giving millions of people back valuable time. **That is not just Chalo's business outcome; it is the purpose behind the work.**

Chalo runs a zero gender pay gap under her watch, bringing women into engineering and operations roles the industry once ruled out for them.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

Women are still underrepresented in transport and infrastructure, especially in leadership, engineering and decision-making. I've often been the only woman in the room, feeling the pressure to prove not only my ideas, but my right to present them. I want people and ideas to be judged on merit, without gender-based assumptions.

At Chalo, we promote this through equal pay and by bringing more women into engineering, operations and field roles. But representation also matters in **how systems are designed**. Safety, accessibility, lighting and digital payments can determine whether women feel able to use public transport. Women need to be involved before the blueprint exists, not as a checkbox, but because better transport requires diverse perspectives.

What would you tell someone in the transport sector to start doing differently from today?

Stop treating public transport riders as captive and start treating them as customers who have choices. People leave buses when they can because the system often lacks reliability, visibility and safety. The sector needs to invest in the essentials: **real-time data, predictable schedules, digital payments and safety features like live tracking and emergency support**. Reliability is not a nice-to-have; it is the product. Build it well, and buses can become the rational choice rather than the fallback.

"I want scrutiny on merits and not on how people see gender roles and come with preconceived notions about women."

Rume **Oshenye**

Founder & CEO

Organisation
EVC Point Nigeria

City, Country
Abuja, Nigeria

Rume Oshenye is founder and CEO of EVC Point Nigeria, an e-mobility tech startup mapping the country's EV charging and battery-swap network through its ConnectVolt app. A Chartered Tax Adviser who built a career across UK personal and corporate tax, she started the company after a curiosity sparked on maternity leave: Counting Abuja's charging stations by hand – grew into a mission. She also serves as Publicity Secretary on the first National Executive Committee of EMPAN, Nigeria's EV promoters association.

She began mapping Abuja's EV charging points by hand on maternity leave; that count became ConnectVolt, a nation-wide infrastructure app.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change?

Being the only woman in the room means I'm constantly aware of how I'm being perceived before I've even said anything. And when I do voice my opinions, they're not always listened to the first time. Sometimes not even the second time either. So I've had to learn to say things ten times over, in different ways, sometimes through different people, just to get an idea taken seriously that would have been accepted immediately if a man had said it. It is truly exhausting in a way that has nothing to do with the actual work. I'm not just doing the job, I'm doing the job plus the extra labour of making sure I'm heard doing it.

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

The bravest thing I did was leaving the certainty of a UK tax career, where I was qualified, established, and knew exactly what the path looked like, to build something from scratch in an industry I had no formal background in. I wasn't an engineer. I wasn't a mobility expert. I was a tax specialist who noticed charging stations on maternity leave and decided that gap was worth chasing. But if I'm honest, the braver decision wasn't the leap itself, it was deciding to stay in the room after I'd made it. Ideas are easy to have. Staying, and insisting on being taken seriously, is the harder part.

"I'm not just doing the job, I'm doing the job plus the extra labour of making sure I'm heard doing it."

Sartaj **Lamba**

Founder & CEO,

Organisation
Buddy Mobility Care

City, Country
Chandigarh, India

Sartaj Lamba is Founder and CEO of Buddy Mobility Care in Chandigarh, India, providing accessible, dignified transport for senior citizens and persons with disabilities. She built the company after struggling to arrange safe hospital travel for his bedridden father-in-law, who lived with Parkinson's disease. Lamba now works to make accessibility a standard part of India's transport infrastructure, built in from the start rather than added on as a specialised service later.

"Even small changes made today can help build a transport ecosystem that is safer, more dignified, and truly inclusive."

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

The turning point came when my father-in-law was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and gradually became bedridden. Despite having access to resources and support, arranging safe and dignified travel for his frequent hospital visits remained extremely difficult. That experience made me realise the significant gap in India's mobility infrastructure for senior citizens and persons with disabilities, and inspired me to build a solution combining accessible mobility with end-to-end assistance and dignity.

What began as one family finding a way to get to the hospital is now a company helping thousands of people move independently, every day.

What is your ultimate goal? Share your vision for infrastructure and mobility.

My ultimate goal is to make accessible and dignified mobility a standard part of India's transport infrastructure, not a specialised service. I envision senior citizens, persons with disabilities and people with mobility challenges travelling independently and confidently across cities.

Infrastructure, public spaces, airports, hospitals and transport systems should be designed with universal accessibility at their core, from the very beginning.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

Working in a traditionally male-dominated mobility and transport sector has been both challenging and rewarding. I've always believed capability, commitment and results should define a professional, not gender. I'd like to see more women represented in leadership and operational roles. Most importantly, I hope future women professionals are never made to feel they need to prove themselves more simply because they're women.

Tamara **Nerima**

Tamara Nerima is Marketing and Sustainability Director at Scania East Africa in Nairobi, leading alternative fuels strategy and e-mobility policy advocacy across the region. She sits on the boards of EuroCham Kenya and the Swedish East African Chamber of Commerce. Her career has run through HR, finance, radio and the BBC World Service before sustainability, which taught her that careers need not be linear. She argues Africa should design mobility for its own conditions.

