

# GENDER

AND URBAN PLANNING



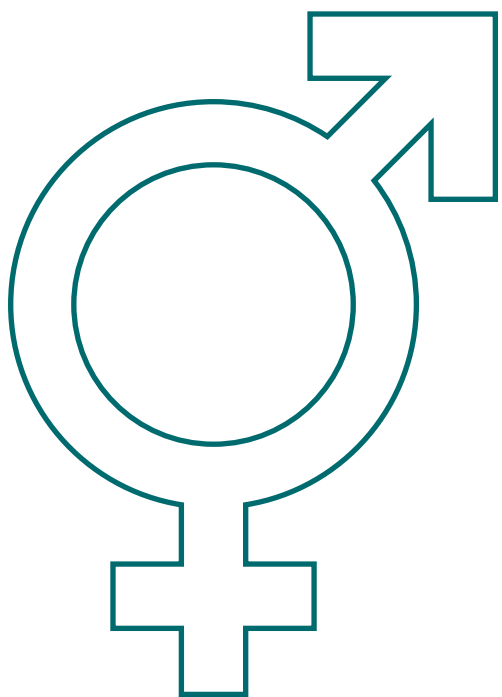
ISSUES AND  
TRENDS

**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



# **GENDER**

AND **URBAN PLANNING**



ISSUES AND  
TRENDS

## Gender and Urban Planning: Issues and Trends

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# Foreword

There are some components of urban planning which can be gender responsive but are not addressed. These include mixed use, accessibility, mobility, safety and security, distribution of services, community buildings and social mix.



The renewed drive to make urban planning relevant to the realities of the 21st Century should take up the challenge to make our cities and towns responsive to the needs and priorities of women and men, girls and boys. This report is timely as UN-Habitat is currently striving to support the necessary reforms to make urban planning an effective tool for governments and local authorities the world over so as to realize sustainable urban development. Our strategy is to promote spatial design of cities and larger territories that contributes to urban sustainability, improves economic growth and makes cities more efficient, inclusive and equitable. In this respect, gender equality and empowerment of women are key considerations for urban planning and design.

On the one hand, urban planning assumptions about communities and how people interact with cities to a large extent do not take into account existing evidence showing that women and men use urban services, access urban environments, and are impacted upon by cities differently. As a result, urban planning policies and programmes have been found wanting in tackling the needs of women and girls in most cases. There are some components of urban planning which can be gender responsive but are not addressed. These include mixed use, accessibility, mobility, safety and security, distribution of services, community buildings and social mix. On the other hand, the effect of urban planning on people's lives, well being and quality of life is not sufficiently recognized by the majority in the women's movement. The link between urban planning, poverty reduction, economic empowerment of women, and ending violence against women is hardly understood by the drivers of gender equality and empowerment of women at local, national, regional and international levels.

This report therefore attempts to increase awareness of gender issues in urban planning theory and practice. Its genesis is in UN-Habitat's efforts to mainstream gender into our flagship reports on human settlements. It is a contribution towards bridging the gender gap in urban planning policies,

programmes, tools, guidelines, approaches and legislation. It is a reference guide for practitioners, including urban planners, gender experts and academics, as well as activists, civil society organizations and other actors working in the areas of urban planning, gender equality and women empowerment, urban governance and management, land and housing, transport, infrastructure and basic services, safety and security. It can be used to engage with cities and towns at different levels of development, from market towns to mega cities.

This report examines how developments in urban planning have addressed gender inequality in the past, what the key issues are and how planning can help address gender inequality in the future. The report draws on available empirical evidence and case studies and provides a firm basis for much-needed on-going action research. I trust that this report will contribute towards promoting social justice and gender responsive urban planning. I believe that urban planners who have not been fully exposed to gender issues, as well as activists and gender experts not familiar with the urban planning field will find this publication useful. We need to work and learn together in order to make our neighbourhoods, towns, cities and urban regions more environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive and economically productive.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the principal authors, all the gender and urban planning experts, and the UN-Habitat staff who contributed to the development of this report.



**Joan Clos**

Under-Secretary-General, United Nations  
Executive Director, UN-Habitat



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# Acronyms

BME	black and minority ethnic
CAP	Commonwealth Association of Planners
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPTED	crime prevention through environmental design
ECNI	Equality Commission of Northern Ireland
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GAD	gender and development
GIA	gender impact assessment
GM	gender mainstreaming
GROOTS	Grassroots Organisations Operating together in Sisterhood
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INDP	Irish National Development Plan
L2L	local to local dialogues
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
METRAC	Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children
MWN	Manchester Women's Network
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NZPI	New Zealand Planning Institute
PIA	Planning Institute of Australia
PUKAR	Partners for Urban Knowledge Action & Research
RTPI	Royal Town Planning Institute (UK)
RUAF	Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Food Security
SBS	Southall Black Sisters (London)
SEW	Self-Employed Women's Association
SPARC	Society for the Promotion of Resource Area Centres
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
WEF	World Economic Forum
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment Globalizing Organisation
WIC	Women in Cities International
WID	Women in Development
WIN	Women's International News
WIP	Women in Planning

# Glossary

## Gender auditing

The process of assessing the actual position of women relative to men in terms of urban planning issues. It allows for examination of activities, programmes and policies from a gender perspective to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for promoting gender equality issues. This process relies on the availability of sex-disaggregated statistics.

## Gender budgeting

The process of ensuring that all budgets from the national to the local level are scrutinised from a gender perspective, making it possible to calculate how much is being and should be spent on issues impacting women and men.

## Gender impact assessment

A tool used to assess the gendered effects of policies and programmes, most effective when undertaken by the affected groups themselves. The process involves evaluating the potential effect of policies and programmes on different groups of women and men, boys and girls, and looking post facto at the results of policies and programmes.

## Gender mainstreaming

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implication for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.<sup>1</sup> This entails bringing results of socio-economic and policy analysis relative to gender into all decision-making processes of the organisation—including both the core policy decisions of the organisation and the small everyday decisions of implementation—and tracking the outcome.

## Gender proofing

The means by which an organization ensures that all policies and practices within organisations have equally beneficial effects on men and women.

## Gender-sensitive

An approach to public policy that recognises the differences and inequities between women's and men's needs, roles, responsibilities and identities.

## Intersectionality

Analysis, advocacy and policy development that addresses multiple discriminations and helps people understand how different sets of identities impact access to rights and opportunities. This entails recognizing that women experience discrimination and violations of human rights not only on the basis of their gender, but also as a result of other unequal power relations owing to their race, ethnicity, culture, caste, class, age, ability or disability, sexual orientation or religion.

## Sex-disaggregation of data

The collection of data on men and women separately in relation to all aspects of urban planning, including employment and livelihood, housing, ethnicity, class, caste, age and location.

## Women's empowerment

The core of empowerment lies in the ability of a woman to plan and control her own destiny. This implies that to be empowered women must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), they must also have the agency to use those rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as are provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions). And to exercise agency, women must live without the fear of coercion and violence.

# Executive Summary

The aim of this report is to raise awareness about the way the planning of urban settlements affects gender equality, and women's empowerment. A secondary aim is to ensure that urban planners and those involved with planning understand that urban planning has a role to play in assisting women to achieve their rights in the political, economic, social and educational fields. The report shows how urban planning can help contribute to delivering the international commitment to gender equality and empowerment of women as stated in the Millennium Development Goals, the Habitat Agenda the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) and other internationally agreed-upon commitments.

Urban planning affects the sustainability, accessibility, usability, design and quality of places. Since the way women and men live their lives differs, urban planning may well deepen inequalities if gender differences are not recognised and taken into account in plans and projects. And since gender cuts across other equality groupings such as disability, age and religion, a need exists to ensure that planning addresses diverse groups of women and men. This report examines how urban planners initially neglected gender as the profession developed, how subsequent movements in urban planning have attempted to address gender equality, and the requirements that remain for recognizing and accommodating the specific needs of women and men in urban environments around the world.

Three key trends impacting urban planning in the coming decades are continued urbanisation of the world's population, poverty and climate change. By 2030, more than two-thirds of the world's population will live in cities and towns, and most of this century's rapid urban population growth will happen in the context of developing countries. Poverty is a significant factor in urbanisation and a powerful influence on the shape of urban growth. While many urban poor live in inner-city slums, many more live in informal settlements on the urban periphery, where growth outpaces infrastructure development for water, sanitation and transport, affecting livelihoods and well-being. Along with rapid urbanisation, the big issue for urban planning is climate change, which increases the vulnerability of coastal settlements to flooding and may lead to global food insecurity. Studies have identified the direct and indirect effects of climate change on women and men, boys and girls. An understanding of the gendered aspects of climate change, mitigation and adaptation is essential to ensure a more sustainable urban future.

The key gender issues identified in this report include informal settlements, water and sanitation, land tenure and infrastructure, livelihoods, employment and transport. One of the roles of planning is to create spaces that enable women and men to access employment and sustainable livelihoods. Inequalities in accessing livelihoods and employment

contribute to urban poverty, and this is highly gendered in its impacts with significant social, economic and political consequences for communities. The formal development of urban settlements is based on access to secure land tenure. The growth of peripheral informal settlements is directly linked to the need to access affordable land. Cultural and legislative impediments restricting women's access to land and property ownership exacerbate the situation. Access to resources is difficult in informal settlements and basic infrastructure needs often go unmet. These factors continue to affect women more than men as women shoulder the majority of the burden of urban poverty.

Linked issues among housing, health, income and safety affect the capacity of women relative to men to engage in all aspects of urban life. For women in many urban areas, the need to travel long distances every day on foot or by public transport to access water, employment, education, health care and other services raises safety concerns. The design of streets and settlements has historically overlooked the needs women have to move around urban spaces safely and freely and to engage in leisure and recreation. When land-use policies and transportation plans are developed independently of each other, gender inequalities in accessibility are perpetuated.

Frequent scarcity of water supply has become a significant problem facing growing urban settlements and is widespread in Southeast Asian and sub-Saharan African countries. As those most responsible for collecting water for their households, women and girls are more likely to bear the brunt of water supply problems. Time taken to collect water reduces the amount of time available for other important household tasks, and for outside pursuits, such as education. Related to water, sanitation is a key issue in rapidly growing urban settlements. The gender-specific needs of women are often ignored in improvements to informal settlements' sanitation and public facilities, such as schools. The results are degrading and physically dangerous situations where women and adolescent girls are forced to use toilets that are not well-located and lack privacy. In many countries, women are primarily responsible for all forms of waste disposal, leading to exposure to myriad health risks, a problem that is aggravated when no formal waste disposal services exist.

The barriers and challenges to developing gender-sensitive urban planning can be summarised under four headings: cultural, institutional, political and moral and personal. Cultural factors include the typically gender-insensitive nature of urban planning education and practice. This can be overcome by embedding gender considerations in professional education and training, and in professional codes of conduct. Institutional factors include the existence and positioning of gender specialists and gender advisory

groups within the structure of public authorities and other agencies, the access they have to senior management and politicians, and their authority to effect change in policies and programmes through decision-making mechanisms. These barriers can be overcome by ensuring that advisory groups are formalised in local government and that gender specialists have clearly recognised positions in organisations. Political factors include the amount of top-level support available to implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes and to follow through. It is important to ensure that politicians and officials take responsibility for working with advisory groups and supporting on-going efforts. Moral and personal factors include the extent to which legislative requirements resonate with the values and beliefs of planners and the public. These awareness barriers can often be tackled through effective public participation and grassroots campaigns.

Urban planning is a significant tool for dealing with the sustainable urbanization challenges facing 21st century cities, including where and how to house people and connect people with the facilities they need. Within a specific legislative context, planning involves the various formal structures of government at different levels, working and engaging with the informal groupings that make up communities. Given the international commitment to achieving gender equality and the fact that cities are made up of gendered spaces and places, a new model for planning in the 21st century must integrate a gender perspective at each stage of the process and at each level of planning.

Mandates for a new model of urban planning include shaping and prioritising plans according to social equity concerns alongside economic and environmental concerns, and using data and information that is disaggregated by sex. There is a continued need to share better practice. Cross-cutting issues such as gender need to be acknowledged in the individual budgets of programmes, and accountability for achieving goals and targets is essential. There is a continued need to integrate spatial, transport and economic development planning with planning for health and social services. Gender impact assessments need to become routine. Those involved in and those with an influence over planning education and community capacity building must ensure that planners and those involved in public policy formulation and decision-making are trained in gender issues, grassroots involvement and leadership development.

Although planners work at a range of spatial scales, it is local governments in particular which have a key role to play facilitating gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive processes. The next step is to ensure that at each stage of the planning process, policies and programmes go through a rigorous process of assessment. Finally, local governments in particular can ensure that those working in the profession of planning and those engaged with grassroots groups know each other and work together. Urban planners and those involved in making decisions about the future of urban areas are ethically obligated to ensure that policies and programmes are pro-poor.







# Introduction to Gender and Urban Planning

# 1

The starting point is that gender inequality is a central issue for urban planning and development and that gender refers to women and men, girls and boys.

When former UN-Habitat Executive Director Anna Tibaijuka<sup>2</sup> called on urban planning practitioners to develop a different approach to planning that is pro-poor and inclusive, implicitly she was also calling for an approach to planning that is gender-sensitive, particularly since a key Millennium Development Goal—MDG 3—is gender equality and empowerment of women.

‘New Urban Planning’, advocated by the Commonwealth Association of Planners at the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, Canada, in 2006,<sup>3</sup> addresses that call for a new kind of urban planning by setting out ‘a normative proposition that builds on traditions of planning thought and on good practice from today such as gender aware planning’.<sup>4</sup> This report provides context and support for such efforts, looking specifically at gender and urban planning to demonstrate how the new urban planning approach needs to address the complexity of gender-based issues if it is to deliver sustainable urban development. The report builds on extensive work on women and planning that started in the 1980s, and acknowledgement and debt is given to the grassroots groups, practitioners and scholars who have developed a greater understanding of gender-aware planning over the past three decades.

This report recognises the distinction between the normative perspective of how things could and should be and the way things are. The starting point is that gender inequality is a central issue for urban planning and development and that gender refers to women and men, girls and boys. The report shows that traditionally, aspects of urban planning have disadvantaged women and that in many instances, a focus on gender involves rectifying long-standing inequalities experienced by women and involving men. A gendered perspective concerns men too, and one of the challenges is to ensure that urban planning recognises the different needs of both women and men when dealing with the challenges of urban sustainability. Several different approaches to addressing gender inequality exist, and a wide range of tools are now available to identify issues and assess the potential impact of policies and programmes. This report examines how developments in urban planning have addressed gender inequality in the past; what the key issues are and how planning can help address gender inequality in the future. The report draws on available empirical evidence and case studies and provides a firm basis for much-needed on-going action research.

## **Structure of the report**

This report is set in the context of three major trends that will increasingly impact urban planning in the coming decades. First, urbanisation of the world’s population is on-going: fully two-thirds of the global population will live in urban areas by 2030. Second, climate change is leading to increased threats of flooding of low-lying areas, shortages of water and disruption of urban agriculture.<sup>5</sup> Third, increasing levels of poverty concentrated in urban areas will continue to be exacerbated by urbanisation and climate change unless mitigating action is taken.<sup>6</sup> Local approaches to infrastructure and public space development, housing, employment, transportation and other important aspects of urban planning will increasingly be influenced by these trends, and this paper addresses them in light of their gendered dimensions.

Section 1 provides the rationale for examining the topic of gender in urban planning. It highlights the different needs and roles of both women and men in towns and cities and outlines the ways in which contemporary urban planning has failed to address these. In this context, the different roles and needs of women in terms of employment and livelihoods, land and housing, as well as basic infrastructure and urban services are highlighted. This section cites recent international and United Nations (UN) declarations, goals, targets, resolutions and decisions on gender and development in general, and gender and urban development in particular.

Section 2 looks at how gender has been addressed in contemporary urban planning, from its foundation in late 19th century Western Europe through its spread to the colonies and developing countries and on to the present. The development and implementation of ideas about gender in urban planning by scholars and practitioners, particularly post-1960s, is discussed throughout the section and key contributions are highlighted.

Section 3 identifies and summarises recent and innovative experiences in the area of gender in urban planning, including successes and challenges. First, the section covers experiences relating to the procedural aspects of urban planning, including institutional and regulatory frameworks; public participation

(within the context of the role of women in urban governance); monitoring and evaluation of urban plans (including gender toolkits and social and gender impact assessment); and urban planning education. Second, the section covers the substantive aspects of urban planning, including planning for sustainable urban development; dealing with informality; and providing infrastructure (especially transport, water and sanitation).

Section 4 starts with a summary of the gender issues of significance to planning for 21st century cities, on the basis of the review in Section 2 and the experiences discussed in Section 3. The section then identifies and describes the mechanisms through which a renewed or revisited urban planning should integrate gender in both the procedural (or process) and substantive (or plan content) dimensions of urban planning. Among the key mechanisms addressed are urban policy and legislation; urban design, urban plans and transport plans; building regulations and development control; monitoring and evaluation of urban plans; and urban planning education

## 1.1 Why is gender important in urban planning?

Urban planning is about creating towns and cities that are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, and that provide sufficient land for housing in suitable locations, connected to the amenities people need to live. The 2009 Global Report on Human Settlements, *Planning Sustainable Cities: Policy Directions*, frames urban planning as ‘a significant management tool for dealing with sustainable urbanisation challenges facing 21st century cities’.<sup>7</sup>

The planning of towns and cities is carried out through the efforts of both professionals and community representatives. Spatial planners play a pivotal role, drawing on and collaborating with engineers, utilities and social infrastructure experts. The specific links between gender equality and urban planning have recently been spelled out in the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but the need for gender equality and the advancement of women has been recognised internationally for almost 70 years.

