

## ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH PARTICIPATORY SLUM UPGRADING

Urban poverty is becoming increasingly feminized – there are more women and girls, than men and boys, who live in poverty in urban centers around the world<sup>1</sup>.

The urban poor and especially slum dwellers, face formidable challenges in the form of environmental hazards, inadequate shelter, insufficient provision of water and sanitation and limited access to services, resulting in huge amounts of time spent in ensuring that their basic needs and those of their dependents are satisfied and women are more vulnerable to these challenges. **Women and girls face also a set of unique challenges in slums** and informal settlements that include their greater exposure to gender-based violence<sup>2</sup> and discrimination, their higher vulnerability to unsafe public spaces and the lack of essential infrastructures.

Moreover, women in slums usually have less rights or less power to enforce them. This translates into more fragile livelihoods and higher vulnerability towards climate change impact as women have a more difficult access to credit and finance, an unequal position in the labor market and a limited ability to secure assets independently from male relatives.

Advancing gender equality is critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and the well-being of girls and boys.

### The PSUP approach:

#### *Promoting women's participation with:*

- 35 Diverse country teams that include women (at least 40%) across all stakeholder groups and that have a specific gender focal point.
- The minutes of meetings of the different PSUP structures document the number of women and men participating in all meetings as well as the recommendations from both genders and the decisions taken on these.
- The budget for implementation makes provisions for child care for meetings / workshops / community gathering, etc. to enable women to participate in them.

#### *Empowering women through gender oriented projects and interventions:*

- A portion of the community managed funds and local projects in each PSUP site goes towards initiatives that improve the lives of women and girls.
- 50% of the community managed projects are implemented by women groups encouraging their capacities development and leadership.

#### *Mainstreaming gender in planning and all sectors:*

- The PSUP trains Country Teams on the importance of gender sensitive planning to include the diverse perspectives of women and girls and recommends gender sensitive approaches to data gathering to understand these perspectives.
- The urban profiling process includes disaggregated data and facts and figures on women and girls in slums.
- A portion of the capacity development budget is dedicated to building capacity on gender issues in slum upgrading.
- PSUP documents, flyers, websites and other material explicitly mention the commitment of the Programme to equality for diverse women and men

and boys and girls in slums and acknowledge that successful city-wide slum upgrading is not possible without the engagement and of women and girls and the knowledge they bring.

- Projects developed within the PSUP include gender sensitive outcomes:
  - Gender, age and ability-sensitive assessment,
  - Design and location of essential infrastructure, facilities and services such as access to water, sanitation and toilets, solid waste management, drainage, electricity and transport that are informed by the experience of women and girls.
  - Ensuring that built infrastructure such as toilets, water points, transport points, drainage, roads and paths, public and green spaces, are safe places for women.
- PSUP reports on gender in its evaluations and normal report requirements.
- UN-Habitat is governed by the HRBA and must have professionals trained in gender development.

### PSUP recommendations

- Integrate women in decision making and promote their participation.
- Empower women through gender oriented projects and interventions (e.g. improving their livelihoods).
- Mainstream gender in planning and in all decisions as a crosscutting issue and always adapt the slum upgrading interventions to the needs of the most vulnerable.

<sup>1</sup> Tackle, C. (2012) Urbanization, Gender and Urban Poverty: paid work and unpaid care work in the city IIED & UNFPA, 2012.

<sup>2</sup>i.e. threat of physical or psychological violence at home and in public spaces

**BOTSWANA:** *Mainstreaming of gender through disaggregated data and capacity building*

Gender has been given greater attention in Botswana's profiling of slums across three cities and the national profile. By this integration of the gender in the profiling, the PSUP has promoted a greater understanding of the experiences of women and girls in slum upgrading, collecting detailed disaggregated data by gender for slum upgrading. Moreover, the PSUP's emphasis in gender has also had a positive influence on institutional arrangements and in capacity development of urban managers, technical staff and the community. For example, the Ministry of Gender has seconded a dedicated person to be part of the country team in recognition of the importance of gender who has had a key impact in promoting gender issues across key thematic areas and positioning gender as a key consideration for planning. Awareness has translated into equal representation of men and women in capacity development workshops are decided. When the community had to select two representatives to represent Botswana in Habitat III they chose one woman and one man. This equal representation probably wouldn't have happened without the framework of the PSUP to promote gender equality.

**GHANA:** *Promoting women's livelihood opportunities through Community Managed Funds (CMF).*



Female street food vendors prepare food to support their families in very unhygienic conditions, in streets without proper sanitation or drainage and subject to floods during heavy rains. Women indicated that if the street was improved and upgraded – paved, with proper drainage and the provision of some community toilets–their livelihoods generation capacity would be dramatically improved. Though PSUP's CMF streets were paved and lighting was added improving the safety not only for the women but also for children.

The CMF in Ghana were also used to set up a community micro-finance fund with one of the local banks. Local women can use these local funds to support their business. This Fund has enabled the growth of many local businesses which as they grow employ additional local women.

**KENYA:** *Creating local institutional change and ensuring provision of basic infrastructure.*



In the community mobilization processes in Kenya, representation slots were specifically set aside for women and youth. In the committees for the implementation of local projects leadership roles were assigned to women. These committees have since been often integrated within ongoing county level processes around public participation. The county has also appointed a woman to help mobilize the community and bring women's issues to the attention of the county regarding the PSUP project. Thanks to this balanced representation, more than 50% of the projects were predominantly led by local women and girls and aimed at empowering women. Projects concentrated in improved access to water and sanitation, livelihoods generation and capacity development/skill training workshops where women have been given priority.

**IMPACT**

25 urban profiles with segregated data based on gender

Gender focal points appointed in 35 countries to ensure that all actions are gender responsive

Gender mainstreamed in capacity building and workshops with 340 participants trained, 30% of which were women in senior decision-making positions at country, city and community levels.

40 % of the members of the local project Community Representation Committees are women. Women's groups have implemented community managed projects.

516,203 People – direct beneficiaries of implemented projects, from which 268,000 women and youth

**INCLUSIVE SLUM UPGRADING**

**FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE**

**UN HABITAT**