

Youth, mobility and rural livelihoods in sub-Saharan Africa

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Youth mobility in rural Africa: some substantive issues

- Putting youth transport/mobility needs and constraints in a livelihood context
- Factors shaping access to transport and livelihoods
- Youth as transporters
- Participatory child/youth-centred approaches to mobility issues

Putting youth transport/mobility needs and constraints in a livelihoods context

- Making the youth/transport/livelihood connection
- Considering livelihood needs: access to jobs/income (+ health + education + social networks)
- Defining 'youth'
- Case studies from rural Ghana and Nigeria

Youth and rural livelihoods

- Building multiple livelihood strategies
- Implications of the de-agrarianisation thesis
- The key role of transport/mobility
 - direct implications for access to work opportunities
 - indirect implications of access to health, education, social networks

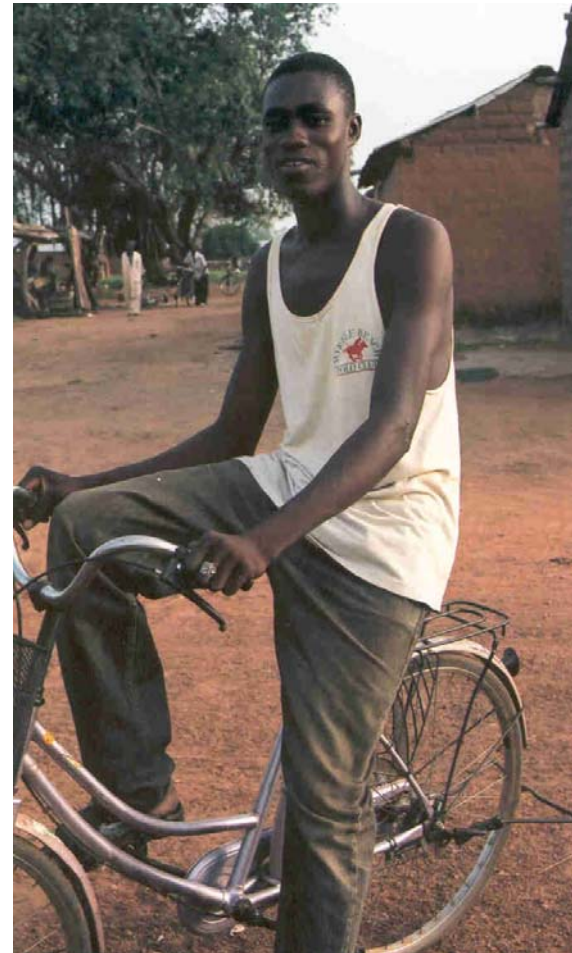
Some factors affecting access to transport and livelihoods

- gender
- age/education
- birth order?
- location (on/off road etc.)
- local livelihood options
- cultural and political economy contexts

Gender issues in transport access

“If we want to hire [a bicycle] they will tell us we are girls to work at the kitchen, not to ride a bicycle... boys shout at us to leave the bicycle. We don’t have time to learn to ride because we close school at 2 p.m. and use our time to 4 to cook... since there is no light here... we must finish our chores and then it’s dark.... Boys ...will quickly fetch water and go to play.”

[JSS girl pupil, 15 yrs, Sampa]



Age/education factors in transport access

“In urban areas a child of 9 can travel on their own, but in rural areas a child of 15 may not not travel on their own because of illiteracy.... Those in urban areas have seen many cars and tarred roads and other signs....”

[Father of 2 boys, Aworabo]

“those living in the rural areas find it difficult to travel on their own [but in urban areas children of 10 or 12 might travel alone] because they are educated”

(Girl, 15 years, Sampa)

Transport as livelihood

- Gender perspectives
 - girl carriers, boy operators
- Transport as liberator? Nigeria's rural achaba (motorbike taxi) drivers
- Long-term health, education and knock-on livelihood implications

Transport as livelihood: gender perspectives

Headloading as female occupation:

‘we feel shy to carry the firewood [to town for sale] because the girls will be laughing at us’

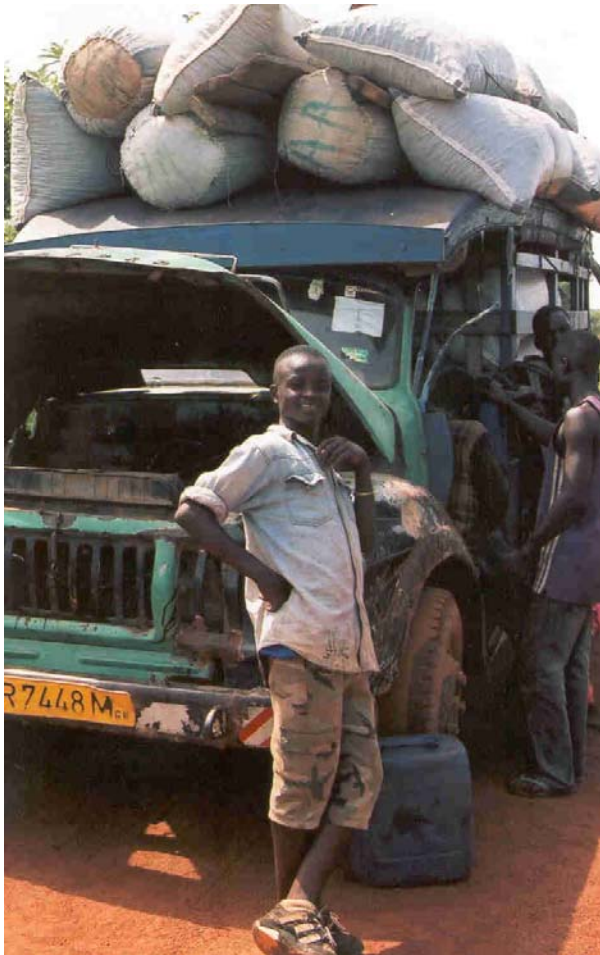
(Boy of 15, Abora)

‘to see a man carrying things on his head in our culture is not allowed’

(Birom man, Jos)



Transport as livelihood: boy operators



girls are not as strong as boys [so can't operate push trucks]'

(Youth, 20s, Sampa)

Transport as livelihood and liberator?

Nigeria's rural achaba drivers

[Jos Plateau data]

- Mostly youths employed
- Mostly young passengers (more male)
- A major source of income
- Usually combined with other occupations
- Very high accident rates
- Impact on villagers' mobility and perceptions of isolation

'youth have returned to the villages'

Promotion of participatory child/youth-centred approaches in mobility studies

- Ethical issues – youth as partners in research, or merely tokenism?
- Can youth-centred approaches empower?
- Can we learn from Indian experience?
- Research plans: Ghana and South Africa