The Commission on the Status of Women, which is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), was established following resolution 11 (II) of 21 June 1946. The commission is dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. It prepares recommendations and reports to the UN Council on promoting women’s rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields. A declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women was adopted by the General Council in 1967. It took another 12 years until the UN adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 to address long-standing disadvantages and inequalities experienced by women around the world. Since then, each arm of the UN has sought, with varying degrees of success, to help implement the convention through its activities. The convention was the first international instrument to define discrimination against women, and it did so as follows:

- Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.<sup>8</sup>

The ratification of conventions has not been geographically even, although non-ratification does not prevent a country from being assessed against the standards of any given convention. It can take many years for conventions to be ratified, as in the case of Fiji, where it took more than 10 years of advocacy for CEDAW to be ratified, and even longer in the Solomon Islands.<sup>9</sup>



Women repairing a road in Hanoi. ©Tran Thi Hoa/World Bank

The Beijing Platform for Action adopted in 1995 by governments at the Fourth World Conference on Women, further confirmed governments' commitment to alleviating gender inequality through gender mainstreaming (GM) and other methods. And it addressed women's rights to land and property. It was the Habitat Agenda, however, adopted at the UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul in 1996, that marked the most significant turning point in giving prominence to women's issues regarding land, settlements and the context of development.<sup>10</sup> Signatories to the Habitat Agenda resolved to:

- Accord every opportunity for full access and participation by women in municipal decision-making by ensuring necessary provisions for an equitable distribution of power and authority.<sup>11</sup>

In the Habitat Agenda, the UN and its member states committed to GM as a key process for assessing the ability of policy and legislation to meet the differing needs of women and men with regard to human settlements.<sup>12</sup> The commitment of UN member states is outlined in paragraph 46 of the Habitat Agenda:

We commit ourselves to the goal of gender equality in human settlements development. We further commit ourselves to:

- (a) Integrating gender perspectives in human settlements related legislation, policies, programmes and projects through the application of gender-sensitive analysis;
- (b) Developing conceptual and practical methodologies for incorporating gender perspectives in human settlements planning, development and evaluation, including the development of indicators;
- (c) Collecting, analysing and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information on human settlements issues, including statistical means that recognize and make visible the unremunerated work of women, for use in policy and programme planning and implementation;
- (d) Integrating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable resource management mechanisms, production techniques and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas;
- (e) Formulating and strengthening policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision-making.<sup>13</sup>

In the year 2000, the international community adopted the eight MDGs as a further framework for the development activities of more than 190 countries in ten regions. These have been articulated in more than 20 targets and 60 indicators.<sup>14</sup> Gender equality became a cross-cutting factor in each of the goals and a goal in its own right: Goal 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment resulted from years of advocacy by the international women's movement. An understanding of the gendered dimensions of the goals is crucial to achieving them equitably as well as efficiently. Urban Planning has a role to play in all eight goals; in particular, Goal 7 relating to environmental sustainability which has specific targets on water and sanitation and improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

There have been numerous ECOSOC and Security Council, UN-Habitat and Governing Council resolutions supporting the commitment to gender equality explicitly and addressing the long-standing inequalities between women and men (see Appendix 2). They include resolutions relating to land rights and the participation of women.<sup>15</sup> Resolutions are generally expected to lead to change, however, follow-up research reveals much less progress than might be expected.<sup>16</sup>

The ability of women to achieve political, economic, civic and educational equality can be hindered or helped by the environment in which they live and the facilities they can access. More progress could be made through the mainstreaming of gender into all aspects of UN work. The Commission on the Status of Women is in an important position to ensure that urban planning is integrated into related areas of work affecting the built environment.



**Women participate in an elections process in Afghanistan.**  
©UN-Habitat/Wataru Kawasaki

## 1.2 The different needs of women and men

Having outlined the international commitment to gender equality, this section goes on to examine the different needs of women and men in relation to employment, livelihoods, land and housing, social and physical infrastructure and everyday life. It is important for planners to keep asking how proposed plans and projects will alleviate gender inequality and disadvantage and promote equity. Significant global variations in inequality and disadvantage exist, not only between men and women, but among different groups of each. This examination is not exhaustive. Instead, this report draws on research to provide snapshots of situations in developing and developed countries.

### 1.2.1 Employment

Urban planning involves creating places and spaces for employment opportunities, whether formal or informal.<sup>17</sup> Planning not only identifies land uses, but also ideally integrates employment with transport and housing to make places work for everyone. In this way, equity in gender roles can be facilitated. The regeneration of existing settlements and the creation of new settlements provide opportunities for gender to be considered early on with no added costs and considerable benefits. By treating everyone the same and assuming that the position and needs of women and men are similar, plans may unwittingly reinforce inequalities.

The employment status of men and women varies greatly around the world. Women are more likely to earn less than men for doing the same type of work and are less likely to have a regular income or salaried position than men.<sup>18</sup> Many countries have experienced growth in the number of female students attending tertiary institutions and universities.<sup>19</sup> Despite this, women continue to be under-represented in areas such as public sector governance and the built environment professions such as urban planning, and over-represented in areas such as service industry employment and unpaid roles in family businesses.<sup>20</sup>

In general, women are less economically active in the formal employment sector than men. Research has shown that in developed countries, around 60 per cent of women combine employment with family responsibilities, and women with a preference for a home-centred life account for 20 per cent of employable women.<sup>21</sup> However, in developing countries, the reasons for women remaining outside the workforce are more likely to be related to the need to fulfil socio-cultural expectations, a lack of access to education, or the need to carry out caring roles within the household.<sup>22</sup> In the workforce, a gender gap still exists in relation to pay and working conditions, and this has implications for women's ability to access housing, transport and leisure and recreation.<sup>23</sup>

Analysis of global employment data shows that women are more likely than men to find employment in the informal sector.<sup>24</sup> Women represent a higher share of

vulnerable workers in every region and are more at risk of experiencing vulnerable employment situations.<sup>25</sup> Women in the informal sector are often self-employed home-based workers or street traders.<sup>26</sup> They also work in many other high-risk sectors, for example as waste-pickers, porters or construction workers. Informal employment poses a number of risks for women and children in developing countries. In Caribbean countries<sup>27</sup> and India,<sup>28</sup> women street vendors are regularly harassed by police who question their legal status. Women earn very low incomes, often much less than their male counterparts.<sup>29</sup> In informal settlements, without cooperative childcare networks, lack of available childcare means that children are often left at home alone or go with their mothers to work and are exposed to hazardous situations.<sup>30</sup> Lack of available water, sanitation and shelter while working also pose significant threats to some women, particularly travelling vendors.<sup>31</sup>

Gender differences also exist in paid and unpaid work. Women are more likely than men to act as the main caregivers in households, looking after children and elderly, ill or disabled family members, as well as undertaking the majority of other domestic duties. The way the burden of unpaid care work is distributed across different individuals has important implications for people's well-being and needs to be understood in the context of different countries.<sup>32</sup> As primary caregivers, women are responsible for ensuring children go to school and accessing medical treatment for family members, which can pose an extra burden in countries with high rates of communicable diseases and poor access to facilities. A study undertaken in Cordoba, Argentina, for example, found that women spend nearly three times more time on domestic tasks than men.<sup>33</sup> Although men and women spent about the same amount of time working, women's contributions went unpaid and unrecognised because household tasks were considered their traditional role.<sup>34</sup> The impact of all these issues on the location of facilities and services and the design of cities and urban areas needs to be understood in the context of different places.

### 1.2.2 Livelihoods

Linked to employment, urban planning has a key role to play working with cooperative governments, developers and land owners to create environments where women and men, girls and boys, are able to create sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families. This is particularly important for women, since they are more likely than men to find employment in the informal sector.<sup>35</sup> The ability to create a livelihood is affected not only by lack of income,<sup>36</sup> but also by exclusion in the form of inadequate transport systems, lack of access to services, health care and education, limited political voice, and poor-quality housing and infrastructure.<sup>37</sup> Inequalities in access to education for girls result in women accounting for two-thirds of adults who are unable to read or write.<sup>38</sup> Seventy per cent of children who do not attend school are girls.<sup>39</sup> A lack of education impacts livelihood opportunities when children become adults.<sup>40</sup>

Urban planners, working with government officials, land owners, developers and other officials, can create plans that set aside land for the household production of food and ensure that it is serviced with water and appropriate transport networks. Good planning and community development can ensure that women in informal sectors are able to take their produce to a safe place for sale or exchange. It can ensure that environments are accessible for everyone, disabled as well as able-bodied, by acknowledging the way in which gender and disability interrelate.<sup>41</sup>

Research shows that female-headed households are more likely to shoulder the burden of poverty than other households.<sup>42</sup> In both developed and developing countries, women-headed households are increasingly common,<sup>43</sup> although the causes vary. Reliance on one income makes these households extremely vulnerable. Domestic work, self-employment and casual or part-time labour offer little legal protection or security. If this income is lost, household members in some places may turn to prostitution, credit debt or illegal work to make ends meet.<sup>44</sup>

In countries without reliable social security systems, citizens have no safety net when their source of income fails. For households in poverty, maintaining a sustainable livelihood is a day-to-day struggle, especially when faced with barriers that reduce earning capacity, including caring duties, lack of education and poor infrastructure.<sup>43, 46, 47</sup>

Globally, women earn less over a lifetime than men, yet they tend to live longer. Their lower earnings can be attributed to time out of the workforce for childbearing, caring and household responsibilities, and getting paid less for the same work as men.<sup>48</sup> As a result, women in countries with limited social security may have little or no income when they reach retirement age. Some may continue to work or rely on other household members to provide for them. This is a growing concern in countries with ageing populations.

In developing countries, HIV/AIDS has become major threat to livelihoods.<sup>49</sup> This has a disproportionate impact on women. Caring for ill family members and orphaned children means more domestic duties and results in less time available to generate household income. This burden affects female children, preventing them from participating in formal education.

People living in poor urban environments have a higher risk of disease or injury and exposure to the effects of crime. This can affect their ability to sustain a livelihood.<sup>50</sup> When poverty deepens, often as a result of the burdens of HIV/AIDS, women and adolescent girls increasingly turn to transactional sex in order to provide necessary resources for their households. Transactional sex is often unprotected, increasing the likelihood of the spread of HIV/AIDS.<sup>51</sup>

Urbanisation processes such as rapid infill developments and urban sprawl, as well as pollution and natural disasters also impact household members' ability to provide for their needs. For urban slum dwellers and other women in poverty, accessing the natural resources on which they depend, such as



**A woman sells vegetables in Mathare slum, Nairobi-Kenya.**  
©UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu

firewood or charcoal, may involve travelling long distances; such resources may also be prohibitively expensive.<sup>52</sup> Increased reliance on natural resources has a negative effect on the environment and other population groups, particularly rural people, who rely on the environment for survival.

Rural poverty often leads to urban migration,<sup>53</sup> and rural-to-urban migrants often end up living in informal settlements. The need to earn livelihood may create a desire among some rural residents to live in or close to cities, where jobs are more plentiful, though living conditions can be worse than in poor rural areas.<sup>54</sup> Poor urban living conditions, including a lack of clean and affordable water, poor sanitation, inadequate housing and overcrowding, all compromise the health of slum dwellers. Women, children, elderly and disabled people are all particularly vulnerable to these factors. Added to this, poor health leads to an inability to earn a living, and since women are often less likely than men to access healthcare for lack of financial resources, this highlights the relevance of urban planning in attempting to change government and cultural attitudes that will lead to an improvement in the built environment and improve access to health facilities. Here planners can work with health providers to identify and zone land where appropriate in anticipation of needs.<sup>55</sup>

### 1.2.3 Land and housing

Secure tenure and equal property rights are critical issues for women, and these depend in large part on their ability to own land and housing.<sup>56</sup> In patriarchal societies, women can be excluded from the purchase of property, inheritance and decisions about land and property resources.<sup>57</sup> The death of a spouse can make women subject to eviction by relatives—a practice common throughout India and Africa.<sup>58</sup> Many countries have limited legal protection for women's property rights, and where it does exist it is not always acted upon, owing to weak enforcement and acquiescence to patriarchal power.<sup>59</sup>

In some cultures, a woman's right to property is related to her ability to fulfil cultural and religious expectations.<sup>60</sup> Women who are divorced, single or in same-sex relationships can experience discrimination in accessing land and housing. For example, customary practice in some countries dictates that women may still require a male signatory to purchase a house.<sup>61</sup> Accessing land and housing ownership is also difficult for women when they live in poverty, have unstable employment situations, are subject to an unregulated property market, suffer from domestic violence or encounter other barriers.<sup>62</sup>

The right to adequate housing is an integral part of women's human rights.<sup>63</sup> Housing issues and barriers are experienced differently by men and women, especially affordability and access, location, quality and design, homelessness, emergency housing and eviction. A lack of adequate housing and security of tenure has been shown to make women more vulnerable to violence.<sup>64</sup> Housing is inextricably linked to safety, income generation and

health,<sup>65</sup> and it provides a safe place for cultural and religious practices. Increasing women's property rights and addressing financial limitations is a key tool in fighting poverty and improving women's access to housing.<sup>66</sup> When women have access to affordable, adequate housing, their households tend to be more stable, leading to increased children's attendance rates at school.<sup>67</sup>

In developing countries, the worst housing conditions occur in slums and informal settlements, which are home to 'the majority of urban poor'.<sup>68</sup> These areas lack at least one element of basic infrastructure, such as piped water, improved sanitation or durable housing. Informal settlements on the periphery of formal cities may have restricted access to employment, education and other services, owing to a lack of transport infrastructure. Inadequate housing design and informal settlement layout impact women's comfort and health in the home and their ability to live independently and get the services they need.

Housing affordability and access to housing are growing problems in developed countries, as well. Many households are forced to reduce spending on food, education and heating to maintain access to housing. Affordability is often achieved at the expense of quality design and space leading to problems of overcrowding, which impact residents' health and well-being. The effects are felt most by single-parent households, single men and women, elderly and disabled people.<sup>69</sup> Globally, the privatisation of public or social housing is contributing to affordability issues, particularly in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.<sup>70</sup> A lack of affordable housing contributes to increasing homelessness.



*Settlement reconstruction in Nias, Indonesia. 2005. ©UN-Habitat/Veronica Wijaya*

The experiences of homelessness differ between men and women. Based on research in India, it was found that proportionally, more men than women live on the streets. There are a growing number of street children in many places, the majority of whom are boys aged 10 to 14.<sup>71</sup> Women are more likely to experience 'hidden homelessness' than men.<sup>72</sup> There is more impetus for women to put up with unsafe or unhealthy living conditions in order to avoid losing children to government officials and to protect them from further poverty and distress.<sup>73</sup> Alternatives are needed for those affected by domestic violence, the majority of whom are still women and children.

Forced evictions, or the removal of individuals, families or communities from their homes, land or neighbourhoods, against their will, directly or indirectly attributable to the State,<sup>74</sup> are an on-going threat to households and communities in poverty and are a contributing cause of homelessness. When urban redevelopment, city beautification, large-scale infrastructure and gentrification projects are not adequately linked to local needs and processes, they can lead to unnecessary forced evictions.<sup>75</sup> Forced evictions disproportionately affect women, itinerant households, migrants and indigenous people.<sup>76</sup> Evictions are often accompanied by violence, especially towards women, which may include intimidation, coercion, rape and beatings, bringing the whole process of urban renewal under question.<sup>77</sup> Urban planners can plan effectively with communities by building relationships with and understanding communities and play a critical role in

helping ensure that communities are not only involved in the planning process but become central to creating their future.<sup>78</sup>

The provision of emergency housing<sup>79</sup> is often inadequately planned for, thereby inadvertently increasing forms of homelessness and violence against women. Emergency housing is a key concern in hazard planning related to climate change and in conflict situations. In post-disaster management situations, urban planning has a key role to play in ensuring the protection of communities from future disasters. Urban planning can also play a role in achieving better rebuilding after disasters. Given that emergency relief camps often become longer-term settlements accommodating many thousands of people, better planning early on could help ensure better sanitation and the provision of services. Women and men need to be involved in these planning processes to ensure that their cultural needs are met. Women are more vulnerable to violence in temporary shelter. Where they do not own the homes destroyed, women are often excluded from the benefits of reconstruction and may have to live in temporary settlements for extended periods of time.<sup>80</sup>

In flood-prone areas such as Bangladesh, flooding leads to other hazards that have a significant impact on the health of urban poor residents. Floodwaters in slums can mix with raw sewage and result in water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea, typhoid and scabies. Water supplies also become contaminated during floods, as pipes in slum areas are likely to be damaged or leak (see Box 1).

### Box 1: Gender and climate change in Bangladesh

Researchers studying the impact of climate change on Dhaka predict the city will be affected in two major ways: flooding and drainage congestion, and heat stress. The elevation in Dhaka ranges from two to 13 metres above sea level. This means that even a slight rise in sea level is likely to engulf large parts of the city. Moreover, high urban growth rates and high urban densities have already made Dhaka more susceptible to human-induced environmental disasters.

With an urban growth rate of more than 4 per cent annually, Dhaka is already home to more than 13 million people and is one of the fastest-growing cities in Southern Asia. It is projected to accommodate more than 20

million people by 2025. The sheer number of people living in the city means that the negative consequences of climate change are likely to be felt by a large number of people, especially the urban poor who live in flood-prone and water-logged areas.

In Bangladesh, the Centre for Global Change has been researching and documenting how climate change affects women in particular and what this means for infrastructure. The research for the gender profile of climate change, documents instances where women felt they couldn't use cyclone shelters in adapted schools and other buildings because no consideration was given to the sanitary arrangements from a gender perspective. This

has led to women not using the shelters and being put in danger as a result. Sensitivity to the design of shelters can ensure that all members of the population are able to use them. It wasn't until after the devastating cyclone Sidrin 2007 that the government initiated the building of 4,500 new shelters in the coastal belt and after intense advocacy from the Centre for Global Change, government has changed the design criteria in a gender sensitive way in particular to address the sanitary arrangement.

Sources: UN-Habitat, 2008b; Ahmed and Neelormi, 2009.

### 1.2.4 Infrastructure

Physical and social infrastructure is essential for communities to function properly. Transportation, water and sanitation, electricity, information technology and other services are all aspects of physical infrastructure that not only shape the spatial structure of cities, but can also reinforce inequalities. Traditionally, physical infrastructure has been associated with mega projects, such as large-scale engineering projects and high-tech solutions. Too often, the way in which physical infrastructure is defined excludes consideration of the solutions with which women identify. Physical infrastructure needs to be more broadly defined to include appropriate sanitation for women and girls, as well as

men and boys, and to take account of waste disposal and recycling of household rubbish.

Facilities such as schools and hospitals are important components of social infrastructure. Both physical and social infrastructure need to be coordinated as part of the urban planning and development process to ensure all residents access to livelihoods and services. Planners need to work closely with communities and representative groups working in these areas.<sup>81</sup> Planning for social infrastructure has often lacked consideration of the specific needs of women, for example childcare and day centres,<sup>82,83</sup> shelters and refuges for women escaping violence. This has resulted from women having less say in the planning of municipal services and reflects a lack of equitable political and professional representation.<sup>84</sup>

#### Box 2: Slum Indicators

A slum household consists of one or a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area, lacking one or more of the following five amenities:

- 1) durable housing (a permanent structure providing protection from extreme climatic conditions)
- 2) sufficient living area (no more than three people sharing a room)

- 3) access to improved water (water that is sufficient, affordable and can be obtained without extreme effort)

- 4) access to improved sanitation facilities (a private toilet, or a public one shared with a reasonable number of people) and

- 5) secure tenure (de facto or de jure secure tenure status and protection against forced evictions). Since information on secure tenure is not

available for most countries included in the UN-HABITAT database, only the first four indicators are used to define slum households, and then to estimate the proportion of urban population living in slums.

Source: Millennium Goal 7 Indicators, *State of the World Cities Report 2009* p.33

#### 1.2.4.1 Water and sanitation

Lack of adequate sanitation and water facilities are two of the defining characteristics of urban slums; the other three relate to the durability and size of shelter and secure tenure; see the list of slum indicators in Box 2 above. Water scarcity and water quality for drinking, along with the treatment of wastewater and sanitation, are interrelated, and both sets of issues have gendered dimensions.

