

# Gender approach in local urban development projects in Morocco

## Gender and urban development

Equal participation of women and men in urban management is crucial for participatory democracy and gender equality (SDG 5). By ratifying the United Nations Convention against Discrimination against Women, Morocco is committed to ensuring women's equal participation in all sectors. Although progress has been made, particularly in the field of education, further efforts are needed to achieve effective equality in urban cooperation, including gender reforms and the inclusion of women in governance.

The regional project "City-to-City Cooperation Maghreb-Germany" (KWT II), commissioned by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), was implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in cooperation with the Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW) of Engagement Global gGmbH, from March 2016 to February 2024. Among other activities, the regional project supported project partnerships between German and Maghreb cities. The good practices highlighted in this fact sheet have been partly financed by the regional fund "Promoting the role of women in the Maghreb" (PFM, 2013-2020) and developed by the municipalities of Chefchaouen, Mohammedia and Taroudant in 2019. These practices will be scaled up as a part of the follow-up regional project "Urban Adaptation to Climate Change in the Maghreb", running from March 2024 to February 2027.



## Capacity development for women elected representatives and municipal executives

Capacity development measures, supported by PFM, have been implemented by KWT I in Chefchaouen, Mohammedia and Taroudant for the benefit of elected women and women municipal executives.

The approach was implemented in two phases. The first phase consisted of strengthening the soft skills of the beneficiaries in order to improve their management capacities. Two training courses were given: Managerial skills & leadership and Project presentation methods. Post-training evaluation showed a 92% satisfaction rate among participants. The second phase focused on technical skills (hard skills), in particular understanding the gender dimension and integrating it into urban projects, with a satisfaction rate of 100%. Two seminars were organised: The first seminar, Gender approach and urban space, aimed to familiarise beneficiaries with the gender approach and to highlight gender inequalities in urban space.

The second, Inclusive urban Planning, aimed at professionals such as urban planners and architects. This seminar was an introduction to the concept of inclusion in urban planning.

A call for projects on gender in urban planning for trained women was then launched in 2019, with three projects selected.



## Support for the creation of income-generating activities (IGA) in Taroudant

The objective of the project was to improve the administrative and financial management capacities of the structures, promote the heritage of Taroudant and strengthen the technical and managerial skills of the beneficiaries. The project aimed to professionalise the activities of the associations and cooperatives, create a brand image that promotes the local heritage and encourage balanced development between men and women.



Left: Discussions during a women's empowerment workshop in the peri-urban area in Morocco.

Right: A cheerful seamstress sits at a sewing machine with fabric.



## Gender-sensitive awareness-raising on selective waste sorting in Mohammedia

In many households, the responsibility for sorting waste often falls to women, increasing their daily workload and reinforcing traditional gender roles. This division of labour reflects deeply ingrained social norms around domestic responsibilities. To address this, an awareness campaign on selective waste sorting was launched in Mohammedia, using sorting ambassadors and gender-sensitive communication tools. The initiative aimed to promote a more equitable distribution of household waste management between men and women, enabling women to participate more fully in social and professional life. It also sought to assess how communication messages shape, reinforce or challenge symbolic representations of gender roles.



## Promoting women's access to technical positions and supporting their integration: the case of the public lighting department in Chefchaouen

This project was supported within the public lighting department of Chefchaouen to address the imbalance in women's access to training and technical positions, as well as their participation in the management of technical services. It also addressed the difficulties of integrating women into traditionally male professions. The aim was to integrate two female local authority managers into the department, strengthen their skills in geographic information systems (GIS), and support them in the implementation of a light point marking project that they had piloted.



## Steps and actions

The gender measures adopted different methodological approaches, described in diagram 01 below:

### Strengthening the leadership and managerial skills of women elected representatives and municipal executives:

- 1. Strengthening soft skills** through training sessions on managerial and leadership skills and project presentation methods.
- 2. Strengthening hard skills** through training sessions on gender-sensitive approaches to urban spaces and inclusive urban planning.
- 3. Supporting female executives in implementing small-scale projects** that integrate the gender approach, in order to put into practice what they have learned from the training modules.

### Support for the development of IGAs in Taroudant:

- 1. Needs assessment:** Evaluation of beneficiaries' needs and priorities in terms of IGAs.
- 2. Training sessions:** Organisation of training courses on working capital management, marketing, sales techniques, promotion of local and regional products, and health approval of food and cosmetic products.
- 3. Personalised coaching:** Support for beneficiaries in developing communication plans and practical tools.

