

Understanding barriers to accessing social and economic opportunities in Aotearoa New Zealand

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What we did...

The Ministry of Transport undertook a project to investigate what access is and why it is important, which informed the Transport Outcomes Framework's definition of inclusive access as "Enabling all people to participate in society through access to social and economic opportunities such as work, education and healthcare".



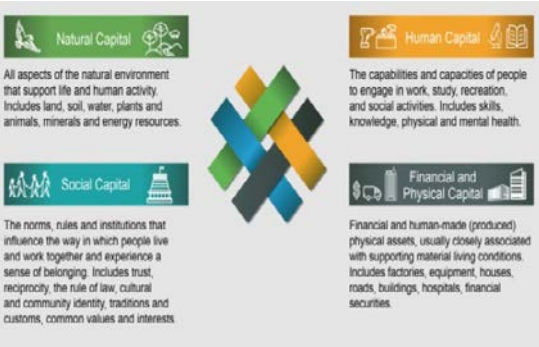
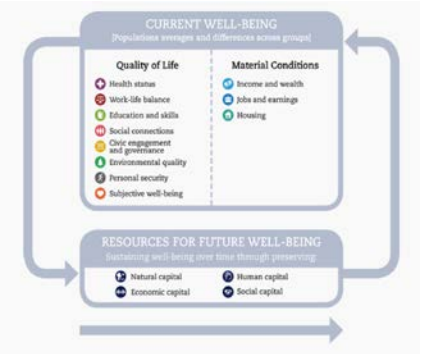
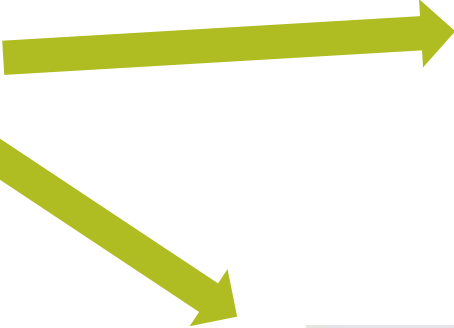
NZ Transport Agency and IPSOS: a programme of in-depth immersive and collaborative research with people with disabilities or limited financial means to elicit deeper insight into the role the transport system has to play in enabling full participation in society.



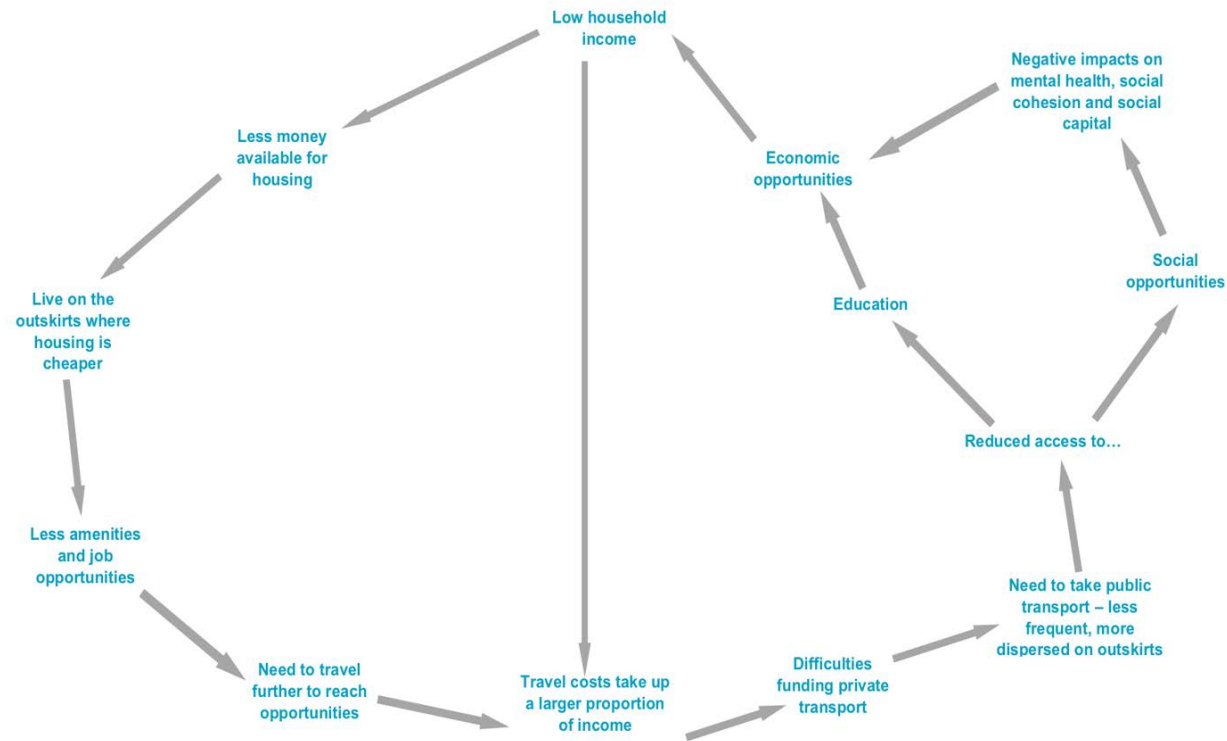
This presentation brings together these two pieces of work, sharing our innovative approach to exploring barriers to access, what we have learnt so far about the impact that these barriers can have on overall liveability and wellbeing, and what might be done to improve accessibility and properly incorporate impacts into policy development.