Cities rely on their rural hinterlands for resources such as water. Problems with water in rural areas often have an impact on urban areas. Over the past century, water use for drinking and urban agriculture has grown more than twice the rate of population growth. Although the number of urban residents living without access to improved drinking water is significantly less than for rural areas, the figure

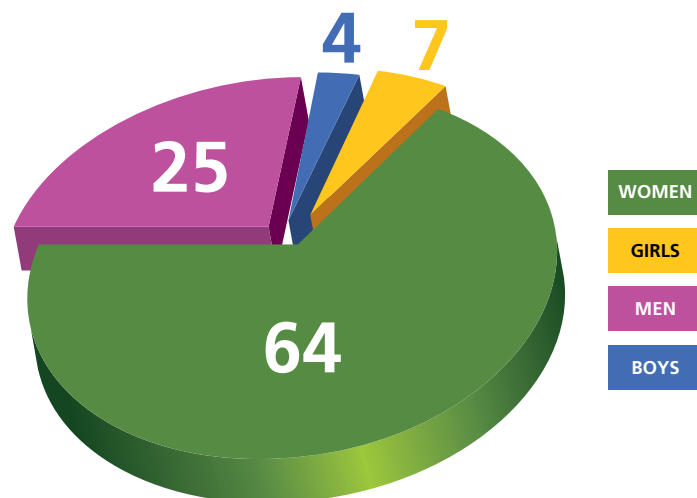
is increasing as urbanisation increases. Studies show that women still share the burden of collecting water. Women are more than twice as likely as men to collect water, while children are the main water collectors in 11 per cent of households (see Figure 1).

Issues of water scarcity will become more acute as a result of climate change and population growth. This in turn impacts the ability to deal with wastewater and sanitation. In urban areas in developing countries, improved sanitation has failed to keep pace with population growth. Not only this, but where facilities have been provided they often fail to take account of gender issues. Where slum upgrading programmes focus on the provision of communal toilets, issues of privacy often mean the facilities are not suitable for and accessible to women.



**Drinking water from a pump. Mali.** ©Curt Carnemark/World Bank

*Figure 1: Household members who typically collect water, 2005-2006 (per cent)*



Source: George, 2008.



*Dandora dumping site, Nairobi, Kenya. 2011. ©UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu*

#### 1.2.4.2 Waste disposal

The physical and social infrastructure for waste disposal is often not considered part of infrastructure planning. Yet without it, cities can grind to a halt, literally drowned in a sea of household garbage, as in Naples when rubbish collectors went on strike in 2008. Resources for the provision of waste management and disposal management are particularly important for women in developing countries because they

often take on the role of waste disposal. Yet, women are rarely involved in the design of waste disposal and recycling facilities.<sup>86</sup> There is little provision for the social infrastructure to ensure that communities understand the health hazards associated with handling particular types of waste and the implications of this for the health of women and children. Planning for infrastructure is about equity of roles in the household. Where societies are marginalized to start with, women will experience multiple disadvantages (see Box 3).

### Box 3: Waste disposal and Bedouin women of the Negev in Israel

The Bedouins of the Negev in Israel number between 140,000 and 159,000. Half the population live in seven planned settlements and the remainder in 'unrecognised villages' lacking formal infrastructure and services. Bedouin women are triply marginalised as Arabs in a Jewish state, residents of Israel's periphery and females in a sharply patriarchal society.

The Bedouins' traditional semi-nomadic lifestyles revolved around raising livestock and practising rain-fed agriculture, where the wastes were mainly organic in nature. As they adopted more sedentary lifestyles and consumption patterns changed, waste patterns evolved from organic to non-biodegradable.

Most Bedouin women have limited access to transportation to take household waste to municipal dump sites, and for cultural reasons, women are confined to the household area, so they burn waste in backyard fires. Women and children are required to monitor fires to prevent them burning out of control, and in poorer households toxic materials are more likely to be used on fires for cooking and heating.

Respiratory problems, skin irritations, nausea, headaches, high blood pressure and cancer are common health concerns among the community's women and children, owing in part to their exposure to toxic pollutants in the act of burning waste. Awareness of

the risks associated with waste burning is low amongst Bedouins. Local health clinics also show little understanding of the links between waste disposal methods and the prevalent health problems. Close proximity of households and the disposal of some waste into waterways mean that the effects are not just felt by households with insufficient waste disposal, but by the wider community as well.

Source: Garb, 2008.

### 1.2.4.3 Transport

A person's ability to access local facilities and employment depends on her mobility and the choices that are available. Transport infrastructure provides a network for movement, communication and exchange.<sup>87</sup> It is only within the last decade that policy-makers and practitioners in developing countries have recognised gender differences in the way women and men travel.<sup>88, 89</sup> After walking, mass transit is the most common form of transport for women and men in much of the world. Women tend to use mass transit at off-peak times and make shorter trips at more varied times.<sup>90</sup> Write transport researchers Kunieda and Gautheire, 'Poor women and men do not travel less; they travel under more duress and in worse conditions' than higher-income residents.<sup>91</sup> Studies around the world show that gender determines what form of transport is used and the way users view transport, and that some universal concerns prevail. In some countries, owing to cultural or religious traditions, women are restricted from using public transport or bicycles.

Kuneida and Gautheire's research in Africa, India and Bangladesh found that overall women are most concerned about the personal security aspect of mobility. When safe, secure and affordable options are not readily available, they may forego trips, including to school and healthcare, resulting in absenteeism and ill-health. This leads to more illnesses, and unemployment is higher among women in part because the costs of transport can be greater than the benefits of employment. They seek less efficient or more costly alternatives when they perceive a threat in relation to transport.

Women have also been found to forgo the opportunity to work outside their neighbourhoods if transport fares and services are expensive and unreliable. Transport accounts for between 10 and 30 per cent of a household's total expenditure. Surveys in Mexico City show that households spend 25 per cent of daily earnings on transport. In Nairobi, the figure is 14 to 30 per cent, and in Delhi it is 20 to 25 per cent. When 700,000 squatters resettled on the periphery of Delhi, male employment increased by 5 per cent,<sup>92</sup> while female employment fell 27 per cent because their travel time increased threefold.

With the growth of car ownership during the 1950s in northern and developed countries, cities were adapted to the needs of the car.<sup>93</sup> Cities in developing countries have been following this trend, including cities in China, with men taking up car ownership and driving in higher numbers than women overall. Carbon dioxide emissions have continued to increase, owing in part to vast increases in motorized transport in developing countries, despite the international timetable for addressing the problem.<sup>94</sup>

In slum areas, few roads are paved and most people walk on dirt paths. Intermediate means of transport range from wheelbarrows and handcarts to bicycles, mopeds and motorcycles. A World Bank study in Accra, Ghana found that the transport capacity of a bicycle is about five times greater than being on foot which increases people's capacity to transport goods to market; thereby providing women with the potential to transport more goods to market quicker than by foot.



*Traffic snarl along one of the main streets in the City of Shanghai, China. 2010. ©UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu*

### 1.3 Summary

Clearly, urban planning, or lack thereof, can enable or impede women's and men's access to jobs, homes, transport and essential services. Urban planning has the potential to affect the sustainability, accessibility, usability, design and quality of places. Since the way women and men live their lives differs, the accessibility and usability of places are therefore gendered.

Contemporary urban planning processes, particularly in developing countries, have tended not to distinguish among the specific needs of women, men, boys and girls, and as a result, they have not adequately addressed gender equality. Gender considerations have traditionally focused on issues specific to women.<sup>96</sup> In a sense, this has been replicated in the MDG goals and targets, particularly Goal 7 on the

environment and Goal 8 on development co-operation, which are closely allied to urban planning. When gender is placed at the centre of planning for infrastructure, housing, employment, livelihoods and health, education, gender inequality can start to be tackled.

If policies to improve and enhance places are to address gender inequality, they must also take into account the issues and needs of both women and men. The policy implications are clear. Gender-sensitive urban planning starts with the needs of people in communities. The design of places and spaces needs to reflect the socio-cultural needs of women as well as men, girls as well as boys. Existing policies and programmes need to be scrutinised to see how they can be adapted to become more gender aware and bring about genuine gender equality.

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# Gender in Contemporary Urban Planning

## 2

Most planning histories overlook the role women play in urban design, development and decision-making, but every day around the world, millions of women contribute to planning decisions at all levels of governance, sometimes in harrowing or difficult circumstances.<sup>97</sup>

This section examines how gender has been addressed in contemporary urban planning, from its foundations in late 19th century in Western Europe through its spread to the colonies and developing countries, to the present. It outlines how various approaches have been employed to encourage the engagement of women in planning processes.

### 2.1 Early beginnings: A male-dominated model emerges

Planning has over the decades responded to and evolved in response to events such as industrialisation, urbanisation and globalisation. The development of urban planning in the Western world began in the late 19th century in Western Europe.<sup>98, 99</sup> At that time, planners along with surveyors and engineers were engaged primarily in public health concerns, working to clear overcrowded urban slums that were associated in the public consciousness with ill health and moral corruption. In addition to concerns about the health of urban populations, the overarching aims of planning were promoting economic prosperity, civic beauty and ease of access to city amenities.

Until formal urban planning education began in 1909 planners had backgrounds in professions such as civil engineering, architecture and public health, which were dominated by men, although architecture had a small female contingent.<sup>100</sup> The gender imbalance in the planning profession was reflected in the way planning issues were identified, conceptualised and addressed. The concerns of planning reflected the backgrounds of planners and the society in which they worked, as it still does today.

Early approaches to urban planning were homogenous, tended to favour healthy white males and made 'patriarchal assumptions about the role of women.'<sup>101</sup> The family was the basic unit for policy creation, in which specific gender roles took precedence. Women were seen to belong to the private realm (i.e., the home), while the public realm was designed for the use of men. What resulted was a built environment favouring employable, healthy, mobile male citizens and one that reinforced and entrenched stereotypical gender roles, including women as housewives and domestic servants. This approach became ingrained in planning education, theory

and practice and remained relatively unchallenged until the 'second wave' of feminism in planning following the women's liberation movement in the 1960s.<sup>102</sup>

During the early 20th century, utopian models of society had a major influence on planning and a resounding effect on modern planning models. A small number of women contributed to utopianism in both Britain and America. One example is American author Charlotte Perkins Gilman, who wrote *Herland* in 1915 and *Making Towns Fit to Live In* (a commentary on town planning) in 1921.<sup>103</sup> It was the work of the male utopianists that gained the most recognition. Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities*, Le Corbusier's *City for Three Million* and Frank Lloyd Wright's *Broadacre City* sought to give new, different roles to women and create new ways of living which included cooperative housekeeping, kitchenless houses and communal nurseries.<sup>104</sup> Utopian visions reflected the rapid changes in science in the 20th century and were driven by technological developments.

Many of these utopian ideas were dismissed by town planners at the time, particularly those suggesting alternative roles for women in cooperative kitchens and nurseries. Nonetheless, the basic influence of these visions in terms of the divisions between home and work have had a profound impact on the built form of cities around the world in terms of layout and design and the need to travel. Some argue that these visionary approaches to planning were diluted or parts removed to create a less radical and more acceptable patriarchal imagination of the future of the city.<sup>105</sup> The realised plans also resulted in many poor outcomes for women, particularly since they dictated a certain way of living that did not always fit with or reflect women's needs.

At the same time modern town planning tended to reinforce patriarchal, male-dominated visions of society, it was also spurred on by agents of social change, namely socialists, feminists, suffragettes and philanthropists. A few women were involved as key proponents in the development of the planning profession. The first wave of feminists in planning included Elizabeth Howard (Ebenezer Howard's wife), who was instrumental in the establishment and support of the *Garden Cities* movement. Artist and illustrator Kate Greenaway was amongst other strong supporters of the movement. When

the United Kingdom (UK) Town Planning Institute was established in 1913, Henrietta Barnett was the only woman on the committee. Barnett was responsible for the establishment of Hampstead Garden Suburb in London at the turn of the 20th century. She also authored several books on social reform and planning.<sup>106</sup> However, much of women's contribution to early urban planning has been overshadowed by the spotlight given to the profession's 'founding fathers'. A shared experience of the lack of acknowledgement of women's role in the development of urban planning can be seen across the world.

## 2.2 Experiences of the colonies and developing countries

Colonisation has been described as the perfect 'vehicle for diffusing planning systems.'<sup>107</sup> With aims to 'civilise and modernise' their territories, colonial powers implemented master planning and development control zoning throughout Asia and Africa. Over time, planning models were dispersed in two ways: by colonial imposition or adapted by countries. The gradual adoption of Western planning theory and practice in many places led to the adoption of stereotypical assumptions underlying planning, particularly in relation to households, including:

- Each household consists of a nuclear family of husband, wife and two or three children;

- Each household functions as a socio-economic unit within which there is equal control over resources and power of decision-making between adult members;
- Within each household there is a clear division of labour based on gender. The man of the family, as the breadwinner, is primarily involved in productive work outside the home, while the woman, as the housewife and homemaker, takes overall responsibility for the reproductive and domestic work involved in the organisation of the household.<sup>108</sup>

Such ideas were often inappropriate and did not translate well into local environments or cultures.<sup>109</sup> Western European patriarchal values, entrenched in planning models, were in conflict with established cultural gender roles including the implementation of individual (male) land ownership within indigenous cultures where collective or female land ownership had traditionally existed.<sup>110</sup> Consequently, power structures changed and women in particular lost their rights to land and power in governance and decision-making processes (such as in the Pacific Islands and New Zealand).

In the case of the Caribbean, the colonial structure of land ownership was imposed on an enslaved and indentured population transplanted to the islands from other parts of the world. Despite the emancipation of 1838 and the creation of 'free villages', as well as the 'flag' independence that occurred



Overlooking the central Kumasi market at closing time in Kumasi, Ghana, June 22, 2006. ©Jonathan Ernst/World Bank

in the 1960s, many of the land laws developed during the enslavement period still exist today.<sup>111</sup> As a result, descendants of enslaved Africans and indentured Indians in particular, along with those who live in rural areas, still have difficulty purchasing their own land, which is an important path to wealth creation.<sup>112</sup> Archaic land laws also influence settlement patterns and concentrate the level of poverty in mainly rural and underserved urban communities.

In many parts of the world, colonial planning structures remain in place today and continue to promote the creation of a built environment that reflects the assumptions and aspirations not of the citizens today, but of the 'founding fathers' of planning. Although experiences of colonisation and development vary among countries and cities, women in all developing countries have been greatly affected by the enduring legacy of the traditional planning model. Cities in

developing countries, designed with an emphasis on zoning and based on the assumption that people travel by car, have had a negative effect on the mobility of women. Historically, the experience of many women in these cities has involved displacement, loss of land, lack of power and exploitation.<sup>113</sup> Cities in developing countries have grown so rapidly that the master planning approach and zoning bear little resemblance to what occurs in the real built environment. Formal planning rules are often at odds with the informal and yet highly organised nature of many settlements.

The failure of imported planning mechanisms to meet the needs of rapidly growing cities is a serious issue, further endangering women's health and safety in urban environments. The city of Kingston, Jamaica, typifies the experiences of modern planning in a colonised city (see Box 4).

#### Box 4: Colonisation and planning in Kingston, Jamaica

As former colonies of Great Britain, the English-speaking Caribbean countries witnessed the wholesale adoption of their colonial government's approach to urban planning. Consequently, existing laws and regulations governing urban planning in the Caribbean are heavily influenced by laws and regulations of colonial Great Britain. The adaptation of colonial laws and city layout are two major aspects of the history of urban planning in the Caribbean. Others are the socio-economic and political realities of slavery and transplanted indentured servants. According to Colin Clarke, 'Kingston was planned. It was, furthermore, a transplanted European town, designed by the white (male) elite to fulfil its own requirements.'

The capitals and major cities in the Caribbean are port towns and cities designed to facilitate trade and other commercial activities between Great Britain and the island nations. Analysis of the early settlement pattern of these port cities revealed a very dense and compact layout. The original layout facilitated internal communication which, according to Clarke was slow and confined to messages carried by horse-drawn vehicles, delivered on foot or spoken directly. The compact nature of the settlement of the urban areas in colonial Caribbean countries

forced people of African and Asian ancestry or those without economic means to settle on the periphery of cities, in the most uninhabitable areas—a condition which persists even today.

In Jamaica, the growth of the capital city, Kingston, continued to expand northward up to the 1960s and westward to include the communities of Portmore and Spanish Town. The metropolitan area also includes urban and suburban communities in neighbouring St. Andrew. Census data from the year 2000 for the Kingston Metropolitan Region shows a population of close to 1 million. Since the opening of the cross-country highway, the metropolitan region now includes the towns of Old Harbour and May Pen. The growth of Kingston positions this city as the largest city in the English-speaking Caribbean.

The city's growth was fueled by the need to provide affordable housing solutions to the burgeoning urban population. According to Clarke, at the close of the 1960s, the government intended to provide housing for approximately 30,000 residents in the Portmore area. Land use plans were prepared for that target, but by 1982, the population had already doubled over the original projection and the existing

plan could not accommodate the growth. In addition to a lack of housing in Portmore, the area had no retail areas until the 1990s, forcing women to commute for 30 minutes to shop for basic items and to access basic services. Children of all ages had to commute similar distances for primary and secondary schools. In the late 1990s, the government finally sought to address these issues by building schools in the communities of Portmore.

The approved land use and transportation plans for Kingston, created in the 1960s and yet to be updated, do not take into consideration the changing dynamics of employment in the city. Today, women constitute more than 60 per cent of the Caribbean workforce, and they are concentrated in low-end service and public sector jobs away from home. Most of the residential communities in Kingston can be described as 'bedroom communities'. Women have to take several buses or walk miles to carry out their basic tasks relating to home and work. The design of cities like Kingston did not take into account the needs of working women, so today, women's safety and ability to participate effectively in the workforce are hindered.

Source: Clarke, 2006.

### 2.3 Development of ideas on gender in urban planning and their implementation

Feminist thought has informed many of the key ideas about gender in urban planning, particularly since the advent of the 'second wave' of feminism in the mid-20th century. In the 1960s, and particularly in North America, many women started to take advantage of new education opportunities and challenge the cultural stereotype of the 'suburban housewife'. Researchers began to write about the relationship between women and the built environment, highlighting the general failings of the male-oriented modern urban planning model.

Between 1960 and the mid-1980s, several books outlining women's interaction with the built environment were published. Notable contributions included *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs (1961) and *Redesigning the American Dream* by Dolores Hayden (1984). In the 1970s and 1980s, a new movement of feminist British geographers also studied women and the built environment. The work of female researchers and scholars resulted in publications, along with the establishment of new women's organisations<sup>114</sup> and the gradual production of new tools for planners to use to address women's needs in planning. Often, this work was carried out in parallel to mainstream planning.