Marketing and Sustainability Director

Organisation
SCANIA East Africa

"My hope is that we reach a point where a woman working in a workshop, leading an engineering team or running a transport business is no longer remarkable."

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

Pivot.

If I could give my younger self one piece of career advice, it would be not to be afraid of changing direction.

I started my career in HR and, over the years, have worked across finance, operations, procurement, radio, project management, sales, marketing and now sustainability. At several points, moving into something new felt unconventional, but every experience added another layer to the way I understand business, people and the transport industry today.

Careers do not have to be linear.

Sometimes the opportunity that appears to take you sideways is actually the one that moves you furthest forward.

Her career has passed through HR, finance, procurement, radio, project management, sales and marketing, including launching the first BBC Kiswahili website.

Tatiana **Rey-Bellet**

Director, TIR & Transit

Organisation
International Road Transport Union

City, Country
Geneva, Switzerland

Tatiana Rey-Bellet is Director of TIR and Transit at the International Road Transport Union in Geneva, leading its work on customs transit systems that keep freight moving across borders. She joined IRU in 2012 after almost a decade in development, managing health and sanitation projects under UNICEF, plus education and communications roles in Pakistan and Russia. She learns by listening at border crossings, to drivers and customs officers alike, not only to managers.

At border crossings she makes a point of listening to drivers and customs officers, not only to managers, exporters and national transport associations.

What support was indispensable for your career development?

When I visit border crossings, I listen to drivers and to customs officers (yes, it matters to listen to the people for whom transit facilitation and security are daily priorities), as well as to transport company managers, exporters, and national road transport associations. It is important to continuously broaden my understanding of transport as part of a larger trade system. Transport needs exist only because trade exists, and trade cannot happen without transport – so deepening my understanding of trade needs is essential. Asking questions and building solutions together with different partners is how I keep growing. Every question, and every joint effort, is another step in my growth.

"My support has been my own attitude: to always listen to the people who work in transport, in whatever role they hold. Every question is a step in my growth."

Virginia Olalde **López-Gavito**

Executive Director

Organisation
CANAPAT

City, Country
Ciudad de México, Mexico

Virginia Olalde López-Gavito is Executive Director of CANAPAT in Mexico City, where she works on road safety, sustainable mobility and gender inclusion across passenger transport. Trained in international business and public policy, she moved into the sector through Mexico's automotive and heavy-duty vehicle industry, building her credibility over years of often being the only woman, and the youngest voice, in the room, before rising to lead one of Mexico's key transport associations.

She spent years as the only woman, often the youngest person, in Mexico's automotive and transport negotiations. Now she leads one of its national associations.

Do you have a role model who influenced you to fight for what you are doing now?

My strongest role models have always been the women in my family: my great-grandmother was a migrant who supported her family as a seamstress, my grandmother was one of the early women to graduate as a dental surgeon from UNAM, my aunts became surgeons and engineers, and my mother remains my greatest inspiration. They taught me that being the first, the only, or one of very few women in a room should never determine how far you can go.

Which moment prompted you to enter the field of mobility and infrastructure?

My path into transport wasn't something I planned. My background was in international business and public policy, and when I joined Mexico's automotive and heavy-duty vehicle sector, I began to understand transport from a much broader perspective: mobility is behind almost everything, education, employment, healthcare, trade. That realisation changed the way I saw the sector, and turned a professional opportunity into a personal commitment.

How does it feel to work in a male-dominated environment, and what would you like to change or (not) experience in that context?

For many years I was often the only woman in the room, and frequently one of the youngest too. Over time I learned that credibility isn't

> **"Being the first, the only, or one of very few women in a room should never determine how far you can go."**

demanded, it's built, through preparing thoroughly, listening carefully and delivering on my commitments.

What I'd like to change is the idea that women need to adapt to traditionally male leadership styles to succeed. My hope is that the next generation will no longer have to talk about being 'the only woman in the room.'

What is the bravest decision you did (not) make that you would advise your younger self to make?

I would tell my younger self to speak up sooner. Early in my career I sometimes waited until I felt completely prepared before expressing an opinion. With experience, I learned you don't need to know everything to contribute something valuable.

Prepare yourself, certainly, but don't wait for perfection or permission. Raise your hand, ask the question, share your perspective. Courage often comes after you take the first step, not before.

In Loving Memory of **Eveline Prado Trevisan**

We are deeply saddened to hear about the passing of Eveline Trevisan. She was a powerful and generous presence in the movement for more inclusive, human-centered cities.

For more than three decades, Eveline shaped urban mobility in Belo Horizonte with care, persistence, and vision. Through her leadership of the Pedala BH program, she helped make cycling safer and more accessible while bringing people together across institutions and communities. Her work always reflected a deep understanding of how mobility connects to everyday life.

She believed in cities that work for everyone, especially those who are often overlooked. As she once shared, "the city needs to be designed for people's daily lives, for care, for coexistence". That belief was visible in everything she did.

Eveline carried a rare energy. She was open, warm, and deeply committed. She made space for others, listened with intention, and inspired action without ever losing her kindness.

She was recognized as a Remarkable Woman in Transport (2019) and again as a Remarkable Feminist Voice in Transport (2023). These recognitions reflect a legacy grounded in both impact and humanity.

Her work continues in the streets she helped transform and in the people she inspired along the way.

Thank you, Eveline. You will be deeply missed.

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