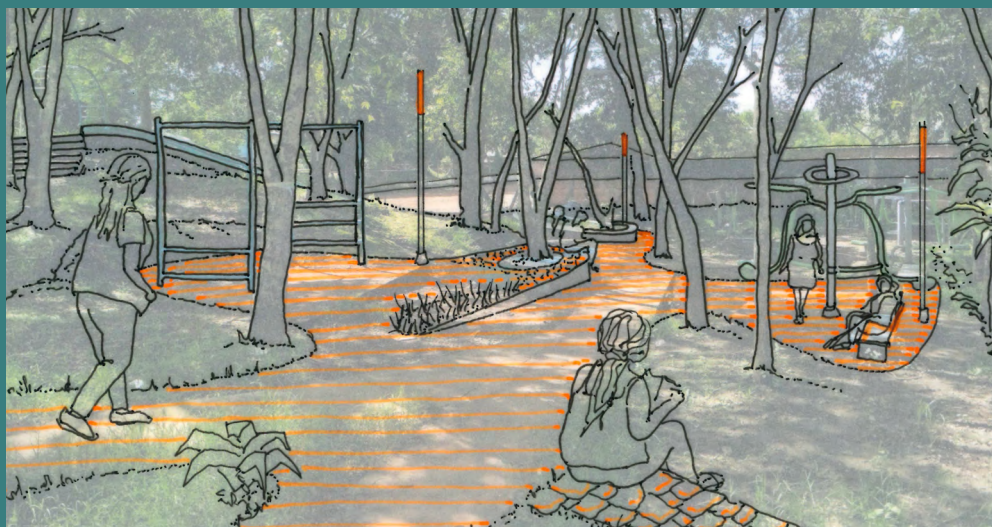


Gender-responsive approaches for enhancing inclusivity in sustainable urban development

COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICES AND ROADMAPS



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India, April 2026

Gender-responsive approaches for enhancing inclusivity in sustainable urban development

COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICES AND ROADMAPS

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Introduction

Urban development strategies must include a **gender-responsive** lens to tackle deep-rooted inequities, differential or unequal access to resources, mobility, safety, and ensure representation of marginalised voices. The “Good Practice Compendium on Gender-responsive approaches in Sustainable Urban Development” aims to address this need by curating best practices and creating recommendations towards transformative Gender-responsive approaches that have paved the way for cities to integrate an intersectional **gender** and feminist perspective as a core competence in sustainable urban development (urban planning, governance and service delivery). The goal is that this compendium of good practices and roadmaps can help local governments, planners, and communities integrate the use of **gender-transformative** perspectives in urban projects to work towards equitable, safe, accessible and sustainable cities for all genders.

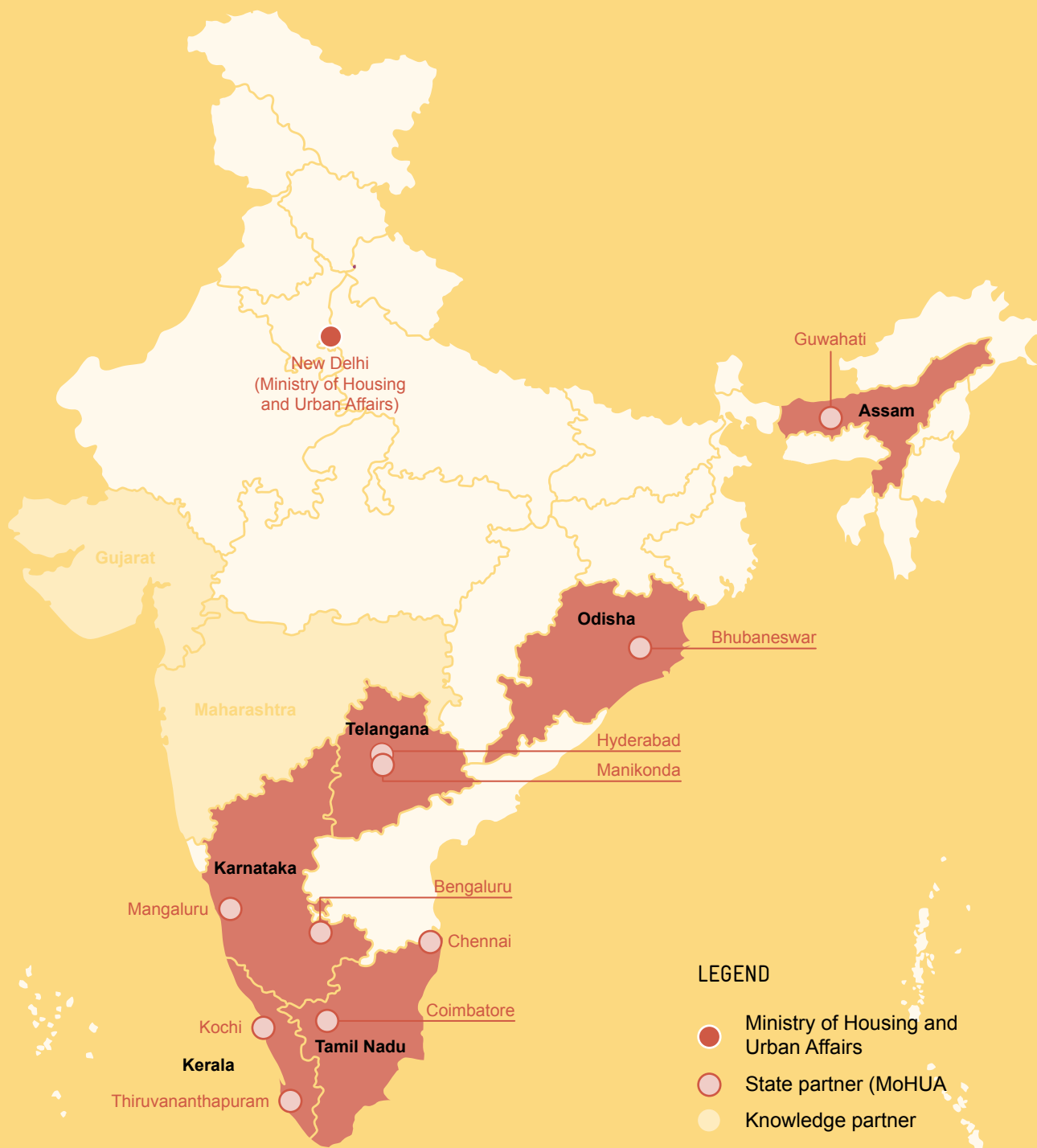
This document is one of the outputs of the “Sustainable Urban Development - Smart Cities II (SUDSC II)” project implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project supports the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India (GoI), and the partner state governments of Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana in developing resilient, sustainable approaches and solutions for sustainable urban development by considering disaster risk management, **leave-no-one-behind (LNOB)** and including aspects of gender.

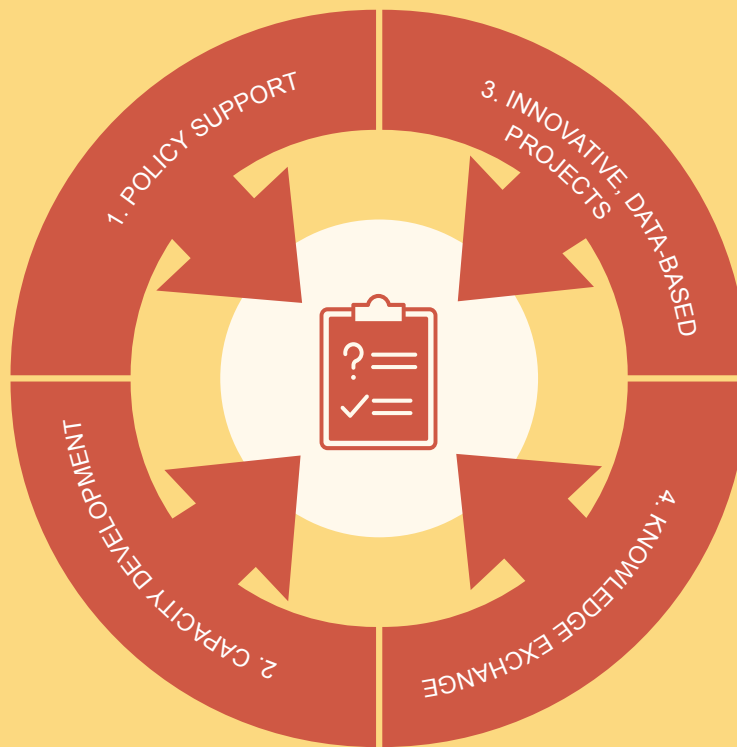
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are defined on the
Glossary (page 201)



SUDSC II – Overview

National, state and city level institutions will apply gender-responsive approaches of resilient and sustainable urban development to ensure access to public services that consider disaster risk management and leave no one behind.





Focus areas



Gender Equality
and Inclusion



Urban Governance /
Municipal Finance



Disaster Risk
Management and
Resilience.



Digital Transformation
for Sustainable Urban
Development

Situating the Sustainable Urban Development- Smart Cities II (SUDSC-II) Project

Aligned with the global mandates such as, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda (NUA), the Addis Ababa Finance-for-Development Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), India has launched several urban missions to adhere to its commitments and objectives of achieving sustainable and urban development. Some of these missions include the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0 (AMRUT 2.0), Smart Cities Mission (SCM), Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 (SBM-Urban 2.0), and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). These initiatives seek to enhance the ease of living, strengthen accountable governance, and advance environmental sustainability, while simultaneously contributing to economic growth and creation of employment opportunities. According to the SCM, the country's flagship missions, such as Housing for All, Clean India Mission, AMRUT, National Mission for Sustainable Habitat, and National Urban Livelihoods Mission, have already transformed over 4,800 cities and towns (UN-Habitat & MoHUA, GoI, 2023).

Despite the various responses initiated by the GoI to address complex urban challenges, there remains a significant need to strengthen the capacity (of individuals and institutions) to implement sustainable urban development practices, particularly through risk-informed, integrated, and resilient approaches grounded in a gender-transformative and intersectional feminist lens. Such an approach ensures the provision of basic services by building resilience and preventing disasters, while leaving “no-one-behind” and ensuring women's equal representation and meaningful participation.

This compendium responds to the **BMZ's Strategy on Feminist Development Policy: For Just and Strong Societies Worldwide**, passed by the government of Germany in March 2024, to be applied to all sectors, regions and instruments of German development policy, including GIZ cooperation projects. This policy draws on extensive discussions, in particular with civil society organisations and experts from across the globe. The goal of the policy is to eliminate discriminatory structures for women and girls, and for marginalised groups. Its focus is on gender equality through a gender-transformative and intersectional approach.

The document will serve to exchange knowledge with Indian state and city officials, representatives of academia, civil societies, and the private sector, among others, on the thematic topic of localised action for **urban infrastructure, governance, and community participation**. In particular, it will support the smart cities of Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore, Guwahati, Kochi, Mangaluru and Manikonda in implementing the concepts of risk-informed, integrated, resilient, and gender-responsive sustainable urban development.

In addition to these cities and regions, this compendium will be useful for a broader audience, working at the institutional as well as community level in integrating an intersectional feminist perspective in urban planning and advancing gender-transformative sustainable urban development practices.

The compendium responds to the following objectives:

- a. To develop a Knowledge Product, in the form of a compendium of good practices, for the GIZ- SUDSC II project.
- b. To include a historical overview of the need to recognise and respond to gender disparities in urban planning.
- c. To identify and document gender-responsive approaches and practices in urban development, urban planning and governance applied in different cities.
- d. To make visible Global and National (India) good practices that promote gender-responsive sustainable urban planning and development.
- e. To develop practical gender-responsive urban planning roadmaps and toolkits adaptable to different urban contexts.
- f. To inform policy and programming to achieve equitable urban development with a gender lens or intersectional feminist perspective.

STRUCTURE OF THE COMPENDIUM

The compendium is structured in three sections. Chapter 1 develops the background context of gender-responsive and gender-transformative perspectives in sustainable urban development, presenting an overview of the impacts of the current urban planning models on **climate change**, gender disparities and other social injustice. This chapter also proposes feminist urban planning as the framework to achieve gender-responsive and gender-transformative sustainable urban development.

Chapter 2 presents the compendium of gender-responsive urban development practices at the Global level and in the Indian context. The chapter first presents the methodology and criteria applied to identify and review good practices before presenting 15 Global good practices and 15 Indian good practices, which focus on projects that integrate intersectional feminist perspectives in sustainable urban infrastructure and governance. The chapter highlights in-depth case studies - 5 Global cases and 5 case studies for India, through interviews and field observation.

In particular, the compendium focuses on projects that aim to respond to and mitigate the impacts of climate change on the everyday life of women and marginalised communities across different themes:

- » **Urban infrastructure and service delivery:** primarily, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), everyday mobility and public space improvements, solid waste management, climate resilience and disaster management projects.
- » **Governance:** Programs and strategies that have integrated an intersectional feminist perspective in capacity building, digital governance, financing solutions, among others
- » And, projects developed through **community and women's participation**.

Finally, in Chapter 3, the compendium presents **Recommendations for Enabling Gender-Responsive Sustainable Urban Development** that aim to inspire and provide specific tools to aid cities and territories in integrating a gender-responsive perspective in urban development.

The challenge and contribution of this document is that it seeks to provide frameworks and tools that are built upon previous gender-responsive and gender-transformative urban planning projects worldwide and in India and simultaneously respond to the German BMZ's Strategy on Feminist Development.

How to use this compendium

STEP 1.

What this compendium is about

The need for gender-
transformative, sustainable
and resilient urban
development

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STEP 2.

How gender-responsive urban development is implemented

Compendium of Global and
Indian Practices on Gender-
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development

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STEP 3.

How to apply gender- responsive urban development

Recommendations for
Enabling Gender-responsive
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STEP 4.

Doubts about concepts

Glossary

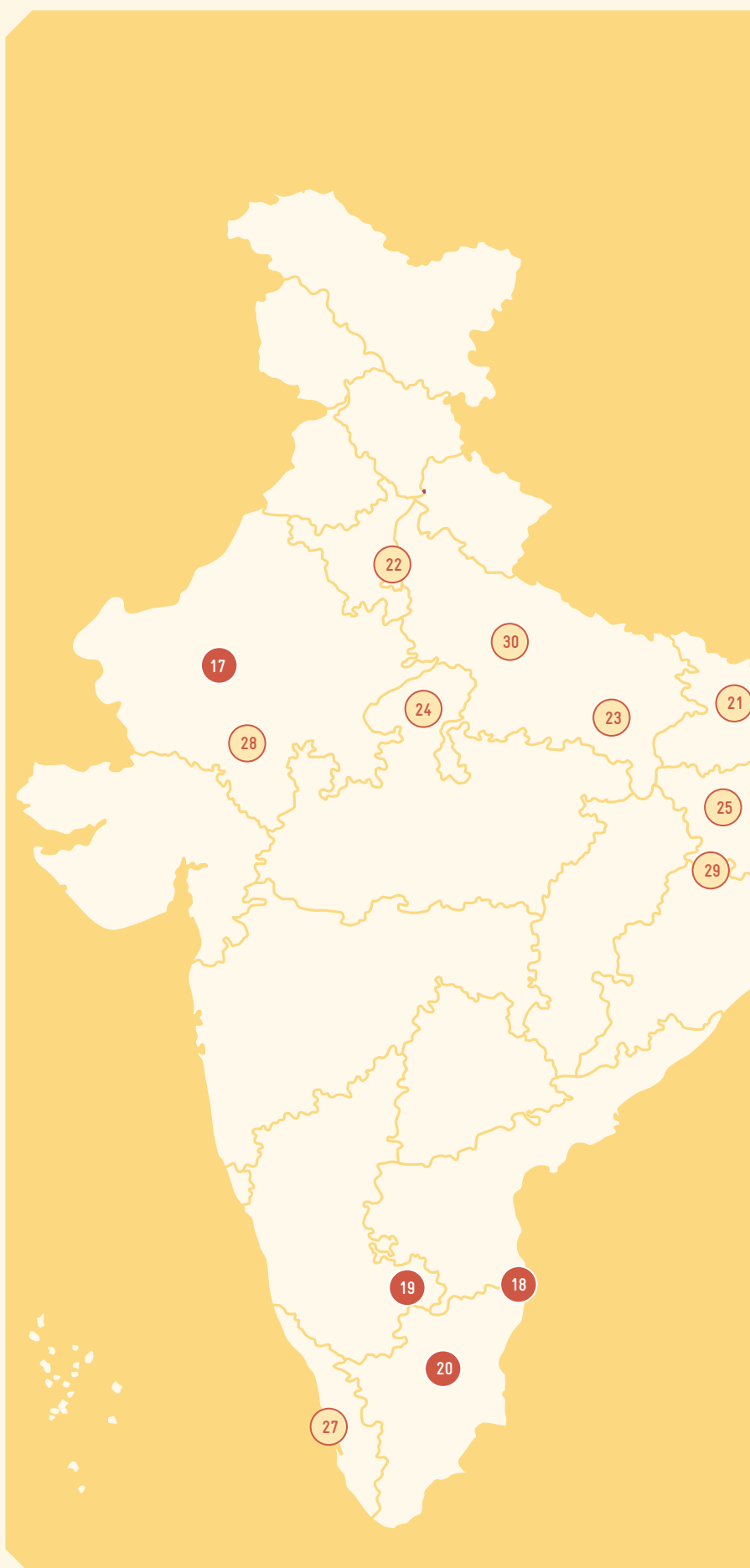
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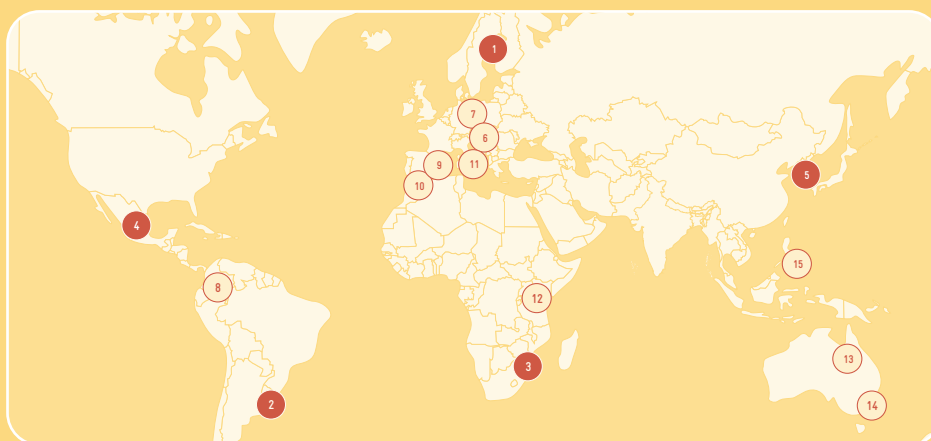
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Want to know more

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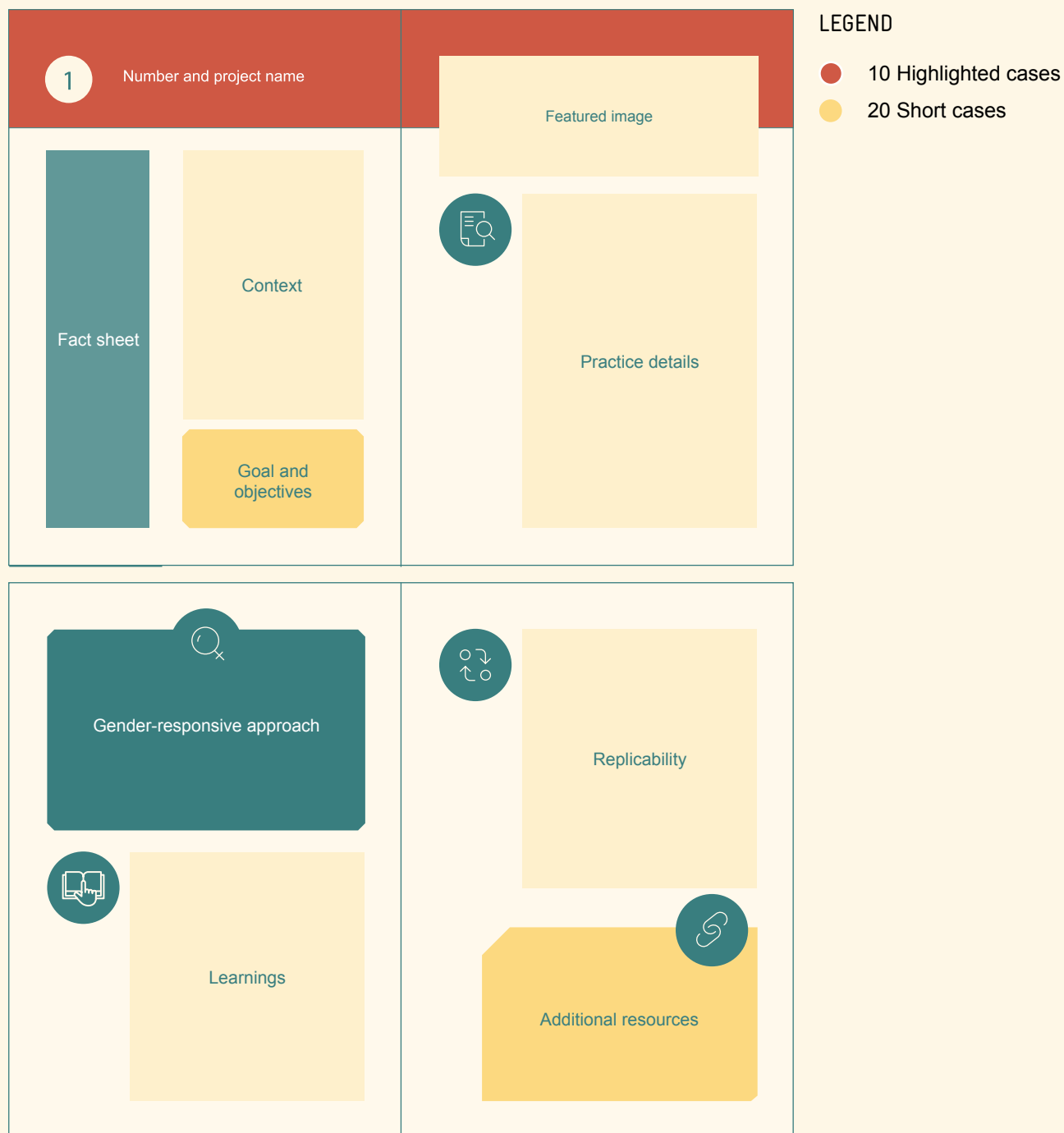
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HOW TO READ THE CASES





The need for gender-
transformative, sustainable and
resilient urban development

1. The need for gender-transformative, sustainable and resilient urban development

1.1. Unequal consequences of urban planning and climate change

According to the UN projections, 68% of the world's population is expected to reside in urban areas by 2050, and approximately 90% of this growth will occur in Asia and Africa, with India, China, and Nigeria collectively accounting for about 35% of the increase. In India alone, the urban population is projected to grow by an additional 416 million by 2050¹. A significant contributor to this burgeoning population is internal displacement and forced migration due to climate-change impacts and events.

This exponential growth has had an impact on the form and size of urban areas. In India, the 2011 Census recorded a total urban population of 377 million spread across 6,166 metropolises/urban towns out of a total of 7,935 towns². Even though cities occupy less than 2% of the Earth's surface, they are responsible for 75% of global CO₂ emissions³. The growth of cities and metropolitan areas has had a major environmental impact, in terms of the depletion and destruction of energy, natural and territorial resources, as well as socioeconomic impacts, particularly increasing social inequalities.

Urbanisation, sprawling, high-density population and rapid infrastructure activities have exacerbated climate change impacts and extreme weather events, with poor coping mechanisms and disaster resilience urban systems in place. In 2016, the UN Environmental Programme estimated that the global costs of adapting to climate change impacts are likely to grow by \$140-300 billion per year and to \$230-500 billion per year by 2030 and 2050, respectively⁴. This expenditure is likely to be heavily-lifted by the urban local bodies, which would be home to a significant proportion of the world's global population.

1 2018 Revision of the World Urbanization Prospects, published by the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). <https://www.un.org/en/desa/68-world-population-projected-live-urban-areas-2050-says-un>

2 <https://unhabitat.org/india>

3 UNEP <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/cities/cities-and-climate-change>

4 UNEP report: Cost of adapting to climate change could hit \$500B per year by 2050, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/05/unep-report-cost-of-adapting-to-climate-change-could-hit-500b-per-year-by-2050/> retrieved in July 2026.

India's urban development challenges

In India, unequal urbanisation and unmet needs of the rapidly expanding population are contributing factors to fragmented spaces in cities with inadequate infrastructure. Some of the challenges that have influenced this unequal urban development are:

- » Limited disaggregated data by gender and other intersectional categories.
- » Limited women's participation. Women's presence in decision-making needs to be increased to enable more opportunities to share their knowledge, especially in urban planning and design.
- » Limited gender-transformative planning approaches that respond to the diverse population needs, particularly in marginalised urban spaces.
- » Lack of spaces and platforms for coordinated responses among government departments.
- » Limited cross-learning opportunities or limited visibility of practices to be replicated and scaled. There is a need for transdisciplinary approaches and training on integrating intersectional feminist perspectives in urban planning as well.
- » Limited finances, capacity and the infrastructure in cities and government bodies to develop sustainable and gender-responsive planning. Further, there is a need to increase the integration of digital technologies and infrastructure for people-centric services, which impacts accountability and transparency of services provided.

Unequal use, access and needs in cities

The prevailing model of urban planning has overlooked or inadequately considered the impacts on the environment, which also remain disjointed from the social justice impact of urbanisation. Historically, mainstream urban planning has responded to patriarchal, capitalist and colonial paradigms that have promoted growth without limits, built on urban planning from a “stereotypical” citizen model (usually responding to the needs and interests of an able-bodied white middle-class man working full-time and without care responsibilities), while also breaking any relationship to the natural environment.

Life in the city is not the same for everyone. Who benefits from the structure and urban design of cities? Are they fair for everyone? Does the design consider all ways of knowing, experiencing and living in the city?

There is no single answer to these questions, but they make one question urban planning as a discipline that deals with the analysis of human settlements and the set of techniques used for urban intervention.

The impact of the predominant models of planning in cities is highly gendered and intersectional, which disproportionately impacts the vast majority of the population. The same spaces in a city can be experienced differently by different bodies, based on their varying needs and depending on their gender, age, race, sexuality, and physical ability, among other social categories. The differential use, sense and experience of space for different identities also demonstrate who has access to which spaces and who has been denied access⁵. Further, women as well as minority groups have been historically excluded from urban development decision-making processes and transformations. As a result, cities have been created focusing on production and consumption activities, while other activities, especially those related to care and unpaid domestic work, historically attributed to women, are considered marginal and external to urban planning approaches.

Limited women’s participation in city-making processes is worsened by overlapping responsibilities of care, managing household and work⁶, inadequate access to housing and basic services, patriarchal expectations that impact access to educational opportunities, early marriages and motherhood, limited mobility, in addition to actual and perceived fear of **gender-based violence**⁷.

Further, neoliberal policies are causing major social imbalances that are materialised territorially in phenomena such as the commodification of public space, speculation, gentrification and touristification. Social spending and services related to the reproductive spheres are reduced, cutting aid for dependency and placing the burden of care tasks back on women’s shoulders, thereby exempting the State itself from responsibility. In this situation, the current urban model reproduces gender inequalities, perpetuating the exclusion of women and limiting their right to the city⁸.

5 Phadke, Khan & Ranade, 2011.

6 For example, according to the National Sample Survey (NSS), nearly 40% of the Indian population is involved in unpaid care work, and this number is only expected to rise further.

7 Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2024.

8 Col·lectiu Punt 6, 2024.

Impacts of urban models on diverse bodies in the city

Patriarchal and socio-cultural norms and expectations

Personal safety and security concerns

Complex challenges emerging from intersectional needs

High risk to gender-based violence

Marginalised voices

Restricted access to education

Limited representation of women's voices as well as other unerrepresented groups in formal structures of urban governance

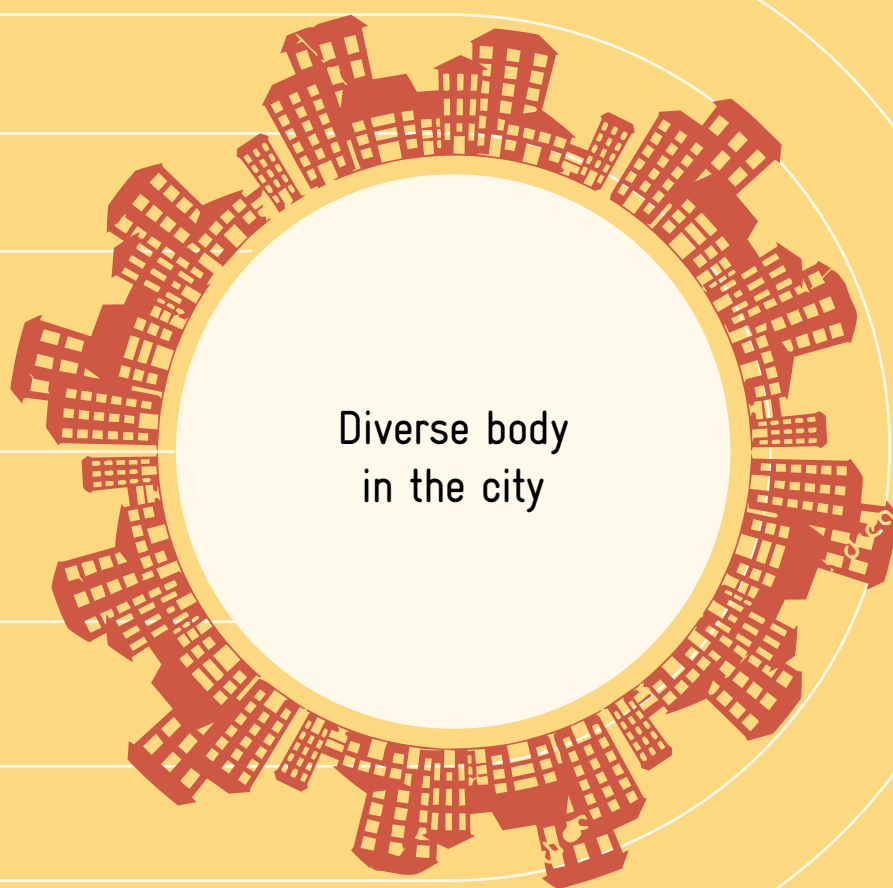
Compounded vulnerability and limited capacity to adapt to climate risks

Restricted mobility in cities designed for car users

Limited access to information, resources and support services

Poverty impacts and exacerbated health risks for urban poor

Inequitable access to work



Gender Impacts of Climate Change in Urban Areas

The compounded impact of sprawl, haphazard development and climate change impacts makes cities vulnerable to natural hazards (both slow and sudden onset). In the case of India, it is the seventh country most impacted by extreme climate events (such as floods, heatwaves, storms) triggered by climate change⁹.

In addition, cities have been planned with their backs to nature, conceived as organisms expanding continuously and uncontrollably, depleting the resources of both nearby territories and remote places, generating considerable waste, environmental pollution and displacement of population from their surroundings, while straining the ability of cities to meet the needs of their growing populations. Cities have inadequately addressed climate change impacts, without understanding its linkage with the global crisis of care. From an ecofeminist perspective, the climate emergency is inseparable from the care emergency. Without integrating consideration of care, cities not only trespass the limits of the natural resources and environment, but also tremendously strain women and their bodies, who continue to be the primary unpaid caretakers of the dependent population, in a context of an increasingly aging population.

Globally, women, especially low-income, migrant, racialised and indigenous women, are recognised to be most affected by the consequences of climate change, and experience disproportionately high exposure to extreme weather events and restricted access to shelter. Other unrepresented groups such as people with disabilities, children, the elderly, and LGBTBIQ+ community also experience compounded vulnerabilities effects of climate change, because of limited access to land and resources, less access to institutional support, health services, less information and fewer opportunities to participate in decision-making.

One of the consequences of the climate emergency is the exposure of women to a greater risk of gender-based violence, due to multiple factors: greater poverty, forced migrations, among others. Girls specially, are also more likely to fall victim to human trafficking, exploitation and child abuse in the aftermath of disasters. Further, both climate induced mobilities and immobilities stem from vulnerabilities and risks that are closely entangled with gender power relations, both within and beyond a household¹⁰. Despite being the most affected, they are rarely visible in decision-making processes or seen as agents of change concerning climate action.

Women in informal settlements and marginalised communities, across many cities in the Global South, already spend a disproportionate amount of time fetching water for everyday use, especially due to the depleting groundwater resources, which forces them to traverse longer distances. They are also more likely to work in the informal labour sector and commute by foot, subjecting them to extreme temperatures and air pollution more than others. In all these activities, women and girls are also more likely to face harassment and sexual violence.

In India, the climate change impacts are widespread, including disruption of basic services like transport, education and health facilities, limited access to safe and clean water and sanitation infrastructure, leading to heightened health risks, and a rise in poverty and inequality¹¹, in addition to socio-economic losses through loss

⁹ Global Climate Risk Index 2021

¹⁰ CSTEP, 2023

¹¹ NIUA, 2024

of infrastructure and properties, loss of lives, loss of livelihoods, and food security. Women also experience concerns of personal safety and health challenges during floods and other disasters. Urban poor children living in low-income settlements, slums and streets, orphans or children with disabilities are also highly **vulnerable** with poor access to health, water, sanitation, education and physical safety and protection¹².

Access to toilets offers a clear example of how a gender-responsive approach has been missed in urban planning worldwide, by being an infrastructure of exclusion for women, people of colour, and transgender. Lack of safe access or limited availability to functional toilets is a serious problem, especially in informal settlements in contexts like India, disproportionately affecting women and girls and placing them at risk of gender-based violence when accessing these infrastructures.¹³

In the Global South, a distinctive challenge of urban development and climate change impacts is urban informality. In India, this urban informality is a product of complex structures of power, both top-down as well as bottom-up practices, which tread the boundaries of legalities, and often emerge from the conception and contestation of space¹⁴. This informality is not to be assumed as uncontrolled illegal activity or viewed synonymously with poverty- an unfavourable outcome of urbanisation. Instead, this informality becomes visible when the planning regimes act beyond the prescribed regulation, often to accommodate the objectives of those in power, sometimes justified as an outcome for the common good¹⁴. Acknowledging this informality while forefronting marginalised voices is critical in developing contextually relevant planning strategies that question western strategic planning approaches.

Further, addressing these interconnected challenges on multiple fronts will require comprehensive and integrated strategies that combine urban planning, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and an intersectional feminist perspective that address social justice and incorporates women and vulnerable populations as agents of change¹⁵.

¹² Mani et al., 2017.

¹³ Greed, 1994, p. 200. Anthony and Dufresne, 2007.

¹⁴ Roy, 2009.

¹⁵ Díaz-Carro and Vázquez Junquera, 2023. IPCC, 2014). Amorim-Maia, Anguelovski, Chu & Connolly, 2022

1.2. Gender perspectives and feminisms in urban planning

The inadequacies towards integrating women and girls in designing sustainable cities and environments is historically and professionally embedded. For a century, urban planning was considered a neutral subject, and where public interest was often seen as universalistic, standardised and singular. Planning was oblivious to the diversity of realities in our society, replicated inequalities, privileging the most powerful and excluding women from the making of urban space and the profession.¹⁶

The feminist movement has a long history with multiple waves, in which women's groups have organised to reclaim representation in public life and public space, often in response to poor urbanisation, public health conditions, and inadequate urban infrastructures. From Christine de Pizan's "The City of Ladies" (1405) to the City Beautiful movement (1890s-1900s) in North America, there were several efforts to improve the quality of urban spaces. As early as the 15th century, Pizan envisioned a city that sought to break the public silence imposed on women. Her "city of ladies" was conceived as a space of freedom for women, a city that escapes destruction and war¹⁷.