Why is access important?

- Access is a core enabler for many opportunities - it creates economic benefits through access to employment, goods and services, and less tangible benefits through social connections.
- It increases the wellbeing of people as it allows them to expand their capabilities and live the lives they value.



Transport Poverty



Those with disabilities and those on low incomes are more impacted by transport poverty

- Groups most likely to suffer from transport poverty include households with low incomes, members with disabilities, elderly, Maori and Pasifika, in areas with poor transport connections and/or without access to a car
- They are also the most likely to suffer reduced access if transport policy does not account for the distributional impacts on these groups, but they also stand to gain the most if policy is designed to improve their access
- In the last week
 - 25% of New Zealanders couldn't take a journey that would have been beneficial
 - 44% of people with disabilities couldn't take journey that would have been beneficial
 - Those untaken journeys were more likely to have had a notable impact on people with disabilities (59%) and low income households (49%) compared to the total population (44%).

"It's very important for me to maintain contact with my whanau but my disability prevents me from venturing out to see them and it affects my emotional and spiritual wellbeing"

"I had to skip a meal due to lack of food in the house"

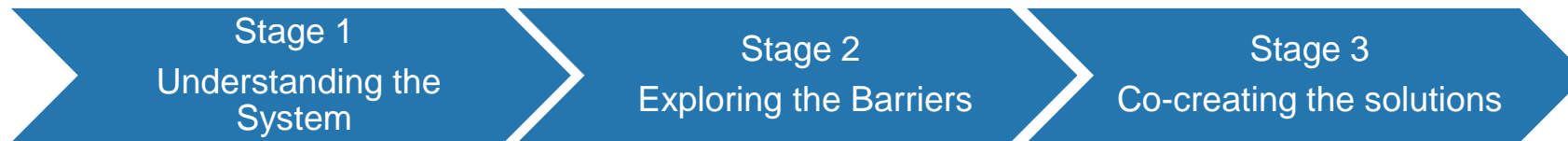
"Missed out on the extra money that I would have got if I could get to the job opportunity"

Source: NZTA Customer Journey Monitor Q2 2019: Q11: Were there any journeys within the last week which would have been beneficial to undertake, but you couldn't? (n=2,064 for Q2 2019) ; Q14a: To what extent did not being able to take that journey affect you or your family? (Base: all those who could not undertake a journey in the past week, n=497).

NZTA has research underway to explore barriers faced by those most impacted



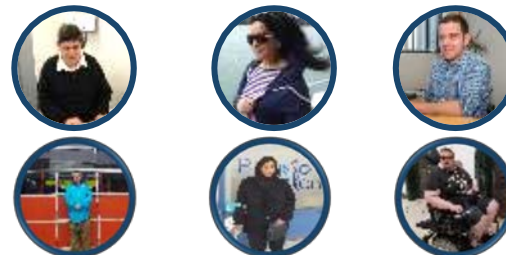
IPSOS are conducting this research



- Desk research
- 15 Stakeholder interviews
- 6 Customer empathy interviews
- Consultation with Diversity NZ

- 20 customers with disabilities plus 10 on low incomes
- Get to know you interviews
- Immersive ethnographic sessions
- Reflective interviews
- Final reflections

- 3 x Dynamic Exchanges
 - 4 customers from stage 2
 - 2 NZTA staff
 - Moderator
- Closing the feedback loop



Access is pivotal to quality of life



This is amplified for those who are facing financial or health challenges



Transport barriers can have knock-on effects across the system, impacting social and economic outcomes



On getting kids to school

So often the barriers will be transport ...they won't have a car or there will be one car in the household which is used for the person that's working. Or if there is a car, it comes down to whether they're able to afford to put petrol in it or whether they're able to warrant or register it.

I think there is a temptation if you need to get your kids to school to drive a car that is unwarranted or unregistered. And then if you get caught doing that you build up debt.



On getting work

Their desire to work is typically huge ...one reason [for not working] that comes up over and over again, it was just too hard. I'd go to the job interview but it was going to be too hard for me to get there, to get to work [and] to guarantee I'd be there on time".



A wide variety of barriers have been encountered on our journeys with participants



- Cost
- Physical obstacles
- Uneven footpaths
- Steps
- Driver behaviour
- Changes to services
- Lack of seating
- Lack of shelter
- No safe crossings
- Steps
- Misused mobility parks
- Lack of information
- Hard-to-read signage
- Feedback channels
- Lack of digital access

How can we address these barriers?



We can make tweaks to existing infrastructure and services, but the key to future equitable access is to consider these issues from the start through:

- Universal design
- User research
- Co-design
- Consistency
- Cross-government collaboration and co-ordination
- Influencing local councils to improve accessibility
- Building empathy



Policy implications

The work that NZTA and IPSOS have done shows that even minor policy or infrastructure design choices can have a significant impact on different groups of people and risk disadvantaging them if their needs are not considered.

The fact that access is identified as a key outcome of transport policy signals that we should be considering the impacts of transport policy in terms of how they affect access for different groups of people as an inherent part of the policy process.