### Selective waste sorting in Mohammedia:

- 1. Involvement of gender-sensitive sorting ambassadors.**
- 2. Drafting the content of communication media,** paying attention to visuals and gender roles in images.
- 3. Representation of the plurality and diversity of society** through communication tools.

### Integration of two female civil servants in the public lighting department of the municipality of Chefchaouen:

- 1. Diagnosis of training needs:** Assessment of training needs based on the profiles of the two female managers.
- 2. Formalisation of the department:** Determining the composition and organisation of the public lighting service, with clarification of the duties of the new civil servants as part of the new municipal organisation chart (job descriptions).
- 3. GIS training sessions:** Organisation of several training sessions on the basics of the Geographic Information System (GIS) to enable the two officers to master the key operations.

Diagram 01: Methodological approach. © GIZ



## Achievements

In addition to the personal empowerment of the women, which is reflected in the fact that they are able to translate the knowledge acquired in the training courses into the ability to develop and implement small-scale projects as managers, the measures have produced a number of results (diagram 02):

### Measures to strengthen women's leadership:

- **Adoption of gender analysis tools:** Development of beneficiaries' managerial skills
- **Microprojets pilotes:** Implementation of small-scale projects integrating the gender approach, led by women community managers.
- **Raising collective awareness:** Raising awareness of the difficulties and discrimination faced by women in the decision-making process and in the management of local affairs.
- **Concrete recommendations:** Development of measures to integrate the gender approach into the day-to-day actions and decisions of local players.

### Support to the development of IGAs in Taroudant:

- **Training:** Organisation of 6 training sessions for 25 representatives (13 associations and 12 cooperatives).
- **Communication and marketing plans:** Design of plans for the 25 beneficiary associations and cooperatives.
- **Pooling of skills:** Development of mutual aid and pooling of skills between associations and cooperatives.

### Gender-sensitive home waste sorting awareness campaign in Mohammedia:

- **Capacity development:** 40 gender-sensitive waste sorting ambassadors trained.
- **Household awareness:** 284 households sensitised and committed to adopting the project.
- **Communication media:** Production of gender-sensitive communication media.
- **Building on experience:** Preparing to extend the initiative to other districts/ municipalities.

### Promoting women's access to technical professions in Chefchaouen:

- **Validation of job descriptions:** Approving new job descriptions for the two civil servants.
- **Gender-sensitive approach:** Implementation of a new approach to urban management and planning, actively involving women and raising men's awareness of the urban challenges faced by women.
- **Acquisition of technical skills:** Training the civil servants to work with GIS.
- **Support for integration:** Support for the two civil servants as they take up their duties and apply their new skills in the public lighting department.

Diagram 02: Achievements. © GIZ



## Challenges

The gender measures have faced a number of challenges, as described below:

### General challenges:

- One of the main challenges was that, due to the contractual situation with the PFM regional fund and the duration of the KWT I regional project, all small-scale projects had a maximum implementation period of 5 to 6 months. In this context, waiting times for administrative approvals were also a significant obstacle to the implementation of the projects.
- One challenge was to overcome the fears of the trainees about their ability to perform in their roles, including mastering technical skills and integrating into a predominantly male professional environment.
- Another challenge was the difficulty of raising awareness and changing people's behaviour in order to get them interested and involved in the projects, despite the failures of previous experiments.

### Challenges encountered in Taroudant:

- Taking gender into account in urban projects to ensure balanced development.
- Involvement of men to overcome resistance in conservative circles.
- Low financial capacity of cooperatives and associations, limiting significant action.
- Competition from imported products and informal markets, reducing the chances of success.

Diagram 03: Challenges overcome. © GIZ



## Innovative aspects and strengths

These projects stand out for their strengths, reflecting a commitment to an inclusive and gender-sensitive approach:

Training and capacity development in leadership, project management and inclusion in urban projects.

Participants' ongoing commitment to ensuring the sustainability of current and future urban small-scale projects.

Training of male and female civil servants in citizen consultation.

Better consideration of the gender dimension in urban projects

Improved exchanges and professional relations between women and men.