During the 19th century, a movement of female and feminist activists emerged and continued the contribution to the field of urban planning and architecture by seeking a more just and equitable society for all, especially women. Above all, their practice focused on improving and rethinking the physical environment of cities to guarantee equity in their use, and began with the recognition of the tasks of reproduction and the management of everyday life. One example is the work of Jane Addams's "redemptive places" (mid-1900s), where women work collectively to improve the city at the neighbourhood level¹⁸.

In the 20th century, feminist planners and geographers, both researchers and practitioners, widened their contributions to planning theory and practice that can be applied to gender-responsive sustainable urban planning and development and for advancing women's right to the city¹⁹. Starting with Jane Jacobs, who, in the late 1950s, began her own fight against the urban renewal led by New York City planning chief Robert Moses, and others who often dismissed her as "just a housewife." She eventually became a historical reference for many urban planners for her claim to preserve neighbourhood life and respond to people's everyday life needs in their diversity.

Following this genealogy, researchers, practitioners and activists have contributed to gender and feminist urban planning across different areas, integrating everyday life, urban safety, care and ecofeminist perspectives to several subfields of sustainable urban development. In doing so, they paved the way for the integration of a gender perspective into international agreements in the 1990s, particularly following the

¹⁶ Healey, 1997; Fainstein and Servon, 2005; Beebejaun, 2024; Ortiz Escalante and Valdivia, 2015; Ortiz Escalante, 2016, 2019.

¹⁷ de Pizan, Christine, 1998.

¹⁸ Casanovas, 2022; Catharine Beecher (1800-1878), Melusina Fay Pierce (1836-1923), Christine Frederick (1883-1970), Octavia Hill (1838-1912), Henrietta Barnett (1851-1936), and Jane Addams (1860-1935). Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935), Herland (1915) Muxí Martínez, 2005, 2021; Spain, 2001.

¹⁹ e.g. Berry et al 2025; Col·lectiu Punt 6 2019; Fainstein and Servon 2005, Falú 2009; Falú 2011; Greed 1994; Hayden 1980; Jacobs 1961; Leavitt 2003; Little, Peake, and Richardson 1988; Muxí Martínez et al. 2011; Peake 2024; Rahder and Altília 2004; Sandercock and Forsyth 1992; Sandercock 1998; Whitzman 2013; Wilson 1991

Beijing Conference in 1995. However, it was not until the 2010s that this approach was integrated into the official agenda in the field of urban planning and urbanisation.

Gender perspectives in the international planning agenda

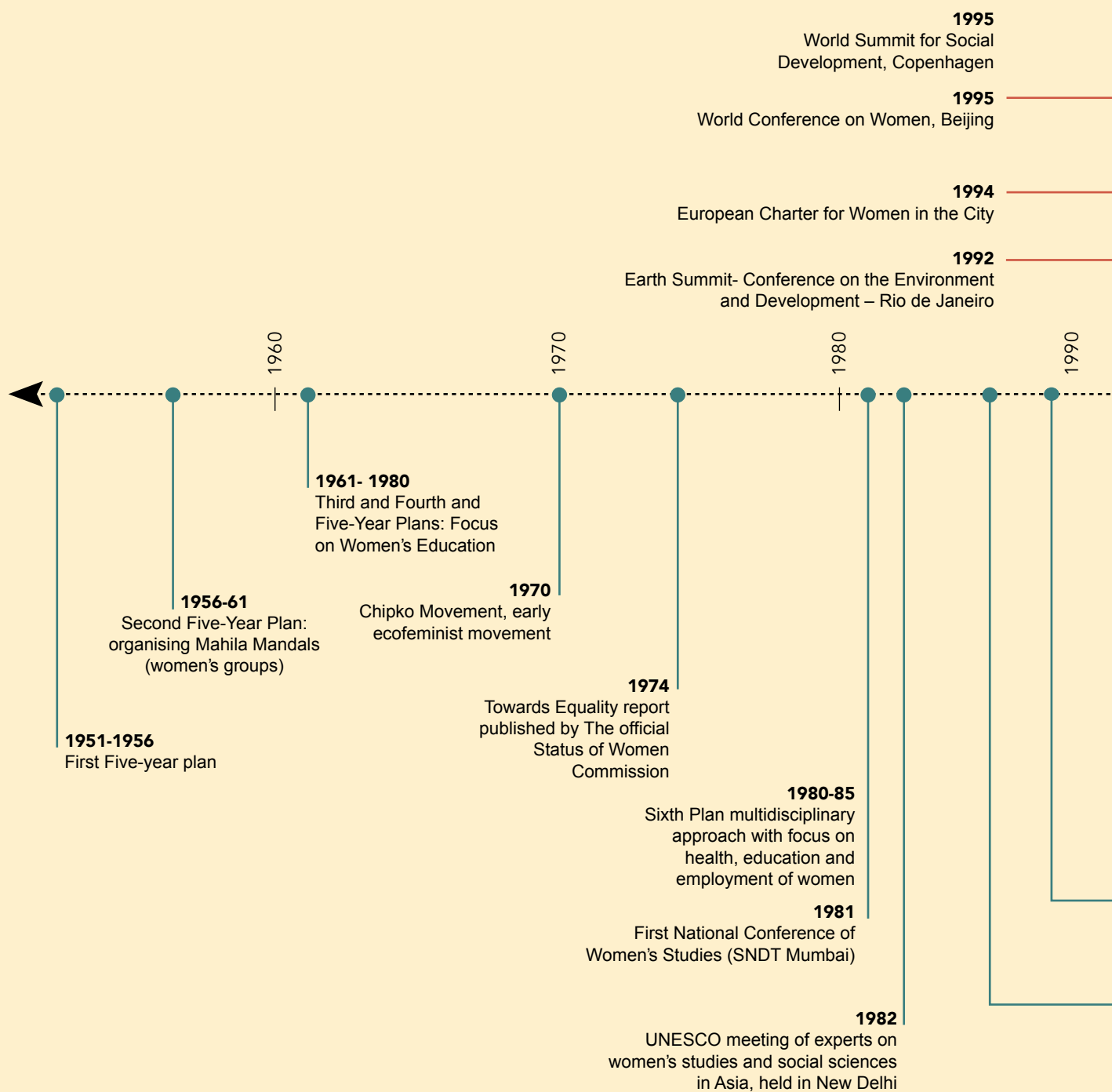
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations (UN) members in 2015, created 17 world Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs highlight the interconnections between the environmental, social and economic aspects of [sustainable development](#). It is SDG 5 that responds to Gender Equality, which needs to be intersected with other SDGs that are directly related to urbanisation: SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities and SDG 13 Climate Action.

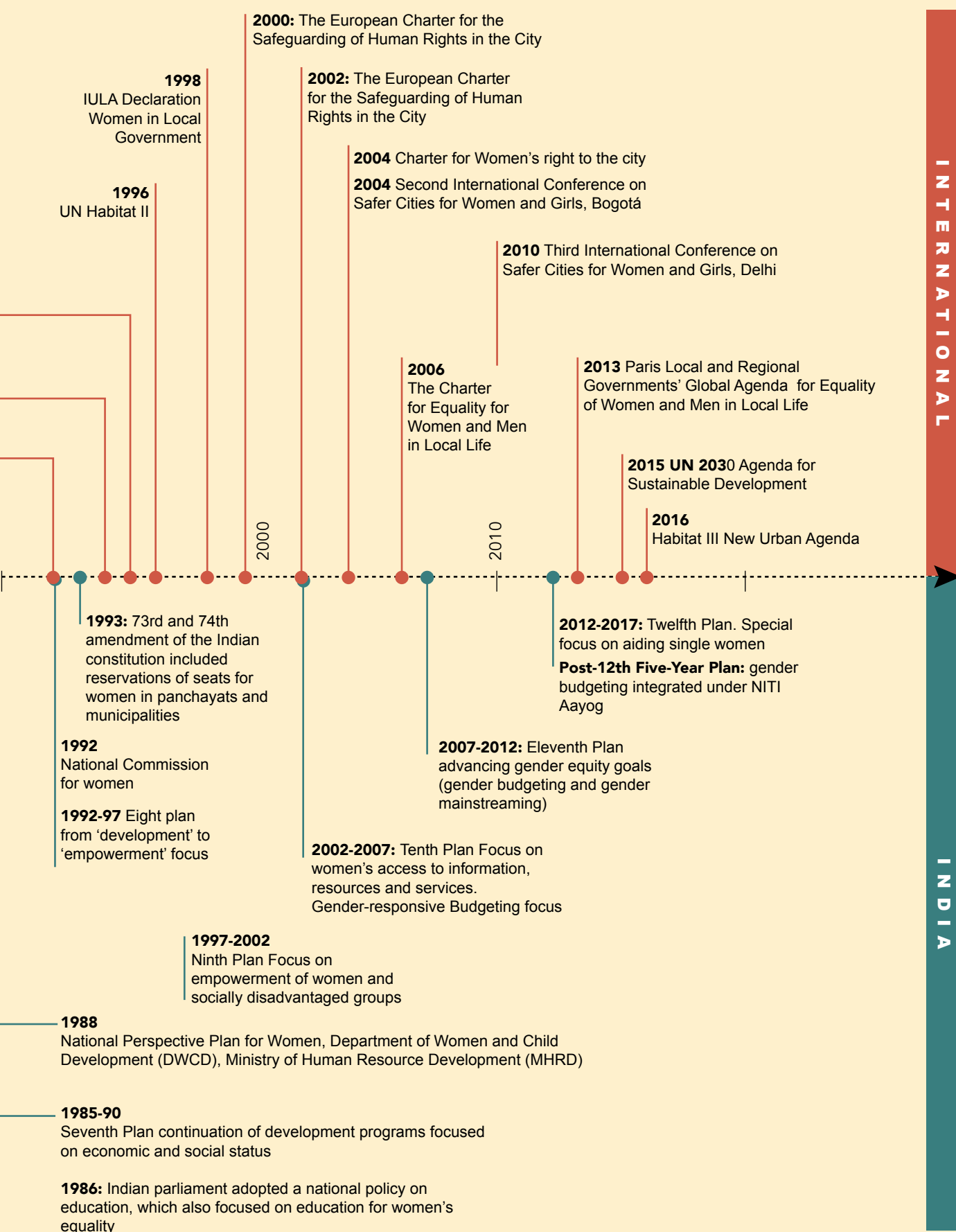
The New Urban Agenda (2016) states in points 5 and 13 that cities must achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls to take full advantage of their vital contribution to sustainable development; ensure women's full and effective participation and equal rights in all spheres and positions of leadership; and prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination, violence and harassment against women and girls in public and private spaces. Many agenda items related to urban planning, mobility, territorial, rural and urban development, housing policies, participation, design of public spaces and streets, among others, are specified to be age and gender based.

However, the political impact of the SDGs and the NUA has been rather limited, and both have struggled to achieve transformative changes in policy and institutional structures.

The subsequent section summarises the timeline of the main feminist and women's rights policy achievements in relation to urban development and planning. The timeline combines the different policies and charters at the international level, and the policies, plans and achievements at the Indian level.

Timeline – Feminist Policy and Women’s Rights: Achievements in India and Abroad





Gender perspectives in the Indian context

In India, women's and feminist movements have slowly evolved since before colonial times. The articulation of gender and women's questions through different periods has been complex, transforming over time through changing development agendas and contextual situations. But gender has been an integral part of India's development.

Feminist analytical frameworks in the fields of built environment have evolved much later, particularly, interior design, landscape design, architecture, urban design and planning, than in the disciplines of health, law, literature, art, theatre, and human development²⁰.

Today, 'Women empowerment' has become a core issue across multiple sectors, although there is a significant need to increase awareness and build capacity to achieve gender-responsive outcomes, especially in urban development.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND EVOLUTION OF FEMINISM IN INDIA

Broadly within the South Asian context, from the perspective of the West, women are often framed as victims of patriarchal and socio-cultural religious control. However, in India, in the past, women enjoyed a higher status, in terms of participation in religious rituals and ceremonies, attaining education, a greater degree of freedom in choosing marriage partners and holding an equal status in terms of contributing to household production²¹.

Studies have noted a gradual shift in the status of women from the post-Vedic period (~1000 – 600 BCE), through the medieval times, where foreign invasions further deteriorated their position in society, with fewer rights and restrictions on seeking education and movement, increase in child marriages, and practices of widow burning (sati), the purdah system and polygamy as accepted social norms. Both Hindu and Muslim women in the medieval ages were positioned as inferior in comparison to men, and later periods of Aryan expansion brought in the caste system, giving a lower hierarchical ordering to non-Aryans. Women belonging to these lower castes suffered intersectional marginalisation, with some taken in as dasyus (slaves)²².

The **women's movement** visibly emerged and gained momentum in the 19th century, during pre-independence, and within the context of prevailing colonial ideology and their hegemonic control, overlayed with the local socio-cultural norms and customs that granted an overall lower positioning of women in society.

Broadly, the historical evolution of these multiple movements (See Appendix 1)²³ can be identified as the pre-independence social reform movements, followed by the

²⁰ Desai, 2007.

²¹ Chakraborty & Roy, 2023. Ghosh & Roy, 1997. Tharakan & Tharakan, 1975.

²² Chaudhuri, 2012. Ghosh, 1996. Pande, 2018.

²³ Appendix 1 captures the details of the contextual conditions of these different periods, along with some of the key features, reforms and policies introduced, and the major organisations or actors engaged in the respective periods.

period of nationalist movements leading up to independence in 1947, the early years of accommodation and the period of economic crisis post-independence, to the more contemporary movements post globalisation and digitisation.

Reform and anti-colonial movements during the Pre-independence Period

Towards the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British Liberal reformism as well as the emerging local opinion public opinion was to tackle and end some of the prevailing unjust practices and customs. The core focus was on including women in public spaces, improving their political rights and providing access to employment and education, campaigning against child marriages, ending permanent widowhood, and raising the minimum marriageable age for girls (to 14 years) and boys (to 18 years)²⁴. Female infanticide, sati or widow-burning, prostitution and begging by destitute women were also some of the other issues addressed and were also backed by the British Administration²⁵.

However, these early reformist movements were framed from the perspective of English-educated Indian male professionals who were influenced by colonial liberal ideas of the time²⁶. They only echoed the concerns of specific regions and castes, primarily from the elites in the society. They intended to create a modern Indian society that was traditional yet reformed in some ways. The ideas continued to adhere to patriarchal social structures and its gendered expectations.

Some of the notable movements achieved during this period were the illegalisation of Sati in 1829 and, legislation of widow remarriage in 1856 in British India. Other achievements included the 1939 Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act, which granted women greater proprietary rights and inheritance rights.

Following this period (and mainly between 1915-1947), Nationalist and freedom movements emerged, where women's inclusion in the non-violent civil disobedience movement expanded their presence in public spaces as well as their role and participation in the freedom movements, thereby increasing their political and economic participation. This period also saw the formation of major nation-wide organisations (such as All-India Muslim Ladies' Conference (Anjuman) 1914, Women's India Association (WIA), National Council of Women in India (NCWI) and All India Women's Conference (AIWC) between 1917 and 1927), who emphasised that the progress of women is critical for any society's advancement.

Post-Independence

Women's participation in the freedom struggle movements paved the way for rethinking their role and rights in society, addressing social issues, and developing a systemic development plan after India gained its independence in 1947. The constitution recognised the unequal position of women in society and included special provisions for women and children. However, India also had to simultaneously deal with the challenges of mass migration and communal

²⁴ Tharakan & Tharakan, 1975; Jain, 2020.

²⁵ Bhat & Wani, 2022.

²⁶ Bhat & Wani, 2022. Chaudhuri, 2012. Tharakan & Tharakan, 1975.

violence in the immediate aftermath of partition, as well as the challenges of economic reconstruction during the formative years of a new state. Therefore, the status of women and their rights as defined in policies were not aligned with their everyday lived experiences²⁷.

In the first two decades after independence, women's political rights were inadequately considered in the state's discourses, and women were primarily regarded as recipients of welfare²⁸. Issues of marriage, divorce, succession, guardianship and adoption were key issues raised with several organisations taking up both legal and constitutional measures to outlaw polygamy, legalise intercaste and interreligious marriages, make child marriage punishable and increase the marriageable age for boys and girls.

Following this period was an economic crisis and stagnation in the late 1960s, where gender concerns were mainly integrated with concerns of poverty. In the early 70s, some state and political organisations were set up to tackle women's issues. CPI (M) set up the Shramik Mahila Sangathan and the Progressive Organisation of Women, formed by Maoist women²⁹.

Women's movement in the 1970s coincided with and was impacted by the second wave of Western women's movements and emerged together with left and democratic forces. This wave of feminism was broader, especially due to the recognition of **intersectionality**. There were considerations of caste, class and culture by the state. These movements were also largely led by women and women's organisations, where the hegemony of Indian patriarchal social structure was challenged at multiple sites- from the scale of household, family, and marriage to the state, class, caste and community³⁰.

Promotion of NGOs, grassroots level organisations (focused on women's welfare) gained momentum during the mid-70s, which gave opportunities for women to voice their concerns, and participate in the programs, rather than being framed as recipients or beneficiaries: Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), National Commission of Women (New Delhi), National Council of Women (Pune), Joint Women's Program (Delhi), Kali for Women (Delhi). Violence against women, missing girl child, sexual exploitation and harassment, dowry, rape, land rights, and political representation were some of the key issues raised at the time.

In 1974, the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) was set up by the Government of India, which examined the rights and status of women and published a novel report, Towards Equality. "A Blueprint of Action Points and National Plan of Action for Women 1976". The report highlighted the low status of women in society, and suggested measures in education, health, family planning and nutrition, employment, social welfare and legal status and provisions.

By the 1970s, 1) there was a drastic increase in female professionals joining medicine, engineering, journalism, media, and management, 2) women increasingly participated in politics and administrative services, and 3) more women began teaching, nursing and secretarial jobs³¹.

²⁷ Pande, 2018.

²⁸ Chaudhuri, 2012.

²⁹ Pande, 2018, p. 8

³⁰ Chaudhuri, 2012. Jain, 2020.

³¹ Desai, 2007.

From the mid to late 80s, women-led non-governmental organisations focused on individual women to help them access the advantages already granted by law, causing a shift towards recognition and realisation of rights. Advocating for the rights of Dalit and Marginalised women also gained importance. The focus of health, employment and education of women in the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1980) marked the beginning of the third wave of feminism. Later, the amendments (73rd and 74th of 1993) made to the Indian constitution, there was an inclusion to provide reservations of seats for women in panchayats and municipalities, with a 33% of reservation for women.

Since the Third Five-year Plan, there has been increasing focus on the development of women and children, from the increase in the allocation of funds, to organising women's groups (Mahila Mandals), prioritising women's education, health and employment, improving their economic and social status and including them in mainstream national development. Later, empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups, such as the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities as agents of social change and development was emphasised³². Gender Budgeting and gender mainstreaming to advance gender equity goals became critical to enhance access to information, resources and services, and were included as part of the development agenda from 2002.

Contemporary Indian Feminism and women's issues: Shift from Women's Development to Women-led development

Economic liberalisation of the late 1990s - 2000s and the beginning of modern technology brought on a cultural shift towards women's freedom, choice and independence. Some of the main concerns that have gained greater visibility are violence against women – sexual, domestic and virtual. The widespread use of social media has triggered another wave of feminism, almost at the same time as the transformations in the feminist movements in the West.

More recently, digital tools have facilitated several campaigns and movements to gain widespread attention, like the Nirbhaya movement (2012) and the MeToo Campaign (2018). These movements allow opportunities to demand accountability from decision makers and key players and demand change. The Pandemic that followed once again brought to the limelight the marginalisation of women and gender inequalities that continue to persist, and the need to continually integrate gender concerns in urban development.

In the year 2024, the vision of "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India) has become a central focus of the national discourse on development. The vision of the Government of India is to transform the country into a developed nation by the year 2047, which marks the 100th year of independence. The four pillars of this vision are GYAN- comprising Garib (poor), Yuva (youth), Annadata (farmers), and Nari (women). Therefore, women are central to this vision, with women's empowerment becoming a key theme across multiple sectors, marking a major shift from women's development to women-led development. The vision focuses on inclusive development and social welfare to ensure economic progress leaves no one behind.

32 Pande, 2018.

Feminist Urban Planning Contributions and Strategies

This section summarises feminist urban planning contributions and approaches and classifies into five main strategies:

- a. Everyday/ Everynight Life as methodology
- b. Impacts of GBV on Women's Right to the City
- c. Prioritising Care and Developing Caring Cities
- d. Integrating Feminist Community Participation
- e. Ecofeminist Approaches to Climate Adaptation and Mitigation

A) PLACING EVERYDAY LIFE AS A CONCEPT AND METHODOLOGY TO ANALYSE DIVERSE PLANNING NEEDS

Planning has been complicit in reproducing the oppressive public-private **binary** that places women in the private realm associated with the domestic, the emotional, the embodied, the family, and the unpaid and informal work; and men in the public sphere of production, paid employment, rationality, disembodiment, market, state, and power³³. This has hindered women's right to the city: to the use of spaces, access to opportunities and participation in planning decision-making. For example, women's use of spaces like plazas, squares, markets and streets typically occurs while carrying a specific task or demonstrating a specific purpose for their visibility in the space.

As a response to break with this public-private false dichotomy, feminist planning has incorporated the concept of everyday/everynight life as a source of knowledge, a scale of analysis and a methodology³⁴. Examining everyday life means giving equal relevance to the needs of the paid productive work and the unpaid reproductive/ domestic/care and community work, to promote a more equitable gender division of labour and, in addition, to make visible women's contributions to the domestic and community economy³⁵. Using everyday life as a paradigm and as a methodology in planning could help make visible the unpaid work undertaken mostly by women and change the traditional approach to urban life that has reproduced dualisms such as workplace/home and public/private³⁶.

Thus, this methodology implies using women's knowledge and everyday life experiences in urban planning and considering women as experts of their communities and neighbourhoods, because of the knowledge accumulated through the complexity of carrying out paid work, unpaid domestic, caring responsibilities and community work³⁷. This knowledge should be included in the design of cities to understand women's mobility patterns and appropriation of space in their daily life³⁸.

³³ Duncan, 1996. Sweet and Ortiz Escalante, 2010.

³⁴ Ortiz Escalante, 2019.

³⁵ Bofill 2005; Gilroy and Booth 1999; Healey 1997; Muxi Martínez et al. 2011

³⁶ Lykogianni 2008

³⁷ Davies 2003; Dyck 2005; Gilroy and Booth 1999; Lykogianni 2008

³⁸ Nadimpalli, 2021

Examining the regional and local level, in recent decades, we find examples of cities that have integrated a feminist perspective through the study of everyday life in the local planning agenda. To exemplify this strategy, in the compendium we find the global case of Vienna (#6), Austria, with the Office to Integrate Everyday Life and a Gender Perspective in Urban Planning, and the city of Umeå (#1), Sweden. Outside of the European context, there are also examples from the South, such as the city of Montevideo (#2), Uruguay, where women mayors have implemented feminist urban planning projects. This compendium also documents practices that address everyday life basic services related to urban infrastructure and sanitation, such as projects aimed at improving access to toilets in Australia and India (#13, #24 and #25). In India, projects with a strong focus on increasing accessibility and use of women and children in public spaces such as in Kohima (#26), or projects like the diagnostic study assessing women's access and mobility plan in Bihar(#22), and the pedestrian mobility improvements implemented across Guwahati (#16).

B) MAKING VISIBLE THE IMPACTS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ON WOMEN'S RIGHT TO THE CITY

Feminist urban planning has also extensively documented how women's rights to the city are limited by fear of sexual violence and rape, the type of violence that attacks their intimate bodies³⁹. In addition, women and **LGTBIQ+** individuals are more likely than cisgender men to adapt and restrict their everyday lives and mobility and limit the use of public spaces, particularly at night⁴⁰, due to the fear and perception of violence^{41, 42}.

While mobility studies have shown that women have more sustainable, complex and diverse movements during the day, at night, their mobility can become paralysed by avoiding certain areas, opting for certain types of transport or avoiding stepping out entirely. Feminist urban planning has pressured urban policies to respond to this paradox and guarantee women's right to the city during the day and at night⁴³. The ease and extent of women's independent mobility in their daily lives also have a significant impact on the relationship they form with their cities and how it shapes their experiences of belonging⁴⁴.

To address gender-based violence and urban safety from a feminist perspective, women's organisations and cities have, in the last decades, developed Safe Cities programs that integrate women's safety into analysis, as well as policies and planning projects that contribute to making cities safer for all. Through women's safety audits and participatory methods, such as exploratory walks, several cities in the Global North and South have developed Safe Cities programs (for example, Montreal, Mexico City, New Delhi, and many others). There are several compendia and roadmaps that have documented safe cities programs and safety audits. This compendium documents cases that respond to the interconnection of women's safety, urban infrastructure and climate change, such as the case of Gender and Mobility Plan of Mexico City (#3), Mexico, the Women's Safety Audit to respond to climate change vulnerabilities in Tetouan (#10) or the Gender Planning Lab in Chennai (#19) and Safetipin (#22).

39 Falú, 2011. Pain, 1991. Sweet and Ortiz Escalante, 2015.

40 Pain 1991, 1997; Koskela 1999; Patel, 2010; Phadke, 2013; Ortiz Escalante, 2018, 2019.

41 Pain, 1991. Robertson, 2016. Stanko and Hobdell, 1993.

42 Robertson 2016

43 Ortiz Escalante, 2019

44 Nadimpalli, 2021

C) PRIORITISING CARE AND ITS MATERIALISATION IN THE TERRITORY, WORKING FOR THE CARING CITY

Different works on care in the city converge, making visible the need to take care out of the private sphere and off women's shoulders, and to make it a social and public responsibility. From a planning perspective, cities also need caring spaces and infrastructures designed from an intersectional feminist perspective. One such contribution is the paradigm of "The Caring City" developed by Col·lectiu Punt 6⁴⁵. The Caring City builds on one of the pillars of feminist urban planning, which is sustainability - understood holistically as the sustainability of life: environmental, economic and social. This conception of sustainability calls for putting the care of life of all living beings and of our environment at the centre, from an ecofeminist approach that understands the global care crisis in close relationship to the environmental crisis.

The Caring City

The caring city is a safe city where anyone can walk down the street at any time without fear of harassment. It has a public transport system that is accessible and affordable, connecting different spaces and care activities, without forcing you to spend a considerable part of your day commuting. A caring city ensures access to decent and affordable housing.

The caring city allows you to care for others, providing the physical support necessary to carry out all caregiving tasks, from grocery shopping to caring for children and other dependents. These physical supports include public spaces and facilities with playgrounds for different ages, fountains, public toilets, vegetation, benches, tables, among others.

The caring city also cares for our environment by not consuming land, energy, and environmental resources without limit. It sustainably manages waste, water sources, reduces air and noise pollution and promotes strategies for reusing underutilised spaces and prioritising the rehabilitation of spaces instead of new constructions. It builds green corridors and ecologically restores the built environment.

A city that allows one to take care of themselves and provides spaces for leisure, a variety of sports activities, and opportunities to interact with other people in outdoor public spaces and also in spaces sheltered from inclement weather, where you can hang out, sit, and chat without having to be mediated by any commercial activity.

In the last five years, different cities around the world have initiated specific projects and policies to develop some of the principles of the Caring City. For example, the city of Bogotá (#1), Colombia, has created "Las Manzanas del Cuidado" (Care Blocks)⁴⁶. The Care Blocks are part of Bogotá's public policy operated by the District Care System, which is included among the 15 Global Practices of the Compendium. In

⁴⁵ Valdivia, 2016, 2017. Col·lectiu Punt 6, 2019.

⁴⁶ <https://manzanasdelcuidado.gov.co>

India, the framework SheRises proposed by Safetipin (#22) also includes a framework for Caring Cities⁴⁷.

D) BREAKING HIERARCHIES THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

In the planning field, there is an extended tradition of collaborative, community engagement and participatory planning⁴⁸, including the incorporation of civil society (individual residents or organisations) as stakeholders in the decision-making processes to develop public policies across any of the planning phases: assessment, design, implementation and evaluation. Although participatory planning has been recognised as a more efficient approach for developing the capacity among stakeholders to work together locally to solve common problems⁴⁹, it has not always been intended to work towards action or to break hierarchies between neighbourhood knowledge and technical training.⁵⁰ As a result, not all voices have been included due to a lack of integration of an intersectional feminist perspective⁵¹.

Feminist Participatory planning values community-building at the grassroots level and acknowledges the role of women in the planning process as active agents of transformation. Gender transformative and Feminist Community Planning projects that have been developed in different territories: 1) include and analyse women's intersectional experiences in different spheres of life (productive, domestic and **care work**, community work); 2) Analyse the consequences of having a sexualised body in public space; 3) Include the time-space dimension of everyday/everynight life and 4) Foster direct political pressure towards policies and decisions that respond to women's needs⁵².

The compendium highlights practices where participatory planning has achieved women's active participation and action in public policies, such as the case of the Heat Action Plan in Jodhpur (#16), Pangea, Garden of the Five Continents and Nonviolence in Napoli (#11), the case of Habitat Chamanculo C in Maputo (#4).

E) INTEGRATING AN ECO-FEMINIST APPROACH TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND URBAN ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION

Efforts from eco-feminists and other allies make visible the linkage between gender and climate change and demonstrate fairer pathways towards sustainable ways of living together. However, despite these efforts, there continues to be a strong concern with prevalent middle-class masculinised knowledge in climate change debates and how it shapes an understanding of techno-scientific solutions, such as geo-engineering⁵³. Across multiple climate change conferences (COP), it is evident that decisions are mostly made from an androcentric and colonial vision, where a privileged minority of

47 <https://safetipin.com/report/she-rises-a-framework-for-caring-cities>

48 Caldeira and Holston, 2015. Douglas and Friedmann, 1998. Healey, 1997; Innes and Booher, 1999. Ortiz Escalante and Valdivia, 2015. Sandercock and Attili, 2010. Verdaguer Viana-Cárdenas and Velázquez Viora, 2012.

49 Healey, 1997.

50 Sandercock and Attili 2010

51 Cooke and Kothari 2001; Hickey and Mohan 2004; Listerborn 2008; Mosse 1994; Sweet and Ortiz Escalante 2010; Shah 1998;

52 Ortiz Escalante and Valdivia, 2015. Ortiz Escalante, 2019; Castán Broto and Neves Alves, 2018. Col·lectiu Punt 6 2019, 2015. Sandercock, Leonie, 1998.

53 MacGregor (2009), CSCD, Hadjimitova, Wurzer, Martin, Pedersen. 2024. Castán Broto, 2024. Israel and Sachs, 2013.

our society, mostly from the richest countries, decides for the rest of the population, without understanding or living the consequences.

Although women are the most impacted by climate change, they have been the most invisible and excluded from decision-making and power bodies where climate emergency mitigation strategies have been decided. In 1988, a seminal work entitled “Women and Environment in the Third World: Alliance for the Future” by Irene Dankelman and Joan Davidson marked one of the earliest contributions to the claim of a gender perspective in climate change discourse. Since then, feminist scholars and activists worldwide have endeavoured to illuminate the gender dimensions within urgent environmental challenges⁵⁴.

More recently, feminist urban planners, including scholars and practitioners, have been analysing the differential vulnerabilities, questioning the injustices replicated through climate change in urban and rural areas. They acknowledge the need for a gender-responsive and intersectional analysis to tackle the reproduction of gender, race and class inequalities in sustainable urban development, including issues such as access to water and sanitation; food sovereignty; urban mobility; waste management, greening urban spaces; tackling urban flooding; access and management of energy systems; or the women-led community design of urban climate shelters⁵⁵.

In this compendium, the case of the design of climate shelters in Barcelona-Ciudad Arce (#9), the redevelopment of stormwater drains through the K100 Citizen’s Waterway project in Bangalore (#19), are some of the examples. The Heat Action Plan in Jodhpur (#16) has also been built around the specific climate impacts experienced by women and actively engages local women’s groups and activates their voice and role in leading climate adaptation strategies.

The compendium focuses on analysing and presenting good practices globally and in India, which have applied these gender-responsive and feminist strategies in urban planning projects of infrastructure and governance. It also highlights the integration of an intersectional feminist perspective and analyses how community participation crosscuts these practices.

54 CSCD, Hadjimitova, Wurzer, Martin, Pedersen. 2024.

55 Sultana, 2010, 2022. Khalid and Lemanshi, 2024. Castán, 2024. Angelovski et al, 2020. Col·lectiu Punt 6, 2025. Nadimpalli et al., 2024

2

Compendium of Global and
Indian Practices on Gender-
responsive approaches in
sustainable urban development

2. Compendium of global and Indian good practices on gender-responsive approaches in sustainable urban development

In the following pages, this compendium presents a total of 30 Gender-responsive Urban Planning practices showcasing its interlinkages with sustainable urban development, thus moving towards integrating an intersectional ecofeminist perspective, while acknowledging the gender impacts of the climate emergency and the need to respond to the global climate and care crisis.

Several compendiums have already been published highlighting practices, policies and projects that integrate a gender perspective in urban planning, primarily focusing on projects that address women's safety issues. More recently, there has been a major interest in making visible gender-responsive planning projects that respond to everyday life and respond to care. This compendium seeks to go further by documenting projects that have responded to and mitigated the impacts of climate change on the everyday lives of women and marginalised communities. In this sense, this compendium aims to showcase projects that link sustainable urban development and gender perspectives.

This chapter categorises and discusses 15 global practices and 15 Indian practices that mostly respond to **urban infrastructure and service delivery** (WASH, everyday mobility and public space improvements, solid waste management, climate resilience and disaster management projects). As well as projects, programs and strategies that have integrated an intersectional and gender perspective in **governance and community participation**: such as financing solutions, capacity building, and digital governance.

Methodology of the compendium

The methodology to document the 30 good practices have combined the following activities.

- » **Literature review of multilateral institutions roadmaps and reports:** Key reports from the UN Women, UN-Habitat, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the InterAmerican Development Bank, CAF Latin American, including academic articles and studies of women's and feminist organisations were reviewed to identify sustainable gender-responsive urban development practices at the global and national level. This project has also used International and National networks as a strategy to collect information and identify good practices and key informants. In particular, the works of the following stakeholders have been reviewed: the Network of Woman and Habitat of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Global Platform for the Right to the City, the Mediterranean Network of Feminist Urban Planning, Habitat International Coalitions well as grassroots women's organisations, NGOs, research institutions and think tanks in India (that work on different facets of inclusive and sustainable development), including Jagori, Safetipin, WRI India, The Urban Catalysts, Urban Works, Mahila Housing Trust, GEAG, Development Alternatives among others.
- » **Definition of the themes to be analysed and included in the current compendium:** The project explored several broad themes and aimed to include a diverse range of themes under the umbrella of sustainable urban development, drawing from both global and national projects. Upon deliberation, the themes to be highlighted in the compendium have been agreed upon with GIZ team to respond to the goals of the current project, and these included: urban infrastructure, public space, access to water and sanitation, climate change and resilience, improvement of pedestrian and sustainable mobility, public policy or legislation.
- » **Building a Database with proposed practices:** Based on preliminary research, a database of over 45 good practices (both Global and Indian) was shortlisted in this database, integrating a summarised information of each practice. The practices presented the title and summaries of the practice and were classified by location (city/territory and region), type of practice (program, specific action, campaign, strategic plan, action plan), year of implementation, stakeholders involved, funding institutions, thematic areas, learnings and replicability. Further analysis followed to explore the extent of gender-responsiveness of the practice in addition to other identified criteria (see box on selection criteria), which led to shortlisting best 30 practices best aligned with the agenda of the compendium.
- » **Design of a Questionnaire to collect information about global and national practices:** As next steps, a questionnaire was sent to selected practices to be included in the compendium to expand on the preliminary information gathered. The survey was distributed by email with the aid and support of GIZ India and other institutional partners involved in the project.
- » **Online Interviews:** In addition to the questionnaire, online interviews with key informants or coordinators of the practices were organised to complete the information on the 15 global and 15 local practices. These interviews expanded the information collected through literature reviews and the questionnaires, and contextualised details further by gaining in-depth insights into the processes of the practices. These interviews also served to further identify the final 5 global and 5 local in-depth case studies. Across the 30 cases, the interviews were

conducted in Hindi and Spanish, (limited to the interviewers' linguistic capability), in addition to English, to capture richer contextual insights and to include diverse perspectives.

- » **Desk review and detailed documentation of 5 global good practices:** The in-depth analysis highlighted innovative strategies, plans, projects, and policies adopted for integrating Gender-responsive approaches into urban planning, governance, and infrastructure development projects.
- » **Detailed documentation of 5 national good practices:** Across Indian states and cities, field visits and in-person interviews with field experts, implementing agencies, government partners, and relevant stakeholder consultations were conducted in Guwahati, Jodhpur, Chennai and Bengaluru to complement the online interviews.
- » **Design of case study template:** This template helped systematise the documented good practices, clearly and legibly, comprising both graphic material and text.

SELECTION CRITERIA

In order to select 15 Global and 15 Indian gender-responsive urban planning practices, following a broader review of cases, the practices were selected based on the following components:

- » **Gender and feminist innovative strategies:** Unique and effective approaches used in the case studies on sustainable urban development from **gender-responsive, gender-sensitive, gender-transformative or feminist perspective**, including projects on climate resilience, adaptation and urban infrastructure.
- » **Stakeholder engagement:** A focus on projects that involved a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and community groups. The focus was also to include projects that specifically engaged and integrated women, girls, children, transgender or LGTBQ+ communities, particularly in specific areas like vulnerable and marginalised communities.
- » **Community engagement:** Projects with a strong component of community engagement in different phases of the practice, including conception, assessment and implementation, while including practices where women and the LGTBQ+ community had a centrality.
- » **Funding schemes:** Projects that were sustained and developed through funding from the government, but also those that emerged from NGOs and other funding schemes that engaged community leadership and gender budgeting. Projects that were women-led or where women were involved in key roles or management (such as self-groups, slum community groups or women groups), were also included.
- » **Impact analysis:** Projects that assessed both tangible (for example, infrastructure improvements) and intangible (for example, increased participation of women in governance) impacts and projects with greater potential for replicability and scalability were included.
- » **Regional and thematic diversity:** Projects were identified to ensure regional and thematic variety by selecting representative case studies also implemented at different scales.



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- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1 The Gendered Landscape Tour, Umeå | 7 Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Development, Berlin | 12 Infrastructures of climate repair, Nairobi |
| 2 Public Space “Las Pioneras”, Montevideo | 8 The Care District System, Bogotá | 13 We Need to Talk About Public Toilets. Policy agendas for inclusive suburbs and cities, South Wales |
| 3 Habitat Chamanculo C, Maputo | 9 Building a new model for the city: caring, sustainable, and equitable city, Barcelona | 14 Gender Sensitive Urban Design Implementation Toolkit, Canberra (Aboriginal Country: Ngunnawal and Ngambri) |
| 4 Gender and Mobility in Mexico City, Mexico City | 10 Safety Audit in Tetuan in the neighbourhood of Nassim (Union d’Action Feministe), Tetuan | 15 Pilot Evacuation Center - Disaster Risk Reduction, Santa Cruz |
| 5 Women friendly city project, Seoul | 11 Giardino dei Cinque Continenti e della Nonviolenza, Dream Team association, Naples | |
| 6 Gender mainstreaming in urban planning and urban development, Vienna | | |
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2.1. Global Practices

Below are 15 global practices of gender-responsive, sustainable urban planning distributed across different parts of the world. In order to select the practices, in addition to their thematic relevance, the compendium aimed to showcase practices that have been developed in a variety of regions, seeking a diverse representation across North and Latin America, Africa, Europe, the Mediterranean Region, Asia and Australia and Oceania.

After reviewing all the cases, 5 global cases have been highlighted:

- a. The Gendered Landscape bus tour, Umeå municipality, Sweden, Europe
- b. Public Space “Las Pioneras”, Montevideo, Uruguay, South America
- c. Habitat Chamanculo C, Maputo, Africa
- d. Gender and Mobility Plan, Mexico City, North America
- e. Women Friendly City, Seoul, South Korea, Asia

These five deep-dive Global practices are mostly medium and long-term projects that have been led by an institutions, particularly municipal or city governments. They are practices whose success and effectiveness has been made possible by the advocacy of the glocal feminist movement, in combination with teams of feminist experts, planners and advocates who have entered city governments and have pushed this agenda forward. These also include cases that have been developed in coordination with civil society and other feminist organisations and women’s groups, for example in the cases of Umeå, Montevideo and Mexico City. In the case of Maputo, an NGO led the project in an informal settlement, in coordination with the municipality. This collaboration was essential for achieving broader impacts for women and girls in these settlements. These are projects that have a history, with years of years of work dedicated to training and raising awareness with institutions and community members about the need to integrate a feminist and a gender perspective into sustainable urban planning, and making visible the gendered impacts of spatial development on women’s lives.

The deep dive cases cover a wide a variety of themes and issues, including the improvement of public spaces to better respond to women’s needs and safety concerns from a sustainable perspective; development of a mobility plan from a gender perspective and the implementation of activities to increase the quality of sustainable public transport; and city plans and municipal urban planning offices that mainstream a gender perspective across all projects.

The list of the 15 global practices is completed with cases from Bogotá (Latin America), Nairobi (Africa), Berlin, Viena (Europe) Barcelona, Tetuan (Mediterranean), Santa Cruz de la Laguna (Philippines), South Wales and Canberra in Australia. These practices combine projects and policies that have been led and implemented through non-profit organisations, NGOs, women’s groups and research institutions, as well as by the government institutions. These are projects that are working on the provision of a network of public toilets, the design of network of community care climate shelters, the design of a care district system, the improvement of women’s safety in public spaces and development of criteria to design and implement gender-responsive sustainable urban planning.

In all the cases, one of the key learnings is that integrating a gender-transformative approach goes beyond responding to international or national legislation. It is a political commitment and a feminist struggle of the people involved, particularly women, and the process has required years of work before showcasing results. Most cases integrate a gender and feminist perspective throughout the project cycle and process, from issue identification; conducting capacity building and training on gender perspectives with the stakeholders involved; conducting assessments that respond to people's everyday life and context from a gender perspective; analysing both quantitative and qualitative data; and in many cases, through a community participatory engagement. Not all practices resulted in implementation of actions and recommendations, but the process itself has had a positive impact on the community members or the organisations involved.

Table of global cases

HIGHLIGHTED CASES

	Project name	City	State	Region
1	The Gendered Landscape Tour	Umeå	Sweden	North Europe
2	Public Space “Las Pioneras”	Montevideo	Uruguay	Latin America
3	Habitat Chamanculo C	Maputo	Moçambic	Africa
4	Gender and Mobility in Mexico City	Mexico City	Mexico	Latin America
5	Women friendly city project	Seoul	South Korea	Asia

Basic summary of the project	Thematic Area 1	Thematic Area 2
Since 2009 guided bus tours organised around the city show to passengers successful implemented, and to shed light on persisting gender inequalities. This practice raises important questions about the city's development and identity issues.	Public space improvements, awareness building and community engagement	Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking
The case is an example of actions implemented within the Third Gender Equality Plan (2014-2020) by the Urban Development Department of the Municipality of Montevideo	Public space improvements	Governance and community organizing: Building common policies by empowering feminist organisations and giving them their own space
The work in Chamanculo C centres on advancing gender equality in an informal settlement where women and adolescent girls face disproportionate barriers to urban governance. By creating listening mechanisms and influencing legislation, the project helps adapt urban policies to a context where women struggle to access land, basic services, and protection from everyday risks. The project prioritizes strengthening the agency of women and girls through secure land tenure for single women, improved adolescent mobility that reduces the mental load on mothers and caregivers, and a network of safe, inclusive, resilient public spaces free from violence.	Urban infrastructure and slum upgradation; Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking	Community and women's participation Gender Budgeting
A Plan to integrate a gender perspective in the mobility and public transportation policies of the city. The plan wants to address three objectives: increase women's safety while traveling and reduce GBV in transportation; increase the data about mobility of care to adapt the mobility and transportation system to this type of mobility; increase women as workers of the transportation system	Urban infrastructure: Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking	Governance and Capacity building
Women-Friendly City Project (WFCP) aims to reflect women's voice in every policy decision made by the city government, so that no policy will favour one gender.	Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking	Public space improvements

SHORT CASES

	Project name	City	State	Region
6	Gender mainstreaming in urban planning and urban development	Viena	Austria	North Europe
7	Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Development	Berlin	Germany	North Europe
8	The Care District System	Bogotá	Colombia	Latin America
9	Building a new model for the city: caring, sustainable, and equitable city	Barcelona	Spain	Mediterranean
10	Women's Safety Audit in Nassim	Tetuan	Morocco	Mediterranean
11	Giardino dei Cinque Continenti e della Nonviolenza, Dream Team association	Naples	Italy	Mediterranean
12	We Need to Talk About Public Toilets	South Wales	Australia	Australia and Oceania
13	Infrastructures of climate repair	Nairobi	Kenya	Africa
14	Gender Sensitive Urban Design Implementation Toolkit	Canberra (Aboriginal Country: Ngannawal and Ngambri)	Australia	Australia and Oceania
15	Pilot Evacuation Center - Disaster Risk Reduction	Santa Cruz	Philippines	Asia

Basic summary of the project	Thematic Area 1	Thematic Area 2
The implementation of the gender mainstreaming strategy in Vienna's urban planning and development has been consolidated in various departments and offices over the last ten years through numerous actions and pilot projects, as well as through the systematic evaluation of quality standards at different levels of planning.	Public space improvements Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking	Governance: multistakeholder involvement
This handbook contains a range of criteria and guidelines for decision-making in gender-sensitive planning at various levels.	Public space improvements	Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking
the Care District have put women at the center of Bogotá's urban transformation and future planning. The first Care Block was piloted in Ciudad Bolívar and, nowadays, there are 11 of such Blocks across Bogotá.	Urban infrastructure: New facilities of care	Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking
Design of community care climate shelters from an ecofeminist perspective and through women and LGBTIQ+ active participation in all the phases of the project	Urban infrastructure: Climate solutions/ climate resilience	Public space improvements
Participatory safety audits through women's participation in an informal neighborhood in the periphery of Tetouan exposed to several environmental hazards (flooding, lack of urban infrastructure, landslide)	Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking through climate adaptation	Community development, Women's led
The Pangea Project represents a story of transformation and hope through collaboration, commitment and creativity. A neglected urban area has been transformed into a lush garden that embodies the values of unity, education, sustainability and non-violence.	Urban infrastructure and climate adaptation: Public space	Policy inclusions/ considerations
Providing safe, accessible and inclusive public toilets is critical to ensure community participation in Australian suburbs and cities. Toilet planning and provision should be guided by city-wide strategies, user-responsive design principles and clear roles and responsibilities relating to toilet provision and maintenance.	Urban Infrastructure: Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH)	Policy inclusions/ considerations
Building Infrastructures of Climate Repair (BICR) aims to investigate, unpack, and understand the gaps in conceptions and experiences of climate risk and uncertainty as they overlap with—and even perpetuate—different forms of violence for marginalized, low-income women in the urban Global South.	Climate solutions/ climate resilience	Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking Public space improvements
The GSUD Toolkit is a practical guide that examines common gender-related public realm inequalities and challenges, offering recommendations to remedy and resolve.	Public space improvements	Everyday mobility/ street improvements/ placemaking
Pilot Evacuation Center (2014) that would seek to address the issue of temporary shelter during times of flooding in the area, and the establishment of the relocation site in Barangay Ugong that were funded via DSWD Core Shelter and a donation from International Organisation for Migration (IOM), from the women's needs and with a gender perspective	Climate solutions/ climate resilience	Housing alternatives and relocation

1

The gendered landscape bus tour

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Umeå municipality

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City Government

FUNDING SOURCES

Umeå municipality. Guiding the tour is a part of the work tasks of the gender equality officers of the municipality. Each stop on the tour has different funding and stakeholders involved.

RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION

Gender equality officers at the municipality of Umeå (civil servants). The political mandate is decided in the city council and the gender equality committee.

CITY, COUNTRY

Umeå, Sweden, North Europe

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2009 - ongoing

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Feminist organisations, universities

TARGET GROUP

Women, girls and LGBTQ+

To all of the society interested in breaking down gender inequalities.

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

Context

In the late 1970s, the municipality of Umeå created the Gender Equality Committee, eventually becoming a mandatory consultation body in 1992, for all substantial council decisions with the goal of examining and commenting on recommended new policies. Later, in 1989, Umeå Municipality was selected to participate in a national pilot initiative to investigate and remove barriers to achieve gender equality. It is also in 1992 that the municipality partnered with the University of Umeå to offer a course on "Gender and power" for senior management in the municipality. Since then, the municipality has offered specially designed recurring courses for staff and elected officials on issues related to gender, power and society.

Umeå municipality has worked for a long time with equality issues in a strategic and pioneering way. The work has been carried out through gender mainstreaming and through specific initiatives to make visible and scrutinise inequalities, rephrase problem definitions, and broaden the analysis. Gender equality entered the municipal agenda in Umeå mainly due to the efforts of committed politicians who have ensured its inclusion, with urban planning being a central tool in their work to achieve gender equality. This has occurred within a context of a vibrant political feminist movement in the city.

GOAL

Offer a bus tour to raise awareness of how gender plays a role in the city and how gender inequality has consequences across all parts of society

OBJECTIVE

- » Highlight successful gender equality changes and landmarks in city planning, as well as remaining challenges and gender inequalities
- » Create an ongoing capacity building strategy that can permeate current and future planning projects in the city

Artwork "Listen" at Rådhusorget. Photo credits: Philip-Avesand



Practice details

In 2009, in the context of the conference that celebrated 20 years of strategic gender equality work in the municipality, the city created the 'Gendered Landscape' bus tour. The Gendered Landscape offers a new way of looking at the city, immersing participants in how gendered power structures take shape and define the city, and then inviting them to try and co-create an imaginary of how it could be different. The guided bus tours show participants successful changes and landmarks in the city that have contributed towards gender equality. At the same time, the tour also highlights existing challenges and gender inequalities in the city. The tour seeks to create awareness on the fact that gender plays a role in the city and that gender inequality has consequences for all parts of society, while also presenting the results of the long-term work on gender issues in the municipality.

The Gendered Landscape bus tours highlight some of the city's achievements in gender equal urban development and raise important questions about development and identity on a local level – issues that are norm-critical and, in some cases, provocative, challenging and dynamic. The tour also highlights other public activities, including the works of non-profit organisations, art in public spaces, initiatives from the business community, and places that have historically been important to remember the women's movement and the LGBTBIQ+ movement.

Throughout the years, the tour has become a method of work, not only as a way of looking back or imagining a different future but also as a way of identifying and suggesting areas where increased awareness is needed, and as a tool for making statistics come alive.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

The integration of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the public policies of Umeå has developed since 1992, when it became mandatory for the Gender Equality Committee to be the consultation body for all substantial council decisions before approval of new policies. Since then, a gender perspective has been integrated in the inception and conceptualisation, capacity building, needs assessment through community participation, as well as M&E after implementation, to consolidate the project. The Gendered Landscapes bus tour is an example of the multiple projects and policies that the municipality has implemented over more than three decades to achieve gender equality in the city, including the following:

- » Since 1992, the Gender Equality Committee has overseen all the public policies that are developed in the city to mainstream gender across all the city's departments.
- » Through a historical review of feminist movements in the public space, the municipality not only makes visible the changes and improvements in gender equality policies, but also highlights how these have developed owing to the struggles and work of the feminist movements in public spaces.
- » Representation of art in public spaces
- » Development of methodologies to analyse and propose new urban policies
- » Umeå connects planning practices with feminist research (gender studies)
- » Since 1992, conducts capacity building within the organisation (through the collaboration with the university of Umeå), as part of a mandatory training for municipal staff
- » Analyses the equality in public facilities (such as preschool and sports facilities)
- » Participatory action with young girls through co-design processes in public space (an example is the Frizon meeting place)
- » Analyses the travel patterns (including intersections of gender and mobility)



Learnings

The integration of a gender equality perspective in Umeå's municipal policies has brought multiple learnings, including new projects and the consolidation of existing ones. In 2017, The Gendered Landscapes received URBANACT, identifying it as one of the 91 good practices of sustainable urban development by the European Commission.

There are several examples of how the initiatives of the bus tour have made an impact on the planning and development of the city.

- » The Freezone initiative has impacted the work of the Umeå Street and Parks department, changing their methods for dialogues with citizens and gender-mainstreaming the content of steering documents.
- » Another example from the tour is the example of Gammlivavallen football stadium, which showcases the city's ambition to encourage more equal use of public spaces and sports arenas. In 1999, a political decision was made in the municipal board of leisure, leading to practice hours being divided according to the division in which soccer teams played, regardless

of gender. As a direct result, Umeå's leading women's soccer team, Umeå IK, were able to choose their practice hours before the leading men's team, Umeå FC. Since then, the decision has impacted the distribution of practice hours across all municipal arenas in Umeå.

- » A third example is the representation of Umeå as a cultural city, where the cultural sector continually monitors gender representation in the city's cultural scene. A positive trend towards more gender equality has been observed over the last few years. In 2015, 45 % women were represented on the main cultural stages in Umeå, out of a total 2,000 events organised.



Replicability

Over 100 tours have been organised so far, reaching thousands of urban practitioners and decision-makers. The project is constantly developed based on the context and the participating target groups. Therefore, the tours are never static with the same stops and discussions, with new stops added continuously based on the need. The tour is often included in programs for external study visits or conferences held on-site in Umeå. For example, in recent years, the bus tours have also been part of the curriculum for local university courses on gender studies and urban planning.



Additional resources

www.genderedlandscape.umea.se

Several knowledge products have been published on the tours:

- » 2019 (Gender, power & politics – 30 years of gender equality work in Umeå municipality)
- » 2023 (The Gendered City. Methods and techniques for urban and spatial planning and design. The Gendered Landscape Tour – master thesis by Lily Scarponi)
- » Linda Gustafsson and Annika Dalén. 2025. In search of a method that works, in Jess Berry et al. Designing Gender Sensitive Spaces for Consenting Cities Practices and Provocation. Routledge https://www.routledge.com/Designing-Gender-Sensitive-Spacesxx-for-Consenting-Cities-Practices-and-Provocations/Berry-Kalms-Moore-Bawden/p/book/9781032911274?srsId=AfmBOoqSm1R_HPOGuIWgEN2HLEo1TfF7SmGqzet_eJN4i1v-F51ARXcL
- » Gender Equality work in Umeas: <https://www.umea.se/kommunochpolitik/manskligarattigheter/jamstalldhet/inenglishgenderequalityworkinumea.4.4b0df14518498115f8e553.html>

2

Public space “Las pioneras”

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Department of Urban Development
of the Municipality of Montevideo

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City Government

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Municipality of Montevideo

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Municipality of Montevideo

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Feminist collectives, for the
management of their own space
linked to the public space

CITY, COUNTRY

Montevideo, Uruguay, Latin American

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2018 – 2020 (inauguration –
public space ongoing)

TARGET GROUP

Women, girls and LGTBQ+ and feminist
collectives of the city. To all of society

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

Context

Between 2015 and 2020, Daniel Martínez, of the left-wing Frente Amplio, joined the Montevideo City Council, along with a gender-balanced government of left-wing women and feminists who were in constant dialogue with social and feminist movements. Among them was Silvana Pissano, an architect and feminist who was the director of the Department of Urban Development within the City Council, one of the three departments responsible for housing and with the largest budget to implement. Many of the projects developed were within the framework of the Third Gender Equality Plan (2014-2020), which introduced advances towards the construction of a more egalitarian city in response to the demands and reflections made by feminist collectives.

The team began with projects to improve large public parks in different neighbourhoods of the city, and named these spaces after women who have played a significant role in the history of Uruguay, such as the Idea Vilariño eco-park and the Débora Céspedes park. This program, called *Mujeres con calle* (Women with Streets), sought recognition by incorporating into the city's nomenclature the names of women who have contributed in various ways to its construction. This approach contributed to the need for women to be seen and, therefore, considered as political subjects. One of the most important features of the program is the work with social and neighbourhood organisations, which has been carried out since the beginning.

In addition, other actions and programs were also implemented to incorporate feminist urban planning as concrete responses to the situation of inequality experienced by women in three main areas: housing, public spaces, and employment. Noteworthy examples include projects such as MUJEFA, a mutual support cooperative for women heads of household; UFAMA, a housing cooperative for and by Afro-descendant women heads of household; the new Rehabilitation Office for Single-Parent Families; the Abandoned Properties project aimed at rehabilitating buildings for social use as a temporary shelter for women who have been living on the streets; the Feminist Co-housing for older women; and the Trans House, a socio-educational, recreational, and cultural space managed by LGTBQ+ collectives, among many other actions carried out during this period.

Inauguration of Las Pioneras Square.
Photo credits: Silvana Pisano



GOAL

To create a new public space by reinterpreting women's history and generating spaces for collective feminist self-management.

OBJECTIVE

- » Transform a public space in the established city with a feminist perspective.
- » Implement new ways of doing politics for the common good from within the administration.



Practice details

Las Pioneras Square in Montevideo is a public space in the established part of the city that pays tribute to the women who fought for their rights in Uruguay since the late 19th century. But above all, it is a space for collective construction that puts into practice the politics of the common good, with the administration ceding power and spaces for the self-management of feminist collectives.

Las Pioneras project began to take shape in 2018 when the Department of Urban Development defined a work process that would allow for the design and construction of a square conceived from a feminist perspective and capable of giving space to and revaluing the contribution of the pioneering women who fought in Uruguay so that women could continue to fully exercise their civil and political rights.

In mid-2018, a tender was opened for architectural design proposals to design a new public space in a heavily consolidated area between Agraciada Avenue, Gral. Aguilar Street, and Gral. Luna Street. This tender was innovative because it already integrated the construction company that would carry out the work and the budget allocated by the City Council for the entire project. One of the main requirements was that the proposal should include a tribute to Las Pioneras as a substantive part of the design of this public space.

Twenty-three proposals were submitted and evaluated by a jury of five specialist architects. The winning proposal involved deconstructing an existing building, reusing some of the material for the new construction, restoring the old metal structure of the workshops, and creating a platform on which new forms of use and coexistence could be developed, for appropriating this space. The program included the restoration of two houses on the edge of the site to create a space for feminist groups and an entrepreneurship space for women (the Pioneras canteen). And their proposal to pay tribute to Las Pioneras was to cover one of the dividing walls with a mirrored surface,

“so that, thanks to the work of the pioneers, we can now see ourselves reflected in where we are and imagine possible future scenarios.”

At the end of 2018, an open call was made to feminist groups to develop proposals for the collective management of the houses located on the edge of Las Pioneras public space. The process led to the formation of the assembly of feminist groups “towards the collective management and common heritage of the houses of the pioneers,” made up of the organisations Cotidiano Mujer, Colectivo Habitadas, Encuentro de Feministas Diversas (EFD), Las Puñadito, Colectivo Elefante, and Plenarío de Mujeres del Uruguay (Plemmu). The assembly committed to work collectively to create a feminist, pluralistic, and open use space where courses, exhibitions, workshops, rehearsals, gardens, presentations, assemblies, and other activities can be held. These activities include the defence and affirmation of women’s rights in their various expressions and forms of organisation. The space also includes a small restaurant managed by a women’s worker cooperative.

The resulting space was inaugurated on March 7, 2020, and has created a new emblematic space in the consolidated city to honour women. Above all, it has opened platforms for collective construction and new ways of building common policy, by allocating a place to be self-managed by feminist collectives and by emphasising the value of use and the transfer of power to the community.

Inauguration of Las Pioneras and Recreational Activities at Las Pioneras Square. Photos credits: Silvana Pisano





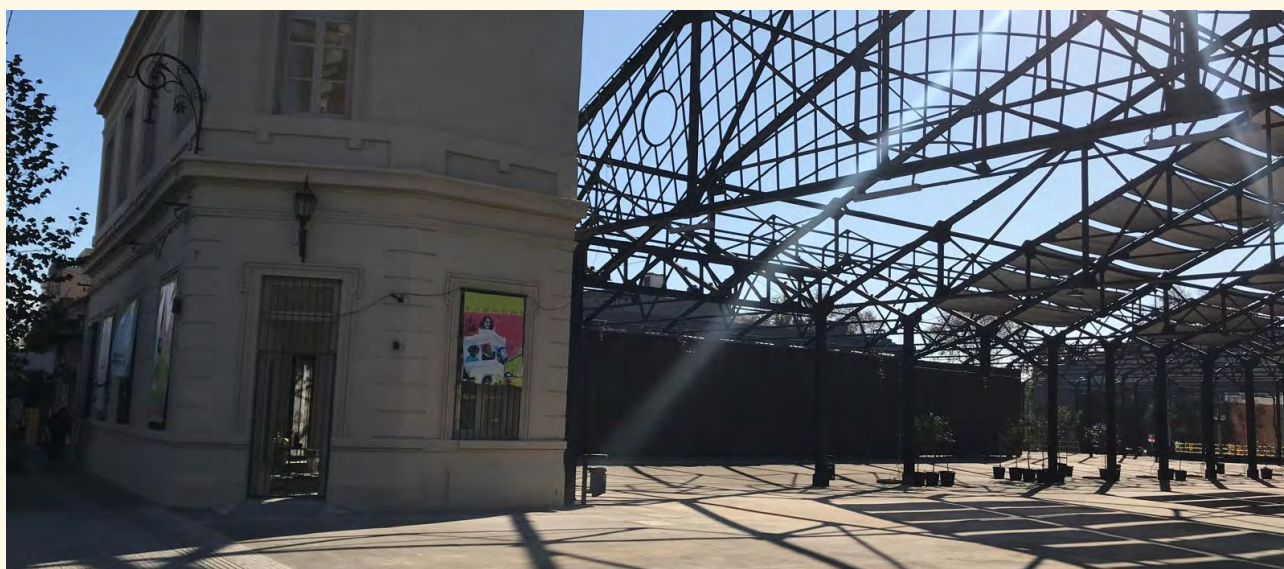
GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

The integration of a feminist perspective into the Las Pioneras public space project stems from a favourable political and social context in which feminist movements had entered city government and were influencing urban transformation policies, with various representatives in positions of power, such as the director of the Department of Urban Development. Therefore, there was a political and technical commitment to work from the premises of feminist urbanism, both in the design and management of public policies, in order to contribute to the construction of more democratic cities. This commitment involves not only the implementation of specific programs and actions, but also the incorporation of this vision into all lines of work. Especially mainstreaming this perspective across different areas of the same department and other departments within

The main contributions of this project to the integration of the gender perspective are:

- » Reframing women's history through increased visibility in public spaces. Paying tribute to the women pioneers who fought for the rights we enjoy today and by honouring by naming public spaces after them. Highlighting the importance of collective achievements and breaking away from individualism.
- » Holding a competition-tender with feminist design criteria- by ensuring representativeness and creating a space that allows for diverse forms of appropriations, enhancing visibility and perception of safety, combining vitality with other uses, by providing freely accessible public toilets and mobile furniture for flexible use of space.
- » The design proposal for the Pioneras public space proposes an active tribute, rather than a passive one, like a statue.
- » The process and construction of the space have created an institutional precedent and a collective imagination of how to materialise feminist urbanism in public space and its management.
- » It has generated a self-managed space in the two restored houses linked to the space for the city's feminist collectives.
- » Creation of a management agreement between feminist organisations and the municipal government for a new way of transferring power and building common goods.

Feminist organizations building in Las Pioneras.
Photo credits: Silvana Pisano





Learnings

This project succeeded in placing feminist urban planning and the strategy of recognising women as political subjects on the political agenda through a tangible project with visible and measurable impacts.

Furthermore, it has created an institutional precedent for a process of appropriation and construction of the common good. It is not only the product that has been generated that matters, but also the process that has sustained it.

The main lessons learned can be grouped into:

→ Lessons learned from the process

The process was deeply democratic, with an open call for participation from feminist organisations, academics, and women activists; an innovative and efficient competition-tender in terms of time and resources, in which many diverse people participated; transfer of power and management to feminist collectives.

→ Lessons learned from the outcome

The space witnessed a grand inauguration with more than 5,000 people in attendance. It is a novel project in Montevideo, with a design that respects what already exists, and providing a space that allows for very diverse production where everyone can feel represented.

→ Lessons learned from the construction of a space for feminist collectives:

It is essential for the success of this space that feminist collectives are recognised as political subjects and that these collectives manage, organise, and decide on the activities that take place inside and outside the square, with the city government guaranteeing the basic material conditions.



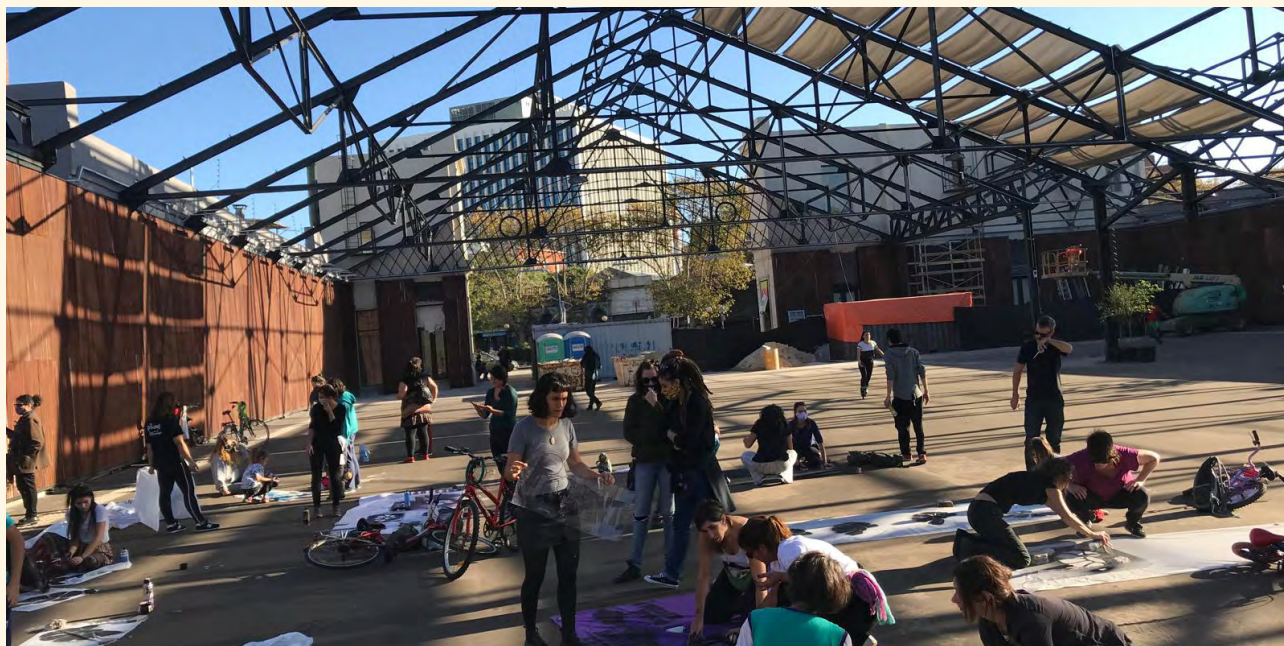
Replicability

This is an initiative whose ideas behind the process can be replicated, while the outcomes are specific to each location and situation and cannot be easily replicated.

For replication of this project, the following different elements must be in place to ensure its success:

- » Organised and active feminist movements that have built knowledge and practices on feminist urbanism in the territory.
- » A public institution trained in feminist urban planning, both politically and technically, which allows not only for the development of the urban transformation process but also for the construction of common goods with organised feminist movements.
- » A budget that allows for urban transformations from this perspective.

Protest activities in Las Pioneras. Photo credits: Silvana Pisano



Additional resources

- » Intendencia de Montevideo (2017). Tercer Plan de Igualdad de Género. Compromisos del gobierno departamental y los gobiernos municipales para el período 2016-2020. Disponible en <https://montevideo.gub.uy/sites/default/files/biblioteca/3erplandeigualdaddegenerocompromisos2016-2020.pdf>
- » Intendencia de Montevideo (2018a). Pliego de bases y condiciones particulares del concurso-licitación pública n.º 698/2018 para el proyecto y ejecución de obra del espacio público Las Pioneras. Montevideo. Disponible en <http://www.montevideo.gub.uy/asl/sistemas/siab/cartelera.nsf/Pliegos/698-2018>
- » Intendencia de Montevideo (2018b). La política de lo común y el municipalismo. Conversatorio. Pierre Dardot. Montevideo: Departamento de Desarrollo Urbano, Intendencia de Montevideo. Disponible en https://montevideo.gub.uy/sites/default/files/biblioteca/pierre-nuevo1_0.pdf
- » Intendencia de Montevideo (2019a). Estrategia de la Intendencia de Montevideo. Disponible en <https://montevideo.gub.uy/institucional/estrategia-en-la-intendencia-de-montevideo>
- » Intendencia de Montevideo (2019b). Proyecto Fincas Abandonadas. Hacia una política departamental de recuperación de inmuebles abandonados. Montevideo: Departamento de Desarrollo Urbano, Intendencia de Montevideo. Disponible en <https://montevideo.gub.uy/sites/default/files/biblioteca/proyectofincas20919web.pdf>
- » Intendencia de Montevideo (2019c). Plan Montevideo libre de acoso sexual en los espacios públicos. Plan de acción 2018-2020. Montevideo: División Asesoría para la Igualdad de Género, Intendencia de Montevideo. Disponible en <https://montevideo.gub.uy/sites/default/files/biblioteca/planmvdlibredeacosoversionweb050.pdf>

Noticias sobre el proyecto:

- » <https://montevideo.gub.uy/areas-tematicas/ciudad-y-urbanismo/urbanismo-feminista/plaza-las-pioneras>
- » <https://montevideo.gub.uy/noticias/urbanismo-e-infraestructura/inauguramos-plaza-las-pioneras>

3

Habitat chamanculo C

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Arquitectura Sin Fronteras – ASFE

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Alliances: NGO + Municipal Government + community-based organisations + research centre

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

ASFE, Municipality of Maputo, Barcelona's Global Justice Program, Spanish Cooperation Agency AECID, GVA Navarra, WSUP, GADC and SELAVIP Foundation.

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Arquitectura Sin Fronteras & Municipality of Maputo

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Municipality of Maputo: Urban Planning, Environment, and Construction Department, and the Urban Development Office; Nhamankulo District Administration, Neighborhood Secretariat, and 73 “quarteirao” leaders (approx. 50 families each).

CITY, COUNTRY

Chamanculo C, Maputo, Mozambique, Sub-Saharan Africa

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2016 – ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women, girls and people with disabilities

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

Local (community)

Context

During the implementation of different slum upgrading projects in Chamanculo C (2005-2015), ASFE identified the need of strategic urban transformation (alley transformation into streets) in order to engage the community to build their right to the city. The main partner is the Municipality of Maputo (CMM), the capital city of Mozambique. Since 2017, this project has collaborated in the city's informal settlements to influence urban public policies.

The work in Chamanculo C centres on advancing gender equality in an informal settlement where women and adolescent girls face disproportionate barriers to human rights, safety, and participation in urban governance. This project promotes the “right to the city” with a gender lens, ensuring that women's voices inform how the neighbourhood and territory are planned and managed. By creating listening mechanisms and influencing legislation, the city helps adapt urban policies to a context where women struggle to access land, basic services, and protection from everyday risks. The project prioritises strengthening the agency of women and girls through secure land tenure for single women, improved adolescent mobility that reduces the mental load on mothers and caregivers, and a network of safe, inclusive, resilient public spaces free from violence. They also enhance professional training in Maputo to build gender-responsive urban governance and support community participation in **climate adaptation**, directly benefiting more than 3,200 families that are led or supported by women.

GOAL

Promote transformative actions with gender perspective to guarantee the “right to the city” in the neighbourhood of Chamanculo C

OBJECTIVE

- » Support women empowerment in housing and land rights
- » Ensure Community participation ensuring women's voices and experiences
- » Integrate feminist urbanism principles

Before and after a street 2 in Chamanculo. Photo credits: ASF



The **main challenges** to implementing the project are:

- » **Patriarchal social norms:** The project operates in communities influenced by Machangana culture in southern Mozambique, where patriarchal structures limit women's rights and place disproportionate responsibilities on them both inside and outside the home. Gender-based violence is prevalent, and traditional norms can restrict women's participation in decision-making, requiring targeted strategies to promote equality and empowerment.
- » **Informal settlements and limited municipal resources:** Approximately 75% of Maputo's population lives in informal settlements. Limited municipal resources constrain the capacity to upgrade infrastructure and provide essential services, making collaborative, community-led approaches that are essential to improving living conditions.
- » **Climate vulnerability:** Increasing climate-related events, such as flooding, exacerbate already challenging environmental conditions in informal settlements, highlighting the need for adaptation and resilience strategies.
- » **Urban aspirations and mobility:** Many residents, particularly in informal areas, value personal vehicles and large plots in peri-urban areas over living in the city centre. This preference drives populations farther from economic opportunities, where public transport is limited and dysfunctional, increasing social and economic vulnerability.
- » **Civic awareness and participation:** Residents, especially women, often have limited understanding of their rights and opportunities for engagement in urban governance. This is reinforced by top-down urban management, where the population is not even aware that bottom-up is a possibility.



Practice details

The project engages three key actors. First, the community in all its diversity, with particular attention to girls, adolescents, and women who lead households, ensuring their needs and experiences shape urban priorities. Second, technical teams are strengthened so that women's voices are heard, valued, and integrated into planning and implementation processes. Third, decision-makers are supported to consider the specificities of feminist urbanism, adopting policies and practices that address gendered barriers to land, mobility, safety, and participation. Together, these actors build a more inclusive, responsive, and equitable urban environment for women and girls in Chamanculo C.

In Habitat Chamanculo C, beneficiaries were initially identified through urban macro-decisions, such as converting alleys into streets, applied regardless of who lived there. As the project progressed, issues of diversity and vulnerability emerged, prompting the introduction of an affirmative action criteria. For example, when two neighbours needed to give up land, an elderly widower among them contributed less than a young renter. Technicians connecting the project were also identified based on their enthusiasm and capacity to support inclusive processes, ensuring women's voices were included in planning and implementation. Additional criteria considered household responsibilities, social position, and exposure to risks, prioritising the most vulnerable residents and promoting equitable access to land, mobility, and services.

The project has been implemented in 6 phases, while the transformation of alleys into streets is ongoing, and new issues have been included. Since 2018, every 2 years, an evaluation and conceptualisation process defines the next phase. The 6 phases are:

- » 2015-2016 Habitat 1: pilot
- » 2017-2018 Habitat 2: trial and error definition of the urban transformation - 6 steps method to land tenancy method
- » 2019-2020 Habitat 3: Elaboration of Detail Plan
- » 2021-2022 Habitat 4: Debate and impact on Right to the City
- » 2022-2025 Habitat 5: Main focus on gender and the impact of urban transformation in the lives of women.
- » 2024-2027 Habitat 6: inclusion of childhood, adolescents and diversity

Since 2017, including in these phases, the project also implemented training:

- » Technicians and community leaders have ongoing capacity building throughout implementation.
- » Since 2021, University Eduardo Mondlane (Law Faculty), ASFE & UN-Habitat have implemented a one week sensibilisation course on the right to the city twice a year. More than 700 students, activists, and civil servants (63% women) have taken the course.
- » Since 2020, the Municipality and its partners (ASFE & AVSI) have organised thematic seminars for reinforcing the technician's networks and cooperation on specific issues: mainly, housing and climate change.
- » Faculty of Law of Universidade Eduardo Mondlane & ASFE is designing a Postgraduation Course on the Right to the City

The project is still undergoing further development with all partners: including, Arquitectura sin Fronteras, Municipality of Maputo, Amurets, Instituto de Acesso a Justiça, ENPEU, WSUP, Faculdade de Direito da Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Escola Secundaria Lhanguene, Chamanculo's Community, Walking Cities Lab DPU-UCL).

The future goals of the project are to continually broaden the perspective, by understanding the impact of feminist urban transformation and including those who were invisible. Also, reinforcing sustainability and guaranteeing funds so that the entire Detailed Plan achieves implementation.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

The current project is framed under the PPARC, emphasizing gender and climate change adaptation, contributing to all outcomes.

- » **Gender budgeting** was fully integrated into the funding strategy. The entire project is grounded in feminist urbanism principles, ensuring that resources and activities are planned with a gender perspective. In particular, for Habitat 6, one of the project's activities is the direct funding of initiatives led by women and girls, including:
- » Micro-projects for climate change adaptation, empowering women and girls to implement practical, locally driven solutions.
- » Cultural actions that promote the right to the city, strengthening their participation, visibility, and influence in urban spaces.

This approach ensures that the budget not only supports gender-sensitive planning, but also actively channels resources to initiatives that advance women's and girls' leadership and agency in urban development.

- » **Community participation** is integrated throughout all phases of the project, with a strong gender focus. Women and girls are central actors, contributing to planning, design, construction, and decision-making in their neighbourhoods. They participate in creating their workspaces, school-route planning, climate action initiatives, and cultural activities that raise awareness of their rights. Women's resource groups support data collection, capacity-building, and small local contracts, fostering leadership and continuity in their communities. Adolescents engage in awareness campaigns, competitions, and community actions to strengthen civic participation.
- » **Duty-bearers**, including municipal authorities, sectoral and district technicians, and neighbourhood leaders, ensure that gender perspectives guide policy alignment, land rights attribution, and supervision of works. They mobilise communities, facilitate conflict resolution, and actively promote women's participation.
- » **Responsible actors**, such as university faculty, research centres, and local women's groups, lead curriculum design, impact measurement, and inclusive initiatives. The project includes a Right to the City course, where academics, students, and activists engage in joint reflection and learning. Community engagement is further strengthened through Jane's Walks and regular community meetings, enabling dialogue, mapping, and co-creation of solutions.

Community participation occurs in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, systematically empowering women and girls while ensuring visibility, leadership, and agency in urban development. Gender equality is embedded not only as a principle but as a tangible outcome of all project activities.



Learnings

- » **Long-term trust-building is essential:** Respecting local traditions and rhythms allows meaningful participation and enhances the effectiveness of interventions.
- » **Patriarchal social norms require targeted strategies:** Gender-sensitive approaches are needed to overcome limitations on women's rights, responsibilities, and access to decision-making.
- » **Community participation needs common language and visualisation tools:** Using images, before-and-after representations, and participatory tools helps align expectations between residents, technicians and decision-makers
- » **Iterative innovation is key in low-resource contexts:** Continuous adaptation and co-creation with communities are necessary to implement effective urban solutions where funding and resources are limited.
- » **Feminist urbanism strengthens social cohesion and safety:** Centring women and marginalized groups improves security, reduces gender-based violence, and reinforces economic and social inclusion.

Impacts

- » **Transparent process:** Clear, bureaucratic procedures, socialised with local leaders and aligned with Chamanculo C's community idiosyncrasies.
- » **Land tenure and co-ownership:** Women, including widows, secure plots through co-ownership of titles, preventing displacement in favour of older sons.
- » **Participatory design mechanisms:** Women-only groups and other inclusive forums guarantee women's voice and vote in all decisions.
- » **Research and data:** Continuous collection of disaggregated data by gender and age informs decisions and monitors outcomes.
- » **Technician facilitation:** Connects community members with decision-makers, ensuring gender equality, women's agency, and participation are central to urban planning and governance.
- » Women are learning to build and are an active part of the construction team that transforms alleys into streets.



Replicability

Some of the major achievements of the project are:

- » **Empowerment of women in housing and land rights:** more than 800 families, particularly women-headed households, are supported to access housing titles, ensuring tenure security and economic empowerment.
- » **Comprehensive urban transformation:** Street upgrading, public space interventions, and infrastructure improvements enhance safety, accessibility, and resilience in informal settlements.

- » **Institutional recognition and sustained support:** Contribution to the approval and ratification of an urban law defining a 9-step method for the right to the city, providing municipal and community endorsement for participatory urban interventions, supported by ongoing funding for implementation
- » **Capacity building and community engagement:** Strengthened skills of municipal staff, civil society, and community members, creating shared understanding and fostering collaborative urban planning.
- » **Integration of feminist urbanism principles:** The project places women and marginalized groups at the centre of planning and implementation, addressing gender-based violence, social inequalities and participatory decision-making.



Additional resources

Scientific papers or reports:

- » September 2025, Nieto.M, Lombe.M, Marquez.S, Oviedo.D “From alleys to streets: urban transformation's contribution to the Right to the City viewed through pedestrian experiences”, Cities and Health, DOI: [10.1080/23748834.2025.2539605](https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2025.2539605)
- » Habitação multifamiliar em altura em Chamanculo C <https://zenodo.org/records/15050208>
- » “Integrated Slum Upgrading: details and learnings from four experiences in Africa” <https://wsup.com/publications/integrated-slum-upgrading-details-and-learnings-from-four-experiences-in-africa/>
- » July 2019, “Ver para creer: la imagen como herramienta del acceso al derecho a la ciudad en los asentamientos informales de Maputo” https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335490594_Seeing_to_believe_the_image_as_a_tool_of_access_to_the_right_to_the_city_in_the_informal_settlements_of_Maputo
- » Dez 2017, Ana Cubillo <http://www.e-revistas.uji.es/index.php/kult-ur/article/view/2518>
- » Dez 2017, Human Building <https://www.e-revistas.uji.es/index.php/kult-ur/article/view/2616>

Urban tools:

- » Detail Plan - Regulations https://asfes.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/BR_208_III_SERIE_2023.pdf and full text in this web <https://asfes.org/project/defensa-del-derecho-al-acceso-a-la-ciudad-a-traves-del-reordenamiento-urbano-participativo-y-al-acceso-al-titulo-de-duat-en-asentamientos-informales-de-maputo/> under PPARC

4

Gender and mobility plan in Mexico city

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Government of Mexico City

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City Government

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Federal Government- National Institute of Women, Secretary of Women Mexico City, Secretary of Mobility of Mexico City, and BID

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Secretary of Mobility of the City of Mexico

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Secretary of Women, Secretary of Security, Public transport operators, Police department, Department of Public Works and Urban Development

CITY, COUNTRY

Mexico City, Mexico, Latin America

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2019-2025

TARGET GROUP

Women and girls

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

Context

Mexico City has a fragmented and inefficient transportation system that exacerbates social inequalities of various kinds and affects everyone. However, those who travel through Mexico City experience the city differently. The way and reasons one travels, the means they use, the perception of insecurity they feel, and the barriers—visible or invisible—they face in getting around vary between women and men. Therefore, while mobility issues affect everyone, they are experienced differently. The gender perspective in mobility is based on a new way of thinking that questions the traditional ways in which women, who commute daily to and from Mexico City, move and travel.

Certain issues specifically affect women and reduce their ability to move freely, safely, and with dignity throughout the city. Three main problems faced by women have been identified in the city: a) Mobility needs derived from specific travel patterns, which have historically not been recognised and have excluded women from the full use and enjoyment of public space; b) Multiple situations of sexual violence and assault that violate their rights, such as sexual harassment and abuse in public spaces and on public transportation; and c) Traditionally unequal participation in the mobility sector, which begins in the school environment and extends into the workplace, deepening the absence of a gender perspective in urban mobility plans and projects. These three issues are even greater for women who face multiple intersecting situations of vulnerability, such as their age, socioeconomic status, whether they have a disability, their mode of transportation, among others.

Addressing these issues requires public mobility policies with a cross-cutting gender perspective, as well as coordinated and consistent actions that consider inequality between men and women, their different needs, and the different situations of vulnerability they face.



Practice details

The 2019 Strategic Plan for Gender and Mobility, designed through an interdisciplinary and multisectoral process, sets out the following goal for 2024: Mainstream a gender perspective in urban mobility policies in Mexico City, and strengthen equality between women and men in the transport sector.

The objective of the document is to guide the priorities of the Secretariat of Mobility and the Integrated Transport System in terms of gender and mobility, helping women to move freely, safely, and comfortably in Mexico City. Under this premise, mobility systems, programs, and projects are geared toward enabling women to travel with accessibility, comfort, safety, and shorter travel times. To advance toward this vision, the plan defines three strategic axes that respond to the three main problems women face in terms of mobility: a) Sexual violence and aggression against women in the Integrated Transport System are reduced; b) Gender parity and institutional culture in the transport sector are strengthened; and c) Women's travel needs and patterns are effectively addressed. For each of these pillars, the 2019 Strategic Plan on Gender and Mobility sets out specific lines of action, activities, goals, and responsible parties.

a. Reducing sexual violence and assaults against women in the Integrated Transport System.

- » Safe infrastructure and timely surveillance for the prevention of sexual violence and assaults against women
- » Training and awareness-raising for the prevention and effective response to sexual violence in the Integrated Transport System.
- » Effective response protocols for cases of sexual violence against women within the Integrated Transportation System.
- » Approved system for reporting cases of sexual violence and assaults against women.

b. Strengthening gender parity and institutional culture in the transport sector.

- » Affirmative action to promote gender parity and institutional culture in the transportation sector.
- » An institutional culture that promotes substantive equality and non-violence towards women working in the transport sector.

c. Effectively addressing women's travel needs and patterns.

- » Infrastructure and public policies that address women's specific travel needs (prioritizing care-related travel).
- » Promoting effective and sustainable mobility alternatives for women that respond to their travel patterns and needs.

The plan also defines the following cross-cutting lines of action:

1. Information, monitoring, and evaluation. to have a continuous monitoring and evaluation system to track the progress and impact of this strategy.
2. Regulation and public management, conducting an in-depth analysis of existing regulations, procedures, programs, policies, and actions of past administrations in the areas of gender, prevention, and response to violence against women in the transportation system to identify possibilities for improvement and clarify the level of implementation and impact of programs, policies, and actions of past administration.
3. Strategic linkages and multisectoral collaborative spaces, creating spaces for dialogue to ensure a multisectoral engagement process for the effective implementation of the strategy.





GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

The gender perspective is mainstreamed in urban mobility policies in Mexico City, strengthening substantive equality between women and men. Under this premise, mobility systems, programs, and projects are geared toward enabling women to travel with accessibility, comfort, safety, and shorter travel times.

- » The Strategic Plan was developed through focus groups of users, staff, and managers to give greater visibility to the real needs and problems of women in public transport. This data was used to define the actions to be implemented in the 2019 Strategic Plan for Gender and Mobility.
- » Working groups and dialogue spaces were held with transport agencies, other Secretariats (in particular the Secretariat for Women), as well as civil society, academics, experts, international organisations, and members of the legislative branch, to hear their opinions and priorities, discuss the contents of the strategy, and strengthen it.
- » With the objective of improving public transport from a gender perspective to improve women's experiences and comfort, from December 2018 to March 2019, the Secretariat of Mobility (SEMOVI) carried out an interdisciplinary (with the participation of people from various disciplines) and multi-sectoral (including the perspectives of different sectors) process to design the 2019 Strategic Plan for Gender and Mobility. As part of this process, a cross-cutting group was created, including experts in mobility, gender perspectives, and sexual violence against women from different areas of the Secretariat of Mobility, which designed and provided internal feedback on this document.
- » The Strategic Plan for Gender and Mobility, includes a gender mobility assessment with data that recognizes the differences in the trips of women and men, comparing purposes, modes of transport and activities; the assessment also includes the needs of women related to the mobility of care, as well as data sexual violence lived in public transport and public spaces, gender differentiated safety perceptions data of the unequal participation of women in the public transport sector of the city. This assessment is the background used to set up the strategies and actions to be developed by the strategic plan by 2025.

Construction of the cable car system in the district of Iztapalapa from a gender perspective

- » Institutional coordination with the Department of Public Works and Urban Development to integrate a gender perspective into the construction of the project. The cable car system is being built in peripheral areas of the city that had not been served before. Locations for the cable car stops are being sought and analysed in relation to everyday activities and mobility for caregiving. Also, the location of these stops are considered in relation to the urban space, safe pedestrian connections to banks, markets and schools, adequate lighting, and accessibility..
- » This coordination was carried out with the mayors' offices where these projects were being developed, in order to also work on the image of public space and how the installation of the cable car towers would also impact the configuration of the neighbourhoods.

- » The team studied women's mobility patterns in neighbourhoods to analyse demand throughout the day. Demand for cable cars was observed to be usually constant throughout the day because women use this means of transport to travel beyond the rush hour, for school trips, shopping at the market, and other caregiving activities. It was shown that cable cars always have the same supply because they run constantly, but they are used during all hours of operation.
- » The project involved local residents and communities in the areas to co-create the public spaces that were generated with the construction of the metro cable station stops.
- » Work was done on signage and naming each station in relation to important aspects of everyday life in the neighbourhood. This helped users take care of public spaces and improve their perceptions of safety and maintenance.
- » The project also analysed how the population functions in these spaces and respond to their needs.



Learnings

One of the learnings was that it was essential to work to **coordinate with multiple departments**, beyond the Mobility Department, and especially with the Secretary of Women and Secretary of Security. Further, a committee was created (Comité Integrado de Transporte Público) to coordinate these actions from the Secretary of Mobility. This committee was key to making the proposed actions binding. In addition to this coordination committee, there were parallel communication and coordination strategies that were essential for the implementation of the plan, such as:

- » Establishing channels of communication in real time through WhatsApp groups
- » Co-developing and co-designing documents in person and in group, by working together with the different stakeholders involved
- » Creating different working groups to scale up the results, and to attend the different perspectives and visions in relation to each action item. Focus the discussions and after the work of the different groups, get together and exchange the learning and proposals. For example, there was a specific working group for the protocol to address sexual violence on public transport.

Another learning from the project was the **need for time** to implement all the actions of the plan. The plan was initially very ambitious plan, as it aimed to implement all the actions in 2019, but this was not possible, first because of Covid-19, but also because of the need for additional time to consolidate the plan.

Finding **funding to implement actions** from different sources and institutions was also essential. For example, resources for the protocol came from institutions, such as the Secretary of Women or the Interamerican Development Bank (BID). This funding strategy helped to deliver training for more than 10,000 people (around 50% of those people were in charge of implementing the protocol) on the implementation to address sexual violence on the public transport system.

Without this funding, **capacity building** with all people involved in implementing the protocol to address sexual violence on public transport would not been possible. Capacity building was conducted with managers, station staff, operators, police officers, people attending on the gender violence telephone (911 line), and staff from the prosecutor's office. This training was conducted all throughout 2024. During the capacity building, innovative tools were demonstrated and implemented, combining in-person and synchronous and asynchronous online tools. It was essential to have in person trainings with people working on the operation of public transport. The team adapted the different modalities to the different groups. For the police department, they did a training of trainees, to replicate the training with police officers.



Replicability

To achieve continuity and scale up the project the following elements are identified in the development of the Strategic Plan:

- » The need to design long-term strategic plans, not just for the term of one administration, but to develop a vision for the next 15 years and structure short-, medium-, and long-term actions.
- » Create legal instruments and publications that allow for the monitoring of actions. At the very least, guidelines and practices should be established at the government level to give greater traceability and significance to the issues, so that they become mandatory elements to comply with. The strategic plan was implemented at the insistence of the Comprehensive Public Transport Committee, which made it binding.
- » These documents must be accompanied by indicators to measure and monitor the impact of the actions.
- » Create specific areas within governments, for example, gender units, whose primary function is to ensure that gender and mobility strategies are implemented. Gender units are what enable these actions and their implementation to be promoted. All mobility and urban development departments should have a specific gender area.



Additional resources

- » <https://semovi.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/estrategia-de-genero-140319.pdf>
- » <https://www.semovi.cdmx.gob.mx/movilidad-integrada/genero-y-movilidad>
- » <https://www.semovi.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/Resultados%20del%20PEGyM%20de%202019%20a%20marzo%202022.pdf>

5

Women friendly city project

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Women Policy Division in Seoul Metropolitan Government

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City Government

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Seoul Metropolitan Government and the Seoul Foundation of Women and Family (SFWF)

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Seoul Metropolitan Government

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Community and women groups

CITY, COUNTRY

Seoul, Republic of Korea, Asia

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2007 – 2016 (3.0) – ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women and girls

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City/Regional: Metropolitan area

Context

Women-centred policy-making in Korea has been led by the relevant Ministry of the central government, with its focus on protecting women, preventing gender discrimination, and enhancing women's status in society. Due to these efforts to develop the country's female resources and enhance the welfare and rights of women, there has been considerable improvement in the formal equality of women, including legal and institutional frameworks. However, there remains much room for improvement to achieve 'substantial' women's equality, particularly in the labour, family and welfare areas. Since those eligible for the benefits, under the previous policies, were limited to a few underprivileged, most women did not directly benefit from the policies. Further, the basic framework of the policies failed to reflect the diverse needs of each provincial government and the unique aspects of women living in metropolitan areas and, thus, had a significant impact on women's daily lives.

Women-Friendly City Project (WFCP) aims to reflect women's voices in every policy decision made by the city government, to ensure that no policy will favour one gender and focus on improving the implement women-friendly policies that address three issues of urban environment; inconvenience, safety, and unpleasantness and thereby enhance the living standard of women by empowering them.

GOAL

Incorporate the perspectives of women and their experiences into a broad range of city planning policies.

OBJECTIVE

- » An exemplary model for women-friendly urban policies with a long history of implementation
- » This project has opened a new horizon in women's policy by reflecting gender-recognition characters in the urban space of Seoul



Practice details

In January 2007, the “Women Friendly City Project,” began as an initiative to minimize the inconveniences women faced in their daily lives and to make the city a place where women could be happy and comfortable. Since then, a task force team was established; experts had a series of meetings thereon; a public survey was conducted; and reports on these tasks and policy forums were held before approval as an official city project in July 2007. In October 2007, the Partners Group (of experts), was formed, and the foundation of citizen governance was established through a series of internal meetings and advisory councils.

This project received its first recognition in 2010 by the UN Public Service Awards. This initiative was intended to promote “substantial” happiness among women. At the beginning, it facilitated special consideration to women in the areas of employment, prosperity, convenience and safety. The areas covered have now expanded to include roads, transportation, culture, and housing.

Since 2013, Seoul Metropolitan Government has been fostering safe environments for women throughout the city with programs for women’s safety, specifically with the roll-out of Safe City for Women initiatives (Version 1.0 to 3.0) and the launch of the Ansimi mobile app in 2016.

Building upon the Women’s Safety Metropolitan City 1.0 and 2.0 programs, Seoul Metropolitan Government launched the 3.0 program in 2017 with its key focus to shift from “hardware” (infrastructure) to “software” (values) and to further ensure safety in all aspects of daily life.

The “Women Friendly City Project” employs a wide range of strategies with a great vision of creating a women-friendly city environment.

Instead of dealing with a symbolic policy, the project focuses on developing policies that will bring real benefits to women and make their living environment more convenient.

In 2007, the strategies were:

- » To create a women friendly city environment—improve restrooms, transportations, and street facilities amongst others.
- » Ensure every department of the Seoul Metropolitan Government, and institutions which make investments or contributions to the project and autonomous districts are involved.
- » Establish citizen governance for effective incorporation of women’s perspectives and experience.
- » Develop guidelines for facilities to build and strengthen social consensus.

After a long history of implementation and improvement, in 2013 the program for Safe City for Women 3.0 project was launched and embraced the following strategies:

“Equal Seoul”

- » Gender equality at school: Provide education, textbooks, and teacher training courses to ensure that gender equality becomes the norm in each grade.
- » Foster gender equality at work.
- » Encourage citizen-led monitoring of ads and public materials that convey gender stereotypes/inequality.

“Respectful Seoul”

- » Conduct fact-finding survey on dating violence and digital sex crimes to establish a mid- to long-term roadmap
- » Support victims: There is currently no established system of legal and medical aid for victims of dating violence and digital sex crimes. Seoul Metropolitan Government is therefore considering creating an expert support agency.
- » Raise public awareness.

“Safe Seoul”

- » Establish, expand, and strengthen networks that promote safe environments for women.
- » Encourage wider use of Ansimi mobile app (to transmit the user’s location via a smartphone).
- » Conduct a gender-perspective analysis of disasters and provide classes and other types of training to strengthen women’s capacity to cope with various disasters.
- » Develop and distribute a gender sensitive disaster management manual among disaster-prone groups, including pregnant women.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Seoul City launched the Women Friendly City Project in 2007 with the intention to promote the substantial happiness of women. This includes 90 sub-projects designed for consideration for women, enable work, prosperity, convenience and safety. The areas covered by the women's policy expanded to include roads, transportation, culture, housing, and more. The incorporation of a gender perspective can be demonstrated through some quantifiable data:

- » The total number of restrooms provided were 87 in 2007, 378 in 2008 and 1,049 in 2009 through the "Women-Friendly restroom" project.
- » Woman-friendly Parking Lots near entrances and elevators of buildings were 68 in 2007, increasing to 4,622 in 2008 and 23,324 in 2009.
- » 594 emergency bells and 1,264 CCTVs and an additional 2,524 lights were installed to enhance the brightness of parking lots.
- » Introduced Safe-Return-Home service that sends passenger taxi ride information to the individuals' parents or guardians from the start of their ride home. A total of 6,580 taxi drivers registered with the Seoul call taxi system in 2008, which increased to 22,099 in 2009. About 106,679 people availed this service between 2008 to 2009.
- » High-quality child-care facilities provided through the establishment of the Seoul Child Care Center (which included 1,999 certified childcare centers).
- » Women-friendly walkways (69.2km), parks (50 places), apartments (2 model complexes) were created to enhance the convenience and safety of women.
- » Standard manuals (guidelines) for restrooms, parking lots, walkways, parks, and more., are available for use in designing and constructing similar facilities in the private sector.
- » Certification or a "women-friendly facility mark" is awarded to excellent facilities (258 awarded so far) following a non-site inspection. Though these projects were initially launched in the public sector, they are gradually expanding into the private sector.
- » Customer Satisfaction substantially increased to 83.2% in 2008 from 68.2% in 2007, as shown by the survey Citizens' Evaluation of Administrative Services.

Seoul continues to implement programs and actions in the project City for Women 3.0 through:

- » Safe Return Scouts: A program that helps women get home safely at night by arranging escorts for them.
- » Brighter Streets and Parking Lots: Increased lights in streets, parking lots and other public places.
- » Safe Delivery Service: Installing of Safe Delivery Boxes in neighbourhoods with high populations of women to response to the public alarm at the growing number of crimes committed by offenders disguised as deliveryman.
- » Home Patrol Service for women Living Alone: This program includes automated patrol system and installation of emergency alarms and wireless detectors on doors.
- » Safe Neighbourhoods for Women: Supporting local communities in making their own neighbourhoods safer for women by providing necessary spaces, expertise, and funding to launch community-led safety initiatives and training local citizens to be safety leaders.
- » Ansimi, a mobile application linked to a 24/7 network dedicated to women's safety, was launched in 2016.
- » Safety House for Women: Convenience stores and other public places throughout the city designated as Safety House for Women, where when in danger, women can get help.
- » Women Safety Sheriffs were appointed and organised to search 26,549 locations for video cameras filming women illegally and conduct 185 public campaigns.
- » The Gender Sensitive Disaster Management Manual and gender safety indicators were developed to ensure women's safety in disaster situations.



Learnings

A gender-equal city is a city safe for women, and a city safe for women is a city safe for everyone. A more difficult and important task than changing the physical environment is establishing a culture of gender equality. Seoul Metropolitan Government set out to educate the public on women's issues through public campaigns, social media, and public contests. Such efforts made a considerable and noticeable difference, and the city continues to reinforce and expand their contents.

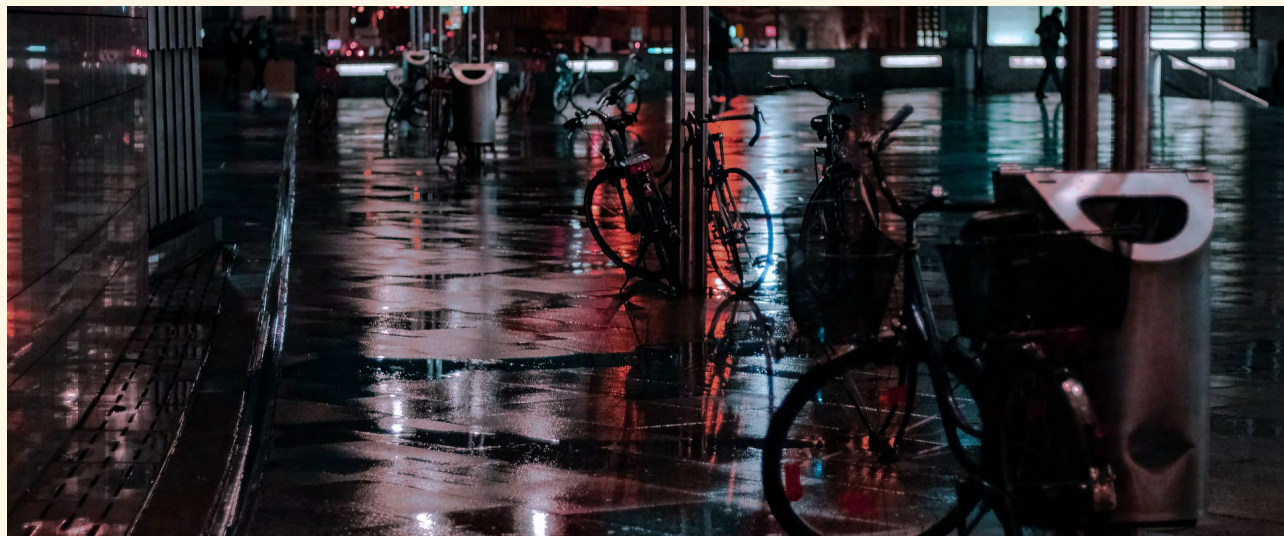
Other learnings of the project

- » Lack of understanding about the project: Some of the departments or organisations felt the project was a burden; therefore, it was difficult to incorporate women's perspectives and experiences into entire policies of the city government.
- » Designation of CF managers: the project designated a CF for each department and a CF manager for each bureau (281 for Seoul City, 896 for autonomous districts) as part of the effort to raise awareness of the project. Additionally, they held workshops for citizens to develop new programs and complement the existing ones.
- » Closer cooperation between departments.
- » Facilitate participation of every department by providing model cases.
- » Raise awareness about the project and build a social consensus through intensive promotion.



Replicability

Major cities in Korea have begun to benchmark and adopt Seoul's preventive approach to sexual violence. The Women's Safety Patrol Houses program will soon be extended to six other cities, including Incheon and Yeosu whose officials are currently consulting their counterparts in Seoul on the matter. The central government has also begun to promote the Safer Neighbourhoods for Women and the Home Patrol Service programs based on national directives. These programs have attracted attention from news outlets around the world as well, including NHK of Japan and ABC of Australia.



Urban Streetlight. Photo credits: Women Policy Division in Seoul Metropolitan Gov



Additional resources

- » <https://seoulsolution.kr/en/content/women-friendly-city-project>
- » Women's Safety Metropolitan City 2.0 (Presentation from Seoul Metropolitan Government)
- » Safe City for Women 3.0 (Presentation from Seoul Metropolitan Government)
- » <https://www.seoulsolution.kr/en/content/fighting-violence-against-women-making-seoul-safer-city-women-project>
- » Gender Audit Checklist of the Jakarta and Seoul metro systems by N. Yossa et al. 2023. Is public transport meeting the needs of women? A gender audit of two metro stations.
- » Women Friendly Seoul Promotional Video for the United Nations Public Service Awards 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOfQ7N_7n_Y
- » Women Friendly City Project, Seoul, <https://nfs.inroad.in/best-practice-detail?id=107264#>
- » Women Friendly Seoul Project of Seoul Metropolitan Government Awarded Metropolis Awards 2010 Special Mention: <https://english.seoul.go.kr/women-friendly-seoul-project-of-seoul-metropolitan-government-awarded-metropolis-awards-2010-special/>
- » USE - URBAN SUSTAINABILITY EXCHANGE <https://use.metropolis.org/case-studies/safe-city-for-women>

6

Gender mainstreaming in urban planning and urban development

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

City of Vienna

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City Government

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

The municipality of Vienna

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

MA 18 – Urban Development and Planning, City of Vienna

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The Women's Office of the City of Vienna

CITY, COUNTRY

Vienna, Austria, Europe

DURATION/ TIMELINES

1998 – ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Evaluating consequences for different target groups across all phases and with a systematic approach.

Women, girls, people with disabilities, transgender, LGBTQ+ or specific underrepresented groups integrated in the conceptualisation and/or implementation of the project

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

GOAL

Gender mainstreaming as a city-wide strategy to integrate a gender perspective in all urban planning projects in the city in coordination with 16 municipal departments



Practice details

Vienna has been a pioneering city in gender planning practice for more than 25 years. The Women's Office initiated planning-centred efforts in 1991, leading to a dedicated coordination office in 1998. Gender mainstreaming became a city-wide strategy in 2000, in the Strategy Plan for Vienna, the Urban Development Plan and sectoral programs, master plans and urban design concepts, as well as in numerous individual projects.

From 1998 to 2010, the Co-ordination Office for Planning and Construction geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women of the Executive Group for Construction and Technology was a central driver of this impulse. This approach, guided by a gender planning expert, involved interdisciplinary collaboration across administrative levels. In co-operation with 14 municipal departments and many other actors of urban development, model projects were initiated, pilot processes were implemented, and new methods were tested in about 60 pilot projects.

The know-how generated in this pilot phase, complemented by innovative best practices of MA 21A and MA 21B and the evaluation of international gender planning aids, is now available as a manual to communicate concise planning experience. For the first time, target group-specific requirement profiles, objectives, test questions and quality indicators were formulated for different scale levels in Vienna while at the same time presenting the most important methods and work tools for a gender-sensitive approach.

Julius-Tandler-Platz. Photo credits:
Stadt Wien Christian Fürthner



Gender planning in Vienna started in the early 1990s with a series of activities, programs and policies:

- » 1991, exhibition “Wem gehört der öffentliche Raum – Frauenalltag in der Stadt“, (Who Owns Public Space – Women’s Everyday Life in the City) for the first time explicitly demanded a specific planning approach
- » 1992, The Women’s Office of the City of Vienna was set up with one thematic focus on planning aspects.
- » 1998, Co-ordination Office for Planning and Construction Geared to the Requirements of Daily Life and the Specific Needs of Women of the Executive Group for Construction and Technology, Vienna assumed a pioneering role: in addition to taking special account of the interests of girls and women in planning
- » 2001, Co-ordination Office took over the central task of evolving and establishing the (then) novel strategy of gender mainstreaming in this field.
- » 2010, Reorganisation of the Executive Group for Construction and Technology, gender mainstreaming was defined a core task of the superordinate Groups for Planning, Civil Engineering and Building Construction

Gender mainstreaming in urban planning – a process-oriented strategy to safeguard quality in planning – is continuously evolved by the City of Vienna. A gender-sensitive perspective informs the entire planning process from the analysis of planning tasks and the formulation of goals to the implementation and evaluation of measures taken.

Vienna’s urban planning activities take targeted account of the different needs and interests of distinct user groups and differentiate by life realities, life phases, social and cultural backgrounds. Planning objectives and measures are evaluated by systematically examining their effects on various user groups. In addition to the different needs of women and men with regard to the services and amenities offered by the city, in public space or the housing environment, further differences due to varying dimensions of discrimination related to e.g. age, socio-cultural background, religion, physical or psychological abilities are taken aboard as well where this is possible and viable.

The focus is on the needs and requirements of different target groups – children, young people, persons with family and caregiving tasks, and aged persons (75 years or older) –, since these tend to be less frequently considered in planning and thus are often “underrepresented”. These groups are strongly rooted in their local housing environment and have a relatively limited everyday mobility range. In case of persons with family and caregiving tasks, the combination of paid work and family chores additionally curtails the time budget.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Gender-sensitive planning is a differentiated planning culture that employs a site- and group-specific approach. The added value of gender mainstreaming in planning administration becomes evident at several levels.

- » **Quality assurance in planning processes:** gender-sensitive planning considers the needs of persons who are often overlooked. Thus gender-, age- and group-specific interests and effects are systematically examined in connection with each new planning task and planning step. The objective lies in meeting current demands for space by individual groups, creating flexible and adaptable spaces to satisfy different needs and generating new potentials of space appropriation by inhabitants.
- » **Exchange and communication of know-how:** the reflection on the underlying values of urban planning from a gender-sensitive perspective supports a planning culture informed by everyday needs and nurtures greater awareness of the different everyday needs of women and men in relation to life phases, life realities, cultural and social backgrounds. As a horizontal or cross-sector issue, gender mainstreaming also highlights the importance of interfaces between individual planning levels.
- » **Targeted resource use:** gender-sensitive planning also has an eye on the equitable distribution of space and time. The usability and functionality of a city are above all measured by its usefulness for people who due to their individual life phase tend to spend a lot of time in the immediate vicinity of their home. In combination with gender budgeting, the distribution effect of the resources invested can thus be assessed and transparently controlled.
- » **Methodological innovations and methodological evolution:** the sensitization for gender-sensitive issues in the context of a systematic exchange of experience between different departments and disciplines supports the evolution of interdisciplinary planning know-how. Planners' scopes for action become thus visible. New planning issues and approaches often highlight “blind spots” and hence call for novel methods. The innovative power of these methods must above all be measured by their transferability to concrete (technical) levels of activity or planning tasks. The present manual contributes towards this goal by identifying transferable methods and instruments.



Learnings

The experience gathered in the 60 gender mainstreaming pilot projects implemented so far at different scale levels has highlighted the importance of comprehensively assessing the most significant quality characteristics to ensure gender equality and of “breaking down” these features to a detailed project level as the relevant plans are rendered more precise and concrete.

One of the main learning has been to work in coordination with all the municipal departments. In 2024 the city created the Gender Planning Network with 16 departments of the city to create recommendations and discussion, which allows to have a space of continuous reflection and revision of gender integration in the different projects with the departments but also with the consultants that work on planning projects in the city, to all discuss and review how to integrate a gender perspective in planning. This network is also a tool to make visible all the stakeholders involved in make gender mainstreaming and that it takes a collective knowledge and effort.

Another learning is that it takes more a change in the way cities work and develop their projects, where gender planning is not an isolated issue, but a way of designing in all the levels of the city.

The planning departments need a translation of the everyday life of the more needed, of low-income people. Planning departments needs to be trained and sensitized to integrate compassion and empathy with diverse groups of people and try to find the translations of the realities of people who are more needed to respond to their realities through urban planning and public spaces transformation. Also planning department need to integrate low budget innovation to be implemented.



Replicability

Gender-responsive planning in the city has been integrated in all the phases of the projects from the conceptualisation of the project, budgeting, capacity building, needs assessment, community participation, implementation, M&E and consolidation of the project. The replication of gender mainstreaming in urban planning continuous being replicated, but adopted to the current context of climate change as well as increase population life expectancy and ageing. For example, they are adapting public spaces to be used during summer time and heat waves to make spaces that can respond to the diversity of care needs and diverse people. The goal is that the different groups needs are represented in the public space. The city has been rethinking spaces through communities dialog and negotiation to co-create public spaces from a gender perspective. An example is the new project of Franz-Josefs-Bahnhof train station in the old town, adding benches, seating options, water park for children and caretakers, space for homeless people to seat and stay, ping doing tables for youth, better efficient lighting with new technology that improve lighting for pedestrians, but also preserves wildlife.



Additional resources

- » <https://www.wien.gv.at/english/administration/gendermainstreaming>
- » <https://www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/wbrup/content/pageview/4174049>
- » Gender mainstreaming in urban planning and urban development / owner and publisher urban development Vienna, Municipal Department [...] : <https://www.digital.wienbibliothek.at/urn/urn:nbn:at:AT-WBR-707537>
- » The case of Vienna is very emblematic, and there is an extensive list of academic and institutional publications studying this case.
- » <https://www.wien.gv.at/alsgrund/julius-tandler-platz>

7

Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Development

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Women's Advisory Committee of the Senate Department for Urban Development

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City government

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Department for Urban Development

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Women's Advisory Committee of the Senate Department for Urban Development

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Department of General Affairs, Minister of Urban Development

CITY, COUNTRY

Berlin, Germany, North Europe

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2011-ongoing

TARGET GROUP

All of those involved in planning processes to creatively assess each new project with in regard to gender mainstreaming.

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City



GOAL

design a handbook with gender criteria and guideline to integrate in all planning projects in the city

Practice details

The implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Berlin administration was launched in 2003, initially with a three-year pilot phase. Since then, gender mainstreaming has been an integral part of all administrative areas and is to be considered in everyday administrative practice. The Equal Opportunities Office has decentralized gender officers of the Senate and district administrations who bear particular responsibility for internal gender mainstreaming processes within their respective departments.

This handbook contains a range of criteria and guidelines for decision-making in gender-sensitive planning at various levels. This handbook is based on actual experiences, identifying possibilities that result from the practical assessment of urban development, with the aim of making the gender-sensitive city a reality.

- » Gender Mainstreaming will also be implemented in urban development and planning in Berlin. The advantage in this field of action is that one can refer to the long-time experiences and structures of feminist planning and that at present, the tradition of resident-participation is experiencing a revival and methodological further development.
- » Berlin's gender mainstreaming pilot projects, which were primarily initiated in the areas of urban and public outdoor space development served as important focal points. The results have provided knowledge and experience and their impact is radiating far beyond Berlin.
- » Its foundations are the criteria that have been developed and proven successful in gender-sensitive planning during the work performed by the Women's Advisory Committee of the Senate Department for Urban Development as well as by additional expert opinions.
- » The Equal Opportunities Office provides the corresponding funding. Funding is granted based on a project proposal, which, along with a clear outline of the planned project and its objectives, must be submitted to the Equal Opportunities Office by the respective administration.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Building criteria for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in planning processes and in incorporating gender issues into the development of urban neighbourhoods. During the process of compiling and further developing these materials, the following criteria received priority:

- » the issue of spatial integration into the urban fabric and its functional context,
- » spatial concepts that are not exclusively oriented toward traditional urbanistic models but permit and encourage innovative
- » the examination of the issue of how to engender neighbourly relations and a sense of community or identification in urban areas and the challenges this poses for the planning process.

Therefore, this handbook contains a range of criteria and guidelines for decision-making in gender-sensitive planning at various levels. The first part addresses the similarities and differences between gender mainstreaming and gender planning as employed in the Berlin context. Suggestions regarding the design of planning processes are next, supplemented by criteria for the evaluation of the different levels of planning in the urban context.

These criteria must be adapted to the respective planning contexts. They are intended to stimulate and encourage those involved in the planning process to approach each new project with an eye towards a creative examination of the advantages that gender mainstreaming can provide.



Learnings and replicability

gender mainstreaming should be viewed as a complex and long-term organisational development process. Its aim is to establish equal opportunities and gender equality for women/girls and men/boys, also through a modernized administration.

- » This handbook is intended to reinforce these positive effects. It provides an overview of criteria that are helpful in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in planning processes and in incorporating gender issues into the development of urban neighborhoods.
- » The criteria are based on the specific experiences in Berlin and should by no means be viewed as a finished and all-inclusive catalog. Instead, they must be creatively adapted and augmented in all planning processes by the various individuals involved in accordance with their specific experiences, competencies and resources.
- » The criteria are intended to encourage planners to reflect their own experiences in the planning process and to add new insights to the discussions, thereby increasing the wealth of experience available in the future.
- » The only way that the experiences gained can truly become “mainstream” and contribute to gender-sensitive urban planning in the intermediate future is to not simply work through a checklist or manual, but to actively apply these and any additional criteria to the various planning tasks at hand.
- » Each venture should be examined in terms of its potential gender-specific impact and arranged in a manner that contributes to promoting the equality of all women and men. As part of this process, differences between the typical woman and the typical man should not simply be taken for granted - instead, gender-specific role assignments and stereotypes should be overcome by facilitating new and individual ways of life.

Pictures of public spaces from the handbook.
Photo credits: The State of Berlin



Images from Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Development Handbook. Photo credits: The State of Berlin



Additional resources

- » https://app.overtone.io/document.php?policy_document_id=cityofberlin-68e7c307034d07da8851663ff05055a0
- » Gender mainstreaming in Berlin politics and administration: <https://www.berlin.de/sen/frauen/gleichstellung/gender-mainstreaming/>
- » Ambivalences of Gender Planning, by Sandra Huning - 23 January 2013: <https://metropolitiques.eu/Ambivalences-of-Gender-Planning.html>
- » Senate Department for Labour, Social Affairs, Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination, Equality and participation: Gender mainstreaming strategy
- » https://civitas.eu/sites/default/files/berlin_gender_mainstreaming_0.pdf



8

Care District System (Sistema distrital de Cuidado)

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

District Secretariat for Women of the Mayor's Office of Bogotá

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City Government

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Mayor's Office of Bogotá

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

District Secretariat for Women of the Mayor's Office of Bogotá

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Involving the State, the Capital District, the private sector, civil society, communities, community organisations and families

CITY, COUNTRY

Bogotá, Colombia, Latin America

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2019 - ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Caregivers in their differences and diversity; people in their differences and diversity who require care or different levels of support; men in their differences and diversity, families in their diversity of caregivers, and citizens in general.

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

GOAL

address care needs by building local facilities that bring together all services and put care at the centre



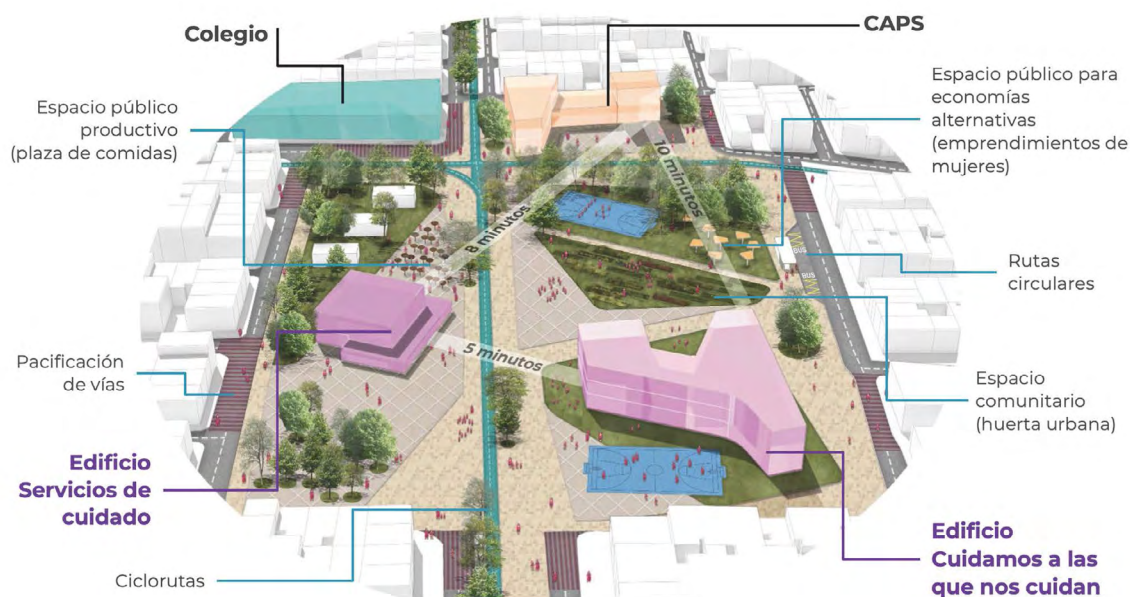
Practice details

The Care District System is the mechanism through which policies, programs, projects, services, regulations, and technical and institutional actions are coordinated to meet the care needs of Bogotá households in a co-responsible manner, involving the State, the Capital District, the private sector, civil society, communities, community organisations, families, and in particular women, men, and non-binary persons, recognizing and respecting their differences and diversity (Article 1, Agreement 893 of 2023). In this regard, the Care District System seeks to guarantee the rights of women and people who perform Unpaid domestic workers (TDCNR) in Bogotá, as well as those who require care, and to progressively transform the sexual division of labor in the District.

This system is the result of the persistent struggle of women's social movements and feminist movements in Bogotá—highlighting the role of the Women's Advisory Council - Autonomous Space (CCM-EA)—which, through its political advocacy, managed to place on the public agenda the need to implement a system that would respond concretely to the demands for care at the territorial level.

At the legal level, Law 1413 of 2010 “regulates the inclusion of the care economy in the national accounts system in order to measure women's contribution to the country's economic and social development and as a fundamental tool for the definition and implementation of public policies,” with Colombia being one of the first countries to require by law the conduct of time-use surveys.

At the municipal level, Bogotá has been known as a pioneer in equality policies. One of its first initiatives in this area was the 2004-2016 Equal Opportunities Plan for Gender Equality (PIOEG), which was the result of efforts by various women's movements in the city.



A District Decree is approved in 2023 that “establishes, defines, and develops the guidelines for the operation of the System; the governance mechanism, with an emphasis on the bodies that comprise it, their members and functions; the operating models, components, services, as well as the follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation of the System” (Mayor’s Office of Bogotá, 2023).

Along with the District Agreement, the Decree establishes the objectives, principles, approaches, target population, operating models, as well as the mechanisms for financing, follow-up, monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and participation. It also defines the components of the service system, the operating criteria, and the governance mechanism, ensuring that the system functions comprehensively and effectively.

The implementation of the District Care System has four territorial operating models where care services are provided: Care Blocks, Care Buses, Personal Assistance, and other operating units. In each operating model, services are provided under the following criteria:

- » Dual care: provided to caregivers and those who require care or different levels of support.
- » Simultaneity: offered at the same time according to defined time slots.
- » Proximity: provided nearby or at the homes of the target population, depending on the operational model implemented.
- » Flexibility in services and social infrastructure: service hours can be adjusted and extended to offer services before and after working hours and on weekends. It is also possible to use existing district infrastructure and optimize its use so that all entities and actors in the System can provide services within the same infrastructure.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Care policies are public actions aimed at changing the current social organisation of care, with the focus of these policies being on people who require care and those who provide it. These policies may include measures that guarantee access to services, time, and resources so that people can care for others and be cared for themselves in conditions of quality and equality.

The main territorial strategies of the District Care and Social Services System are as follows:

- » Guarantee of universal accessibility: Ensures accessibility to care services for the entire population, including women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, homeless people, and other vulnerable groups, through universal design principles and a gender-based approach.
- » Hybridization of services: This seeks to optimize land use and expand the coverage of social services by consolidating equipment nodes, which allow for multifunctionality and cooperation between entities to offer comprehensive services within the Care District System.
- » Territorialization of the Care District System: The Care District System is distributed equitably throughout the territory, integrating both existing and future facilities, along with care blocks and mobile units operating in rural and urban areas.

Based on a qualitative and quantitative characterization exercise carried out during the design stage of the Care District System, the target populations are defined as, on the one hand, caregivers (mostly women) whose main activity is domestic work and unpaid care work; on the other hand, people who require care or high levels of support, whether they are older adults, people with disabilities, or children and adolescents under the age of 14; and finally, the husbands and family members of caregivers.

The fundamental strategy is to care for caregivers by recognizing, valuing, and reframing unpaid care work and those who perform it, through processes of empowerment and well-being. This strategy has three specific objectives:

- » To train caregivers so that they can strengthen their capacities within the framework of building life projects.
- » Promote conditions for income generation to strengthen the economic autonomy of caregivers through entrepreneurship and employability strategies.
- » Develop wellness activities for caregivers, supporting self-care and rest for them.



Learnings and replicability

the Care District System is a comprehensive proposal for shared responsibility for care through the promotion of public policies to break down gender inequalities generated by the distribution of care tasks, setting a precedent not only at the local level but also internationally. It has received many distinctions and awards for the social and urban innovation it represents. It is a proposal that offers many lessons in many different areas.

The Care District System is also promoted nationally and internationally as a strategy for visibility, exchange, and cooperation. Through this dimension, we seek to:

- » Connect with key cooperation actors, governments, academia, and other organisations to jointly analyze the operation, impact, and sustainability of the System.
- » Position the work carried out before potential national and international allies who can contribute resources or technical assistance.
- » Exchange knowledge, experiences, and best practices with other cities and countries, especially in Latin America.
- » Raise awareness of care work and promote its incorporation into public policies and global debates on unpaid care work.
- » Enrich the System from multiple disciplines such as social sciences, urban planning, architecture, engineering, law, among others.



Additional resources

- » <https://sistemadecuidado.gov.co/>
- » Bases técnicas del Sistema Distrital de Cuidado: https://sistemadecuidado.gov.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Bases_Tecnicas-sidicu-04-11-2025_.pdf
- » ABC del Sistema Distrital de Cuidado: <https://sistemadecuidado.gov.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/abc-del-SIDICU.pdf>
- » Infocuidado: <https://infocuidado.sdmujer.gov.co/total-sistema>

9

Building a new model for the city: caring, sustainable, and equitable city

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Col·lectiu Punt 6, ORMUSA and Cooperacció

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Non-profit Cooperative

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Barcelona's Council Global Justice Department

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Col·lectiu Punt 6, ORMUSA, Cooperacció

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Asociación de Mujeres de Ciudad Arce La Libertad (ASOMCALL) and Red de Defensoras

CITY, COUNTRY

Barcelona, South Europe and Ciudad Arce, El Salvador

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2023-ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women and LGBTQ+ community

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City and periurban areas

RESULTS (URL PUBLICATIONS/ REPORTS)

<https://www.punt6.org/en/project-portfolio/climate-care-shelters-in-ciudad-arce-towards-a-caring-and-sustainable-city/>

GOAL

Guarantee equitable access to environmental goods and services, as well as women's right to enjoy an environmental quality of life, by designing a community network of climate shelters from an ecofeminist perspective that mitigates climate change gender impacts



Practice details

Ciudad Arce is a small city of over 70.000 inhabitants (54% of them are women), situated in the district of La Libertad to the west of the capital city of San Salvador. Ciudad Arce is a district facing multiple challenges: socioeconomic inequality, job insecurity, environmental vulnerability, and historical exclusion. The municipality has a poverty rate of 26% and also faces serious environmental challenges. Deforestation, water pollution, and the absence of early warning systems for natural disasters exacerbate the vulnerability of the territory. The southern part of the district, crossed by the Sucio and Agua Caliente rivers and their tributaries (Copapayo, Amayo, and Agua Fría), increases the risk of flooding and landslides. Likewise, the expansion of productive areas and industrial activity have contributed to the degradation of water resources, affecting the water supply in key communities such as El Conacaste [Challenges in Ciudad Arce for water supply]. From an ecofeminist perspective, it is essential to recognize the intersection between environmental exploitation and gender inequalities. Women in Ciudad Arce bear a double burden, as they are responsible for managing water and feeding their families, while at the same time suffering the effects of environmental degradation in their surroundings. This decolonial approach invites to rethink public policies and development strategies so that they are inclusive and address the historically invisible needs of women and indigenous communities. In this context, in Ciudad Arce, women continue to lead key efforts to address the challenges of climate change and ensure their well-being in the context of a growing environmental crisis.

Between 2023 and 2025, the Association of Salvadoran Women for Peace (ORMUSA), in partnership with Col·lectiu Punt 6 and CooperAcció in El Salvador, conducted a participatory action research project through ORMUSA's Gender and Environmental

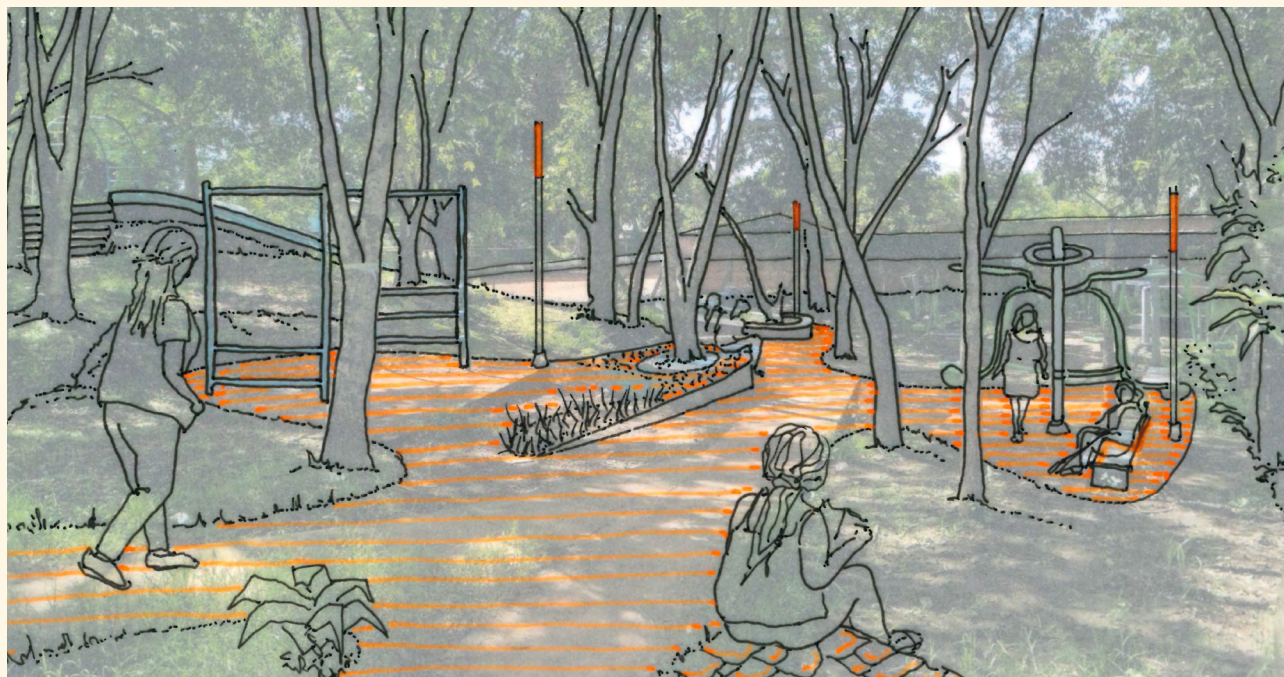


Justice Observatory on the impacts of climate change on access to water and how it affects women's autonomy in the region. This project was developed with the active participation of women in the city of Ciudad Arce in El Salvador; in particular, with community leaders that represented the different neighbourhoods and communities of the city, who are organised under the Women's Association of Ciudad Arce La Libertad (Asociación de Mujeres de Ciudad Arce La Libertad (ASOMCALL) and the Network of Women Defenders of the Territory (Red de Defensoras).

The project has a participatory research component that consisted of conducting an assessment of the impact of water crisis, river pollution and corporate exploitation of water on the communities and in particular, on women's bodies. From the results of this assessment, women proposed to develop actions to mitigate the impact of water crisis and climate change and work collectively in the design of a climate care shelter, with the support of Municipal Government of Ciudad Arce.

In order to design the climate care shelters, Col·lectiu Punt 6, a non-profit cooperative with expertise of ecofeminist urban planning, facilitated a participatory assessment to identify networks and develop a community mapping of climate change impacts in their communities. In the participatory assessment, a body mapping workshop helped also analyze how climate change impacts affect women's bodies. The participatory assessment to design climate care shelters was complemented with three exploratory walks to identify and analyze spaces that are part of the community care network and have the potential to become climate care shelters in the communities of Santa Lucía, Pequeña Inglaterra, Colonias Unidas, and San Francisco.

Based on the diagnosis of everyday networks and environmental impacts carried out by women from each participating community, and after identifying community spaces that already form part of a care network, proposals were developed to improve spaces with the potential to become climate care shelters in Colonias Unidas. In particular, women proposed to create a network of community climate care shelter that included the Women's House of Colonia Unidas; the Forest Park located adjacent to the house that serves as community gym and children's playground; and the soccer field in front of the women's house. Together, these three spaces were chosen to improve physical infrastructure and maintenance of the spaces through community participation and the involvement of the municipal government.



Illustrated Recommendation for the Climate Shelter of Ciudad Arce. Illustrations credits: Marta Fonseca, Col·lectiu Punt 6.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » An ecofeminist perspective was integrated in all the project, being the methodology not only of the project, but the epistemology of all the organisations involved in this long-term project. The project presented in this case study illustrate the actions developed to mitigate climate change from an ecofeminist perspective. But the work developed between all the feminist organisations involved is in the long-term since they have been collaborating for years in feminist urban planning projects that integrate the response to improve women's quality of life in their communities, address gender based violence and promote women's active participation in all phases of the project. This long term commitment and experience working together makes this project sustainable on time and replicable.
- » In 2023-2024, it start working alongside Cooperacció and ORMUSA, two feminist organisations developing community projects in El Salvador, on this project assessment to design a network of climate shelters in Ciudad Arce, El Salvador, as part of a project subsidized by Barcelona City Council's 2023 Global Justice call for proposals, entitled "Building a new model of city: caring, sustainable, and equitable in Ciudad Arce.



Learnings and replicability

The network created between the different feminist organisations in the project has been essential for the sustainability and maintenance of the project. It has been key the work of the international organisations, Col·lectiu Punt 6 and Cooperacció, in assuring funding to develop and maintain the project over the years. But also, in horizontal collaboration with the feminist organisations in El Salvador, those doing work at the national level (ORMUSA) and those doing work at the local level (ASOMCALL and Network of Women Defenders). Without the acknowledgement of the collective strength and without a horizontal structure that support each organisations' strength, the project would have not evolved in the current political situation of repression that the country is living.

After the participatory action research was developed and published in March 2025, the project has continued its implementation. Funding has been renewed in 2025 by the Barcelona's Council Climate Justice Department. With this funding local women's groups will be able to execute the infrastructure improvements and the maintenance of the network of spaces within the climate care community shelter.

On the other side, Col·lectiu Punt 6, has replicated and developed climate care shelters projects in other territories. Since December 2023, the cooperative has been developing a two-year project with a Climate Grant from Barcelona City Council, entitled "Building the Casc Antic Climate Trench" together with two local organisations in Barcelona's Old district. This project has been designed from an ecofeminist and class perspective to address the impact of climate change with the neighbourhood's residents and to be able to identify a network of community climate shelter spaces in the neighbourhood and design proposals for improving and expanding these spaces. In addition, in January 2025, working with Amigas por la Tierra (Friends for the Earth), Col·lectiu Punt 6 published a document on how to develop community climate shelters, to promote the expansion of networks of climate shelters managed and promoted by neighbourhood communities.



Additional resources

- » <https://observatoriociudadarce.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Cuaderno-Ciudad-Arce-pdf.pdf>
- » <https://www.punt6.org/en/project-portfolio/climate-care-shelters-in-ciudad-arce-towards-a-caring-and-sustainable-city/>
- » <https://www.punt6.org/en/books/climate-community-shelters-building-networks-of-care-together/>
- » <https://www.punt6.org/materials/construim-la-trinxera-climatica-del-casc-antic/>

10

Women's Safety Audit in Nassim

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

MedCities/MedCités

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Association of Mediterranean cities governments

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

City Council of Barcelona, member of MedCities/MedCités

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Union d'Action Feministe with Col·lectiu Punt 6

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

City of Tetuan

CITY, COUNTRY

Tetouan, Morocco

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2021

TARGET GROUP

Women and girls of the neighborhood

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

Community



GOAL

Conduct a safety audit through women's participation to propose improvements in an informal neighbourhood

Practice details

The implementation of the COHESIMED project in Tetuan began in 2021. The project, funded by the City Council of Barcelona, aims at improving the well-being of women in the city of Tetouan (Morocco), and specifically in the district of Nakatta (Nassim is its official name), through the improvement of accessibility and safety of public space for women, focusing on their day-to-day movements and trips.

The project was developed in an informal settlement in the periphery of the city. It has a lot of environmental hazards that impact mostly women and children. The neighborhood has experienced flooding, lacks accessibility in most streets, it is disconnected from city center and main services. The project included an action plan to improve some spaces, among them a public space that can be used by young women.

In May 2021, the partners of the project decided to focus the action in the neighborhood of Nakatta, an out-skirts' area of the city of Tetuan with needs and certain community-based networks on which the project could ground its action. MedCities and the city council of Tetuan are strongly supported by the expert teams of Col·lectiu Punt 6 – a cooperative based in Barcelona with a long experience working on the gender perspective analysis in urbanism and architecture – and Acetre Consulting – a long-standing consultancy firm with presence in Spain and Morocco.

After defining the pilot area, the participatory diagnosis kicked off with a number of workshops and exploratory walks in the neighbourhood with over 40 women involved on 16 June, 21 adult women gathered at the Community Center of Al Boughaz and were told about the objectives of the project. A video-animation was used to ease the understanding and break the ice. Their 46 children were taken care of by two facilitators in an annex room, something which facilitated and mobilized the women to attend the workshop!



Women's Safety audit activities
in Nassim Tetouan. Photo
credits: Col·lectiu Punt 6

The next day, 22 women, of which 8 were teenagers, gathered at the Center in the morning and later on marched around the neighborhood to identify «in situ» the problems and difficulties they encounter when moving around or accessing the area on a daily basis. The results of the exploratory march were shared and discussed back at the Center Al Boughaz, and were signaled on different printed maps of the neighborhood. Finally, on Friday 18, 15 adult women participated at a second exploratory march and later on gathered at the Center to conclude the process, together with their 37 children.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » Feminist urbanism has been the conceptual framework that defines the methodology and tools used in the workshops during the participatory diagnosis with Col.lectiu Punt 6.
- » Union d'Action Feministe was responsible for establishing direct contact with the women in the neighborhood, translating into Arabic, and adapting the concepts to suit the reality of the women in the neighborhood.
- » The methodologies developed in the workshops have been adapted to the needs of the group of women who participated. To carry out this assessment, the workshops were organised with adult and young women from the Nekkata neighborhood, as follows:
 - Adult women participated in the first workshop on Wednesday morning, June 16 (23 women) and Thursday morning, June 17 (13 women), for a total of 36 adult women.
 - The exploratory walk with some of these adult women and workshop 3 took place on Friday, June 18, in the morning.
 - The young women attended all three workshops on the same day, Thursday morning, June 17 (8 young women).
- » The results were obtained from the participatory workshops and the participatory recommendations for improving women's perception of safety in the neighborhood and the municipality (written report and map of the neighborhood with recommendations for action).
- » An action plan with interventions to be implemented to meet the needs identified in the neighborhood.
- » Presentation of the results and action plan to women's groups in the neighborhood and the municipality of Tetouan.



Learnings and replicability

The main issues observed by the women concern the quotidian and daily uses of the streets, buildings and urban spaces and point to the lack of public lighting that generates insecurity or the dense traffic and unsafety for women as they mainly move around the neighborhood on foot. Accessibility is a generalized problem around the area, together with lack of comfortable and safe passages to the main neighborhood services like schools or health centers.

A comprehensive diagnosis and map produced by Col.lectiu Punt 6 to identify priority actions and measures, as one of the main contributions of COHESIMED in Tetuan.

This project is a first step toward empowering women to trust their knowledge of their environment and become active agents of change.

In 2025, a replication project started in two other Mediterranean cities: Alhoceima, Morocco and Trípoli, Liban. The positive part of this replication is that these two projects include funding to develop an action plan and recommendation that comes from the diagnoses and will be designed and implemented with women's participation.



Women's exploratory walk
in Nassim Tetouan. Photo
credits: Col·lectiu Punt 6



Additional resources

- » <https://medcities.org/es/gender-perspective-into-the-urban-analysis-in-tetuan/>
- » Union d'Action Feministe; https://www.instagram.com/union_de_action_feministe_uaf/
- » Union d'Action Feministe of Tanger; <https://uaftanger.wordpress.com/>

11

Pangea, Garden of the Five Continents and Nonviolence

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Associazione Dream Team

dalle donne la forza delle donne!

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

NGO

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

self-financed, transfer of land from the council and Grenn Care Grant in 2017

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Network of social associations in the Scampia neighbourhood

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Network of social associations in the Scampia neighbourhood. Are part of this network: Associazione Dream Team dalle donne la forza delle donne!, Centro Diurno di Salute Mentale di Scampia "Gatta blu", Associazione Nagasaki - Brescia Kaky Tree Project, Students from local secondary schools.

CITY, COUNTRY

Naples, Italy

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2017 – ongoing

TARGET GROUP

People of different ages from the neighbourhood

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

Community

GOAL

Create a public space for coexistence, greenery and peace, promoting the recovery of abandoned public space, combating urban decay and contributing to regeneration through gender violence awareness and gender-responsive actions



Practice details

The aim of the project is to create a public space for coexistence, greenery and peace: the Giardino dei cinque continenti e della nonviolenza — 'Garden of the Five Continents and Non-Violence' — on a plot of approximately 4,000 m² in Largo Bataglia, transforming six aiuolas (plots) that were previously abandoned and used as rubbish dumps into a community garden. The garden is located in Scampia, a neighbourhood with high socio-economic vulnerability and marked by strong social stigma. The neighbourhood lacks public spaces and green areas for socialising and playing.

In the Pangea project, different social associations in the neighbourhood have worked together to promote education in non-violence and ecological awareness. A 'map of non-violence' has been created: each flowerbed is linked to historical or contemporary figures who represent principles of peace and justice on different continents. School students and citizens have been involved in the process, combating stigma and urban degradation and promoting values of respect, solidarity and inclusion.

To construct the garden, plant species representative of different continents (Europe, Africa, Asia, America, Oceania) have been planted in five flowerbeds, while a sixth is dedicated to the Mediterranean, symbolising the union of cultures and diversity as a source of wealth.

The project is managed "from the bottom up" (self-managed and self-financed), which means that its strength lies in the cooperation of associations, schools and neighbours, reinforcing the sense of belonging and community.



Pangea Garden. Photo
credits: Col·lectiu Punt 6

It promotes the symbolic and real transformation of an area historically marked by marginalisation and neglect: the garden becomes a place for meeting, culture and reflection on peace and diversity.

The garden is divided into six areas named after the five continents and another called Mediterranean. Each plot has been built and managed by an organisation. The Dream Team organisation manages the Asia plot and, through symbolic elements (such as an empty chair), uses the space to raise awareness of violence against women.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » One of the driving forces behind the initiative has been a neighbourhood association that works for women's rights and against gender violence.
- » Women have participated in the construction and maintenance of the garden.
- » The associations have raised awareness about non-violent practices in a neighbourhood with high rates of violence and crime.



Pangea Garden. Photo credits: Col-lectiu Punt 6



Learnings and replicability

→ The power of community and self-management

Pangea demonstrates that a diverse group (associations, schools, citizens, volunteers) can transform abandoned spaces without relying solely on public institutions. The garden was rehabilitated 'from the bottom up,' with its own resources, volunteers, and collective collaboration. This shows that citizen participation and shared responsibility can bring about concrete changes in neighbourhoods marked by neglect and marginalisation.

→ Green spaces as tools for social regeneration

The restoration of six degraded flowerbeds transformed them from a problem (rubbish dumps, neglect) into a space of peace, beauty, coexistence and belonging. The physical garden became a symbol: beyond planting trees or flowers, it allowed for the visible and collective construction of a 'memory of non-violence', diversity and solidarity, linking people, generations and cultures.

→ Education, awareness and symbolic meaning.

Each flowerbed was dedicated to a continent (plus one for the Mediterranean) and associated with historical or contemporary figures of non-violence and human rights. This allowed schools and young people to research, learn and reflect on universal values such as peace, justice, diversity and solidarity. The project has shown that symbolic acts — planting a tree, caring for a space, painting murals — can become a concrete form of civic education, shared memory and a culture of peace.

→ Rebuilding collective identity and dignity in the neighbourhood

In a historically stigmatised area, the garden offers an alternative narrative: instead of abandonment, violence and marginalisation, it offers a space of beauty, care, collaboration and future. This re-signification contributes to community pride and the revaluation of the neighbourhood. The project highlights that the 'reappropriation' of public spaces by the community—with respect, care, and shared values—can combat prejudice and exclusion and offer new possibilities for socialisation, belonging, and participation.

→ Urban greenery and non-violence as axes of transformation

Pangea articulates two dimensions—ecological (recovery of spaces, creation of green spaces) and social (non-violence, memory, education)—and shows that both can go hand in hand to foster a healthier, more humane and hopeful environment.

The unique feature of this case has been the diversity and number of agents involved in its implementation and maintenance.



Additional resources

- » <https://www.associazionedreamteam.eu/progetto-pangea/>
- » <https://www.premiogreencare.org/i-fondi-del-greencare-messi-a-frutto-dai-premiati/>

12

We Need to Talk About Public Toilets. Policy agendas for inclusive suburbs and cities

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Queensland University of Technology

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Research Centre

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Winston Churchill Memorial Trust

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Local government

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Local, state and federal governments

CITY, COUNTRY

Victoria and New South Wales, Australia

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2024 – ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women, trans people, people with disabilities

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

Regional

RESULTS (URL PUBLICATIONS/ REPORTS)

https://eprints.qut.edu.au/254525/13/BP66_WebberGrantSmith_Sanitation_Formatted_FINAL_002_.pdf

GOAL

Influence through research the process and findings of the Public Toilets New South Wales Parliamentary Inquiry

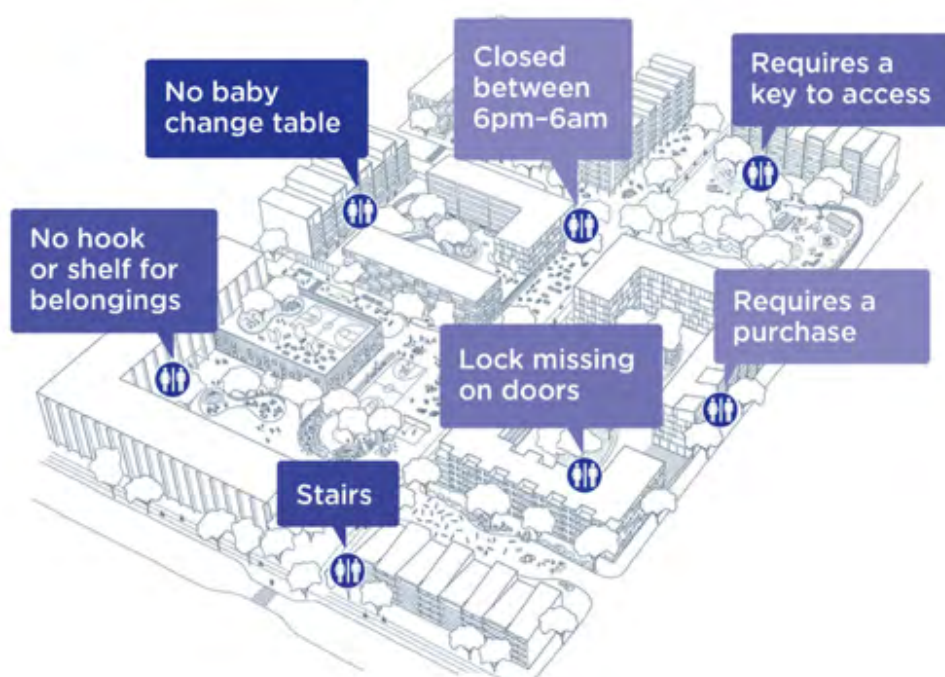


Practice details

The UN Sustainable Development Goals establish access to sanitation services in public spaces outside the home as essential for realising the human right to sanitation for all. Sanitation injustice exists when people do not have equitable access to sanitation infrastructure. Public toilet strategies can address sanitary injustices in public spaces across cities, towns and regions. Providing safe, accessible and inclusive public toilets is critical to ensure community participation in Australian suburbs and cities. Toilet planning and provision should be guided by city-wide strategies, user-responsive design principles and clear roles and responsibilities relating to toilet provision and maintenance. This approach supports individual and collective health and economic outcomes while delivering inclusive public spaces and ensuring user dignity.

While the Australian National Public Toilet Map (DHAC, n.d.) has mapped over 21,000 toilets, access is inconsistent across cities, towns and regions. There is currently no state or federal legislation in Australia mandating the planning or delivery of public toilets and, unlike other public infrastructure, toilets are not included in state and federal plans, funding or agreements such as the Australian Infrastructure Plan. Very few local governments in Australia have formalised policies. Two notable exceptions are Cardinia Shire Council located on Melbourne's urban fringe and Inner West Council in Sydney. Using learnings from these case sites, research on public toilet provision was conducted by the QUT Center for Justice in 2024 to influence the process and findings of the Public Toilets New South Wales Parliamentary Inquiry approved in October 2025.

The research presented the example of an existing policy framework for public toilets that strategically assesses and addresses local needs and accountability can be found in Wales. New South Wales 8 of the Public Health (New South Wales) Act (2017) and related statutory guidance (Welsh Government, 2018) was devel-



oped to respond to reduced access created by local governments closing public toilets in New South Wales. It seeks to ensure that the local government “assesses the needs of its community in relation to toilets, and then takes a strategic and transparent approach to best meet that need” (Welsh Government, 2018, p. 7). This approach centres on identifying community needs and meeting these with a network of public toilets delivered and maintained through a range of provision and partnership options. The Act and statutory guidance clearly articulate that municipalities are the duty-bearer accountable for public toilets, but also acknowledge that they may not be solely responsible for the delivery of public toilets, highlighting private partnership options.

The research suggests that developing and implementing a formal public toilet strategy is one policy tool that local governments can employ to address sanitation injustice. This public toilet strategy may:

- » Identify current and future community needs for public toilets in diverse public spaces;
- » Assess current infrastructure provision;
- » Detail roles and responsibilities for design, delivery and operation; and
- » Provide a plan for future improvements to the network of infrastructure.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » Lack of an inclusive network of public toilets is a sanitation injustice felt by the most marginalized communities and individuals. People with disability, people who are trans and gender diverse, people who are unhoused, people who menstruate and transport workers can all face significant barriers to finding and using public toilets.
- » By considering the toileting needs of diverse populations and providing changing facilities for babies, accessibility for people with disabilities and 24-hour access, the Welsh policy framework addresses the human right to sanitation for all.
- » Integrate a gender perspective in comprehensive understanding of the needs of users, commuters and residents including families, children and park users regarding public toilets through surveys and community groups advocacy through petitions calling on the council to fund public toilets in specific locations.



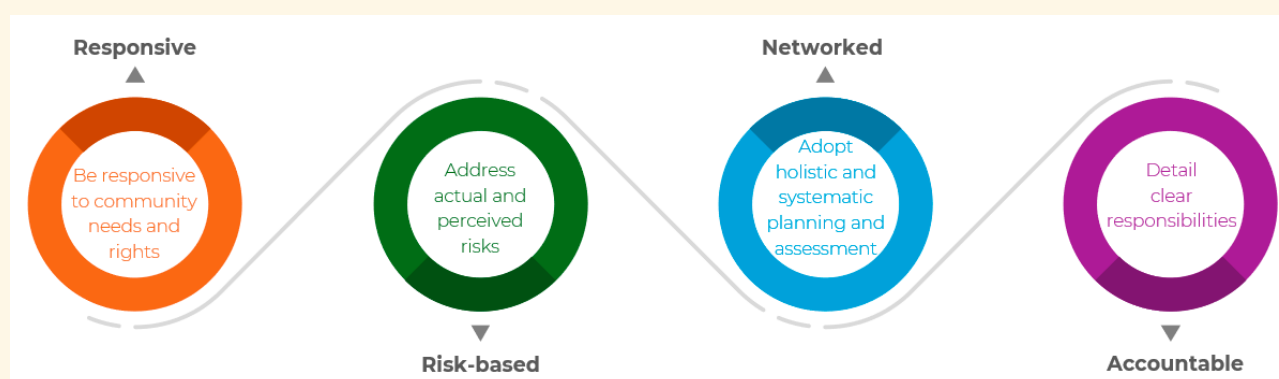
Learnings and replicability

Viewed through the lens of sanitation justice, the development of public toilet strategies therefore not only benefits public toilet-users but can also improve local government infrastructure and service delivery more broadly.

The NSW Parliament established a Parliamentary Inquiry on the 15 August 2024 to inquire into and report on public toilet across the state of New South Wales. The research was included in the as a written submission to the inquiry and also via expert witness. Many submissions to the inquiry reflected the experience of people with disabilities, trans and gender diverse community, aged and elder and those who live in rural areas. The final inquiry's report published in October 2025 identified that public toilets are an essential component of urban infrastructure and reflected many of the recommendations from the research. (On 14 January 2026 the NSW State Government's response also states that while public toilets are an essential component of urban infrastructure the responsibility lies with local government, without guidance or intervention from the State government).

- » Including consideration of the needs of marginalised populations in planning processes through community participation activities in the development of the strategy.
- » Addressing actual and perceived risks regarding sexual violence, loitering and drug related activities. It is therefore necessary to adopt a systematic and networked approach to provision rather than simply applying a standardised design.

- » Adopting a networked spatial planning approach to support public toilets that meet the needs of a whole community, rather than just one location or one community, with the objective of equitable access to safe and inclusive public toilets. But also treating public toilets as an integral part of a network of infrastructure that supports residents and visitors to move across cities.
- » Ensuring accountability of local governments as duty-bearers of public toilet provision through their roles in local planning and delivery of public spaces.
- » Engage local councillors as active advocates for public toilets to meet community needs through strategy development and implementation. Speaking at council meetings and in the media, elected representatives championed public toilets, taking on an advocacy role and highlighting the benefit of their public toilet strategy. This level of support ensured that both strategies were endorsed.
- » Make visible that public toilets can also bring economic benefits to local areas through increased tourism and use of public spaces.



Public Toilet Strategy Priorities by Katherine Webber and Deanna Grant-Smith

Additional resources

- » <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=3071#tab-reportsandgovernmentresponses>
- » https://eprints.qut.edu.au/254525/13/BP66_WebberGrantSmith_Sanitation_Formatted_FINAL_002_.pdf



13

Infrastructures of climate repair

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

KDI – Kunkuey Design Initiative

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

NGO

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

University of Sussex

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

KDI Nairobi

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex
Karachi Urban Labs

CITY, COUNTRY

Nairobi, Kenya

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2006–ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women, children and marginalized communities.

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

Community/City



GOAL

Mitigate the impact of large infrastructures in low-income communities through the improvement of public spaces responding to climate risk of faced by income women

Practice details

Building Infrastructures of Climate Repair (BICR) aims to investigate, unpack, and understand the gaps in conceptions and experiences of climate risk and uncertainty as they overlap with—and even perpetuate—different forms of violence for marginalized, low-income women in the urban Global South. The initiative strives to understand the interactions between multiple forms of urban violence and climate risks in Nairobi, Kenya.

Large-scale developments in low-income neighborhoods can cause growing climate stress and risk for residents of Nairobi. This project explores the potential of infrastructural maintenance and repair that arise from complex interactions between people, technologies, colonial legacies of infrastructure development, and other actors. BICR also places marginalized, low-income women, who often experience significant levels of violence, at the heart of what it means to experience the city in 24-hour cycles of overlapping risks and uncertainties.

Through a process of cross-city learning and interdisciplinary research in conjunction with practice partners, emphasis is put on the multiple pathways through which pro-poor, gender-sensitive infrastructure development and risk mitigation practices, potentiated by each research site, can improve wellbeing. In Nairobi, the project focuses on three key infrastructure projects in order to study their impacts on their communities and how the communities adapt to the challenges: the Nairobi Expressway, the Outer Ring Road, and the Ngong Road- Langáta Road Link Road a.k.a the Missing Link Road.

The project of Building Infrastructures of Climate Repair in Nairobi, Kenya, has been implemented in the neighbourhood of Kibera. Home to around 250,000 residents, Kibera is characterized by crowded conditions, a lack of waste disposal and sanitation

Completed Kibera Public Space site. Photo credits: Kunkuey Design Initiative



services, high unemployment and crime rates and severe flooding. Yet despite these economic, social and environmental challenges, Kibera also has many assets: entrepreneurship, ingenuity, a strong social fabric, and extensive community activism.

In 2006, KDI began working with residents of the informal settlement of Kibera to design and activate a network of Productive Public Spaces that could meet their physical, social and economic needs. The network continues to grow and build resilience across the settlement today.

The process to develop each site in the Kibera Public Space Project (KPSP) network is completely collaborative, connecting local expertise with technical resources. The project works with community groups and residents to design the built components of each site through an iterative series of workshops. At the same time, residents learn management skills and develop programs and businesses to bring the site to life.

The KPSP sites are hubs of cultural exchange, economic activity, and environmental remediation. They provide water, sanitation, and laundry facilities, and reduce flood risk through green infrastructure and flood protection. Resident-managed programs, many led by women and youth, generate income to maintain the sites while building residents' skills.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » Focus on investigating gendered practices of repair and maintenance in insecure urban areas, examining the efforts of various organisations to improve infrastructure on the ground, as well as the local practices of self-built infrastructure and government-led initiatives to upgrade development and flood protection systems.
- » Placing marginalized, low-income women, who often experience significant levels of violence, at the heart of what it means to experience the city in 24-hour cycles of overlapping risks and uncertainties.
- » Use of cross-sectional surveys, interactive digital maps and story maps, remote methodologies, and interactive sessions with communities utilizing infrastructures, particularly with women as key informants and experts of community needs.



Learnings

The KPSP has played a critical role in promoting resident-led upgrading in Kibera, demonstrating that it is more sustainable and effective. Together, the public spaces help remediate the entire watershed while serving tens of thousands of residents and anchoring a network of over 250 community leaders.

As the government launches a new integrated upgrading process for Kibera, the KPSP will be at the center of community engagement efforts.



Completed Kibera Public Space site. Photo credits: Kunkuey Design Initiative



Pictures of community engagement in the Infrastructures of climate repair project. Photos credits: Kunkuey Design Initiative

Additional resources

- » https://www.kounkuey.org/projects/building_infrastructures_of_climate_repair
- » https://www.kounkuey.org/projects/kibera_public_space_project_network



14

Gender Sensitive Urban Design Framework and Toolkit

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Act Government

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

City Government

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Act Government

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Act Government

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

PLACE Laboratory in collaboration with Communication Link, Oculus, and Inhabit Place.

CITY, COUNTRY

Canberra, The Aboriginal Country of Ngunnawal and Ngambri/ Australia

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2021 – 2023

TARGET GROUP

Women, girls and LGBTQ+ and feminist collectives of the city. To all of society

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

RESULTS (URL PUBLICATIONS/ REPORTS)

<https://yoursayconversations.act.gov.au/gendersensitivespaces>

GOAL

Create a guide for urban planners to integrate Gender Sensitive Urban Design (GSUD) within ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026.



Practice details

The Gender Sensitive Urban Design (GSUD) Framework and Toolkit is a profoundly positive step forward in setting the highest benchmarks for public spaces; ones that are equitable, inclusive, accessible, and safe for everyone, in particular women, girls, gender diverse and other vulnerable people.

The ACT Government through the ACT Women's Plan 2026 is investing in practical initiatives to improve gender equality including the inclusiveness of Canberra's public spaces.

Delivering a GSUD Framework and Toolkit was identified as an action in the ACT Women's Plan 2016-26. The plan sets out a ten-year strategy to ensure the ACT community values and respects all women and girls, commits to gender equality and promotes and protects the rights, wellbeing and potential of all women and girls.

The development of the Framework and Toolkit relates directly to Objective 3: Building a community where women and girls are safe and supported to participate. The purpose is to realize the full and equal participation of women and girls in our community by ensuring their safety at home and in public spaces as being essential ingredients to an equitable and just society.

The GSUD Framework and Toolkit is an evidence-based research report that sets out expectations and guides the delivery of best-practice urban design outcomes for the public realm through a gender lens. The project synthesizes research and insights, gathered through extensive literature review, consultation, and place audits, into recommendations for progressive and effective strategies tailored to the ACT context.

It consists of three key documents: 1. An extensive global literature review; 2. The GSUD Framework that sets out the principles to



Pictures from the Gender Sensitive Toolkit. Photo credits: Place Lab

achieve gender sensitive urban places generated from the consultation, research, and analysis; 3. GSUD Implementation Toolkit, a practical guide that examines common gender-related public realm inequalities and challenges, offering recommendations to remedy and resolve them. The Toolkit is for use by practitioners and the community alike who are interested in the places in which they live – extending beyond the borders of the ACT. The project was led by PLACE Laboratory in collaboration with Communication Link, Oculus, and Inhabit Place.

It begins in 2021 with the literature review until February of 2022 that the community were invited to share experiences within five typical urban spaces and they did place audits - across the five typical urban spaces and walkshops. And also, they did 10 interviews to key stakeholder organisations including ACT Policing, Women's Health Matters, United Ngunnawal Elders Council, Canberra Multicultural Forum, Meridian ACT, Council of the Aging ACT, Youth Coalition of the ACT, Disability ACT and ACT Council of Social Services. In 2022, they did two stakeholder workshops to gather further insights and validate findings and work towards solutions and the second to review and validate draft guidelines. In 2023 finalize the Gender Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines and release the implementation toolkit.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » Make visible the needs of the experiences that are not visible in our cities: cities throughout the world are recognizing that many public spaces are not welcoming or inclusive particularly for women, girls, gender diverse groups and vulnerable people. This project wants to change that in Canberra.
- » Community and their participation are in the center: The popular public spaces must reflect the needs, interests, and routines of our diverse community, particularly women, girls, gender diverse groups and vulnerable people.
- » Public spaces are vital for our health and our mental wellbeing – they make our urban environments walkable, provide access to green spaces, help address loneliness and when designed according to the values of the community – they bring us together.
- » Different forms of engagement and the locations included ensured that diverse voices and experiences were present in the development of the Gender Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines. Data and insights were collected from engagement through stakeholder interviews, workshops, YourSay data via a crowd-sourced map and Walkshops that were held across five typical Canberra urban spaces, which included City Walk, Dickson Library, Belconnen Skatepark, Gungahlin Bus Interchange and Anketell St, Tuggeranong.



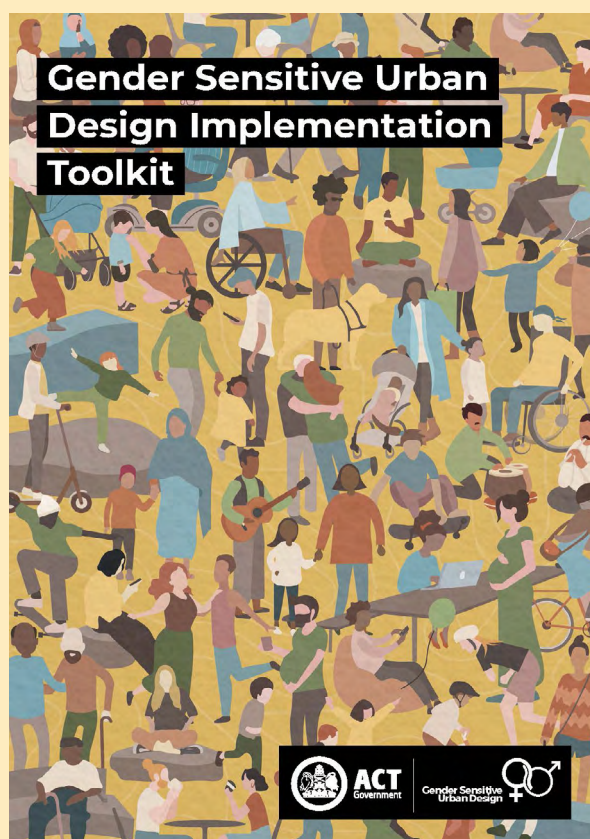
Learnings and replicability

The document brings together the experiences and insights of the people who contributed and helped to inform Canberra's first Gender Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines for adoption at a larger scale.

The Guidelines will help planners, engineers, architects, landscape designers and approval bodies when designing the urban spaces to make a practical difference to the lives of women, girls, gender diverse groups and vulnerable people in Canberra. And not only for Canberra.

This might include:

- » Improving access and mobility like greater ease walking with a pram or with a mobility need because the public space is designed for this activity with gutter lips and wide paths.
- » Improving health and safety like cycling through an urban park where there is adequate space to navigate.
- » Improving access at any time of the day like enjoying a public space that has effective lighting and a landscape design that promote safety with passive sight lines.
- » Improving health and hygiene like finding more public bathrooms or water fountains when being active.
- » Improving safety like being able to move routinely through public spaces for work, life and play with confidence because of lighting, passive sight lines and other security features like CCTV.



Front cover of the Gender Sensitive Toolkit.



Additional resources

- » GSUD FRAMEWORK: https://hdp-au-prod-app-act-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/4216/9017/9791/GSUD_Design_Framework-access.pdf
- » GSUD TOOLKIT: https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2258082/GSUD_Implementation-Toolkit-access-v2.pdf
- » ACT Women's Plan 2016 – 2026. Refer to the 'Second Action Plan 2020-2022'
- » Place laboratory: <https://www.placelaboratory.com/project/act-gender-sensitive-urban-design-framework-and-implementation-toolkit/>
- » GSUD - SUMMARY LISTENING REPORT: https://hdp-au-prod-app-act-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/7916/9017/9791/GSUD_Draft_Summary_Listening_Report.pdf
- » Canberra safety map: <https://womenshealthmatters.org.au/2022/04/05/canberra-safety-map-womens-health-matters-is-seeking-local-womens-experiences-of-safe-and-unsafe-spaces-to-help-inform-woden-town-centre-redevelopment/>
- » Action Women's plan 2016-2026, Act Government: https://www.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2380927/ACT-Womens-Plan-2012-2026.pdf
- » XYLab in Monash University: <https://www.monash.edu/mada/xyx-lab>

15

Pilot Evacuation Center – Voices on the Ground

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Municipal Welfare Social Worker and Development Officer (MSWDO), Women's organisation KALIPI

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Government and community organization

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), Government of the Philippines

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Municipal Welfare Social Worker and Development Officer (MSWDO)

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Women's organisation KALIPI

CITY, COUNTRY

Santa Cruz de la Laguna, Philippines

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2014–ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City/Region

RESULTS (URL PUBLICATIONS/ REPORTS)

https://aichr.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Adopted_AIChr_Thematic_Study_Women_in_Natural_Disasters_26012018.pdf

GOAL

Design evacuation centers in the context of natural disasters integrating a gender perspective in the planning and design



Practice details

The Philippines can be described as sitting “in the eye of the storm” when describing the country’s disaster risk profile, ranking as the third most disaster prone country in the world. With an average of 20 typhoons a year, the country has earned the moniker “Asia’s typhoon welcome mat”.

The most destructive of typhoons in recent history include Yolanda (International name: Haiyan) that took 6,300 lives and cost Php 93-B in damages in the Visayan region. Increased severity of storms due to climate change effects such as rising sea levels coupled with the loss of mangroves, which would have buffered the impact of such storms, make for a highly vulnerable coastal population.

Recent years have also seen the rise of “complex emergencies” where socio-economic or political factors dovetail with the effects of natural disasters, and inflict damages that require careful monitoring and response. In 2009, for example, evacuees from the Zamboanga siege, which affected swathes of Zamboanga City, were also affected by seasonal flooding that compounded the need for assistance in an already tense atmosphere that required an understanding of cultural, ethnic and religious lines.

One feature in the Philippine case, is the need for permanent relocation in areas, which have been identified as no longer fit for human habitation. Many of these areas are occupied by informal settlers who may need additional assistance in relocating to safe areas with access to basic services.

Disaster Management and Mitigation in the Philippines is governed by the NDCC to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), which creates councils at the provincial, city and municipal levels to coordinate disaster management (including the implementation of the National DRRM Plan as fit to the local context). It also provides a space for civil society in disaster risk reduction and management. The National



Pilot Evacuation Center Santa Cruz
Laguna. Photo credits: AICHR

Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) 2011 - 2028 integrates for the first time a gender perspective: “Gender mainstreaming is about the recognition, acceptance, identification and addressing of the different roles, needs, capacities and vulnerabilities of men and women. The NDRRMP is committed to promoting gender-sensitive vulnerability and capacity-analysis in all disaster risk reduction and management activities. It encourages balancing the roles, responsibilities, needs, interests, capacities of and effect on both genders of contingency plans as well as implementation of community-based activities. Gender mainstreaming is about reducing the vulnerabilities of men and women to disasters, and encourages a balance in the participation and decision making roles of men and women in DRRM” (NDRRM Plan 2011-2028: 36).

Under this framework, the Municipal Welfare Social Worker and Development Officer (MSWDO) (working on the protection of women and children before, during, and after natural disasters) work with the local government and communities in Santa Cruz de la Laguna to build the Pilot Evacuation Center (2014) that would seek to address the issue of temporary shelter during times of flooding in the area, and the establishment of the relocation site in Barangay Ugong. The MSWDO organised women into an organisation, KALIPI, in order to work jointly in the development of the Pilot evacuation center to integrate a gender perspective and meet women’s needs in the context of disaster relocation.

The Pilot Evacuation Center, inaugurated in 2014, seeks to address the issue of temporary shelter during times of flooding in the area, and the establishment of the relocation site in Barangay Ugong that were funded via DSWD Core Shelter and a donation from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

The Barangay Ugong relocation site intended for families who used to reside along the lakeshore or riverbed. While located within Santa Cruz and safe from flooding, interviewed families have mentioned the need for sustained livelihood nearby, particularly for the women in the community who still have to tend to their children. The Relocation Site has a daycare center and a nearby school (from elementary to Senior High School) and access to health services from the Barangay. It has also Lactating room for women in the evacuation center and child-friendly spaces.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » Integration of gender mainstreaming in the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan to reduce the vulnerabilities of men and women to disasters. The plan promotes gender-sensitive vulnerability and capacity-analysis in all disaster risk reduction and management activities. It encourages balancing the roles, responsibilities, needs, interests, capacities of and effect on both genders of contingency plans as well as implementation of community-based activities.
- » Design and construction of an evacuation centre and relocation site with women's impacted by disasters through the creation and formalization of an association KALIPI and integrating the needs and realities of women when relocating due to disasters.
- » Recognition of women central role in community leadership and assistance of other women during times of natural disasters, cross-cutting needs and issues such as violence against women and women's rights.



Learnings and replicability

One of the main learnings shows the need to integrate gender mainstreaming in national and municipal plans of climate disaster preparedness and resilience, as well as the need to create a coordinated response with the different level institutions in collaboration with community organisations, particularly, women's organisations.

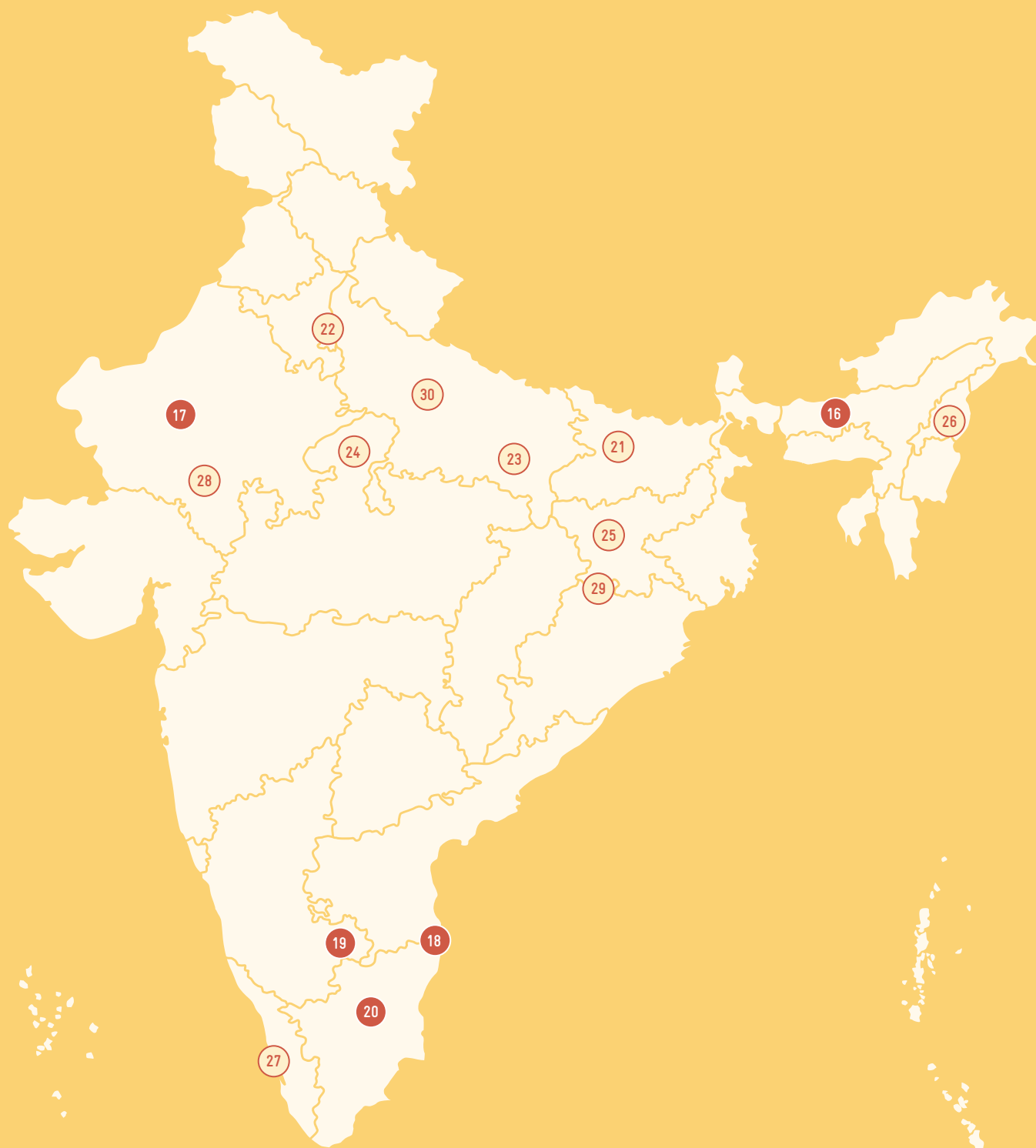
The Gender-responsive approach in the design of evacuation centres has been key in the following areas:

- » disaster prevention and mitigation which saw more women's concerns are more complex than just prevention of disasters as decision making and other concerns were also raised;
- » in disaster preparedness, women comprise about 30 – 60 % of disaster teams at the barangay level but at the local level, much contextual sensitivity is required;
- » disaster response also needs cultural sensitivity, especially in areas where the possibility for gender-based violence is high;
- » disaster rehabilitation and recovery scenarios have highlighted the resilience of women, particularly as they go about seeking livelihood opportunities and in women's reproductive work.



Additional resources

- » https://www.kounkuey.org/projects/kibera_public_space_project_network



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 16 Pedestrian Friendly Mobility in Guwahati, Assam | 22 Mapping Safety using Safetipin Apps, Delhi | 26 Public Spaces and Pocket Parks in Kohima, Nagaland |
| 17 Women's role in Jodhpur's Heat Action Plan (HAP) | 23 Green and Safe Mobility through a Network of Women-led e-rickshaws, Uttar Pradesh | 27 Gender Park, Kochi |
| 18 Chennai Gender & Policy Lab | 24 Community managed Sanitation scheme, Gwalior | 28 Children focused vulnerability assessment and city resilience action strategy of Patna and Udaipur |
| 19 Building Resilient Bengaluru/ K100 Citizens' Waterway project | 25 Educational and Social Ramifications of Inadequate Toilet Access for Girls, Jharkhand | 29 Prioritising Caregiving Services- Child-friendly spaces and open spaces in Rourkela |
| 20 Working Women's Hostel - Tamil Nadu | | 30 Flower Waste Management, Kanpur |
| 21 Women's Access and Mobility Plan for Cities in Bihar | | |

2.2. Indian Practices

In this section, 15 Indian practices of gender-responsive sustainable urban planning are presented. These practices are distributed across different parts of India to represent diverse regions, projects, thematic areas and stakeholders (including government agencies, NGOs, and community groups) involved in the coordination and management of the projects. Projects that engaged and integrated women, girls, children, transgender or LGBTIQ+ as primary groups of focus, or addressed concerns emerging from specific areas and vulnerable communities have also been prioritised. The selection criteria also paid attention to the Smart City Compendium projects, which aligned with the broader objectives of this compendium. In these examples, while on hand, we have institutions that have played a crucial role in integrating a gender perspective in planning projects (for example, in the case of #20 Gender & Policy Lab Chennai), there are also community organisations and NGOs that have led the change for building climate resilience with women (for example, in the case of Mahila Housing Trust). A few cases (for example, #21 Women's Access and Mobility Plan for Cities in Bihar Settings and #28 Children focused vulnerability assessment and city resilience action strategy of Patna and Udaipur) showcase robust, replicable methodologies that can aid in different stages of project development, like establishing baseline, problem identification, identifying indicators, M&E, while including a gender perspective.

After reviewing all the cases, 5 Indian cases have been highlighted:

- » Pedestrian Friendly Mobility, Guwahati, Assam
- » Women's role in Jodhpur's Heat Action, Jodhpur, Rajasthan
- » K 100 Citizens' Waterway, Bengaluru, Karnataka
- » Gender and Policy Lab, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- » Working Women's hostel, Tamil Nadu

The list of 15 Indian practices is completed with cases from Mirzapur and Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh), Patna, Gaya, Muzaffarpur (Bihar), Udaipur (Rajasthan), Kerala, Jharkhand, Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh), Kohima (Nagaland), Rourkela (Odisha) and New Delhi (Delhi).

The five highlighted Indian practices are mainly medium and long-term projects that have been led by city governments, NGOs and community organisations in collaboration with other stakeholders. In most cases, the results and the implementation of the cases have benefited from active participation of women, as politicians, planning technicians or community members. These projects present cases that have integrated a gender perspective throughout different phases of the project cycle and processes, including issue identification, conducting capacity building and trainings on gender perspectives with the stakeholders involved, conducting assessments that respond to people's everyday life and context, from a gender perspective, analysing quantitative and qualitative data and in many cases through a community participatory engagement (for example, see Jodhpur's Heat Action Plan or Chennai's GPL). However, there were also practices where a gender perspective was not originally included in the conception of the project, but the development of the practice, led or driven by women and community members have resulted in a positive gender impact, such as the K 100 Citizens' Waterway Project. Finally, in some projects, local feminist movement driven by a team of feminist experts, planners and advocates has successfully advocated and pushed the agenda in city government, such as the Pedestrian Friendly Mobility

project in Guwahati, and the historical work of Safetipin in Delhi and Jagori, through the provision of different urban infrastructures which integrates a gender transformative perspective. These cases demonstrate the need to include feminist experts in key roles as a critical element for achieving replication of gender transformative projects.

Bringing in a gender lens to an urban space in India, means

“to recognize the range of ‘private’ uses and activities that routinely take place in public—child care, family life and social reproduction, sexual expression, contact and intimacy; as well as the fact that public space is a work environment for many kinds of labour: including street vending, trading and hawking; delivery riding and pedicabbing; gardening, cleaning, waste-picking and sanitation work; security and policing; sex work; busking; begging.”⁵⁶

56 Tonkiss, 2024

SUMMARY TABLE OF INDIA GENDER-RESPONSIVE PRACTICES

DEEP-DIVE CASE STUDIES

	Project name	City	State	Theme	Scale	Target Group
16	Pedestrian Friendly Mobility in Guwahati	Guwahati	Assam	Gender perspective in mobility	City	Pedestrians: Women, children, elderly, differently abled individuals
17	Women's role in Jodhpur's Heat Action Plan (HAP)	Jodhpur	Rajasthan	Low income women response to climate change	City	Women & girls
18	Chennai Gender & Policy Lab	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	Gender perspective in urban and mobility planning	City	Women & girls
19	Building Resilient Bengaluru/ K100 Citizens' Waterway project	Bangalore	Karnataka	Community response to climate adaptation and storm water management	City	Slum communities, women, girls, youth, elderly, differently abled individuals
20	Working Women's Hostel		Tamil Nadu	Women's access to housing	State	Working Women (particularly migrants)

SHORT CASE STUDIES

	Project name	City	State	Theme	Scale	Target Group
21	Women's Access and Mobility Plan for Cities in Bihar	Patna, Gaya and Muzaffarpur	Bihar	Women and their everyday lived experiences in mobility studies	Regional	Women & Girls
22	Mapping Safety in Delhi using Safetipin Apps	New Delhi	Delhi	Women's safety and caring city	City	Women, girls and vulnerable groups- elderly, persons with disabilities.
23	Green and Safe Mobility through a Network of Women-led e-rickshaws	Mirzapur	Uttar Pradesh	Women's entrepreneurship in sustainable mobility	City (expanding to: Varanasi, Kaushambi, Jhansi, and Gorakhpur)	Women & Young Girls

Basic summary of the project/ key issues	Thematic Area 1	Thematic Area 2
Improving pedestrian everyday mobility and reclaiming public realm in Guwahati	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Everyday Mobility/ Street Improvements/ Tactical Urbanism)	Governance (Capacity Building, Policy Inclusions)
Integrating community generated insights into policy and implementation of city level Heat Action Plans, with Women Community Action Groups (CAGs) as grassroots leaders for climate action.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Climate Adaptation / Climate Solutions)	Continued community representation & long-term engagement (Women's role and leadership/ Community-led)
Address women's mobility and safety through Safety audits, campaigns, infrastructure upgrades and gender clubs in schools	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Public space improvements/ everyday mobility)	Governance (Awareness and capacity building)
Enhancing stormwater management to tackle challenges of urban flooding, and reimagining public infrastructure along the RajaKaluve- a historic waterway in the city, through multi-stakeholder collaboration.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Storm Water Management, Public Space Improvement, Everyday Mobility)	Governance (Climate Mitigation/ Climate Resilience)
Develop safe, good quality, hygienic, comfortable and affordable rental housing for working women thereby increasing workforce participation of women in the state of Tamil Nadu	Governance (Gender Budgeting/ Finance Solution)	Urban Infrastructure (Affordable Rental Housing Solution)

Basic summary of the project/ key issues	Thematic Area 1	Thematic Area 2
Measuring Women's Mobility in Low Resource Settings of Bihar, an important first step to devise urban planning and policy solutions that can improve their public space experiences and participation in the economy	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Everyday mobility)	Governance (Policy considerations)
Development of Safety audits from a gender perspective through the use of digital technology	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Everyday mobility/ street improvements)	Governance (Capacity Building)
Building women-led safe mobility, through e-rickshaws model, enhance the freedom and safe movement of women and girls, and inspire women to move towards non-traditional enterprises and contribute towards economic, social, and environmental impact in their community.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Everyday safe mobility)	Continued community representation & long-term engagement (Community-led/ Women leadership)

SHORT CASE STUDIES

	Project name	City	State	Theme	Scale	Target Group
24	Community managed Sanitation Scheme	Gwalior	Madhya Pradesh	Water and Sanitation Access for Women	City	Women
25	Educational and Social Ramifications of Inadequate Toilet Access for Girls in Jharkhand		Jharkhand	Sanitation and Toilet Access for Girls	State	School going children
26	Public Spaces and Pocket Parks in Kohima	Kohima	Nagaland	Public spaces improvement for children and women	City	Young children (0-6 years) and their caregivers including mothers, fathers, grandparents
27	Gender Park	Kochi	Kerala	Entrepreneurial resources, information and support for women	State	Women
28	Children focused vulnerability assessment and city resilience action strategy of Patna and Udaipur	Patna and Udaipur	Bihar and Rajasthan	Climate adaptation with children and women	City	Urban children “most at-risk” and women/ mothers living poverty conditions
29	Prioritising Caregiving Services- Child-friendly spaces and open spaces in Rourkela’s slums	Rourkela	Odisha	Public spaces improvement for children and women	City	Children and women (caregivers) in slum communities/ Infant Toddlers and Caregivers (ITC)
30	Kanpur Flower Waste Management	Kanpur	Uttar Pradesh	Women’s entrepreneurship in waste reduction and management	City	Women

Basic summary of the project/ key issues	Thematic Area 1	Thematic Area 2
The Gwalior Municipal Corporation, in partnership with UN-HABITAT and WaterAid, implemented the Slum Environment Sanitation Initiative (SESI) to achieve open defecation-free slums in the city, starting with the Laxmanpura Slum. The process aimed to mobilise, strengthen and engage women's groups to raise awareness on sanitation and hygiene issues, and take ownership and manage the community toilets.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (WASH)	Continued community representation & long-term engagement (Women-led and women-run)
Exploring the intricate relationship between sanitation facilities in schools and girls' education outcomes (especially school dropout rates) in Jharkhand.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (WASH)	Governance
Develop vibrant public spaces with a goal to create one pocket park in each of the 19 wards of Kohima City by closely working with the community while navigating complex contextual and socio-cultural conditions.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Public space improvements/ Everyday mobility)	Continued community representation & long-term engagement (Community engagement/ Community-led/ Community-run)
The Gender Park is an initiative of the Government of Kerala to advance gender equality and empowerment in the state. It is intended to serve as a hub for all gender-related activities. The park offers a platform for policy analysis, research, advocacy, capacity development, and economic and social initiatives.	Governance (Policy inclusion)	
GEAG and UNICEF's collaborative initiative assessing the climate change vulnerabilities of urban poor children around their five key developmental parameters integrated within ISET's Climate Resilience Framework to help build city resilience action strategy for the cities of Patna and Udaipur.	Governance (Climate resilience)	Continued community representation & long-term engagement (Community participation, ground-up perspectives)
Rourkela Municipal Corporation has mapped the availability and accessibility of Early Childhood Development (ECD), i.e. the anganwadis and public health centres in the cities and provided child-friendly and public spaces in vulnerable and informal communities. This approach helped the city to prioritise development efforts to bridge the gap in demand and supply, foster inclusion, especially for the vulnerable settlements.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Public space improvements/ placemaking)	Continued community representation & long-term engagement (Women self-help group participation & leadership)
Evolution, approaches and challenges of the flower waste management initiative in Kanpur involving a collaboration between the Kanpur Municipal Authority, entrepreneurial startup, Phool.co that can encourage replicability across India.	Urban Infrastructure & Service Delivery (Solid Waste Management, Circular Economy)	

16

Pedestrian friendly mobility in Guwahati

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Assam Urban Knowledge Hub (AUKH)
under the Directorate of Town & Country
Planning, DoHUA, Govt of Assam

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Guwahati Municipal Corporation

RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION

Guwahati Municipal Corporation

CITY/ STATE

Guwahati/ Assam

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

Tactical Urbanism: February to June 2024

Final Implementation: March
to October 2025

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Guwahati Traffic police, Guwahati
Smart City Limited, Guwahati
Utilities Company Limited and
Guwahati Municipal Corporation

TARGET GROUP

Pedestrians: Women, children,
elderly, differently abled

Context

Urban planning in Guwahati was predominantly limited to master planning, building regulations, and building bylaws under the Town & Country Planning, Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority and Guwahati Municipal Corporation. Further, drainage and road infrastructure fall under the purview of the Public Works Department (PWD). The concept of people-friendly infrastructure and complete streets was relatively new to the city, and local institutions were not adequately equipped to undertake street-level urban design. To address this gap, the Assam Urban Knowledge Hub (AUKH) was established in February 2023 under the Directorate of Town & Country Planning, Department of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of Assam, as a think tank and centre of excellence for urban reforms in the state. AUKH leads urban design, planning, and mobility projects and supports stakeholders in implementing initiatives that integrate pedestrian perspectives into infrastructure and mobility design. The team comprises urban planners with diverse experience, working towards implementing urban innovations and transformations across the state. As part of the team's first set of assignments, they focused on three congested areas of Guwahati-Shillong Road, a major arterial road in the city: Six Mile junction, Ganeshguri junction, and Paltan Bazaar. One of the initial challenges faced by the team was to bring the diverse stakeholders together, give demonstrations on these new concepts and explain the need to collaborate and co-create transformative changes in the city. These stakeholders included the Traffic police, PWD Roads, Guwahati Smart City Limited, Guwahati Utilities Company Limited, Guwahati Municipal Corporation, Guwahati Metropolitan Development Authority, District Transport Office, and the Electricity board. With persistent efforts, an MOU was signed with all the stakeholders and Ganeshguri junction was identified as the first pilot project in the city, followed by Paltan Bazaar.

GOAL

Enhance urban mobility in streets and junctions, reclaim public space, prioritise safe pedestrian access and improve traffic flows to achieve transformative change in Guwahati

Photo credits: Shreya Gadepalli



OBJECTIVES

- » Develop safe streets by prioritising the needs of women, children, elderly and differently abled pedestrians
- » Improve traffic flows and enhance mobility by redesigning congested junctions
- » Reclaim public spaces where feasible
- » Develop robust methodologies and guidelines for replication across the city and other cities in Assam.



Practice details

The Ganeshguri junction has an incredibly complex road geometry with several intersections (two consecutive staggered three-arm intersections), making it very tricky and dangerous to navigate the intersection as a pedestrian through the traffic congestion. To analyse these issues, the team first implemented a tactical urbanism exercise between February and June 2024 with the guidance and support of Shreya Gadepalli (urban transport planner specialised in gender sensitive planning and Founder, Urban Works). The intent was to implement a quick, low-cost, effective way to test temporary changes and demonstrate some of the solutions to key stakeholders and decision makers.

Subsequently, this tool was successful in gaining immediate approval of the relevant authorities, and the AUKH team commenced further analysis of the junction. These included field observations and analysis of traffic flow and count, pedestrian movement, parking, and signal timing.

The AUKH mobility team led by Subhasish Borah, Assistant Director TCP and Project Coordinator AUKH, prepared the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and conducted stakeholder consultations throughout different phases of implementation. Following this, the Guwahati Municipal Corporation granted 1.8 crore rupees to implement the project and make permanent some of the ideas tested from the temporary demonstrations and subsequent mobility analysis.

Based on the analysis, some of the following interventions were finalised:

1. Creation of traffic islands and reclamation of public spaces for pedestrian safety- nearly 10,000 square feet of public space was reclaimed. The reclaimed spaces included seated areas under shaded trees (preserved during the redevelopment). The pedestrian walkways also offered a link to the public toilets built under the flyover at the junction.
2. Improving road geometry: demarcate zebra crossings, stop lines and traffic islands.
3. Redesigning signal timing for easing traffic movement- the total cycle time was reduced from 140 seconds to 70 seconds to reduce the queue lengths at the junction. As a result of these interventions, the pedestrian crossing distances were reduced (to ~ 25 feet) and the pedestrian waiting time at signals was also reduced to ~ 20 seconds, to create uninterrupted flows.
4. Relocation of traffic signals to support the improved flow

In the first phase of implementation, the footpaths were redesigned to reconfigure the existing Right of Way (ROW) for equitable space allocation for all users, drain works were redone, tactile surfaces and seating spaces were included in the pedestrian realm, new public spaces were reclaimed, bollards were included to limit vehicle encroachment in pedestrian spaces, pedestrian crosswalks were added, and overall, the traffic and pedestrian flows were improved. Further, parking management (to regulate rickshaws and vehicles parking near the junction) was improved, and the public transportation has been doubled to include some of the public transportation deserts within the city.

In the next phase, the spaces under the flyovers will be converted to green spaces, and the team is also planning strategies to include street vendors with the redevelopment plan, in addition to adding more pedestrian signals and improving coordination of the cycle timings of the multiple signals at the junction for a more efficient flow. These included field observations and analysis of traffic flow and count, pedestrian movement, parking, and signal timing.

The transformation achieved in Ganeshguri junction has gained wide recognition in the city and has subsequently led to the redevelopment of three additional streets. Through the setting up of the Assam Urban Mobility Authority, similar initiatives will be replicated across other cities in the state as well.

→ From testing temporary ideas to creating permanent infrastructure improvements

To assess the space and understand the intervention needed, Ms Shreya Gadepalli first led a walk with the senior officials of the city, including the Commissioner and Secretary to the Govt of Assam, Dept of Housing & urban Affairs, the District Collector, the Superintendent of Police, the Municipal Commissioner, officials from public works, traffic police, municipal corporation, town planning, transport and other agencies. The walk revealed the challenges in pedestrian mobility and safety, including a lack of seamless pedestrian pathways, a lack of wheelchair accessibility, lack of safe crosswalks amidst traffic congestion at the junction.

As immediate next steps, on the very same day, traffic islands were created temporarily by holding ropes, to visualise the change that can be created in the mobility patterns. This demonstrative exercise gained immediate approval from the key officials to commence the pilot project. Solutions were tested in the subsequent days, using chalk

lines, traffic cones, and barriers. As part of this exercise, an innovative signal phasing plan was also developed.

Commenting on the choice of tactical urbanism as a tool, Shreya explained that:

“[it] Implements something on ground quickly, for all the stakeholders, to get a sense of what can be done, because often times, projects take a very long time to be implemented, and people don’t have a sense of why we are doing, what we are doing, and that’s why I choose the idea of tactical urbanism to showcase what is possible [...] often times tactical urbanism is seen as a means of creating public space, but instead it was an opportunity to show that tactical urbanism can not only can create public spaces but also can streamline traffic, to improve traffic flows, so it was a win-win, rather than getting one more than the other”

Within a week, permanent markings were made with thermoplastic paint for traffic islands and pedestrian crossings, and the traffic signals were programmed. The temporary traffic islands were made colourful with paint and plants. The intervention improved the traffic flow, and further analysis followed, which helped finalise the interventions that needed to be made permanent.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

» **Women-driven initiative:** Kavitha Padmanabhan, Commissioner and Secretary to the Govt of Assam, Dept of Housing & Urban Affairs, played a key role in bringing together important stakeholders to support the pilot initiatives shaped by AUKH. She also invited Shreya Gadepalli as a consultant to help test some ideas through tactical urbanism and help shape the project. Shreya now continues to play a key role as the urban mobility advisor to guide AUKH in transforming Assam. The AUKH team also recognises the key role that Namrata Nath (as part of Jana Urban Space) played in overseeing the construction, effectively coordinating and managing the complex dynamics of different stakeholders during the implementation of the project.

» **Including the needs of women in the ‘walk’:** According to the 2011 Census, walking is the most common mode of travel for women commuting to work, far more so than for men. In urban areas, 67.6% of women walk to their workplace, compared to only 28.3% of men. Globally, women also constitute a significant share of public transport users—often not by choice, but due to caregiving responsibilities, limited access to private vehicles, lower disposable incomes, and other structural constraints. Considering the gender dimensions of pedestrian mobility is therefore critical for street design.

During the initial test phase, when a walk was organised around the junction with key stakeholders, participants were asked to wear the traditional wrap (similar to a skirt) that local women wear or to carry a 5-kilogram bag of rice while walking along the street and junctions. Through this exercise, stakeholders realised the challenges of pedestrian mobility, especially from the perspective of women and mothers. The footpaths were originally 1.5 feet above road level, making them difficult to climb while wearing a wrap, and missing slabs along the narrow path further restricted continuous pedestrian movement.



Learnings

- » **Expanding Capacity:** The AUKH team is expanding its team to include urban designers and is continually working to expand its knowledge and build its capacity to continue its work for the long term.
- » **Research:** The team also undertakes several research projects, including ITMS Public Transport planning, Planning and Vending Policy and creating a 'how to' booklet to initiate the redevelopment of junctions in the city.
- » **Enhancing public transport mobility:** AUKH is also enhancing the existing public transport planning and rationalising the connectivity offered by the existing 350 green buses (electric AC buses).

Impacts

- » MOU signed for city-wide street improvement and junction plan.
- » **Future projects:**
 - » The transformative impact of Ganeshguri junction has had a major impact on the city and led to several other projects and initiatives:
 - AUKH received approval for street improvements for three other streets, adding another 7 kilometres for street transformation. These are Paltan bazaar (1.2kms), VIP road (4 kms) and ASEB Rd + Rupnagar Rd + New DC Office Rd + RK Mission Rd (2.2 kms)
 - Implementation of 2 sponge parks (in Rupnagar and Kahilipara) is ongoing, along with the development of 7 urban forests in Guwahati, Nalbari, Sibsagar, Jorhat and Dibrugarh.
 - The team has prepared a neighbourhood improvement plan in two wards of the city, and subsequently approved by the government for implementation.
 - AUKH, under the leadership of Ms Kavitha, had facilitated the first meeting of Assam UMTA. The Hon'ble Minister of DoHUA directed AUKH to collaborate with other departments and work on public transport planning, ITMS, and streets and junction design across various parts of the city
- » The initiatives will be scaled to other cities in the state.



Replicability

The success of the Ganeshguri junction initiative led to the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) for the Guwahati Street Improvement and Junction Plan (Amar Sohar, Amar Rasta) among the Guwahati Traffic Police (GTP), Public Works Department Roads (PWD Roads), Guwahati Smart City Limited (GSCL), Guwahati Utility Company Limited (GUCL), Guwahati Municipal Corporation (GMC), and AUKH under the Town and Country Planning Department, Assam.

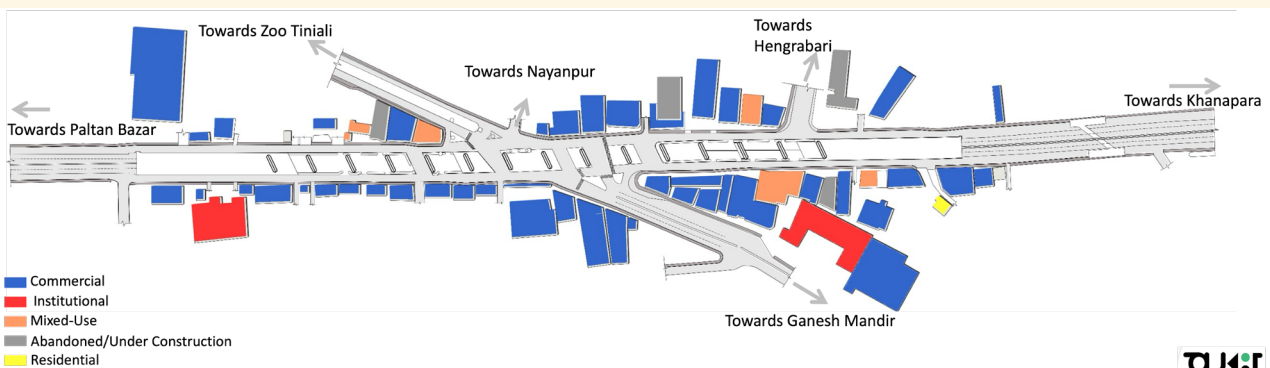
Through this MoA, future projects will continue to be implemented. However, the team recognises that sustaining engagement and trust with multiple stakeholders and main-

taining momentum remains challenging. While decision-makers in Guwahati were quick to implement the project following the temporary demonstrations, there is still an ongoing need to shift the narrative and highlight the importance of critical pedestrian-oriented infrastructure to achieve transformative, long-term change.

As Subhasish explains:

“We need a good narrative, otherwise [...] bringing all the people together is not possible [...] whatever street it is, big street or local streets, this infrastructure is non-negotiable, that narrative is required, otherwise we cannot make any changes”

An example of before and after interventions at Ganeshguri Junction. Photo credits: AUKH



AUKH
assam urban knowledge hub

Additional resources

- » [Assam Urban Knowledge Hub, Directorate of Town & Country Planning](#)
- » [Helping AUKH Walk the Talk](#)
- » [Transforming Ganeshguri](#)



17

Women's role in Jodhpur's Heat Action Plan (HAP)

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Mahila Housing Trust (MHT)

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Non-Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

City Government, local community (for some initiatives) and CSR

OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Community Action Groups (CAG)
Women; Government and MHT

KEY STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

24 government departments and 20
Community Action group involved in HAP

CITY/ STATE

Jodhpur/ Rajasthan

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2023- ongoing

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

TARGET GROUP

Women and girls

Context

Jodhpur, located in the semi-arid region, experiences high daytime temperatures between March and June every year. Rising temperatures and increasing occurrences of extreme weather conditions impact ecology, economy, health and well-being of all.

Human mortality linked to heat waves and other extreme weather events is on the rise. Marginalised and vulnerable populations, living in poorly ventilated, hot, and crowded homes, are most impacted due to high temperatures and higher costs of cooling. Urban poor women, particularly those living in poor housing conditions and overcrowded circumstances, are disproportionately impacted and experience both direct and indirect health risks⁵⁷. While the government is working to improve data systems for heat-related health impacts, currently, there is limited available information on this interrelationship and on heat-related mortality.

Addressing these challenges and prioritising adaptation strategies and mitigating heat risks, including addressing heat-related illnesses, particularly from the perspective of women in the community, the city of Jodhpur has developed a Heat Action Plan (HAP), following in the footsteps of Ahmedabad, which implemented South Asia's first-ever HAP.

The Community Action Groups (CAG), a local-level community group constituting women from vulnerable households, play the role of a key stakeholder, by participating, contributing, implementing and ensuring continuity for some of the strategies implemented as part of the HAP. Their role in the process has helped

1. Give voice to the community's needs by bringing a ground-up lived experience perspective of women to the forefront
2. Achieve societal and physical transformative change in the slum areas, in areas including climate adaptation, water, sanitation, safety, maternal and child health, early education, hygiene and safety and overall wellbeing.

⁵⁷ For instance, Women are likely to spend more time indoors, and cooking creates additional heat stress. Women are also primarily responsible for fetching water for their households, and when water shortages occur, they are forced to traverse longer distances to fetch water, causing additional fatigue and heat stress.

Mahila Housing Trust Team.
Photo credits: Col-lectiu Punt 6



3. Challenge gender stereotypes – both at home and within the larger community- inspire future generations of girls to be change makers and leaders driving systemic change in the community.
4. Most importantly, combat climate change impacts by building their collective adaptive capacity and resilience

GOAL

Developing a city-wide Heat Action Plan by prioritising the needs of women and vulnerable populations in the slum community.

OBJECTIVES

- » Develop robust stakeholder cooperation and create a platform where effective solutions can be co-created
- » Engage with the local community, especially with the local women's groups, and strengthen their capacities to advocate for their needs and achieve transformative change
- » Challenging gender norms, bringing women to the forefront and helping shape their role as leaders, advocates, and change-makers
- » Build mechanisms to enable long-term sustainability of the projects by enabling the community as the primary caretakers



Practice details

Mahila Housing Trust primarily works in low-income, poor communities and helps women to improve their living and working conditions. While working on various issues such as water and sanitation in slum areas of Jaipur and Bikaner in 2006, MHT realised their role as community advocates and facilitators is incomplete without effectively integrating the voice of the community, who are better positioned to articulate their challenges. It was also considered necessary to strengthen the role of the community in the decision-making process, to enable them to take ownership in the long run and continue advocating for the changes they wish to see in their communities.

In order to mobilise the community and better equip them, MHT formed Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) at the slum level, typically comprising 150-200 women. These CBO members further identify 12-15 women amongst themselves to lead community action and manage CBO activities as well. The CAG members/ CAG *Behene* are nominated based on their skills, primarily leadership capabilities, and not necessarily on their educational qualifications. The CBO seeks to form a group of women who bring in varied skillsets, such as the ability to read or write, the ability to effectively verbally communicate with different decision-makers, in addition to their willingness to dedicate their time to the group activities and drive change. At least one member of the CAG belongs to a below-poverty household, and at least one young adult (18+ years of age) is included in this group to include diverse perspectives.

In Jodhpur, MHT conducts leadership training with CAGs and sensitises them about the issues they face in their daily life. They also simultaneously train them on how to address some of these issues at an individual level within the household, and for those issues collectively identified at the slum level, to formally communicate (in written format) to the relevant government authorities. More recently, with the HAP, the focus has been on the impacts of extreme heat and the measures to cope with it. For example, the CAG women expressed that before this sensitisation, they were not even aware that their choice of clothing (choosing nylon, polyester over cotton) altered their body temperature during extreme heat. Some uneducated women were also unaware of what “temperature” or “Celsius degrees” meant, and as a result, could not interpret the local heat warnings issued and take the necessary precautions.

Today, the CAG groups have learnt to interpret the heat warnings issued and engage with different stakeholders to devise solutions that effectively communicate these warnings, even to women who have no access to a phone or internet. Through their suggestion, a jingle to help raise awareness on extreme heat is played by the garbage collection truck regularly. Secondly, for those women who cannot read, the CAG updates a banner displaying the daily temperatures with colour-coded heat warnings to ease interpretation.

After the initial handholding from MHT, the CAG women now drive community action independently and have accomplished many changes in the community. From our interview with the *Juni Basti* (slum), we have learnt that the women have addressed water shortage through the installation of handpumps from the government. They helped facilitate the construction of over 200 individual toilets in the slum households, achieved the construction of an Anganwadi, in addition to raising awareness on safe handwashing for children in local schools. Further, after experiencing two separate incidents of rape and sexual assault in their community, where one young girl aged about 12 years was murdered, the community now actively works towards making their community safe, advocates for more lighting and safe access to communal toilet facilities. They have also trained themselves and others in self-defence techniques and openly discuss issues of gender-based violence at home (by partner or relatives), sexual assault, and rape and have equipped themselves to provide the required initial support and contact the relevant authorities when further assistance is required.

Most importantly, many women in the CAG groups have expressed that overcoming socio-cultural barriers and actively working on various projects has helped boost their confidence and establish a new sense of identity as community leaders. Many members have returned to school to complete their high school or a bachelor’s degree and have become an inspiration for young girls as role models.

CAG *Behene* are at the core of HAP in Jodhpur, and the transformative change that they have achieved in their lives and within the broader community is an important context.

Main activities

a. Heat Vulnerability Assessment of vulnerable hotspots in the city

MHT conducted a vulnerability assessment of heat risk as part of the HAP strategy. This assessment identified low, moderate and high-risk wards, where interventions could be targeted.

b. Multi-stakeholder participation and collaboration

The city organised workshops to bring together stakeholders from governmental and non-governmental organisations, private stakeholders, and the local community to collectively prepare and respond to issues around heat at the municipal, ward and local level.

c. Pilot Interventions of HAP

- » **Solar reflective white paints.** solar reflective white paints were applied on the roof- this was demonstrated to the community to generate awareness on the issue while also simultaneously providing a solution to the problem on an experiential level. This paint reduces the temperatures by 4-5 degrees Celsius and costs 35-40 per sft⁵⁸. The CAG has actively encouraged the community to adopt this technique for their homes.
- » **Citizen's Assembly 'Nagrik Sabha' on inclusive Heat Early Warning System.** The notification about the Citizen Assembly was communicated through the local newspapers, and the assembly garnered 50+ participants, including informal workers, residents of urban poor settlements, officials from Jodhpur Nagar North, representatives from IMD, union leaders and other NGOs. The idea was to facilitate a participatory discussion about the challenges faced and collectively identify effective solutions to address them. MHT acted as a facilitator in the process. MHT also sensitised the communities in the urban poor settlements about the heat warning systems.

During the process, the women, especially representatives from CAG, contributed many effective suggestions, one such example is attaching a jingle to the solid waste collection van to inform citizens about the heat early warning announcement. As Bindiya Patel (Programme Manager, MHT) explains, forefronting ground-up solutions is critical:

“We often think that it is the educated population who can come up with ideas and solutions to address ongoing challenges, but that is not always the case, because those who face the problem have a better idea of how best they can tackle the problem” –[translated fromHindi]

- » **Net-Zero Cooling Station.** The Net Zero cooling stations were designed as safe, waiting spaces and spaces of respite in key locations, especially for the workers and low-income population who move around on foot and suffer greater impacts during extreme heat conditions. The structure includes an innovative sustainable construction that includes a mist sprinkler fan, cooling curtains, solar panels to power electricity, a wind tower and is equipped with benches, drinking water supply and ORS. The cooling station is staffed by a woman from the

58 Source: <https://citizenmatters.in/new-cool-roof-solutions-heat-in-informal-settlements>

community, who is the caretaker and is also trained by MHT to provide immediate help to those displaying symptoms of heat fatigue. During the operating hours, the neighbouring businesses also voluntarily support by keeping a watch and preventing unsolicited activities inside the space.

The land for this cooling station was granted by the government. While the structure was initially meant to be temporary, given the successful use of the space during the summer, the facility is now open between 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM all throughout the year. It has also been replicated in other parts of the city.

- » **Urban Forestry Initiative, Kabir Nagar.** The urban forestry initiative was developed to increase the green cover and reduce heat stress in one of the high-stress wards identified in the city. While the initiative was conceptualised, designed and developed by MHT, and is currently the caretaker for two years, the land and water supply was granted by the government. The community has also contributed funds to install a borewell to ensure a continuous water supply for the maintenance of the park. The park underwent a major transformation from an illegal squatter settlement to a green space after carefully rehabilitating the community.

MHT has also used the park as a test site to train the community, specifically CAG, on the right kind of samplings to be planted and the methods to tend to them, when reproducing similar planting or greening initiatives. The community now views the park as a successful city beautification project and a communal space and has established a committee to manage it, once the park is officially open and the government takes over the operations of the park.

- » **Contextualising climate solutions for increased accessibility to the community.** For example, traditional heat warning and awareness messages are primarily communicated through emails to government departments, TV and media and available on personal devices. Unfortunately, these modes of communication are not accessible to the vulnerable population due to their limited literacy and limited access to the internet. Apart from the jingle for awareness and the banner for communicating daily temperatures, MHT has also initiated wall painting in the slum communities, explaining the dangers of heat stress and simple methods to cope with it. The CAG women have also installed “*pyau*” or public water kiosks in key locations across the community to provide relief in extreme temperatures.



Example of solar reflection white paints.
Photo credits: Col-lectiu Punt 6



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » CAG Women have become local climate champions, advocates and change-makers, challenging gender stereotypes and achieving transformative change.
- » An initiative managed by women for women

Samos Gehlot, Rekha Vaishnav and Alka Purohit from MHT are the key individuals of the MHT Jodhpur team, who closely work with the CAG and the broader community, liaise with the government and oversee the maintenance of the different initiatives that have been implemented across the city, such as the urban park, net-zero cooling station. They also coordinate and train CAG and help them tackle their everyday challenges. They often overcome resistance from men in the community who oppose women taking leadership, or from politicians and other powerful players who feel threatened by NGOs' role in the community.

The team recognises that while their roles require them to help the local women overcome socio-cultural barriers to initiate work in their respective communities, they themselves navigate these expectations at home before they leave for work. The entire team works with the drive to enable greater visibility to CAG women and give them the tools to enhance their identity and change-making skills in the community. They identify that building trust and a relationship with the community is critical to their work, and collectivising a group of women who refuse to leave home was one of their biggest initial challenges. Deep listening is also integral to their approach.



Learnings

MHT's role as facilitators helped achieve collective action at the community level. The team continues to provide issue-based training; however, the CAGs now operate independently, addressing most of their issues and continuing their work with pride and confidence.

Sanjana, Neetu, and Suman's statements demonstrate the gender transformation that was achieved in their community:

"We were often told that women with ponytails cannot do anything, [...] Men in the community often said that if they could not achieve any change, how could we possibly achieve anything.... They would sometimes physically obstruct our path and prevent us from leaving home [...] Now I have my own identity in the community" – Neetu, CAG Group, Bhuri Beri Slum, Jodhpur [translated from Hindi]

"Previously, I used to be scared to even lift my Ghoonghat (veil) to speak to others, [...] I even had to explain to my mother-in-law about the benefits of collective action, and how it can improve- not just our lives, but those in the community as well, as she was opposed to me leaving home and interacting with outsiders [...] so I explained to her if a woman from outside [MHT] is coming to our community to help us, why can we help ourselves?" – Sanjana, CAG Group, Ravti slum, Jodhpur [translated from Hindi]

“I was always identified as someone’s daughter-in-law or wife, but now, even my family takes pride in the fact that everyone knows my name, even in the government offices. When someone from the community raises a concern with the department, they often ask them to go meet ‘Suman ji’. [...] Being a part of the CAG group has given me recognition and a renewed sense of identity” – Suman, CAG Group, Juni Basti slum, Jodhpur [translated from Hindi]

The women are not only recognised within their community but are also identified by the government officers and key stakeholders with whom they work closely. Any issues that are brought to the government from others in the community are often redirected to the CAG groups, as they are familiar with the formal processes involved in raising issues, lodging complaints and resolving them. As one participant, Suman, jokingly explained that she has been requested not to call the 181 number⁵⁹ ([Rajasthan Sam-park CM Helpline](#)) so frequently because they already recognise her dedication and persistence in resolving issues in her community. And any issues raised by Suman are usually attended to immediately.

Impacts

- » Transformative change in the role of women in the local community
- » Strong stakeholder collaboration and co-creation of solutions.
- » Multiple budgetary allocations in the government, under existing programs for the ongoing sustainability of the project.



Replicability

The HAP initiatives, such as the net-zero cooling station, urban parks, have gained recognition and are being replicated across the city. The awareness campaigns, such as jingles and wall paintings, have also been effective in multiple locations. Also, several CAG groups operate across various slum settlements across the city and continue to engage actively with different stakeholders.

Mobilising communities in traditional communities, as Jayendra (Project coordinator, MHT Jodhpur) explains, involves three key steps, which are also crucial for replication for any community engagement and collective action:

“The first step and the biggest challenge is to bring the women out of their homes and engage with them. The second step is to train them and build their capacities, and finally help them voice and direct their issues to the relevant government departments and demand action.” [Translated from Hindi]

⁵⁹ a toll-free number for registering complaints and getting information about government schemes in Rajasthan.



Photos of different heat plan interventions. Photos credits: Collectiu Punt 6

Additional resources

- » Jodhpur Heat Action Plan 2023
- » First of its kind Citizen's Assembly on Inclusive Heat Early Warning System in Jodhpur, India, Mahila Housing Trust, 2025 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXSxvRdXf-4&t=413s>



18

Chennai Gender and Policy Lab (GPL)

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Greater Chennai Corporation

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Government Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Nirbhaya Funds, and as part of Chennai City Partnership between the Government of Tamil Nadu and World Bank

OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

-

KEY STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

GCC, GCP, CMRL, CUMTA, Railways, Social Welfare, Foreign delegates and civil society organisations

CITY, STATE

Chennai/ Tamil Nadu

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2022- ongoing

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

TARGET GROUP

Women & Girls

Context

Chennai is the capital of the state of Tamil Nadu, spanning an area of 426 Sq. Kms and with a total population of 6.748 million inhabitants. The city is located on the eastern coastline, has a high urban density and like most metropolitan cities, experiences gendered disparities and access to services, mobility and livelihood opportunities.

In 2021, the Government of Tamil Nadu, in partnership with the World Bank, was working on a project called *Chennai City Partnership Project Sustainable Urban Services Program*, and the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) was one of the government entities as part of this program. A need to address issues of women's safety, mobility and access to public spaces emerged during the gap assessment studies aimed at improving urban services mobility. Arising out of the need to establish to have an independent body dedicated to addressing these challenges, the Chennai Gender and Policy Lab were established. The aim was to create an inclusive urban environment, challenging and changing gender norms and making policies that are data-driven and gender-sensitive.

The current Honourable Mayor of Chennai, Ms Priya Rajan, has played a crucial role in supporting GPL and its activities. She has also initiated the Gender Clubs in Schools and promoted free public transport for women in the city.

GOAL

Make Chennai safer, increase women's access to public spaces and mobility networks, and ensure gender-inclusive planning.



OBJECTIVES

- » Improve safety and gender-responsiveness in public spaces and public transport to enhance women's access to opportunities
- » Mainstream gender inclusivity to make it a process and a natural element in all city-level planning and service delivery decision-making
- » Provide gender-inclusive infrastructure recommendations- parks, bus stops, subways
- » Assess the perception of women's safety towards mobility
- » Build on a multi-pronged collaborative approach involving multiple government departments, civil society organisations, elected representatives, and academic and research institutions.



Practice details

Gender & Policy Lab (GPL) was operationalised in 2022 by the Greater Chennai Corporation, with support from the Nirbhaya Fund and as part of the Chennai City Partnership between the Government of Tamil Nadu and the World Bank. It is one of the first cities to implement a lab focused on safety and inclusivity from a gender perspective. GPL is committed to making Chennai safer, increasing women's access to public spaces and mobility networks, and ensuring gender-inclusive planning.

GPL focuses on the needs of women of all age groups and is attentive to vulnerable and marginalised individuals, including single mothers, transgender individuals, persons with disabilities, daily wage workers, homemakers, and women employed in blue and white-collar work. Integrating a gender perspective is an integral part of the process.

The project interventions were implemented and achieved under the four pillars:

1. **Assessing the ground situation:** Understanding the ground realities of access, functionality and safety perceptions of infrastructure and transport service. Identify gaps in current policies, regulations, legal frameworks, and institutional capacity. (for example, city-wide studies on safety in public spaces and transport, parks studies)
2. **Strengthening planning and policies:** Reforming policies and regulations based on the gaps identified, and supporting the objective of gender inclusivity.
3. **Build Capacity and raise awareness:** Creating a gender-sensitive stakeholder system- Every stakeholder to be trained and made aware of the diverse gender needs. Focus on individual, institutional and community levels.
4. **Improve infrastructure:** Enhance existing infrastructure and transport services, improve perceptions of safety, and enable gender inclusivity in the city, while applying a gender lens to infrastructure design and public transport services.

GPL initiated various initiatives under the four pillars:

Needs Assessment: As part of this pillar, GPL conducts online and offline surveys, safety audits, field visits, Focus Group Discussion (FGDs), and stakeholder discussions to study the existing infrastructure and assess the perception of citizens. GPL. One example is the implementation of a city-wide baseline study on *Women's Perception* regarding Access and Safety in Public Spaces and Public Transport in Chennai city

Strengthen operations: GPL provides **guidelines and checklists** for respective departments to better adapt and implement inclusive infrastructure. Additionally, **a Working Group** was created to strengthen the institutional mechanisms of GPL and facilitate inter-departmental collaboration with GPL and other departments, where women's access and safety in Chennai is a focus. The group comprises Greater Chennai Police, MTC, Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority, Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Department, Southern Railways and Chennai Metro Rail Limited and their first meeting was held on September 7, 2022. Also, **a six-member Voluntary Action Committee (VAC)** was formed to strengthen the GPL internal team and comprises members from gender-based violence, disability, homelessness, urban transportation, safe cities and technology, and community empowerment. Their first orientation was held on February 3, 2023.

Campaigns for public awareness and active collaboration: **A few examples of these are** a night cycling event for women (May 28, 2022) with over 100 participants and a global 16 Days of Activism campaign (November and December 2022). GPL also implemented the *Safe Mobility Fellowship*, a 10-day program with Safetipin and Prajnya, to conduct safety audits of transit points and public spaces across 47 locations in the city. 22 fellows selected to undertake the audits.

Sensitising different stakeholders and the wider public on gender inclusivity:

- » **Outreach and orientation programmes on Women's Helpline number 181**, in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Women's Empowerment. Over 170 women from GCC attended the orientation held on May 31, 2022. An outcome of the workshop was that the Internal Committees were constituted at Zonal and Regional levels, and existing committees underwent training to achieve compliance with the PoSH Act 2013

- » **Training program for women councillors on Gender and Sanitation, in collaboration with IIHS on 19 May 2022.** 78 out of 102 women councillors participated in the training. The program also included a survey to obtain feedback on women's access to civil infrastructure.
- » **One-day workshop on Gender Inclusive Streets, in collaboration with the World Bank and Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), held on June 21, 2022.** The workshop was attended by over 30 participants from GCC and Chennai Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (CUMTA). The workshop built the capacity of engineers on gender mainstreaming, the use of data in project planning, gender inclusive design, and assessing the impact of a street redesign project.
- » **Two-day workshop on gender and disabilities, in collaboration with NIUA, held on July 4 - 5, 2022.** The workshop was attended by 50 participants from GCC, Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA), the Department of Highways, Commissionerate of Disabilities, Tamil Nadu Institute of Urban Affairs, Department of City Planning, Coimbatore Municipal Corporation and Smart City Trivandrum and Mangalore.
- » **Protection of children against sexual offences (POCSO):** Half-day awareness training on POCSO Act, in partnership with Social Defence and Tulir- an NGO, was held on Nov 19, 2022. A total of 281 headmasters of GCC schools attended.
- » GPL also provided inputs to the World Bank Toolkit
- » GPL developed recommendations for the Tamil Nadu State's New Policy on Women (2021)



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **Women's needs are prioritised across all the interventions and processes at GPL.**
- » **Gender Clubs:** Gender clubs aim to promote gender equality and awareness among students in schools and colleges across Chennai. The topics will be introduced during the School Management Committee (SMC), engage parents and organise school-level mela (fairs). In the inaugural year, 70 GCC schools have implemented this Club, and the program plans to expand this to 92 Middle schools in the second year.
- » **An initiative driven by women in key roles:**
 - The previous Officer in Charge of GPL in the formative stages was the Deputy Commissioner of Education, Dr Sharanya Ari, IAS
 - Chennai's Honourable Mayor R. Priya introduced the Gender Club in 2022.
 - As of 2023, out of 200 ward counsellors of Chennai city, 102 of them were women.
- » **Logo design:** The three triangles of the logo is a representation of female, male and diverse genders, while the circles placed above it represent balance and mainstreaming. The larger circle represents mobility and movement within the city.

Impacts

GPL has undertaken more than 32 activities between 2022-2023, including the Citizen for Safe Mobility fellowship and campaign on parks and bystander intervention, city-wide safety audit, city-wide research study and parks survey

- » Tamil Nadu has over 200 dedicated women-only police stations
- » The 1913 Helpline has incorporated gender as a component in the registration forms to gather gender-disaggregated data. Further, safety concerns within the categories of parks and playgrounds, public toilets, road and footpath and streetlights have been integrated into the forms
- » GPL facilitated the Internal Compliance Committees (ICCs) in three regions- training and sensitisation on the PoSH Act (2013) and their roles as members.
- » Infrastructure upgradation in vulnerable locations, followed the safety audit training programme
- » Post the implementation of the park study and public consultations, GPL shared recommendations and strategies for enabling gender inclusivity with the parks department.
- » Created a manual on bus shelter designs and bus stop locations.



Replicability

The creation and consolidation of the Gender Policy Lab have been key to sustaining gender policies in the city. The different studies and research conducted have been essential to defining the public policies and projects to develop in the city and ensure continuity through capacity building and awareness generation as well. For example, research on public transport helped decide that bus stops need to be transformed to integrate safety and accessibility standards.





Bus stop improved by GPL integrating gender criteria Photo credits: Col-lectiu Punt 6



Visit to Gender Club activity in a school in Chennai. Photo credits: Col-lectiu Punt 6

Additional resources

- » Building a Gender Inclusive Chennai: Learning and Way Forwards https://chennaicorporation.gov.in/gcc/pdf/Building%20A%20Gender%20Inclusive%20Chennai_Report.pdf
- » Gender and Policy Lab. ANNUAL REPORT 2022- 2023 https://chennaicorporation.gov.in/gcc/pdf/GPL_ANNUAL_REPORT_ENGLISH.pdf



19

K 100 Citizens' Waterway

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

MOD Foundation

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Non-profit, interdisciplinary urban action and research institute

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Government of Karnataka

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) (owner)

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Star Infratech (DBOT)

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

National Green Tribunal State: Government of Karnataka, Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, Karnataka Natural Disaster Management Centre Karnataka Slum Development Board, BBMP, Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board, Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company Ltd., Bengaluru Smart City Limited. Let's Be the Change (LBTC), Young Leaders for Active Citizenship, CDD Society, The Ugly Indian.

CITY, STATE

Bengaluru / Karnataka

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2020 - ongoing

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

TARGET GROUP

Slum communities, women, girls, youth, elderly, differently abled individuals



Context

The Rajakaluves literally translates to “king canals”, and in Bengaluru, these canals formed a historic cascading system of inter-connecting tanks and canals—one of the city’s distinctive original features for managing water resources. This system enabled the overflowing rainwater to be drained and managed between the tanks, as well as to use them for irrigation purposes. However, over time, encroachment and illegal construction have altered the use of these canals, reducing them to conduits for household and industrial sewage and garbage dumps, resulting in heavily polluted and visually degraded sites. The Rajakaluve became a neglected water body, where lack of maintenance has resulted in increased flooding events during the monsoon season. The project was conceived to address these challenges and re-envision the stormwater drains as lively, functional water channels and public spaces.

GOAL

Create a functional and lively water network by restoring Rajakaluve waterway, strengthening existing infrastructure, creating safe, accessible public open spaces, and enhancing everyday mobility, particularly for women and children.

Practice details

The K100 Citizens' Waterway project aimed to restore the city's historic waterways (Rajakalves) to their original purpose, strengthen the existing infrastructure and reconnect citizens with their city's water heritage. The project spans an 11.6 km stretch and passes through 23 wards (including some sections under the Slum Development Board) and covers a catchment area of 32 square kilometres. The Rajakaluve has nine secondary drains feeding into it, amounting to a total of 16.66 km of waterway.

To address recurring flooding, solid waste dumping, and the mixing of untreated sewage, the project redeveloped the neglected stormwater drainage infrastructure and reimagined these drains as revitalised public spaces, enhancing overall health and well-being for

Photo credits: S Nadimpalli



the citizens. The project also focuses on actively involving citizens to help manage the Kaluves through awareness campaigns. Building and strengthening multistakeholder collaboration, including multiple government departments and local communities, is integral to the project.

a. Expanding stakeholder involvement and collaboration

Given the complexity of the problem, with intersecting infrastructure challenges, including storm water drainage, sewerage, utilities, including electricity, water supply, among others, the project required extensive collaboration and coordination between several authorities responsible for these different facets. The project continues to regularly engage with multiple agencies for ongoing implementation and maintenance, where the MOD Foundation plays the key role of a project manager, driven by a predominantly women-led team.

b. Design Build Operate and Transfer (DBOT)- an innovative strategy for long-term maintenance

- » Star Infratech was awarded the DBOT contract, under which the contractor is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the project for up to five years after the completion of the construction. The approach was aimed at building accountability into the construction process.
- » The team is currently devising a long-term strategy to identify a single-point authority that will assume responsibility for the project's operations and maintenance once the contractor's term concludes.

c. Ongoing Public Awareness and Citizen Engagement

'Building a Resilient Bengaluru' is a public awareness and action campaign by the Mod Foundation to understand and improve the city's stormwater systems. It combines research, storytelling, and citizen engagement to reveal how our urban water infrastructure shapes everyday life — and how collective knowledge can drive better urban futures.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **Women-driven and managed project.** Vandita Sharma, the Chief Secretary of Karnataka at the time of project initiation, played a pivotal role in enabling the project, and the current Chief Secretary, Dr Shalini Rajneesh, is playing a crucial role in ensuring the continuity of the project.
- » MOD Foundation is currently a 10-woman team of urban designers and architects, which is entirely responsible for project management - managing the complex multi-stakeholder coordination, reviewing designs, overseeing the construction and maintenance of the project, and ensuring the project is implemented as intended, until the time it is handed over to the municipality.
- » **Impact on everyday mobility for women and children.** Improved connectivity, supported by the addition of street lighting, has significantly enhanced the perceived sense of safety and security for residents and pedestrians, in particular, women and children, using these pathways.
- » **Community garden pocket.**
- » **Community engagement for improving waste management.** MOD Foundation coordinated with a local NGO (LBTC) and BBMP to better understand the unique challenges of collecting solid waste, especially within the slums, where garbage dumping in the Kaluves is an ongoing concern. By engaging with the community, especially with women (who are primarily responsible for solid waste segregation and disposal at the household front), the team identified that the garbage collection timings did not align with residents' availability, as most household members were away at work during pickup hours. The team is now collaboratively devising a strategy to resolve the issue and improve waste management practices in the area.



Learnings

A project of this scale has addressed many challenges over the course of its implementation. In the earlier stages, there was resistance from the low-income slum communities and some of the authorities involved. However, persistent efforts and engagement helped build trust over time. Witnessing and experiencing the transformative changes further strengthened the citizens' confidence in the authorities and the project. And as Nidhi, Sr. Urban Designer, MOD Foundation, explains,

“This project becomes an equaliser as it is going through various tracts of the city, but it is the same- The idea was not to create any differentiation in design”

The consistency of the design, together with the flexibility it offers, allows equitable access and enables different users to appropriate the space freely.

Impacts

So far, the project has achieved 70% completion with:

- » 32 acres of the drain reclaimed as public space
- » Over 100 MLD of raw sewerage and industrial effluent diverted from the Rajakaluves to the sewage network
- » The creation of visually accessible waterways by adding retaining walls, flood barriers and including landscaped spaces
- » The addition of 5 km of walkable and connected pedestrian network, and a plan underway for 10 km
- » The construction of 4 pedestrian single span bridges, 18 vehicular span bridges and 2 public parks (with 3 additional parks planned) at the water edge.



Replicability

Following the project's success, in August 2023, it drew the attention of the World Bank, which pledged 3500 crore rupees loan to scale up the stormwater drain network across the city. The loan, to be disbursed from the year 2026, will primarily support the strengthening of stormwater drains and the building of sewage treatment plants.



Rajakaluvu Catchment. Photo credits: MOD Foundation



Additional resources

- » MOD Foundation: <https://mod.org.in/2022/05/06/k100-rajakaluvu-rejuvenation/>
- » K100 Citizens' Waterway project Evaluation Report: [Bengaluru Citizens Waterway Project Evaluation report.pdf](#)

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Working Women's Hostel

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

State government sponsored organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund (TNSF)
(financial assistance and oversees project execution);

Government of Tamil Nadu
(grants and land parcels)

Government of India (grants)

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostel Corporation Limited (TNWWHCL)

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Working Women living in hostels

CITY, STATE

Tamil Nadu

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2023-ongoing

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

State

TARGET GROUP

Working women (particularly migrants)

Context

The Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostel Corporation Limited (TNWWHCL) is an initiative established to provide safe, affordable, and well-equipped accommodation facilities for working women across Tamil Nadu. The project aims to address the growing demand for secure housing among women migrating to urban and semi-urban areas for employment opportunities. By developing hostels that offer essential amenities such as hygienic kitchens, dining areas, recreation spaces, and 24/7 security, TNWWHCL seeks to create an enabling environment that supports women's workforce participation and mobility.

Inclusivity was an important aspect of the TNWWHCL project's design and implementation. The hostels were designed to accommodate the diverse needs of working women, including differently abled individuals. Dedicated rooms and facilities have been provided for differently abled residents, ensuring accessibility, safety, and comfort. Features such as ramps, wider doorways, and accessible restrooms have been incorporated to support ease of mobility. The registration process is also open to all without discrimination based on gender, disability, or background.

The initiative aligns with the broader social objective of empowering women by ensuring their safety, comfort, and dignity in the workplace and beyond. Through this program, the Corporation contributes to inclusive urban development and gender equity by fostering a supportive ecosystem for working women from diverse economic backgrounds.

GOAL

Creation of safe, affordable, and well-managed hostel accommodation facilities that empower working women and promote inclusive urban development across the state.

OBJECTIVES

- » Develop hostels that offer secure living and multiple options for varying needs and budgets
- » Provide essential amenities in the facilities to achieve a broader social objective of empowering women by ensuring their safety, comfort, and dignity in the workplace and beyond



Practice details

Working-age women comprise over one-third of the labour force in the state of Tamil Nadu, where several women migrate to cities for work (as teachers, factory workers, IT professionals and students). These women seek safe and affordable housing that is equipped with essential services. The project was developed across 14 cities to offer a solution and accommodate the burgeoning housing needs of the migrant women moving to cities in the state.

During the inception and conceptualisation stage, the needs of the working women were incorporated into the planning and design. The location of the new hostels was identified based on the proximity to economic hubs (IT districts or industrial areas) in the city, accessibility to transit nodes, available urban infrastructure and amenities, among other factors.

Through consultations and feedback sessions conducted by TNWWHCL, the inputs provided by the end users on safety, affordability, accessibility, and amenities such as kitchens, recreation areas, and transport connectivity were also incorporated into the project design. The needs of differently abled women were integrated through consultations with social welfare departments and by following accessibility standards under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. Architects and engineers engaged in the process incorporated universal design features such as ramps, accessible toilets, handrails, and designated rooms to ensure safety and mobility.

In the implementation of this project, the Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund (TNSF) played a key role as the funding and oversight agency for the project. It conducted comprehensive due diligence before project approval, assessing technical, financial, environmental, and social aspects to ensure compliance with state and safeguard standards. During implementation, TNSF closely monitored construction progress through periodic site visits, progress reports, and coordination meetings with TNWWHCL to ensure quality and timely completion. The agency also facilitated stakeholder consultations with local communities, beneficiaries, and authorities to identify, avoid, and address potential disturbances to the public. By ensuring transparency, accountability, and stakeholder engagement, TNSF helped maintain smooth project execution while upholding social responsibility and environmental safeguards.

→ Detailed Feasibility Report (DFR)

A Detailed Feasibility Report is prepared based on the identified need for a hostel in each context, with the support of technical consultants. The DFR assesses on-site requirements—such as the number of rooms, essential amenities, and service needs—and evaluates potential land parcels (from those made available by the Government) based on factors such as location suitability, proximity to public transport and railway stations, and access to basic services. In some cases, the demand for hostels is driven by local businesses seeking accommodation for their female employees or interns, and this allows a committed occupancy that assures the financial sustainability of the specific women's hostel. Balancing financial sustainability with the social welfare objectives is equally critical to the process.

The following table presents a snapshot of different types of women's hostels built in Tier I, II and III cities with varying contextual conditions.

Table 1: Snapshot comparison of different types of hostels

Name	St. Thomas Mount Working Women's Hostel	Trichy Working Women's Hostel	Tirunelveli Working Women's Hostel
Location	Chennai- Tier-I	Trichy-Tier-II	Tirunelveli-Tier-III
Type	B2C	B2C	B2B, B2C
Context	Close to IT Hubs in Chennai and typically used by IT professionals.	Proximity to the city centre and Trichy Court, where the residents are primarily students and working professionals alike.	This facility has a mix of B2C and B2B tenants, with a mix of students and working professionals
Residents: Women resident managers ratio	145:1	106:1	60:1
Amenities	Wi-Fi, Biometric Access, washing Machine, parking Facility, recreational lounge, Ironing facility, CCTV, RO, Geyser		
Key Locational details	Metro Station – 1km, Bus stop (Butt Road)-200 M	Bus Stand – Central -2 km, Railway station -5 km, Reliance Supermarket-500M	Bus stand -new- 2 KM, Railway station -8KM
Testimonials/ Feedback	<i>I feel like home staying here. In Chennai, after searching many PGs, I am glad to find one with all the needed facilities and a comfortable place to stay for a long time. The staff and security here are very kind and take care of the residents like their own</i>	<i>Good Atmosphere to stay</i>	<i>A very good place to stay and its safe. Affordable rent. I'll highly recommend Thozhi Hostel. Food will also be provided for affordable price.</i>

→ Community engagement

Community participation was integrated throughout multiple phases of the project. During the planning and design phase, consultations were held with local women, welfare organisations, and community representatives to understand the housing and safety needs of working women. In the construction phase, stakeholder consultations were conducted with nearby residents and local authorities to minimise disturbances and ensure community acceptance. During the operation phase, feedback from hostel residents, women's welfare organisations and neighbouring communities is regularly collected to improve services, refine operational policies and maintain harmony. Additionally, the registration system allows beneficiaries to provide ongoing feedback

on facilities and services, ensuring that their voices continue to shape management practices. This participatory approach ensures the hostels effectively meet the real needs of working women. This continuous engagement also ensures that the project remains inclusive, responsive, and beneficial to both its residents and the surrounding community.

→ Registration processes

The beneficiaries can register through an open and transparent registration process on the TNWWHCL online portal. Any employed woman or those looking for employment and seeking safe and affordable accommodation can apply, irrespective of her occupation, income level, or background. Allotments are made strictly on a first-come, first-served (FCFS) basis, ensuring fairness and equal opportunity. There is no discrimination based on caste, religion, marital status, or profession. This inclusive approach ensures that every working woman, whether from the public, private, or informal sector, has equal access to secure and well-managed hostel facilities provided by TNWWHCL.

→ Operation & Maintenance

The Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostel Corporation Limited (TNWWHCL) is responsible for the ongoing operations and maintenance of the hostels. The Corporation oversees day-to-day management, including accommodation allotment, facility upkeep, security, and grievance redressal. Hostel wardens and staff are appointed to ensure smooth functioning, safety, and hygiene within the premises. Regular maintenance checks are conducted to ensure that infrastructure, utilities, and common areas remain in good condition.

The corporation is a private limited company housed under the Department of Social Welfare, and it employs private agencies for specialised services like security, catering and housekeeping. This unique structure of the corporation within the government ecosystem grants it a degree of autonomy to make quick, flexible decisions to ensure smooth operations and maintenance across all the hostels. At the same time, there is a built-in accountability to ensure that the primary objective of providing social welfare is always prioritised without compromising the quality and maintenance of the facilities.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **Driven by women for women:**
- » This project was conceived by a woman team lead. Funding was secured to have projects targeting migrant women workers.
- » The women's hostel residents are an integral part of the project; their inputs and needs are continually incorporated from the time of project inception to ongoing operations and maintenance.
- » **No curfews imposed on exit/ entry for women residents.** A message that is driven into the initiative is that "no woman is questioned on her timings for coming in and out" and "regardless of what she is wearing or what she is doing" she must be comfortable living and working in the space. The only restriction is on the entry of male guests and visitors. Further, any male employee or senior official of the organisation must plan their visit ahead of time, and they must be accompanied by the female manager during their visit



Learnings

Achieving the affordability factor is a challenge for an initiative that works on replicating a set of tested and standardised models across different contexts. For example, in smaller cities, the construction costs are higher and charging an affordable rental, compared to the market rates, may not always support the financial health of the hostel. Hostels in remote locations or smaller cities might also take a long time to achieve the desired occupancy rate. Whereas, in larger cities, there is a surplus of alternative private accommodations, and the challenge is to charge a comparable but affordable price while overcoming some of the preconceived notions attached to government-sponsored entities, as poorly maintained facilities are sometimes a challenge.

Some of the other key learnings from the initiative have been that to ensure affordability and sustainability factors of the women's hostel, extensive market research to find the demand is critical, in addition to having a strong Institutional coordination. Finally, having an inclusive design was found to bring in long-term value for the initiative.

Impacts

- » Currently, 19 Working women's hostels are in operation in 14 cities (including Chennai, Coimbatore, Hosur, Perambalur, Pudukottai, Salem, Tanjavur, Tiruchirapalli, Thirunelveli, Tiruvalur, Tiruvannamalai, Tuticorin, Vellore, Villupuram) in Tamil Nadu, accommodating over 2000 women. Nearly 90% occupancy in the hostels has been achieved.
- » Only 6 of the total hostels under operation are green field construction, whereas the remaining are refurbished hostels.



Replicability

Despite facing challenges with institutional delays with permits and NOCs, initial reluctance among the public to occupy the hostel, and achieving coordination among the stakeholders involved, the project has achieved replication across 14 cities in the state. The future goal is to have a working women's hostel in every district. A total of 14 hostels is currently under construction, scheduled to be inaugurated between February- August 2026, with another 14 commencing construction within the next few months.

The team has also aided other states and arranged site visits for officials from the GOI and other states' relevant departments to implement similar projects in their respective states. TNWWHCL emphasises that having a corporation within the government ecosystem offers adequate flexibility and offers additional benefits for an operation-heavy initiative.



St. Thomas Mount Working Women's Hostel, Chennai. Photo credits: TNSF



Example of a shared room and dining facilities in the Working Women's Hostel. Photo credits: TNSF

Additional resources

- » Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hotels – A Home Away from Home, September 23, 2024, World Bank Group <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2024/09/23/tamil-nadu-working-women-s-hostels-a-home-away-from-home>
- » Comfort, Control, Career: A peek into Tamil Nadu's Thozhi Working Women's Hostels, April 16, 2025, Archita Raghu <https://behanbox.com/2025/04/16/comfort-control-career-a-peek-into-tamil-nadus-thozhi-working-womens-hostels/>
- » Thozhi Hostel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9pSxRHJTJk>

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Women's Access and Mobility Plan for Cities

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Urban Catalysts

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Consulting Practice

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Research commissioned by Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3) as part of its Sakshma programme.

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

NA

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Center for Catalyzing Change

CITY, STATE

Patna, Gaya, and Muzaffarpur (Bihar)

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2019-2020

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

Regional

TARGET GROUP

Women & girls



GOAL

Analyzing women's mobility through qualitative methods to mainstream a gender perspective in public transport in Bihar

Practice details

Research in India and globally shows that access to reliable and affordable urban transport plays a significant role in women's ability to work and access opportunities. When transport systems are unreliable, unsafe, or unaffordable, women are more likely to choose lower-paying jobs closer to home, limiting their economic participation (ADB, 2013). The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that limited access to transportation can reduce women's chances of being part of the workforce by about 16.5 per cent.

In Bihar, women's participation in the labour force remains the lowest in the country. As of 2017–18, only 4.4 per cent of working-age women were part of the labour force. Restricted everyday mobility — occurring as an intersecting challenge of restrictive gender norms, inadequate transport infrastructure, prevailing urban planning regimes, governance and limited access to information and communication technologies- further impede women's economic engagement and participation in contexts like Bihar.

With this understanding, the project focused on understanding how different groups of urban women (and men) travel and the impact of transportation on enabling or restricting their mobility and accessibility and provided policy recommendations to mainstream gender in transportation in Bihar. This diagnostic research was commissioned by the Centre for Catalyzing Change⁶⁰ (C3) as part of its Sakshma programme.

The study focused on women and young girls aged 18 years and above—students, working women, and those not currently in employment—living in the cities of Patna, Gaya, and Muzaffarpur. Three cities – Patna, Gaya and Muzaffarpur – were selected in consultation with Women Development Corporation. The three cities are the headquarters of three major divisions in the state - Patna, Magadh and Tirhut. Patna is the largest urban agglomeration

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in Bihar, with a population of 2.04 million (2011). It is the administrative and economic hub of the state, followed by Gaya urban agglomeration (0.47 million), which is a tourism node and Muzaffarpur (0.39 million), which is a trade centre.

→ Identifying the target groups

The target group was identified using a multi-stage stratified sampling method based on the demographic characteristics of the municipal corporations of each city- Patna, Gaya, and Muzaffarpur. Stratification considered gender, age group, and household size to ensure representative coverage. A systematic spatial sampling approach was applied to select survey zones and households across the three cities.

→ Community engagement

Community participation was integrated into the needs assessment phase of the project through focus group discussions (FGD). These FGDs were conducted with students, working women, and non-working women to capture a range of experiences and perspectives related to their urban mobility, including the barriers and obstacles they face in Bihar. These discussions were also conducted with transport providers in Patna, Gaya and Muzaffarpur. During this phase, the funding agency provided support in identifying the survey agency for household surveys and facilitating FGDs with women. A total of 1,947 participants responded to the survey across three cities. The respondents were between the ages of 18-49 years, comprising 49.9% women.

→ Key Informant Interviews

were conducted with government stakeholders to take their feedback on existing services, which also helped build their capacity in understanding mobility from a gender lens.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

» Gender was integrated throughout all stages of the study.

- In the inception stage, socio-economic profiles at the district and urban agglomerations, institutional framework for urban transport, and state-level policy analysis were analysed to understand government priorities towards sustainable transport and the extent to which gender equality is mainstreamed within these.
- In the assessment stage for Patna, Gaya, and Muzaffarpur, sex-segregated travel surveys and focus group discussions with women.

- In the recommendation stage, findings informed the development of the *Women's Access and Mobility Plan* with gender-responsive mobility indicators to monitor outcomes and outputs.

» A knowledge tool titled **Safer Streets, Safer Cities** was developed to support the mainstreaming of women's mobility and accessibility in street design.



Learnings and replicability

The study estimated women's care-related travel and established the need to improve the urban walking environment and build robust data to inform policy implementation.

Key learnings from the research were:

- » A gender employment gap of 50 percentage points between men and women was noted. In urban Bihar, women earn 25-50 % less than working men.
- » Women spend an average of four hours a day on care work in comparison to men, who spend about one hour. This disparity is also evident among female students, who spend twice as much as their male counterparts on household work.
- » Women travel less than men and predominantly for non-work-related trips; however, they walk more and share intermediate public transport.
- » A novel observation of the study was that, among the total surveyed, men were more dissatisfied with the mobility situation than women, leading them to forgo economic opportunities.

Although the project was a diagnostic study, the knowledge tool can be adopted by the Government of Bihar, and specifically the Urban Development & Housing Department (UDHD) and the Public Works Department (PWD) at the state level, and urban local bodies at the city-levels.

Participatory activities with women to analyze mobility. Photo credits: Urban Catalyst



Additional resources

- » [Women's Access and Mobility Plan for Cities in Bihar: Recommendations](#)
- » [Safer Streets, Safer Cities in Bihar](#)



22

Mapping Safety in Delhi using Safetipin Apps

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Safetipin

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Non-Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Multiple partners supported the project from 2015 to 2020: Cities Alliance, DFID, NDMC (North Delhi Municipal Council), DWCD (Department of Women and Child Development, Govt of Delhi), UN Women, The Asia Foundation, FIA Foundation

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Government Agencies, Trained Community members

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Delhi Government, Municipal Corporation, and Police

CITY, STATE

New Delhi/ Delhi

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2015 - 2020

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

TARGET GROUP

Women, girls and vulnerable groups—elderly, persons with disabilities.



GOAL

Make Delhi safe and inclusive for women and vulnerable groups by leveraging data and technology.

- » Enhance safety, mobility and freedom in public spaces for women and girls
- » Advocate for universally accessible design for prioritising the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- » Engage with women and youth as active participants – as data collectors and safety advocates
- » Facilitate evidence-informed decisions on urban development and public safety initiatives

Practice details

Safetipin's project in Delhi addressed the critical issue of gender-based violence and exclusion in public spaces. The objective was to make the city safer and more inclusive for women and vulnerable groups by leveraging data and technology. Since 2015, the project systematically collected geotagged safety data using a validated framework assessing parameters like lighting, walkability, and public transport access. This evidence was shared with key government agencies—including the Delhi Government, Municipal Corporation, and Police—to inform and advocate for targeted infrastructure improvements and policy changes. By combining this data-driven approach with community mobilisation, the project aimed to bridge the gap between citizens and urban authorities, ensuring that safety and gender inclusion became integral to urban planning and governance.

→ Multi-stakeholder approach

Primary groups—women, girls, and other vulnerable community members—were engaged through structured partnerships with resident welfare associations, women's collectives, and local NGOs to ensure diverse representation. Government stakeholders were identified based on their formal mandates in urban planning, transport, law enforcement, and public works. This combined method ensured that the project's design and implementation were shaped by both grassroots community priorities and the institution-

Mapping activity in Delhi.
Photo credits: Safetipin



al capacities required to enact sustainable change, leading to targeted and relevant interventions for safer urban environments.

→ Community engagement from conceptualisation to implementation

The project actively integrated specific underrepresented groups in both its conceptualisation and implementation, and community participation was a cornerstone of the project, integrated across all key phases.

During the **design phase**, Safetipin conducted focus group discussions and community dialogues with women and girls, particularly those from low-income settlements, to understand their safety challenges and ensure our assessment framework was relevant. In the implementation phase, they trained these women and youth from marginalised communities to become active data collectors, using the My Safetipin app to conduct safety audits of public spaces like parks, markets, and bus stops. They were also the primary participants in **capacity-building** workshops on data and advocacy. Finally, in the **monitoring and evaluation** phase, their continued feedback on safety perceptions after government interventions provided crucial qualitative data to assess impact and refine strategies, ensuring the project remained grounded and responsive.

→ Multi-method process

The project employed a rigorous, multi-method process to diagnose and address urban safety issues. It began with **secondary research** to identify key locations and contextual challenges. The core methodology involved **structured safety audits** conducted by trained community members using the Safetipin mobile app. These audits collected geotagged data on nine parameters, including lighting, walkability, and visibility, with each audit undergoing a quality check before analysis.

This quantitative data was enriched with **qualitative insights** from focus group discussions and interviews with residents, transport staff, and officials, providing depth to the mobility challenges identified. The analysed data, highlighting risk hotspots and infrastructure gaps, was then synthesised into actionable reports for government partners.

A critical component was **longitudinal tracking**, where cities were remapped periodically to measure progress against key indicators like the reduction of dark spots. This entire process was underpinned by continuous **capacity building**, empowering participants with the skills for data collection, analysis, and advocacy, ensuring the approach remained evidence-based and community-grounded.

→ Capacity Building

Safetipin implemented comprehensive capacity-building programs in Delhi, targeting both government officials and community members, including women, youth, and NGO representatives. The curriculum was designed to foster gender-inclusive urban planning and equip participants with practical skills for assessing public space safety.

The training methodology was highly experiential, moving beyond theoretical lessons. It featured:

- » **Safety Audit Walks:** Hands-on sessions where participants used the Safetipin app to collect real-time data on parameters like lighting and walkability in their neighbourhoods.
- » **Persona-Based Exercises:** Interactive group activities that encouraged participants to analyse safety and mobility challenges from the perspectives of different users, such as a woman commuting after dark or an elderly person with limited mobility.
- » **Technical Site Visits:** A critical component involved organizing joint site visits with officials from key departments like transport and electrical engineering. This bridged the gap between user experience and technical implementation, fostering a shared understanding and co-designing solutions that truly met community needs.

This multifaceted approach successfully built technical proficiency and a deeper understanding of gendered access needs. The outcome was an empowered cohort equipped to collaboratively drive evidence-based, inclusive urban interventions.

→ Monitoring & Evaluation

While the project did not operate under a formal, standalone M&E framework, it embedded robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms directly into its core activities. Safetipin was responsible for this integrated M&E process. Monitoring was continuous, involving rigorous quality checks on all collected safety audit data. For evaluation, the project relied on a longitudinal comparison of this audit data—tracking key metrics like the reduction of dark spots over successive mapping cycles—to quantitatively measure infrastructure improvements. This was complemented by qualitative feedback from community users and residents on their perception of safety following interventions. Safetipin led the analysis of this combined data, while government partners utilised the findings to inform planning, ensuring the initiative remained evidence-based and accountable to demonstrated needs.

→ Project continuity

The responsibility for ongoing operations and maintenance is shared, with distinct roles for each stakeholder.

- » Government agencies hold the primary responsibility for maintaining the physical infrastructure Improvements—such as lighting, footpaths, and bus stop upgrades—in public spaces, ensuring these assets remain functional.
- » