

**Project Title:** The Freedom Traveler

**Project Type:** e-brochure (with link to two videos)

**Idea for a Better World:** 500 years ago, women were disadvantaged in the freedoms of movement, speech, and lifestyle choices. 500 years later, has there been any change? Women are forbidden from driving a car in Saudi Arabia. They can ride bicycles, but must wear a full-body abaya (veiled cloak), be accompanied by a male relative, and are bounded within certain areas. Road safety rules do not apply to women in India. 62% of all students enrolled in the universities of Pakistan are female but the majority of them do not possess the opportunity to work. They face difficulties on their daily commutes because it is considered taboo for women to be out of their homes, alone. The economy is suffering as such a large percentage of the population stay at home rather than go out to work. I want to help woman around the world to experience freedom of movement. Enabling girls to be independent would have an immediate positive impact on national economies through job creation and labour mobility. To quote Jan Peterson, Chair Huairou Commission, "For women to be empowered and able to thrive, they must be able to move. People talk about mobility, but they're not talking about women's mobility. At the individual level, when we talk about women's mobility, we're talking about being able to drive a car or go out at night, to be able to carry their goods to the market to earn a livelihood, to be able to swim to safety in a flood or tsunami."

**About Project:** The Freedom Traveller (TFT) connects and empowers female travellers, especially from the countries where freedom of movement for women is restricted, with a platform where women of all nationalities and beliefs can actively network, share knowledge and resources, and map their experiences of travel via crowdmapping technology. The overall concept of TFT is to spark the change. When women will read about other women who were courageous enough to travel alone on a local, national or international level, they would be encouraged to follow suit. One story will give birth to another, causing a gradual societal change. TFT will initially target the university-going female students of Pakistan who have the access to the internet. They are familiar with the western culture and possess a desire for freedom and curiosity for the world. If TFT is a success, the effect would trickle down to other parts of the society. With 30 million internet users in Pakistan, 15 million of whom browse the web using their mobile phone; the role of internet in shaping the future of the country is undeniable.