Diagram 04: Innovative aspects and strengths. © GIZ



Local artisanal products displayed in a traditional straw basket: packaged powder bags, glass cans and working tools. This image illustrates the potential for showcasing local know-how, such as that supported through the income-generating activities development project in Taroudant.

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## Best practices, lessons learnt and advice

Several important lessons have been learnt and good practices identified from the experiences in promoting gender in urban development, that should be taken into account for scaling up:

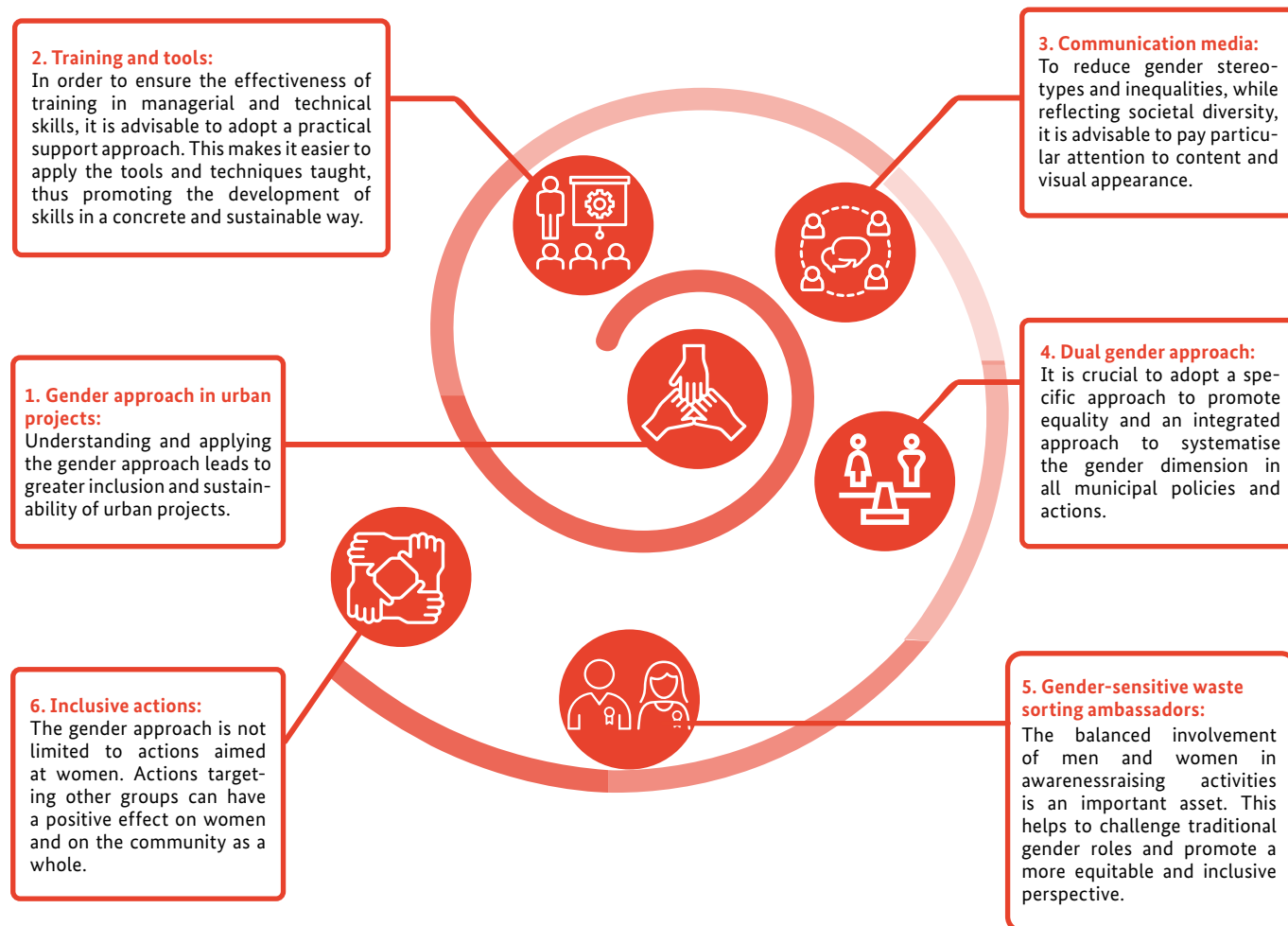


Diagram 05: Best practices, lessons learnt and advice. © GIZ

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