At the same time, women in developing countries and those working in aid organisations began to question the dominant welfare-oriented approach to aid. This approach saw women as passive recipients of aid, not as agents of

change or equal partners in decision-making. Typically, programmes focused on women's roles as mothers and wives, and programmes were centred on nutrition, hygiene and parenting.<sup>115</sup> Women were not included in decision-making about settlement development, infrastructure building or local governance. In the 1970s, the Women in Development (WID) movement emerged, calling for equality for women and improved opportunities to participate in development processes. WID promoted women as key contributors to all parts of society. They also produced gender-disaggregated research, lobbied local governments and advocated for women's rights.<sup>116</sup>

In response to these social and political forces for emancipation, a new tradition of gender planning was advocated as an alternative to existing planning approaches. The general aim of gender equality was to be achieved through recognition of the effects of the subordination of women's issues.<sup>117</sup>

By the 1980s local governments, international bodies and academics, unable to ignore the concerns of women and organisations, began to consider how these issues could be addressed through policy and municipal actions.<sup>118</sup> A growing number of women had entered the urban planning profession, and this started to have an impact on the way in which planning issues were addressed. Many new women planners worked to challenge assumptions about women and develop new planning tools and policy directions.

Feminist planners promoted a more mixed use approach to urban planning, criticising the land-use separation championed in traditional planning that isolated women in the home and made day-to-day tasks more difficult. Instead, they encouraged mixed land-use and transport planning focused on accessibility rather than mobility.<sup>119</sup> This has had far-reaching effects on the current thinking about the design of urban environments, transport systems and housing. In large cities such as Toronto and London,<sup>120</sup> municipal bodies started to develop substantive solutions to creating gender equality in the outcomes of planning decisions. The safety of women in urban environments has been one area where female planners and scholars have been able to promote a more gender-aware approach to planning.

Since the 1980s, increasing attention has also been given to the gendered use of urban spaces and to the safety of women in public spaces, such as parks, streets and public transport.<sup>121</sup> Addressing women's safety in public spaces aims to correct historical imbalances and acknowledge that public space belongs to both women and men. By acknowledging the need to ensure equal access to public space by all users, local governments and organisations found a way to start a significant shift in designing public space and public transport services. Discussions on wider issues concerning women's access to resources and barriers to participation in urban life then evolved. One of the most noteworthy examples bringing awareness to gender in public space is the women's safety audit, developed in Canada in the late 1980s (see Box 5).



*Women in Solo, Indonesia carry materials for upgrading their houses* ©UN-Habitat/Ruth McLeod.

## Box 5: Women's safety audits

Women's safety audits offer a gender-based approach to safety and urban planning. The audit tool examines a list of safety considerations in relation to the physical and social aspects of space. These include improved street lighting, more women-friendly public transport and more accessible policing, without necessarily suggesting that complete surveillance is the only solution to concerns around women's safety.

Building on the concept of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), the women's safety audit tool was developed by the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence

Against Women and Children (METRAC) in Toronto, Canada, in 1989. Audits are usually undertaken by affected groups in relation to a certain space. They can be used in urban, suburban and rural spaces, by different client groups and in different sectors.

The tool has been translated, adapted and used across the world since its conception. Results of an audit can take many forms, including safety maps, stories and annotated photographs. They can be used as a tool by the community to communicate safety issues to local government. They can also be used collaboratively by professional planners and

groups of women and men to highlight the gender differences in the perception of places as part of the decision-making about planning safer public spaces.

The safety audit tool has since been declared a best practice and strategic direction for 2008 to 2013 by the UN. In a recent survey of women's safety in cities, it was found that those organisations that had used the women's safety audit tool reported that they found it to be highly successful.

Source: UN-Habitat (2008d); METRAC, undated

Women's role in and access to housing also became a more prominent topic of research and practice in urban planning in the 1980s and 1990s. Historically, the home had been seen as the domain of women, with men predominantly responsible for its design and ownership.<sup>122</sup> The women's liberation movement had raised questions about these long-standing assumptions and women at all levels began to push for new approaches to addressing housing concerns. In increasingly urbanised environments, concerns about access to shelter, homelessness, housing design and quality were beginning to be addressed

in a new context, termed an 'equality approach' to housing. Additionally, recognition was given to the diverse housing needs of women and household types. As a result of the efforts of several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and women's movements, new methods, tools and policies for meeting women's needs in public housing developments and regeneration projects emerged. One of these was the Frauen-Werk-Stadt project in Austria (see Box 6), which demonstrated advances in addressing the diverse needs of women in housing.

## Box 6: Frauen-Werk-Stadt housing development in Vienna, Austria

Vienna, Austria, is a European city home to 1.7 million people. In Austria, 21 per cent of housing is supplied or subsidised by the government. To meet the society's on-going housing needs, new housing projects are built on a regular basis. One project with a difference is the Frauen-Werk-Stadt housing development.

The project began in 1992 at the initiative of the Women's Office of the City of Vienna. The central principle of this project was housing designed by women, for women. The project sought to highlight the role of women experts in urban development. One of the key ways it achieved this was by holding a design competition in 1993, which set out design criteria based on the concept of the everyday life of women. The winning entry came from a female architect whose design included a variety of dwellings, a 'village common', play spaces and garden courtyards.

Three other female architects were chosen to assist in the project. Women also comprised the majority of the judging panel, and a non-profit Austrian development organisation headed by a woman was chosen as the developer.

Stage one of the development resulted in 357 flats in multi-unit blocks on a 2.3 hectare site. Construction was carried out between 1995 and 1997. 'Frauen-Werk-Stadt 1' is now home to 1,000 residents. The development offers a variety of housing types, including disabled-access flats, shop space, childcare facilities, safe car parking, a medical centre and police station.

Following the successes of Frauen-Werk-Stadt 1, construction on stage two began in 2002. The focus of the second stage is meeting the daily needs of elderly women. Once again, a competition was held and the

winning design was chosen because of its exemplary assisted-living approach. As in stage one, emphasis on the project in stage two has been placed on providing common facilities and shared spaces, in order to foster a sense of community.

This project provides a practical example of how housing and neighbourhood design can successfully meet the needs of women. It also highlights the importance and benefits of involving women professionals in urban development. Housing projects applying for public funding in Austria are now assessed based on the concern given to meeting the diverse needs of households and the use of community-based architecture.

Source: City of Vienna, undated.



**Construction workers. South Africa.** © Trevor Samson/World Bank

Since 1975, the UN has been organising global conferences on women, and these have contributed to the development of policy, goals and commitments in this area.<sup>123</sup> The United Nations Decade of Women 1976-1985 played a crucial role in highlighting the important and often invisible role of women in social and economic development, particularly in developing countries and communities. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a seminal Convention from 1979, provided the context for much of the earlier national legislative and policy frameworks for equality of women for development and peace.

During the 1970s, and particularly in development planning, there was increasing concern that the problems of women had been perceived in terms of their sex and the biological differences between men and women rather than their gender or social relationships. The gender and development (GAD) approach maintains that to focus on women in isolation ignores the real problem of their subordinate status to men.<sup>124</sup> Following the GAD approach, 'gender planning' evolved to take account of the difficulty of 'grafting' gender onto existing practice.<sup>125</sup> The 1970s also saw the start of what has become known as the 'third wave' of feminism, which recognised that previously most gender-focused studies had been skewed toward white Western women.<sup>126</sup>

Since the 1970's and the advent of the third wave, women have been seen as a diverse, heterogeneous group. Gender is generally considered a 'cross-cutting' factor in discussions about demographic factors such as age, ethnicity and disability, allowing a better analysis of needs. More recently, research has shifted from focusing on the differences in how men and women relate to the built environment and started to

assess the variety of needs within groups of men and women. It is now recognised that 'cross-cutting' issues do not map easily onto the vertical silo organisation of public policy.<sup>127</sup> Instead of seeing gender as a cross-cutting issue or theme, experts are increasingly arguing that gender needs to be seen as a rights issue and central to policy.

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw a further reframing of the issues relating to women and planning. The term 'gender' became more widely used and accepted and eventually replaced the use of the term 'women and planning' at a government level. The use of the term 'gender' represented a wider understanding of power relationships, conflict and a concern for the needs of both women and men. 'Gender' is about the socio-cultural relationships between men and women, whereas 'women and planning' had focused more on women and the urban environment and their role in urban planning. Changing the language is not just an issue of semantics, but has wider implications for the approach to addressing issues, and setting agendas and priorities in urban planning policy.

This 'fourth wave' or shift to gender and planning was and still is somewhat controversial. The focus on 'gender and planning' rather than 'women and planning' is argued by some to reduce the direct concern about women's unmet needs in the urban environment and urban policy-making.<sup>128</sup> However, it has widened the discussion about gender in planning considerably and brought about many changes in the way planning decisions are made. This is not to say that the issue of equality has been adequately addressed. An on-going dialogue is still needed to ensure a much wider awareness of the practical examples and applications referred to in this report.

### 2.3.1 UN policy shift: Introduction of gender mainstreaming

The UN defines gender mainstreaming as:

- The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.<sup>129</sup>

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed conclusions 1997/2 obliged all entities within the UN to take gender perspectives into account in their work programmes.<sup>130</sup> The rationale for gender mainstreaming resulted from a need to examine how gender could be built into the established approach to policy. It was clear that gender planning was not going to become the dominant planning tradition; therefore gender needed to be integrated into all approaches to bring about a gradual transformation. Mainstreaming was seen as a genuine means of integrating rather than grafting gender onto policy and transforming each component of the policy process to be gender sensitive.

Since the concept of gender mainstreaming was first introduced, it has become widely used throughout the world, in policy-making and in development programmes. It was adopted as an approach by governments at the fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 in Beijing, China. Oxfam has been a promoter of gender mainstreaming in developing countries and in urban poverty programmes in Britain.<sup>131</sup> In 1997, gender mainstreaming was ratified by the European Union (EU) and has subsequently become a legislative requirement in planning throughout the EU.<sup>132</sup>

Gender mainstreaming is not intended to replace government policies aimed at addressing gender inequalities. It is intended to be complementary.<sup>133</sup> The key idea is that gender is considered at all stages of the policy-making process to ensure that the differing needs of women and men are met through planning decisions. One of the key benefits of gender mainstreaming is the ability to conduct a fine-grained analysis to reveal the different needs and priorities between women and men, and between different groups of women and men, including ethnic groups and those with special needs.

An application of gender mainstreaming takes many forms within the planning process and usually includes gender analysis, sex-disaggregated data, gender-sensitive indicators in monitoring and evaluation of planning, gender-responsive resource allocation and partnerships and networks.<sup>134</sup>



*Women involved in a community meeting to discuss village reconstruction. Yogyakarta, Indonesia. ©Nugroho Nurdikiawan Sunjojo/World Bank*

### 2.3.2 Challenges for gender mainstreaming

While gender mainstreaming as defined above by the UN is now widely accepted at a global and national level, there is an implementation gap between policy and practice in many countries.<sup>135</sup> In developing countries, a lack of resources makes it difficult to set up new data-gathering mechanisms. Much of the progress made in gender mainstreaming has been procedural rather than substantive. So while policies allow for increased participation of women in decision-making processes, it is difficult to assess how this is translated into the planning of urban environments. It also appears that good examples of mainstreaming often exist in isolation from each other, or are under-documented, making it more difficult to build a comprehensive picture of the current role of gender mainstreaming in planning.<sup>136</sup>

Another key barrier to gender mainstreaming in urban planning is lack of skills and expertise in gender impact

assessment (GIA) and gender proofing.<sup>137</sup> Many developing countries offer gender-awareness training for staff in government organisations, including such training for urban planners. However, training is often general and broad, and once completed many participants are left unsure of how to implement it. Some further barriers to implementing gender equality in planning include a lack of political will, lack of funding and resources, unclear responsibility for implementation and on-going resistance to addressing gender equality in urban planning. Reflections on the implementation of gender mainstreaming highlight the need to build capacity from the top down, emphasising the urgency of early and increased political buy-in to gender mainstreaming.<sup>138</sup> There is a need to re-establish the idea that mainstreaming goes hand-in-hand with specific projects for women where long-standing inequalities and discrimination need to be tackled. In many cases, however, mainstreaming has been used to cut women's projects, with devastating effects (see Box 7).

#### Box 7: Changes in support structures for black and minority ethnic women in London – learning points from Southall Black Sisters

Southall Black Sisters is an organisation that has provided support and advice to Asian and African-Caribbean women in West London since 1979, with a special focus on violence against women, immigration issues, poverty and forced marriages. The organisation's ability to carry out this work, has been affected by changes in government funding priorities and the rise in faith and religious-based networks particularly over the last five years.

A decrease in the amount of research on women's issues from a political and feminist perspective has also resulted in fewer people able

to defend BME issues and address the fear around questioning 'cultural' practices, such as forced marriages, that are damaging to BME women. This lack of support is having an escalating impact on the ability of Southall Black Sisters to maintain the work they do and have a positive impact on the lives of BME women in West London.

The Black Sisters have identified the following as key to their ability to continue to meet their objectives:

- Having a committed core group of women to ensure continuity

- Providing front line services and using that experience to campaign and lobby for change on the most pressing issues impacting on women
- Acting strategically by looking at the state's agenda and framing demands and policy submissions accordingly
- Continuing to provide the highest quality services
- Being alert to and using opportunities to mount legal challenge where necessary

Source: Oxfam, 2008, Southall Black Sisters 2011

### 2.3.3 Participation, gender and planning

Although they comprise half of the population, women are often significantly under-represented in local and national decision-making processes.<sup>139</sup> As theories and practices about community participation in planning have evolved, so too has awareness of the importance of gender in participation.<sup>140</sup> Although participation—public engagement in urban governance and community development—is still significantly hindered by discrimination, cultural and domestic constraints,<sup>141</sup> a plethora of tools and practices now exist to aid gendered participation in decision-making processes. Many of the tools and best practice guides, and much of the impetus for implementing gender equality in planning participation, has come from grassroots women's organisations and NGOs such as the Huairou Commission, the Society for the Promotion of Resource Area Centres (SPARC) and the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA). These organisations have created

a critical mass that enables very poor and grassroots women to come together to address problems and issues and eventually influence national and international policies. The Huairou Commission has been crucial in promoting equality in decision-making processes in the form of women's academies and local-to-local dialogues (see Box 8).

Grassroots organisations, and especially women's urban and community movements around the world, have been vital to advances in gender equality in urban planning and development. These groups formed to address concerns about needs in women's everyday lives, such as housing and access to resources. Core elements of the approach of these groups are reflected in the policies and methods adopted at international and national levels, with key themes such as empowerment, participation and the importance of community and place-based approaches.<sup>142</sup> These groups continue to explore new ways of addressing on-going and changing community concerns in urban environments.

## Box 8: The Huairou Commission – Women’s Academies

The Huairou Commission is a global coalition of networks, institutions and individual professionals that links grassroots women’s community development organizations to partners. Of particular relevance to urban planning is the development of successful women’s academies designed and set up to build women’s capacity to speak for and represent their communities. The Grass roots Academies are one of projects supported by the Huairou Commission for the last 10

years. As a methodology for organising, learning and agenda setting, the Grass roots Academy uses the principles of peer learning with between 30 – 100 women from multiple communities, organizations and often countries. Using participatory processes, participants reflect on larger political and development issues, starting from their own successful development practices. These practices and stories are shared and analyzed and joint plans and policy recommendations are

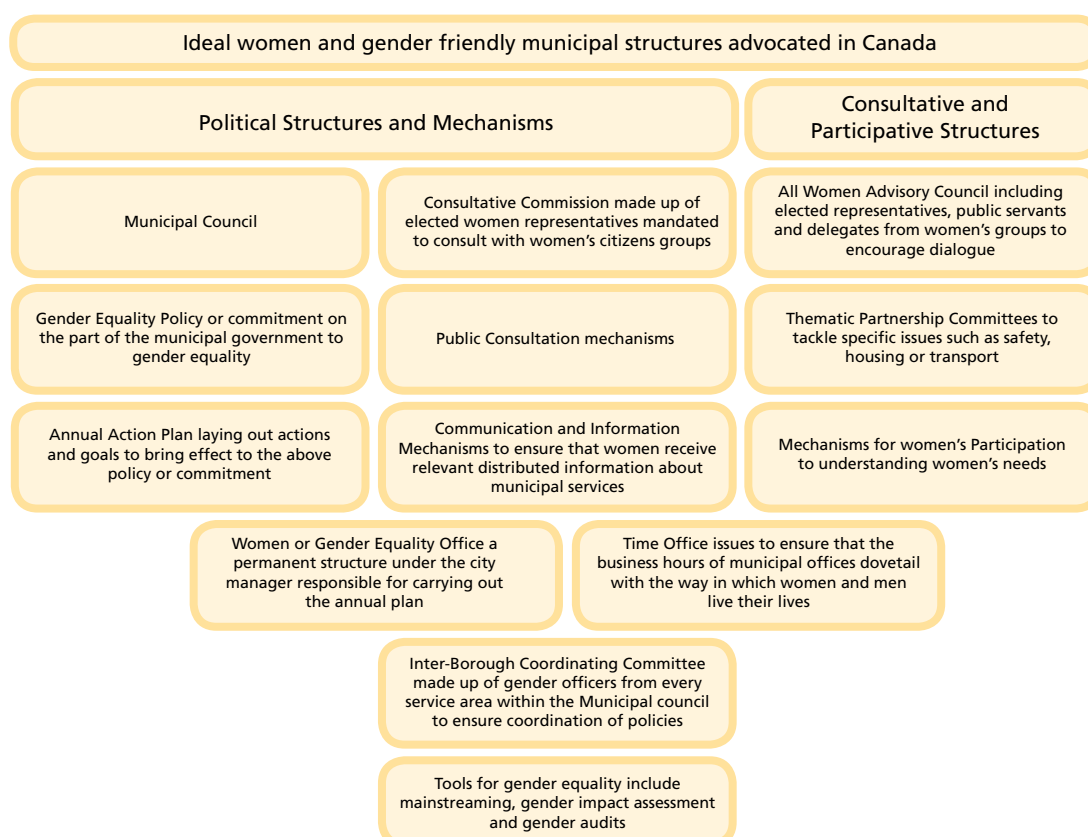
developed at the conclusion of an Academy which are often used as preparatory events held before larger policy events at the UN or other spaces. The Grassroots Academy methodology was awarded the Dubai Best Practices Award in 2006.

Sources: The Huairou Commission, 2008, <http://www.huairou.org/who/index.html>, <http://www.disasterwatch.net/resources/gwia.pdf>

Within most city governments, gender equality can be integrated into both the political and administrative systems, creating support for participation at all levels. Canadian cities have led the way in this regard, instituting gender equality officers and programmes designed to increase the number of women in official positions, and working to improve communication of planning project information and build relationships with women’s organisations. Consultative methods include: women’s councils, adhoc gender-disaggregated planning workshops and thematic partnerships.<sup>143</sup>

Figure 2 shows a model municipal structure advocated by the Federation of Canadian Municipal Authorities and the International Centre for Municipal Development designed to involve elected members, delegates from women’s group and public servants as well as municipal council services.<sup>144</sup> The model was used in Toronto until it was dismantled, not because of lack of effectiveness but because of political change at the city level. This demonstrates the importance of representative structures being embedded in national legislation.

Figure 2: Ideal women and gender friendly municipal structures advocated in Canada



Source: Adapted from the Federation of Canadian Municipal Authorities 2004 p 18

Ottawa's City for all Women's Initiative<sup>145</sup> includes a women's advisory committee which makes recommendations to the city although it has no decision making powers.

### 2.3.4 Participatory budgeting

Participatory budgeting emerged in Brazil in the late 1980s. It has since been adopted in towns and cities across Latin America and Europe, and in projects in Africa. The aim of participatory budgeting is to allow citizens to play a role in determining local government resource allocation and priority for capital projects. Participatory budgeting encourages a more transparent and accountable model of local government and services spending.<sup>146</sup> It provides the opportunity for those commonly marginalised, such as elderly women, children and poor communities to have a more direct impact on the decision-making process and subsequent outcomes. Although budget allocation is not a task undertaken by planners, community decisions on spending priorities have a direct impact on the projects planners are responsible for. For example, citizens may choose more public housing over pavements. The results of these decisions then have a direct impact on the shape and form of the built environment.

To ensure that women participated more equally in budgeting meetings, Coordenadoria da Mulher (Women's Coordination Group of Brazil) introduced three initiatives in 2002 aimed at increasing women's participation. First, mobile children's play areas were provided at public meeting locations. These allowed women with childcare responsibilities to participate in the meeting. Second, gender friendly information about the process was distributed in areas where meetings were

to take place, in order to encourage women to participate. Third, meetings between government officials and women's groups were held to discuss how to encourage women to participate. One of the outcomes of this was to create a thematic forum on women, specifically looking at issues for women in communities.<sup>147</sup>

## 2.4 Summary

Reflecting on the foundations and development of contemporary urban planning allows for better understanding of current trends and patterns in urban planning and the dynamic space of gender within the history of the urban planning field. The research for this part of the report highlighted the fact that the histories of planning in developing countries still need to be told from a gender perspective. The stories of different groups of women, including indigenous women, also need to be recognised and communicated widely. Planning evolves in response to social, political and economic trends, and the ways in which trends are framed determines whether and how gender is considered. The gendered impacts of climate change are being recognised as the example from Bangladesh demonstrates.

Urban planning, as a form of public policy, engages many disciplines. Gender-sensitive urban planning highlights the need for planners and related professionals to work together with grassroots groups and other professionals to understand and respond to the needs of different people affected by factors such as climate change, globalisation and urbanisation. The issues call for interdisciplinary thinking and community-based planning approaches.<sup>148</sup>

## NOTES

97. See Appendix 1 for a brief list of organisations around the world that contribute significantly to the cause of gender equality in planning
98. Njoh, 2009.
99. Developments in urban planning in the UK and Western Europe have dominated the written English language history of planning. The authors recognise that the overall history presented here is therefore partial, and that developments in planning in China, Eastern Europe and Latin America are missing.
100. Greed, 1994.
101. Woodworth, 2005, cited in Archer, 2007, p.11.
102. Greed, 1994.
103. Greed, 1994.
104. Watson, 2007.
105. Greed, 1994, p.94; Watson, 2009.
106. Greed, 1994; Watson, 2009.
107. Watson, 2009, p.210.
108. Moser, 1993.
109. UN-Habitat, 2008c.
110. Watson, 2007.
111. Beckford, 1970.
112. Beckford, 1984.
113. UN, 2006; National Commission for Women, 2005.
114. Women in Geography Study Group, (WGSG) established in 1980 as part of the Institute of British Geographers
115. UNDP, 2003.
116. Ibid.
117. Moser, 1993, p.87.
118. FCM, 2004 .
119. Todes, et al., 2008.
120. GLC, 1986.
121. UN-Habitat, 2008d ; Jarvis et al, 2009
122. Darke, 1996.
123. CEMR, 2005; CEMR, 2006.
124. Moser, 1993, p.3; Levy, 1993.
125. Moser, 1993, p.5.
126. Forsyth, 1986.
127. McGauran, 2005, 2009.
128. Greed, 2005.
129. Neimanis, 2001.
130. UN ECOSOC, 1997.
131. Oxfam, 2008.
132. Reeves, 2005.
133. UN, 2008a, p.2.
134. Todes et al., 2008.
135. Greed, 2005;Todes et al., 2008.
136. Todes et al., 2008.
137. UN-Habitat, 2008c.
138. Astrom, 2002.
139. UNIFEM (now UNWomen), cited in Todes et al., 2008; MWN, 2009.
140. Seaforth, 2002.
141. Todes et al., 2008.
142. Wekerle, 1998.
143. Wekerle, 1998.
144. Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2004
145. City of Ottawa, 2010
146. UN-Habitat, 2009a; PB.org, 2009; UN-Habitat, undated
147. WIN, 2003.
148. Huairou Commission, 2008.



# Recent Innovative Experiences in Gender and Urban Planning

## 3

Typical participatory approaches to urban planning focus on engaging communities as homogeneous groups. This has proved non-inclusive and partial when it comes to identifying issues and solutions.

Section 3 highlights initiatives and actions that represent new efforts for city authorities, regions or countries with regard to gender and urban planning within the past decade. Innovations in both the procedural aspects of urban planning and the substantive aspects of urban planning are discussed. Procedural aspects include institutional and regulatory frameworks; participation, within the context of the role of women in urban governance; monitoring and evaluation of urban plans, including gender toolkits and social impact assessments; and urban planning education. Substantive aspects include planning for sustainable urban development; coping with informality; and providing infrastructure, especially transport, water and sanitation.

### 3.1 Procedural aspects of urban planning

#### 3.1.1 Institutional and regulatory frameworks

At the international level, organisations such as the UN, the Commonwealth Association and the European Union (EU) are continuing to strengthen their commitment to gender and planning. This process is on-going. As international declarations are signed, countries respond within their own institutional and regulatory frameworks. Strategic responses to gender equality, including legislation, are essential to ensuring the implementation of programmes. Legislation has worked to enshrine gender equality in the

#### Box 9: Northern Ireland's Section 75 legislation

Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom situated in the north-eastern portion of the island of Ireland. It has a population of approximately 1.5 million. Between 1968 and 1998, Northern Ireland suffered from on-going internal conflict and sectarian violence. A successful peace process in 1998 resulted in the Northern Ireland Act, which details the negotiated governance structure of the country, along with provisions for human rights and equal opportunity for all. Section 75 of the Act states that:

- (1) A public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity –
  - (a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;

- (b) between men and women generally;
    - (c) between persons with a disability and persons without;
    - (d) between persons with dependants and persons without.
  - (2) Without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

In 2006, the Equality Commission of Northern Ireland, which is charged by the 1998 Act with the task of monitoring the effectiveness of the legislation, commissioned a series of research projects to assess levels of compliance with the legislation and its impact on individuals. The research shows that the legislation has helped raise awareness of the issues and that there needs to be a focus on outcomes that affect people's

daily lives. Where such a comprehensive piece of equality legislation is in place, gender can be analysed as cutting across specific groups, an opportunity that remains to be fully realised in Northern Ireland.

The passage of the Act resulted in Northern Ireland having one of the most progressive equality legislation in the world, impacting all aspects of public policy, including urban planning.<sup>140</sup> The Act was invoked during the reform of the planning system in Northern Ireland in 2009 when an EQIA was undertaken. This ensured that the Government department responsible for the legislation was accountable for its consideration of gender and the proposal to remove the right to a public hearing on planning issues was abandoned.

Source: Reeves Associates  
2006, Planning NI 2010

laws of several countries, particularly in Europe, India and East Africa. In 1999, Tanzania enacted new legislation strengthening women's access and ownership rights in relation to urban and rural land.<sup>149</sup> The work of EU countries such as Northern Ireland also illustrates the possibilities of legislating for gender equality specifically and in combination with other equality categories (see Box 9 above).

The introduction of gender-specific duties at the national level can be effective so long as penalties for non-compliance are in place. In April 2007, the United Kingdom introduced a gender equality duty following implementation of similar duties for race equality and disability although this lasted only three years. During this time the gender equality duty required designated authorities in England, Wales and Scotland to promote gender equality and eliminate sex discrimination but the penalties were not exacting. Northern Ireland already had a duty to promote gender equality as part of its own equality legislation embedded in Section 75 of the NI Act.<sup>151</sup> The penalties here were also not sufficient to invoke widespread implementation of the legislation. The individual equality duties were merged into one general duty which came into force in England, Scotland and Wales in April 2011, requiring that public authorities 'must, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way

that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.'<sup>152</sup> The practical effect is that listed public bodies have to consider how their policies, programmes and service delivery will affect people with the protected characteristics.'

While Northern Ireland illustrates how legislation at the national level can be significant, the Philippines provide an example of how municipalities can be empowered to undertake regional and local equity initiatives. Naga City is one Philippine city that has adopted a comprehensive approach and its own innovative initiatives (see Box 10 ).

Professional planning organisations and networks provide frameworks for the way planning is taught (see section 3.1.4) and practiced and have an important role to play in encouraging and supporting innovative responses in planning. The Planning Institute of Australia's (PIA) response to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people illustrates how planning professionals can contribute to addressing inequalities through the continuing education of planners (see Box 11). While the primary focus of the PIA initiative is inequality and indigenous people, gender is acknowledged as an important crosscutting consideration, given the need to address the specific inequalities and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island women and men.

### Box 10: Gender and urban planning in Naga City

Naga City is located in the Philippines, southeast of the capital Manila. It sits at the centre of fast-growing Metro Naga, which is comprised of 14 municipalities. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the city stagnated under limited services and rampant crime and homelessness resulting from low rates of tax collection. By the end of the 1990s, however, the situation had started to significantly improve, owing in part to effective city governance. Naga City's governing council had begun to explore innovative approaches to addressing the area's pressing issues.

In 1995, Naga City enacted an 'empowerment ordinance' to improve participation and partnerships between the municipality and citizens. The ordinance distinguished between ways of engaging women and men and recognised the different needs of its citizens. The city council has a strong e-governance model, with a focus on increasing individual participation in governance through various media, including the internet and text messaging. The empowerment ordinance allowed the city to address gender

equality within this framework and resulted in the creation of a number of other ordinances and programmes to improve gender equality.

Three key ordinances underpin the activities of the city:

- The Women's Development Code of Naga City 2003 sets out the commitment of the city council and women's organisations to 'vigorously pursue and implement gender responsive development policies and programmes'.
- The Naga City Women's Council Ordinance set up the Women's Council to provide gendered feedback on planning policy formation and implementation.
- Labour-Management Cooperation Ordinance has a requirement to ensure that one of three employer representatives is a woman and that women's issues are regularly on the agenda.

The empowerment ordinance innovation has been reported on favourably, with the processes established in Naga City facilitating greater participation of women in policy and planning. A top-down and bottom-up approach enabled all parties to feel comfortable about sharing ideas and being heard. Capacity, awareness and advocacy have been improved through the work of the Women's Council. Several programmes have been established, including an advocacy programme to increase awareness around violence, women and children. A large programme of activities was scheduled in 2008 to work towards meeting the city's goal of a women-friendly city, and this has yet to be evaluated.

The work of local government in Naga City represents a comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming. However, limited local government resources have impacted the timeliness of implementation of the programmes, and some programmes have not been implemented at all. Women's advocacy groups often have to look for alternative sources of funding.

Source: UN-Habitat, 2008a.

### Box 11: Planning Institute of Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan

Australia has a population of 21 million. A small group—2.5 per cent, or about half a million people—identify themselves as Australia's indigenous population, known as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people. Beginning in the late 18th century, processes of colonisation and European settlement based on the notion of terra nullius ('land belonging to no one') led to on-going oppression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and decimation of their culture, with different impacts on adults and children. For example, from the late 1860's to the late 1960's Aboriginal children were forcibly removed by governments from their families and communities in the name of protection.

Australia's work on promoting and building better relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for the benefit of all Australians began in earnest with a reconciliation process in 2001. The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) produced a Reconciliation Action

Plan, which commits the PIA to undertaking a range of actions on four key objectives: building understanding, developing relationships, advocacy, and offering support for developing planning capabilities amongst PIA members to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to participate more actively and meaningfully in planning and development activities that affect their lives. The Action Plan was formally adopted and launched in March 2009.

The Action Plan includes a commitment to developing guidelines for PIA members on appropriate protocols for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, including guidance on the differing cultural roles of men and women in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. For instance, in many Aboriginal communities there is a strong division of responsibilities between men and women and in working with these communities it is necessary for planners to respect this division. It is disrespectful

to discuss men's business when women are present, and it is forbidden to discuss women's business when men are present regardless of whether they are from that community or not. For planning professionals in Australia, the Institute's commitment to producing guidelines on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities forms an important starting point in acknowledging different culture and gender needs in the planning processes. The guidelines being formulated to make planners aware of their obligations in respecting cultural practices state that when working closely with Aboriginal communities the planning team should comprise at least one male and one female so that men's and women's business can be discussed appropriately; and to ensure that traditional decision-making processes take account of everyone's rights.

Sources: Planning Institute of Australia, 2009; Walsh and Mitchell, 2002; Wensing, 2011.

### 3.1.2 Participation in urban planning

Typical participatory approaches to urban planning focus on engaging communities as homogeneous groups. This has proved non-inclusive and partial when it comes to identifying issues and solutions. In recent years, many planning agencies have begun to recognise local communities as heterogeneous, made up of different groups. The necessity of looking at problems and issues through a series of lenses, including gender, is recognised but not widely practiced. Participatory processes can range from local-to-local dialogues where the

initiative lies with grassroots groups to professionally guided engagement, where planners take the lead and work closely with grassroots groups and stakeholders.

Local-to-local dialogues are important in that they provide women with the opportunity to learn about regulatory frameworks, acquire information about central and local government processes and programmes that they can engage in, and explore working with local authorities in a safe environment.<sup>153</sup> The example of local-to-local dialogues in Kenya shows how this process is evolving over time (see Box 12).



*Dam under construction in Sri Lanka.* ©Lakshman Nadaraja/World Bank

## Box 12: Local-to-local dialogues in Kenya

Four 'villages' in the informally settled Mathare Valley in Nairobi, Kenya, participated in local-to-local dialogues (L2L) in 2002. The villages—clusters of shacks settled by people according to similar ethnicity or allegiance—in Mathare Valley have been developed either on private or government-owned land. In both cases, they lack security of tenure and residents face eviction at any time. Living conditions are poor. Many households are headed by women who live below the poverty line. The villages are densely populated (1,200 people per hectare), intensifying competition for resources. Crime, violence and illegal activities are common.

GROOTS Kenya (Grassroots Organisations Operating together in Sisterhood) acted as a facilitator for the L2L process, which proved important, as many Mathare residents were initially reluctant to engage in the process. The facilitators created an environment of trust that helped residents engage and see past previous negative experiences with police,

government officials, researchers and donors.

The first step in creating the dialogue involved GROOTS setting up preparatory meetings in the four villages, with the women's organisations involved in HIV/AIDS, drugs, shelter, economic empowerment and land tenure, to facilitate discussion and identify priorities. These were followed by a series of consensus workshops involving community leaders from local self-help groups, local and national government. The main issues identified were drugs, HIV/AIDS, land tenure, drug peddling and abuse, poor shelter and environmental conditions and economic disparities. For the first time, elected officials came face-to-face with people in the communities they represented, and officials engaged in a decision-making process without setting the agenda themselves.

The workshops allowed for new avenues to explore how issues could be addressed, and they provided an opportunity for women to build strategic alliances with other community groups. Many residents in the villages were not aware of

their rights as citizens or how to engage in city council processes. The workshops allowed them to gain this knowledge and share it with others.

In 2003, a second round of workshops was held. Issues previously identified were re-analysed and new ideas explored. The workshops provided an opportunity for clarification of roles and responsibilities of those in attendance. Progress on issues was reported, with the most common barriers to implementation being funding and maintaining participation. The process has not always been successful in addressing some issues, particularly drugs and HIV/AIDS. However, L2L is an important starting point for engaging communities and creating an open dialogue between communities and officials. The L2L approach can be applied to urban planning.

Source: UN-Habitat and Huairou Commission, 2004.

A gendered analysis of community engagement is an important first step in establishing who is involved, who is not, and how to engage under-represented groups. The use of sex-disaggregated statistics in analysing participation needs and developing appropriate responses to differences in participation has been used in the UK in such projects as the

Manchester Gender and Community Engagement research. The project was undertaken by Manchester Women's Network in conjunction with Oxfam between 2003 and 2005 with a goal to explore the dynamics of community engagement in the city of Manchester. Oxfam commissioned a gender analysis of existing community engagement processes with a view to informing strategy and practice.<sup>154</sup> The outcome helped raise awareness of participation issues and led to the development of toolkits for gender awareness training in participatory processes. Data was collected through workshops, questionnaires and interviews. Participation in decision-making was analysed at a city-wide, intermediate and local level. The findings highlighted the barriers that occur for women and men in engaging in decision-making processes. The results were disaggregated by demographic categories including ethnicity, age and sexual preference, and then by gender as a cross-cutting factor, allowing for a more thorough analysis of results.

Building on gender-mainstreaming programmes, many cities have developed unique responses to participation. In Belen, Costa Rica, for example, gender equality and participation in plan-making processes and planning projects are being improved (see Box 13). The establishment of a women's equality office led to better participation between the city's council and communities.



**Community meeting discussing reconstruction of village hit by eruption. Yogyakarta, Indonesia.** ©Nugroho Nurdikiawan Sunjoyo/World Bank

### Box 13: Gender mainstreaming in a Costa Rican municipal plan

'Municipal planning' forms the basis for a city's business plan and incorporates the built-environment considerations of mainstream urban planning. Gender considerations at the municipal planning level need to be followed through in urban planning, and gender issues highlighted through urban planning processes may well have implications for municipal planning. This is the case in Belen, Costa Rica, where gender mainstreaming has been undertaken at the strategic and operative levels.

Belen is part of a wider metropolitan area located in Heredia Province in Costa Rica, and is home to a population of 20,000. Since 2004, Belen's city council has been steadily improving how it addresses gender equity in municipal planning through a programme of changes. The objectives of its gender mainstreaming efforts are:

- Awareness-raising in the municipality to promote change in institutional culture.
- Provision of tools to incorporate equity in the working terms and conditions of municipal staff.
- Capacity building and evaluation of achievement of municipal commitments.

The gender mainstreaming project began in 2004 with an assessment of the extent to which gender issues had been addressed

within the municipality. Discussion was also carried out with women's groups, which allowed a dialogue between these groups and the municipal administration. The second step was a series of workshops for staff to raise awareness of gender and equity issues.

In November 2004, the new municipal plan was assessed by municipal staff and women's groups to ensure that gender issues were incorporated into the plan and that actions reflected their recognition of the issues. This work was led by the municipality's gender office. In 2005, work was done to ensure the coordination of the gender office with programmes being developed by other municipal departments.

The further development of the 2007 annual operative plan specifically included gender activities and projects. It also established monitoring and evaluation of the projects. Implementation tools were also a key part of the city's annual plan. The municipal election held in 2007 served as an opportunity to strengthen commitment to promoting equity in planning.

Some of the key outcomes of the gender-sensitive municipal planning process have been:

- Incorporating gender into the work of all municipal units

- Changes in staff attitudes and the culture of the work environment
- Building a dialogue and strengthening partnerships with women's groups
- Specific improvements in addressing gender in urban development projects, which have a real effect on citizen's everyday lives

The process has also served as a pilot for eight other municipalities in Costa Rica.

The process highlighted several recurring challenges of putting gender equality into practice. Of foremost importance is the need for political will, without which projects do not get funding or support. A strong strategic policy approach is also needed—one driven from the top with support from the gender unit and incorporating support across all areas. The need to have baseline data using gender-disaggregated statistics, against which the level of success can be measured, is essential. The process also highlights the way in which addressing gender can help improve the situation of vulnerable and marginalized people generally. It is a useful example, as it highlights the need for programmes to be on-going and build on the skills gained as capacity is developed.

Source: UN-Habitat, 2008a.

### 3.1.3 Monitoring and evaluation of plans

Monitoring involves on-going assessment of the impact of policies. It involves both the collection of relevant data and comparison against available baseline information. Evaluation involves the assessment of the potential or actual effects of policies and projects. The ability to monitor and evaluate, as well as the sophistication of the monitoring and evaluation, depends largely on resources available. What is possible in a stable, relatively well resourced situation will be very different from what is possible in a relatively poorly resourced area.

In many of the case studies presented in this report, little or no monitoring and evaluation is evident. In some instances, such as with the Reconciliation Action Plan Protocol for professionals working with Australian and Torres Strait Indigenous peoples, the lack of monitoring and evaluation stems from the fact that the protocol has only recently been adopted and guidelines are in the process of being produced. In many instances, it appears that monitoring and evaluation have not been built into the policy and implementation process. The positive example of mainstreaming gender in

municipal planning in Costa Rica highlights the need for baseline data against which progress and change can be measured. Only in this way it will be possible to say how women and men have benefited from any processes that have been set up.

Monitoring can involve quantitative or qualitative studies, or both, and can take many forms. The local-to-local dialogues in Kenya used successive workshops over a two-year period to help identify areas of progress, as well as areas needing attention. Designed to facilitate the direct engagement of officials with women's organisations in their locality, the local-to-local dialogue process provides officials with direct feedback from those experiencing issues and affected by responses.

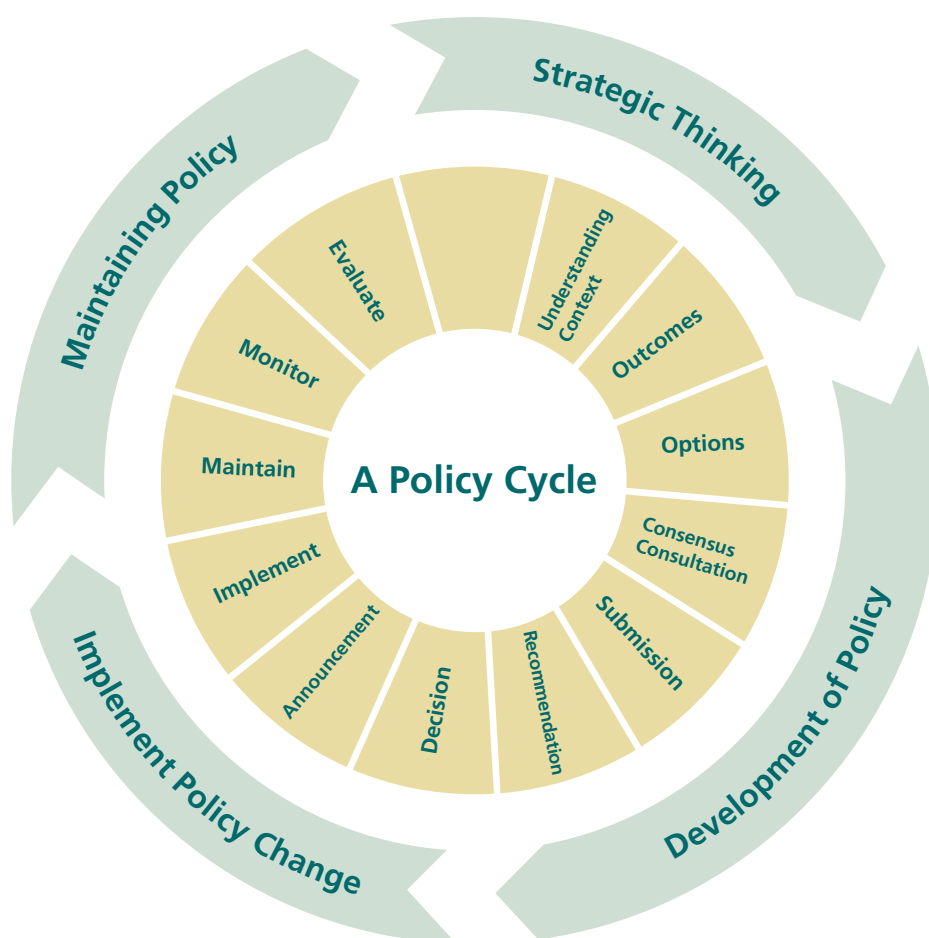
Lack of monitoring and evaluation is a problem in both developing and developed countries. Following the introduction in Northern Ireland of equality impact assessments, which have a built-in gender component, research showed that officials have not built monitoring and evaluation into the policy development process and politicians have not pressed

for it.<sup>155</sup> This example illustrates the length of time needed for new approaches to become embedded and the importance of on-going training and development.

Both monitoring and evaluation are often seen as the end point in the policy and project cycle, yet the data requirements for monitoring and evaluation need to be built in at the start and result from a thorough understanding of the context and the issues. Conceptualising the policy process as a cycle helps reinforce the point that monitoring and evaluation need to be considered at the start of and throughout the process. This can be effectively achieved through the development of indicators which relate closely to the desired outcomes identified during the strategic thinking phase when desired outcomes are formulated (see Figure 3). These can then be used as a checklist during each of the subsequent phases of policy development and implementation. Indicators are important in that they can help drive and focus policy implementation. This is a feature of policy-making in the UK, including Northern Ireland.

Indicators establish what needs to be monitored and evaluated. The performance indicators used to assess whether a policy or project is actually achieving its goal are best established early on through a process of active and effective consultation. This helps focus discussion on how best to achieve equality between women and men. In many developed countries, central governments are producing more gendered statistics.<sup>156</sup> However, these still tend to be based on existing data sources, which historically may not have taken full account of gender or the issues of particular concern to women and men. What is needed is more effective user engagement to provide up to date and relevant information to inform policy development and the measures needed to achieve the desired policy outcomes. In the example of gender mainstreaming in Costa Rica, the outcomes of the programme could be measured in terms of the extent to which awareness of gender issues had been achieved following the programme of training for municipal staff across all areas, including urban planning.

Figure 3: The policy cycle



Source: OFMDFM, 2003

Table 1 below illustrates the kinds of measures which have been introduced in certain jurisdictions to achieve outcomes which better reflect the issues, needs and priorities of women.

*Table 1: Increasing user involvement in policy development*

Aims	To create conditions for effective engagement between communities and officials
Measures needed to achieve the aim and the associated indicator	<p>Training for all policy makers in gender sensitive engagement and project management</p> <p>Indicator: number of people trained</p> <p>Staged evaluation of training to ensure complete understanding and follow through</p> <p>Indicator: Levels of knowledge and awareness amongst those trained</p> <p>Appropriate support to enable women and men to engage in the planning process</p> <p>Indicator: existence of support measure; for instance caring facilities and transport.</p>
General outcomes	Outcomes which reflect the priorities, issues, needs and experiences of all equality groups, including gender.

*Source: Adapted from Reeves Associates, 2007*

Professional planning institutes can promote good practice in monitoring and evaluation. The following principles included in the Royal Town Planning Institute's Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note 7 for planners resulted from the distillation of better practice internationally. According to the RTPI, monitoring and evaluation involves:

- Ensuring that statistics collected reflect the issues, priorities and needs of women as well as men.
- Ensuring that planning performance indicators address the needs of women as well as men, girls and boys.
- Ensuring timely feedback to different equality groups to encourage on-going involvement.
- Developing monitoring processes that pay attention to gender at the start of policy-making.
- Developing evaluation exercises that involve asking women and men directly whether and how their environments are safer and healthier.
- Ensuring that gender is incorporated into briefs for evaluations of projects.<sup>157</sup>

As components of policy monitoring and evaluation, 'gender proofing' assesses whether gender has been adequately considered in the policy-making process, and gender impact assessment tests the likely effects of a policy. Some of the key questions to ask when undertaking a gender impact assessment learnt from Ireland (see Box 14) are:<sup>158</sup>

1. Does the policy or development address the different priorities, issues, needs and experiences of women and men? What are the different experiences, roles and circumstances of women and men that might affect this policy? Is there evidence of different rates of participation between women and men? Have consultations with women identified particular issues that need to be addressed? Will changes to a policy reduce benefits disproportionately in terms of participation rates, success rates, access, treatment, or differences in comfort, convenience, time, costs and dignity?

Within a spatial planning context, answering these questions may entail generating and analysing sex-disaggregated statistics, surveys and focus groups. It is also useful to look at how policies impact women and men from the perspective of the home, the local neighbourhood and the city, as well as rural and suburban areas.

2. What are the implications of these differences for policy and practice? Can women and men equally access the facilities or job opportunities being proposed? Are there barriers that may impede access?
3. Does the policy deliver outcomes that will not only reduce inequality but promote equality?
4. How will implementation ensure that the outcomes will be delivered? Are women and men equally able to influence decisions relating to the policy?
5. How will success be measured? What indicators can be used to track gender equality?

**Where deficiencies in data are found, four steps are recommended:**

1. Describe the data limitations;
2. Highlight known issues or use 'next best' statistics (possibly for a wider geographical area);
3. Make deficiencies known to data collecting agencies;
4. Where possible, allocate funding for practical solutions to resolve the deficits.

Experience from Ireland shows that overall monitoring of gender impact assessments undertaken by government departments by gender experts provides important information.

### Box14: Gender mainstreaming in Ireland

Experience from Ireland shows that overall monitoring of gender impact assessments undertaken by government departments by gender experts provides important information.

The Irish government adopted gender mainstreaming (GM) as a strategy to promote equal opportunities between women and men in its National Development Plan,<sup>159</sup> recognising that women and men often have different access to resources and carry out different tasks in their daily lives.

As a member of the European Union, the Republic of Ireland contributes to and has access to European Structural Funds and is therefore obliged to prepare an Irish National Development Plan (INDP) every seven years. This plan represents the investment strategy for physical and social infrastructure, including roads, water, hospitals and schools. Without the investment strategy, the urban spatial plan cannot be implemented. Without the detailed

work undertaken for the urban spatial plan, the specific items of expenditure for the investment strategy cannot be identified.

Structural supports for GM in Ireland succeeded in ensuring that the issue of GM was on the agenda of those developing the investment strategy. Outputs included a series of fact sheets highlighting the gender issues involved. Gender impact assessments were required as part of the process. Evaluations found that these were poorly completed, with only one-quarter containing commitments to alter policies to combat gender inequalities. Equal opportunities were included in less than half the projects assessed. Although the gender impact assessments highlighted government commitment to collecting data on gender inequalities, this led to little or no alteration to policy and funding. An important lesson learned from this process is that if gender equality is seen as a 'horizontal principle' applying across the board to all INDP

measures, then issues of accountability need to be addressed and integrated into the policy. Clearly, problems arise when budgets are set by separate government divisions without taking account of overall gender equality objectives. Across-the-board consultation through meetings of all relevant stakeholders is required for success.

Lack of coordination among government divisions and departments causes particular problems for GM, if it is conceived as a cross-cutting principle. Consultation with women's and men's groups on the process of policy implementation needs to be carried out systematically. Only a small number of INDP measures reported that they consulted with such groups, which meant that gender issues were not always identified.

Sources: ESRI, 2003 ; McGauran, 2005, 2009.

### 3.1.4 Urban planning education

There are a number of issues relating to gender and urban planning education. These include the gender balance of student enrolments; the gender balance of faculty, both tenured and senior level; programme content; and student performance.

Despite widespread awareness of the importance of gender in planning practice and the development of new ways of working, gender is not commonly a core part of the syllabus in urban planning courses. A recent study by the Global Planning Education Network<sup>160</sup> shows that the majority of urban planning courses (more than 65 per cent) do not cover gender equity issues explicitly in their programmes of study. Professional bodies have a key

role to play to remedy this. An equity perspective in planning education is advocated by many professional institutes and bodies including the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)<sup>161</sup> and the New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI).<sup>162</sup> This has had an influence on the type of courses delivered and how gender and diversity is discussed in the wider framework of the programmes.

#### 3.1.4.1 Courses on gender in planning education

A small number of gender and planning courses have been developed by professors in professional urban planning programmes around the world. Significant gaps in the implementation of gender awareness and sensitivity in planning courses, however, do exist, particularly in programmes taught in Latin American and sub-Saharan African

### Box 15: Examples of courses that address gender and urban planning in the USA and New Zealand in 2009

- 'Gender and Equity': Compulsory course taught to undergraduate and post-graduate students at University of Auckland, New Zealand. Modules include social inclusion/exclusion, gender analysis, planning and spatial equity, gendered space, crime and safer design, and social infrastructure assessment tools.
- 'Gender and the City': Taught at Florida State University, USA. Modules include gender perspectives on the city; globalisation, gender and development; gender, housing and transport; violence, urban space and gender; race and class; and sexuality and queer theory implications for gender.
- 'International Development and Gender': Taught at University of Wisconsin, USA, as an elective course cross-listed between the urban planning department and women's studies. Includes modules on history of gender in development processes, the role of international agencies, access to resources and empowerment.
- 'Great Gender Debates': Taught at the University of California, Los Angeles, USA, School of Public Affairs.
- 'Planning and Diversity': Taught at Virginia Polytechnic and State University, USA. Modules include gender, sexual preferences, culture and participation.

Sources: Email correspondence with module leaders

countries. Box 15 describes a few of the courses available to planning students that, if more broadly implemented and made compulsory, could contribute greatly to gender equality in planning processes. The availability of such courses depends upon several factors, including the research interests and specialties of instructors and the demand for such courses from students.

#### 3.1.4.2 Gender-related training and life-long learning

Planners graduating from a course where gender is not explicitly in the syllabus, regardless of their gender, often fail to consider gender in their planning practice. This fact reinforces the need for continuing professional development. The RTPI in the UK has worked to advance gender awareness in planning practice in recent years. Guidance notes such as the Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note 7 produced in 2007 give planners practical help and inspiration. Building on the RTPI Gender Toolkit published in 2003, this practice note

explains the legal context of gender and planning and sets out good practice guidelines. Examples of good practice are explained for topics such as involvement and participation, plan-making and policy development, implementation and decision-making, and monitoring and evaluation.<sup>163</sup>

Educational opportunities can be provided in a number of ways through a range of delivery mechanisms. In Mumbai, India, one project called 'Gender and Space', run by Partners for Urban Knowledge Action & Research (PUKAR), offered a series of short courses between 2003 and 2006 on gender and planning (see Box 16). This project was able to supplement the local university and college programmes and provide invaluable educational opportunities for women and men committed to making places work better for both sexes. The Safe Delhi project is developing similar courses on safety,<sup>164</sup> and Seoul Women and Family Foundation has developed educational projects to ensure new planners understand how to make Seoul City family friendly.

### Box 16: Partners for Urban Knowledge and Action Research in Mumbai, India

Between 2003 and 2006, Partners for Urban Knowledge and Action Research (PUKAR) undertook the Gender and Space Project, funded by the Indo-Dutch Programme of Alternatives in Development. In addition to research that looked at the gendered experiences of city space, the project had a strong pedagogic component consisting of elective courses and workshops.

The purpose of these courses and workshops was twofold: first, to help raise awareness about the gendered use of space as

part of the advocacy aims of the organisation, and second, to provide an opportunity for researchers to engage with a wider audience. The courses were available for students at universities and colleges in Mumbai. Workshops and one-off lectures were generally open to the public or held for specific groups working with women in the city.

Topics of the courses run included:

- 'Unveiling the City: Gender, Space and the Built Environment'

- 'Interrogating the City: Gender, Space and Power'
- 'Gender Consciousness and the Practice of Urban Planning'
- 'Gender, Space, Youth & Urban Identity'

Sources: PUKAR, 2005; OneWorld Foundation, 2011.

## 3.2 Substantive aspects of urban planning

### 3.2.1 Planning for sustainable development

A gendered approach to sustainable development and climate change ensures that all social aspects of sustainability incorporate the needs of women and men, boys and girls, and that the environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development are considered from the perspective of women and men and boys and girls.<sup>165</sup> It also allows for specific gendered cultural needs to be considered in development projects. Empowering women has considerable benefits not only for individual people and communities but also for the environment and the economy. In developing countries, both in urban and rural areas, women and girls are often the primary gatherers and users of natural resources. Therefore, development projects that address environmental sustainability and climate change from a gendered perspective are likely to have a more wide-reaching impact than those that approach communities more generally.

There are many overlaps between a gendered approach to urban planning and sustainable cities. For example, higher-density housing, better public spaces, improved public transport, and mixed-use development are all found

in both models.<sup>166</sup> Many cities' sustainability strategies now include goals of equity and social justice with gender included under this umbrella, though few address gender in its own right. Two that have are Plymouth and London in the UK, where gender has been specifically included in sustainable development plans.<sup>167</sup>

Incorporating a gendered approach to sustainable development is essential in strategic planning and within urban development projects. Some cities are accomplishing this through urban agriculture. Dakar's micro-gardens project (see Box 17), for example, is one project that illustrates how gender can be addressed in sustainable development. In recent years, the Resource Centre on Urban Agriculture and Food Security (RUAF Foundation), Oxfam and other NGOs have been involved in establishing urban agriculture projects. They are becoming increasingly important for ensuring that rapid urbanisation is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable. Gender mainstreaming is often a core aspect to the projects.<sup>168</sup> Through urban agriculture, women can gain opportunities to provide food for their families and communities, improve their families' nutrition, build business skills and livelihoods related to land tenure, and formalise their land rights.<sup>169</sup>



*Dam under construction in Sri Lanka. © Lakshman Nadaraja/World Bank*

### Box 17: Micro-gardens in Dakar, Senegal

The wider metropolitan area of Dakar in Senegal is home to 2.45 million people. Pressure on rural agricultural land has impacted residents' food supply, and unemployment and poverty are widespread. In 1999, a micro-gardens project was initiated as a technical cooperation programme between the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Senegalese government. The programme was extended and replicated in other cities in 2001 and further formalised three years later. The aims of the programme were to:

- help families produce good-quality vegetables,
- improve the nutrition of the population,
- diversify income-generating activities for families,
- provide jobs for women and young people in particular,
- and generate income.

Through the use of new agricultural technology, the programme has been able to help city-dwellers with limited space grow food on roofs, in yards and in other pockets of vacant space. Participants can generate income by selling any food their families do not need. In Dakar, 4,000 families have been trained to use micro-garden technology since the programme began.

In 2006, the programme was extended to neighbouring countries through a partnership with Oxfam. Partnerships with other organisations have helped to extend the programme into hospitals and schools, as well. The institutional support of municipalities and other development agencies has also contributed to the programme's capacity.

The programme is a good example of how environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability can be incorporated into one project. Recycling is a key part of the micro-garden system. Peanut hulls help to build soil substrata, and old household items become part of elaborate drip-feed irrigation systems. The gardens also provide an opportunity for environmental education in communities. The programme enables more equality in the use of space among men, women, youth, elderly and disabled people. For women heads of household, it is an opportunity to diversify income and reduce vulnerability. Micro-gardens have also provided the opportunity for rural migrants to retain a connection to rural cultural practices related to agriculture. Micro-gardens are inexpensive for residents, and training is provided at no charge.

The programme faces constraints in three areas: the training and support of gardeners, access to equipment, and marketing of excess produce. There is only one training location and it is difficult to access. The problem is being addressed through the establishment of other training centres, but this requires further funding, training staff and equipment.

The location of centres and limited capacity of staff sometimes means that support is not always easily available for gardeners. As the population grows, space for gardening is becoming limited in Dakar. As a solution, some schools, hospitals and public buildings have made their land available for gardening. Fertilisers and equipment can be expensive, and the programme has tried to supply cheap organic fertilisers to gardeners where possible. Some participants find it difficult to access markets to sell excess produce, but a partnership with an Italian NGO in Dakar is establishing a supply chain to do so.

Source: UN, 2008a.

### 3.2.2 Informality infrastructure and services

As a first step toward addressing poverty, unemployment and other issues related to informal settlements in cities, many urban poor federations are working with governments in Asia and Africa to get informal areas officially and legally recognised. Community surveys are an important tool for literally putting settlements on the map. Surveys give residents and organisations leverage to approach governing bodies and international agencies for funding and support for infrastructure improvement projects. They also enable community organisations to present detailed and strong cases when they negotiate with governing bodies. A survey carried out in Dharavi (one of Mumbai's largest slums), for example, found that sanitation was severely inadequate,

with only one toilet for every 800 people.<sup>170</sup> After revealing this information, the urban poor federation working with the community was able to enter discussions with the local government to improve the situation. As a result, there is now one toilet for every 50 people in the settlement.<sup>171</sup> The information collected through grassroots community surveys is invaluable for government organisations that are often unable to carry out such studies, owing to financial and political restraints and lack of local relationships.

Empowering slum dwellers, particularly women, is proving effective in addressing poverty, environmental degradation and inequalities. In Santo Andre, Brazil, a programme that began in 1997 has been effective in improving social inclusion in planning (see Box 18 below).

### Box 18: The Integrated Programme for Social Inclusion- and the Gender Citizenship Programme in Santo Andre, Brazil

Starting in 1997, as a pilot, the local government of Santo Andre, Brazil, selected four favelas, or squatter settlements—Sacadura Cabral, Tamarutaca, Capuava and Quilombo II—for an integrated approach to physical and social infrastructure. At that time, homes in the favelas had poor and dangerous infrastructure, with illegal connections to running water, sewer systems and electricity. Some of the households were located in high-risk areas, subject to floods and landslides or situated on steep slopes. There was a low level of community solidarity and mobilisation; children and youth were exposed to violence and crime.

The programmes initially making up the government's Integrated Programme for Social Inclusion were developed on the basis of urban upgrading and public works and facilities. They included physical and environmental rehabilitation of degraded areas—including basic sanitation, running water, sewage disposal and storm drainage, street paving, electrification, and public lighting—as well as the creation of public works and facilities, such as day-care centres, community centres, neighbourhood squares with high-quality landscaping, and multi-purpose sports courts, as well as improved housing.

From the beginning, the community participated directly in both the management and implementation of projects, and community agents involved in health, urban waste collection, adult literacy and children's recreation, were selected from among residents. Solid waste removal is organised through the Community Waste Collectors' Programme organized by the local authority. Social aspects including education, health, protection of children and adolescents, and combating discrimination on the basis of gender and race are also coordinated by the local authority.

The Gender and Citizenship Program forms part of the programme for Social Inclusion and has resulted in the strengthening of women's roles in decision-making processes and family relations in the community and the city. The Gender and Citizenship Program is the result of a partnership between the Santo Andre Municipality and the Center for Health Studies. A total of 112 discussion groups, gender awareness courses, and campaigns geared towards combating violence against women have been held, involving approximately six thousand people. Progress has also been made in other areas including property rights on

the lots and housing units being transferred to female-headed households, and improved reproductive healthcare. Community-based agents represent about 50% of all the individuals involved in implementing the Program. This is a positive strategy, since in addition to generating employment and income for local residents, especially women, it provides a close link between the programs and the communities' real needs. The Integrated Program for Social Inclusion has directly benefited 3,600 families, improving their quality of life and access to social policies, work, and income, especially in achieving their rights as citizens. At the management level, the Program's greatest triumph has been its intra- and inter-institutional integration, contributing to the operational consolidation and collaboration of the respective work teams, thereby expanding each program's efficacy.

Sources: UN-Habitat, 2008a; UN-Habitat Best Practices Database <http://bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html>

#### 3.2.2.1 Transport

Infrastructure design for transport is about making the whole environment supportive of multiple modes of transport and reducing the need for multiple trips. Planners need to consider the whole street system, with roads designed for all: pedestrians, cyclists, mass transit users, and drivers of private vehicles. Improved road safety can be achieved by slowing traffic down using traffic management and urban design tools, ensuring segregation of cars, bicycles and pedestrians, and carefully managing and locating bus stops, as well as providing women-only buses, women-only waiting areas and policies such as enabling passengers to get off public transport 'between stops'.<sup>172</sup> Gender needs to be considered in all stages of transport planning, from initial investigation to design and implementation.

Safety for women is one of the key factors determining their use of public transport, particularly in developing countries. In Nairobi, Kenya, Esther Passaris created her company, Adopt-a-Light Limited, in 2002 to channel billboard advertising revenues into street lighting to enhance safety for women and communities. Businesses pay for a street light

to be erected, and their advertisement is integrated into the light post.<sup>173</sup> Other recent successful projects include the creation of women-only train carriages in Mumbai, India, and the building of safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in Bogotá, Colombia.<sup>174</sup>

In many developed countries, too, the recognition that women are the main users of public transport and that the multi-purpose nature of their trips reflects the complexity of their daily lives has led to some innovative design solutions. Stations and terminals in cities such as Tokyo, Japan, and Maryland, USA, now contain grocery stores, childcare centres and improved public toilets.<sup>175</sup> Changes to fare structures, such as discounts for women, families and elderly on off-peak services, have also allowed greater access to public transport. Improving public transport and encouraging non-private vehicle use also has the added advantage of contributing to meeting goals of reduced resource consumption. Including women in infrastructure decision-making processes is key to making improvements. As well as transport, infrastructure for water and waste are areas where the needs of women need to be considered when it comes to planning communities.

### 3.2.2.2 Water and waste disposal

Lack of adequate drinking water and improved sanitation characterise urban slums. Women and men have different roles and needs with regard to water and sanitation, yet many upgrading efforts do not take account of such differences. In several countries in Africa, new legislative frameworks are starting to incorporate gender into water and sanitation strategies. However, a 2005 study found that there are often large gaps between strategy development and implementation.<sup>176</sup> It found that a lack

of coherence among gender policies, anti-poverty plans and water and sanitation projects further hindered the effectiveness of programmes.

Including women in infrastructure decision-making processes can lead to improvements to the way in which water and sanitation is managed, while also empowering women to participate in governance (see Box 19). Women's participation is also key to better management of solid waste, which presents further on-going challenges to impoverished urban communities (see Box 20).

#### Box 19: Water provision in Malawi

In Malawi, a national programme to provide piped water to peri-urban communities had been introduced in the late 1980s. A system developed of local committees with responsibility for managing the communal water points. Problems of non-payment resulted from the taps not meeting the needs of most families. A lack of equal representation of women on the water tap committees had resulted in male-dominated water tap committees which were not performing satisfactorily, mainly because the

majority of the men were absent from the neighbourhoods during most of the day. Lack of participatory decision-making involving women during the planning phase resulted in the poor location of water taps, inconvenient design and subsequent inappropriate use of the water points.

Over the years a training programme for women was introduced, which succeeded in raising the proportion of women on tap committees from 20 per cent to over 90

per cent although this was over a period of 20 years. Over this period, women are reported to have gained in self-confidence, becoming effective managers of the communal water points, including their operation and maintenance. However it has been noted that having a majority of women on water tap committees also has issues and what is needed is a balance.

Sources: UN, 2008b; UNESCO, undated.

#### Box 20: The Green Brigade: Setting up a team of women to clean the streets of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso is a landlocked nation in West Africa. It is surrounded by six countries: Mali to the north, Niger to the east, Benin to the southeast, Togo and Ghana to the south, and Côte d'Ivoire to the southwest. Burkina Faso, one of the least developed counties in Africa, has a GDP per capita of USD 1,300 per year. The capital city, Ouagadougou, has a population of more than 1.5 million. Lack of employment opportunities causes a high rate of emigration. For example, 3 million people from Burkina Faso live and work in Côte d'Ivoire.

To survive and provide for their families, many women in Ouagadougou collect firewood by cutting down trees from the

'green zones' of the city and selling it to make a living. Women are also involved in harvesting sand and gravel from the city's rivers to sell to building contractors as a means of earning their daily subsistence. These precarious and casual activities do not guarantee a daily meal for their families, and they lead to the degradation of green spaces and the environment.

In the year 2000, the city's mayor initiated the 'Green Brigade' to reduce poverty by creating jobs, to improve the image and cleanliness of public spaces and urban streets, and to provide support to vulnerable social groups, mainly women

and children. The initiative has succeeded in creating jobs for 1,200 women, most of whom are heads of their household. Every Monday and Thursday, Green Brigade workers clean 120 kilometres of street and 3 million square metres of public space in the city. Workers remove all litter and waste from the streets. The project has led to environmental improvements, cleaner streets and better hygiene and health in Ouagadougou.

Source: UN-Habitat, 2008a.

### 3.3 Successes and challenges

This section identified some of the recent and innovative steps in urban governance, decision-making, community development and planning that have sought to tackle the inequalities between women and men while identifying obstacles that need to be tackled. It is clear that urban authorities are only starting to address inequalities between women and men in cities around the world.

A review of case studies presented in the UN-Habitat Best Practice Handbook<sup>177</sup> highlights several essential factors for the successful integration of gender at the national, metropolitan and project levels:

- The role of women's organisations in providing coherent leadership and representations to government is key. Women have traditionally been under-represented and disadvantaged by policies or lack of policies, so gender mainstreaming often needs to start by addressing this.
- The gap between policy and implementation, or between words and deeds, often results from policy formulation being seen as a statement of intent when it needs to include a detailed account of how the policy goal is going to be achieved. It needs to be clear who is expected to do what, where and with how much.
- Funding is also key to the success of most projects. Only on the rarest occasions can social capital be expected to deliver all the outcomes, with little or no funding needed.
- Political support is crucial, since it is politicians who often make the financial decisions.
- Training and on-going support for programmes is crucial, especially where a project is intended to run for a number of years and involves large groups of people.
- On-going monitoring and evaluation designed at the inception of the project, including the collection of baseline data, is the only way success of projects can be evaluated.

Often, legislation is key to instigating necessary changes in the way agencies operate. Evaluation of the implementation of Northern Ireland's equality legislation, including equality impact assessments, has highlighted a number of keys to success.<sup>178</sup> Sufficient expertise and knowledge about how equality and good relations relate to and impact the function of legislation is important. Where equality units have been established, they need to have clear authority so their advice and guidance is taken seriously. Where government agencies fail to implement the legislative

requirements for gender mainstreaming, sanctions that are both tough and appropriate must be applied. The process for gender equality impact assessments, whether embedded in equality impact assessments, as in Northern Ireland, or in sustainability appraisals, needs to be clear. This means ensuring clarity about who should be carrying out assessments when, and allowing sufficient time in the overall project planning for sufficient consultation with representative groups.

One on-going challenge is the allocation and accessibility of funding, particularly during periods of economic downturn. Many promising new initiatives are cancelled or postponed because of a lack of funding. Funding is closely linked to political will and support. Without political buy-in for gender-equity projects, funding can be reassigned to other projects. This can happen as international pressures and trends dictate the desire to siphon spending elsewhere, often to the detriment of projects that could result in significant community benefits. Programmes initiated by grassroots organisations are often dependent on external funding sources, and this reliance makes it difficult to plan for long-term projects.

Resources are key to public authorities having the capacity to deliver gender equality. Of the required resources of money, time, people and expertise, the most significant ingredients are expertise and commitment of policy managers and implementers. Training is critical for raising awareness across all staff, board members and councillors. Training needs to be timely—not too early, or some officials will fail to see the relevance of the project, and not too general, or they will not see that it applies to their areas of responsibility. Monitoring and evaluation need to be given adequate attention in training. Training needs to happen before policy development starts, to enable gender impact assessment processes to be built into project planning.

Consultation is central to better policy-making and implementation. The most successful consultations for both officials and user or representative groups are those carried out through on-going consultative forums that provide a means for organisations to look ahead at emerging issues as well as receive feedback on existing policies and practice. Direct consultation with the whole range of representative groups, including very low income residents, children, young people, elderly people and disabled people, will often be needed.<sup>179,180</sup>

Moving from an idea to a goal and mobilising resourcefulness and vision involves:

- Undertaking gender analysis to evaluate or analyse an issue, programme or project from a gendered perspective. This consists of an array of different kinds of foci for diagnosis, such as statistical analysis of the region; assessment of the texts of policy proposals, often called 'gender proofing'; assessment of the gender balance and representation in decision-making; and gender-awareness exercises.

- Identifying the stakes and stakeholders in order to explicitly understand their motives and expectations.
- Building from the bottom up using participatory approaches. This ensures that women's everyday life experience is used to construct both a critique of local and regional development and help to formulate new policy.
- Building capacity, which involves developing the skills and capacity of individuals and institutions in gender analysis, planning and budgeting.
- Mentoring as a support mechanism, which is important to help transfer good practice.
- Working with diversity: valuing different experiences and different needs of different groups of women as well as men.
- Making projects visible, which helps secure project funding, transform existing agendas, promote ideas and mobilise support.

A reflective review of gender mainstreaming in the Irish National Development Plan highlighted the importance of key structural issues:<sup>181</sup>

- 1) Matching the vertical way in which the public sector is organised and the way gender mainstreaming has traditionally been seen as a cross-cutting theme. Many public sector bureaucracies are organized vertically, and therefore tasks, budgets, staff allocations and responsibility for implementation are all organized hierarchically by organisation or division within an organisation.
- 2) Implementing organisations need to take responsibility for creating new budget headings.
- 3) Organisations implementing a Gender Mainstreaming strategy need to focus on outputs and outcomes which create improvements to people's daily lives.
- 4) Consultation with women's or men's groups on the process of policy implementation must be systematically carried out, allowing policy-makers to identify gender inequalities and mechanisms to address these in policy implementation.

Women in Cities International has identified the following barriers to a gender-sensitive environment:

1. Loss of gendered focus
2. Lack of resources and support
3. Deficient representation of diverse groups of women
4. Professional co-optation (projects carried out just to look good, lack substance)
5. Problematic division of resources
6. Failure to follow-up or follow through<sup>182</sup>

The work women's organisations do to connect women in communities with governing bodies continues to be crucial to the successful integration of gender and planning.<sup>183</sup> For example, the Huairou Commission's exchange of information and ideas for grassroots women is an invaluable network for women engaging in urban planning processes.<sup>184</sup> Participants develop practical and creative solutions to the issues they face in a supportive and collaborative atmosphere.

The links among national strategies, governing body policies and implementation are important to the success of programmes. The successful implementation of projects requires funding, institutional capacity, skills and resources.<sup>185</sup> The ability to train staff, provide facilities for meetings and training is crucial, as is evident in the example of micro-gardens in Dakar (see Box 17). In many cases, the responsibility lies with NGOs to build their own capacity to implement programmes.

Monitoring and evaluating projects to improve processes is crucial. In projects where baseline data has not been recorded using sex-disaggregated statistics, assessing the outcomes and successes becomes more difficult. Often, the nature of the project means that it is unclear as to who is responsible. Unless monitoring and evaluation are built into the projects at the beginning, it is likely to be ineffectual and of little use to reviewers.

Of the projects highlighted in this section of the report, those that ensured communities, women and women's organisations were empowered through gender-sensitive and appropriate participatory processes appear to be more sustainable and successful in the long run. Enabling people to participate equally allowed for a more honest and productive exchange of information and ideas. This is illustrated by the success of local-to-local dialogues (see Box 12). The process also made dealing with issues easier for local governments, as they were able to work on solutions with the support and help of the communities. Training and education as programme elements have positive outcomes as well. However, it is important that community and women's organisations are not overburdened by responsibility. Empowerment should be about enabling, not creating an obligation to carry out certain tasks. It is also no substitute for government responsibility and action.

Networking, multi-sectoral responses and the support of professional bodies can also contribute to the success of projects. When a range of actors is involved and enthusiastic, momentum is created that sustains projects over the long term. This is the case with local-to-local dialogues and Dakar's micro-garden project. Where urban planning institutes establish strong support systems for members, planning professionals are able to work with clarity and purpose. Networking and information sharing through professional bodies, informal and formal meetings provide the opportunity for encouragement and innovation in practice. The need to have many people involved and supporting a project is also related to the need to ensure political will and support.

Projects developed gradually over time and implemented in stages also appear to be more successful than short-term, quick-fix initiatives. Programmes that build up the skills of those involved as part of the process allow for learning to become embedded by participants. Working on a project in stages means funding can be staged, thus spreading the financial burden. Building capacity overtime allows for the potential of better monitoring and evaluation and for changes to be made in response to emerging needs.

Many of the examples in this section focus on the needs of women. The needs and issues of women, men, boys and girls in relation to specific planning issues have generally been omitted from policy considerations. Examples of projects from China and Latin America, the Pacific and the Caribbean are also underrepresented in global planning and governance discussions, including this document.

This section concludes that more work is needed to encourage better urban planning, governance and community development practice to reduce inequality between women and men.<sup>186</sup> Funders of research have often failed to gender proof research briefs and hence there is limited research examining the needs and issues of women relative to men in relation to specific planning issues. UN-Habitat has published a Gender Mainstreaming Best Practices Handbook to help correct this imbalance. Networking is also an important means for planners and allied professionals to learn from one another. Technological advances in the past 15 years, including the internet, have opened up more opportunities for planning professionals and grassroots groups to exchange ideas and innovations. The websites of the UN-Habitat Best Practices, Huairou Commission and Gender site are examples.<sup>187</sup>

Although the planning profession has played a role, change and innovation in urban planning in the field of gender has relied on the drive of grassroots organisations and a small number of active professionals.<sup>188</sup> For planners, the challenges of meeting 21st century needs and working with a new and commonly agreed-upon conception of planning requires innovation in and reflection on current practice. Professionals have an ethical and moral responsibility to engage in new and more effective ways of planning, building on an already extensive base of skills and talents within the profession. Awards for innovation and best practice also help to integrate new ways of working into everyday practice, and professional institutes can do much more to reward participative planning practices.<sup>189</sup>

## NOTES

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# Integrating Gender in a Renewed Approach to Urban Planning

## 4

The emerging model of urban planning provides an opportunity and potential for a more effective form of gender mainstreaming. The representation of women in decision-making affects plan content and how priorities are set.

On the basis of the review in Section 2 and the experiences discussed in Section 3, this section summarises the gender issues that planning ideally should address. It identifies and describes the mechanisms through which a renewed, or revisited, urban planning should be able to integrate gender in both the procedural (or process) and substantive (or plan content) dimensions of urban planning. Among the key mechanisms addressed are urban policy and legislation, urban design and urban plans, building regulations and development control, monitoring and evaluation of urban plans, and urban planning education. The context within which planning operates is deeply influenced by the major global trends of urbanisation, poverty and climate change.

### 4.1 Summary of issues

The everyday lives of women and men in developing and developed countries differ. One of the roles of urban planning is to create space for employment opportunities and economic growth, and to enhance the ability of women and men to access employment and sustainable livelihoods although ultimately this is up to employers, developers and governments to facilitate. Inequalities in accessing livelihoods and employment contribute to urban poverty, which is highly gendered in its effects. This has significant social, economic and political consequences for communities.<sup>190</sup>

The formal development of urban settlements is based on access to secure land tenure. The growth of peripheral informal settlements is directly linked to the need to access affordable land. Cultural and legislative impediments restricting women's access to property ownership exacerbate the insecurity of their living situation. Access to resources is difficult in informal settlements and basic infrastructure needs go unmet. These

factors continue to affect women more than men, as women represent the majority of the urban poor. The links among housing, health, income and safety cannot be ignored in planning for 21st century cities.

For women in urban areas, the daily need to travel long distances on foot or by public transport to access water, employment, education and services raises safety concerns. The design of streets and settlements historically overlooked the needs women have to move around urban spaces safely and freely. When land-use policies and transportation are considered separately, gender inequalities in accessibility are perpetuated.

The scarcity of water supply has become a significant problem facing growing urban settlements and is widespread in Southeast Asian and sub-Saharan African countries. As the main water collectors, female members of households are more likely to bear the brunt of water supply problems. Time taken to collect water has been shown to reduce the amount of time available for other important household and personal tasks.

Related to water, sanitation is a key issue in rapidly growing urban settlements. The gender-specific needs of women are often ignored in efforts to improve sanitation facilities in informal settlements and public amenities, such as schools. When women and adolescent girls are forced to use toilets that are not well-located and lack privacy, they are exposed to degrading and physically dangerous conditions. In many countries, women are primarily responsible for all forms of waste disposal, leading to exposure to toxins and other health risks; this problem is aggravated when no formal waste disposal services exist.

### 4.1.2 Trends facing cities

In addition to dealing with the fundamental issues of providing adequate urban development in an environment of rapid growth, many cities in the 21st century have a range of other concerns to contend with. Countries with high levels of poverty and inequality are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.<sup>191</sup> Dense urban populations can be at greater risk than rural communities of the spread of infectious diseases, death, malnutrition and loss of housing resulting from heat waves, storms, floods and droughts.<sup>192</sup> As urban populations continue to grow rapidly in African, Asian and Latin American countries, so do the problems associated with growth, such as the need to provide adequate shelter and basic infrastructure. Informal settlements continue to grow on the edge of established urban settlements and poverty continues to be disproportionately experienced by vulnerable citizens, including women.

As discussed in Section 1, the effects of HIV/AIDS tends to have more impact on women than men. Ensuring that households affected by HIV/AIDS have the ability to access resources, employment, education and health services will remain a key issue for urban planning in countries with affected populations. Ageing populations, population loss and changing migration patterns all highlight the need for renewed consideration of gender equity in planning.

#### To what extent is innovative planning able to address these issues?

Urban planning is an essential tool for ensuring sustainable, harmonious and equitable urban settlement in the 21st century, yet some would argue that its ability to promote gender equality remains largely untested.<sup>193</sup> Addressing women's safety in cities has been a goal of the profession for over 40 years, and this broad aim has resulted in improvements in urban design and public transport safety. However, there are still considerable improvements to be made. Improved women's participation in planning has been shown in many of the case studies to result in better planning outcomes for all members of communities. Participation is a key aspect enabling 21st century planning to become more responsive to the diverse needs of communities and more flexible in its responses to existing and emerging gender issues at a global, regional, national and local level.

## 4.2 Integration

### 4.2.1 Urban policy and legislation

A 'progressive realisation of rights'<sup>194</sup> is needed to integrate gender into legislation and urban policy. This means developing countries moving forward step-by-step with the encouragement and support of international bodies, including UN-Habitat, UN-Women, the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, and the CEDAW committee, which are recognised

as effective processes for supporting countries in ratification and implementation of international standards relevant to women's human rights.

Legislation provides the impetus for action and is crucial to ensure gender equality is addressed at the level of the law. Gender equality legislation should require governing bodies to collect sex-disaggregated statistics to improve planning decision-making processes. However, when requirements for gender equality exist, they must be supported by the promotion of knowledge and understanding of gender issues to become transformative.<sup>195</sup>

The emerging model of urban planning provides an opportunity and potential for a more effective form of gender mainstreaming. The representation of women in decision-making affects plan content and how priorities are set. Priorities impact funding and budgeting provisions, which have implications for planning projects and programmes at a local level. Establishing gender issues on the agenda at the strategic level ensures that they will influence successive policies and projects. It is essential that women and women's organisations are included and enabled to participate at the initial stage of the policy process to guarantee that weight given to priorities accurately reflects gender-specific needs. The knowledge and expertise of grassroots women's organisations play a key role in identifying issues facing women.

Sex-disaggregated statistics and information showing the needs of different urban groups ensures that policy priorities are considered from the perspective of women and men, and girls and boys. As stated by the Royal Town Planning Institute, 'It is crucial that the evidence base for policies is disaggregated so that gender differences and equality gaps can be identified'.<sup>196</sup> Gathering such evidence should be built into the first stages of the policy and legislative process.

Sustainable development policies benefit from a strong gender perspective. More weight must be given to the social aspects of sustainability, and economic, cultural and environmental needs must be considered from a gendered perspective. 'In sustainable communities, gender is a crosscutting identifier and the challenge for the future will be to create equality proofing techniques, sensitive to different sectoral groups which can highlight where disparities and inequalities exist'.<sup>197</sup>

### 4.2.2 Urban design and plans

Although transport and urban planning are intrinsically linked in urban space, they are typically not integrated enough at the national and metropolitan levels to ensure the development of environments that suit all residents' needs. This is particularly so in developing countries where top-down sectoral planning initiated by the central government is the most common intervention practice. Transportation and land-use policies need to be considered jointly to avoid the inefficient use of time, money and environmental resources, not to mention the cost involved to the users of such interventions.<sup>198</sup>

Scale and connectivity are important in planning. Improvements made to the design of one neighbourhood need to be made in the context of the wider urban environment and should reflect an understanding of gender differences in transport needs and mobility. A comprehensive spatial planning approach can help minimise urban inequalities.<sup>199</sup> Including a gender perspective in planning urban settlements at a city-wide level changes the way urban space is considered and prevents further spatial institutionalisation of poverty and inequalities.<sup>200</sup>

Urban design is not only about making places look good and aesthetically pleasing; it is also about functionality and making sure things work well for everyone. Failure to take into account the different needs of women and men in built environments has created built environments that may look good but often fail to meet the everyday needs of users. Sense of place, character, vibrancy and attractive physical environments are all appropriate goals for urban environments, although if these goals are not considered from a gendered perspective they may not be met.

Women's safety should be a key aspect in all urban design and planning. The location of buildings and services, the widths of streets and public spaces all need to be considered from a gendered perspective. Design solutions ranging from small-scale to large-scale features should be used to address gendered needs. The incorporation of safety audit tools into urban design projects is one method shown to have successful outcomes for women. Greater inputs from women in the urban design process would help ensure needs are better met. Disaggregated data collection on how spaces and facilities are used helps determine gendered needs. It also helps identify areas that do not work well for women

or spaces that women avoid using so that these inequalities can be addressed through good design.

Post-conflict or disaster restoration of urban areas and urban renewal projects provide an opportunity for redesign to create more equitable urban spaces. While aspects of history and culture should be preserved, consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of restoring spaces originally designed using patriarchal principles that excluded women. Urban renewal and restoration projects provide an opportunity to consider how different user groups access land and housing, resources and physical infrastructure needs such as water and sanitation. Global urbanisation is creating many environmental challenges. Addressing these challenges requires a shift in the approach to creating urban plans to one based on a pro-poor and gender sensitive approach.

#### 4.2.3 Regulations and development management

Planning regulations continue to overtly or inadvertently favour motorized vehicles over people and men over women. This is especially true of inherited planning systems in developing countries, where changes to planning methods have not occurred for many years. Planning regulation should be responsive to the differing gender needs and recognise that rules can have different outcomes for different groups. For example, the rigid implementation of zoning regulations may limit the ability to run a business from home or the types of houses that can be built.

Planning authorities can play a key role in conveying the message that a consideration of gender is important in development projects and will lead to successful outcomes.



Women refugees from Conakry speaking about the problems they face at local radio station, Cote d'Ivoire. ©Ami Vitale/World Bank

Those working in the field of development management should encourage developers to incorporate a gender perspective in the design phase of a project. Establishing an appraisal system to assess projects also helps developers understand the importance of gender and ensure better design outcomes. Planning authorities should also create mechanisms for assessing responsiveness and evaluation of outcomes from projects. This will provide an opportunity for adjustments to future projects. The use of gender-disaggregated baseline data will enable more accurate assessments of projects at all stages.

#### 4.2.4 Monitoring and evaluation

In general, monitoring and evaluation are not explicitly included in urban planning projects, making it impossible to assess how well projects meet gender-specific needs. Gendered monitoring and evaluation should be integrated into all parts of the policy cycle and it should be inextricably linked to policy development and agenda setting. Information gathering and feedback mechanisms are more successful when built in at the beginning of projects. Evaluations that actively seek to include women's views on projects will not only have better outcomes, but they will also help strengthen partnerships and working relationships.

Contextual information and data are fundamental inputs into the design and planning of urban settlements, yet planners are not usually responsible for generating much of the data needed to make decisions.<sup>201</sup> Instead, they rely on other organisations and entities to collect and disseminate relevant information. For planners in many developing countries, accessing information about informal settlements and the informal employment sector is a challenge. International bodies such as the UN, NGOs and the National Bureau of Statistics can play an important role in helping governing bodies and professionals access information. More attention needs to be given to providing basic planning resources such as maps, demographic information and community surveys so planners can better understand differing gender needs.

Effective monitoring and evaluation ensure that information is fed back into the process and should trigger changes in the way planning projects are carried out. Monitoring and evaluation are about assessing outcomes for success in meeting gender needs and about assessing the equity of participation in planning processes.

#### 4.2.5 Urban planning education

There are on-going discussions about the need for a global approach to planning education which would lead to shared common values relating to the public good and meeting the needs of societies.<sup>202</sup> Given a common ethical foundation, gender equality could be incorporated more explicitly into urban planning education requirements in every country, so all planning students would be guaranteed opportunities to learn about gender and planning as part of the core syllabus courses. To create a planning model responsive to needs and differences, gender must be incorporated into all areas of planning education.

Planning institutes and professional associations can play a key role in insisting that students enrolled in planning education courses learn about gendered perspectives and issues. Many practising planners do not have the opportunity to learn about gender during their formal planning education.<sup>203</sup> For this reason, planning institutes should specify that gender and planning is an area 'all members are expected to cover in their life-long learning'.<sup>204</sup>

Support networks for planning professionals need to be put in place. Information sharing is a vital part of encouraging best practice and building the capacity of the planning profession. Once qualified, many planners learn further skills on the job through discussions and mentoring with other professionals, including those who have skills in specialized areas.<sup>205</sup> This 'informal' exchange of ideas and skills is restricted when not supported at an institutional level. Therefore, leadership should be encouraged and opportunities to exchange skills and knowledge developed at a global, national and local level.



**Construction worker at work, Tianjin, China.**  
©Yang Aijun/World Bank

Planning can better respond to gender differences when the planning profession is representative of the population it serves.<sup>206</sup> In most developing countries and many developed countries, women account for less than 50 per cent of planning professionals, yet women generally make up around 50 per cent of populations.<sup>207</sup> If there are disproportionately fewer women represented in the planning profession, then planning processes are less likely to meet women's needs. Therefore, women should be actively encouraged to join the built environment professions, including urban planning, engineering, architecture, surveying and construction.<sup>208</sup>

### 4.3 Concluding remarks

To have legitimacy and credibility, a new model for planning in the 21st century must address the major trends of urbanisation, climate change and poverty and at the same time integrate a gender perspective at each stage of the process and at each level of planning.

Planners must play different roles to bring about more gender-aware planning. Those inside government can work directly with grassroots groups, NGOs and women's affairs ministries through local offices. They may also integrate gender indicators into their projects. Outside government, planners may act as the liaison between government and grassroots women.

The research undertaken for this report highlights the need for on-going research, evaluation and dissemination of the results of case studies to embed gendered perspectives into planning practice. A network of international researchers would ensure that lessons from different parts of the world

become more widely known. For all research commissioned by UN-Habitat and agencies engaged in urban planning, it is essential that each brief is gender proofed to ensure that issues are examined through a gender lens as part of the process. Without an explicit mention in the brief, many in the planning profession may still not see it as their responsibility to explicitly deal with gender.

Planners would benefit from working in partnership and collaboration with grassroots organisations and other gender experts in order to better understand the issues and needs of different groups of people.

A number of websites exist that could be supported to assist with dissemination; these are listed in Appendix 1. Given the fact that so few professional planning courses include gender courses, there is an urgent need for learning materials for emerging professionals and for those in practice at the senior level. Professional institutes must take responsibility for ensuring that their education and continual development guidelines reflect current best practice. Where the profile of the planning profession is unbalanced and unrepresentative of communities, institutes and planning schools need to promote planning as a career amongst underrepresented groups.

In order to deliver gender equality through sustainable urbanisation, planning and planning professionals must be ready to embrace change, working with grassroots women and others to enhance understanding of how the built environment impacts people's day-to-day lives.

## NOTES

190. UN-Habitat, 2008a.

191. Alber, 2010.

192. Awuor, et al., 2008.

193. Todes, et al., 2008, p.47.

194. Jalal, 2006, p.19.

195. Reeves, 2005.

196. Reeves & Davies, 2007, p.7.

197. Reeves, 2005.

198. Jiron, 2007b.

199. French & Natarajan, 2008b.

200. Ibid.

201. French & Natarajan, 2008b; UN Millennium Project, 2005.

202. Stiffler, 2009.

203. Stiffler, 2009, p.10.

204. Reeves, 2005.

205. French and Natarajan, 2008b.

206. Reeves, 2005.

207. Archer, 2007; Reeves & Davies, 2007; Olufemi, 2008; French & Natarajan, 2008a.

208. Oxfam, 2007.

# Appendix 1

List of organisations recognised for their contributions to gender and urban planning

CAP (WiP) Commonwealth Association of Planners (Women in Planning Network) <http://www.commonwealth-planners.org/links.html>

CEDAW Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw>

DAWN Development Alternatives with Women for the New Era

<http://www.dawnnet.org/index.php>

Gender site [www.gendersite.org](http://www.gendersite.org)

Genero Urban <http://www.generourban.org/>

Huairou Commission <http://www.huairou.org/>

METRAC Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children <http://www.metrac.org/>

OXFAM REGENDER <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/ukpoverty/regender.html>

PUKAR India Partners for Urban Knowledge and Research <http://www.pukar.org.in/>

Shack/Slum Dwellers International <http://www.sdinet.org/>

SPARC Society for the Protection of Area Resource Centre, India <http://www.sparcindia.org/>

SEWA Self Employed Women's Association <http://www.sewa.org>

UN-Habitat Best Practices Database <http://www.bestpractices.org/>

UN-WOMEN

<http://www.unwomen.org/>

WIEGO Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organising <http://www.wiego.org/>

Women in Cities International – Canada <http://www.femmesetvilles.org/>

Women in Geography Study Group, (WGSG) <http://www.wgsg.org.uk>

Women's Design Service – United Kingdom [www.wds.org.uk](http://www.wds.org.uk)

Women and Environments <http://www.weimag.com/>

Women's Environmental Network <http://www.wen.org.uk/>

## Appendix 2

ECOSOC and Security Council Resolutions, and UN-Habitat Governing Council resolutions that support the commitment to gender equality, explicitly addressing the long-standing inequalities between women and men, include:

- Resolution 13/13 on promoting the advancement of women in human settlements;
- Resolution 14/4 on promoting the advancement of women in human settlements developments;
- Resolution 15/3 on promoting the participation of women in human settlements development;
- Resolution 16/6 on women in human settlements development;
- Economic and Social Council Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming in activities of all UN entities;
- Resolution 17/11 on women in human settlements development;
- Resolution 19/16 on Women's roles and rights in human settlements development and slum-upgrading;
- Resolution 1325 of 2000 on women, peace and security;
- Resolution 21/2 Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP) 2008-2013;
- Resolution 20/7 on Gender equality in human settlements development;
- Resolution 21/9 Women's land and property rights and access to finance on Gender equality in human settlements development;
- Resolution 23/1 Gender Equality in sustainable urban development.

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# GENDER AND URBAN PLANNING

## Issues and Trends

If policies to improve and enhance places are to address gender inequality, they must also take into account the issues and needs of both women and men. The policy implications are clear. Gender-sensitive urban planning starts with the needs of people in communities. The design of places and spaces needs to reflect the socio-cultural needs of women as well as men, girls as well as boys. Existing policies and programmes need to be scrutinized to see how they can be adapted to become more gender aware and bring about genuine gender equality.

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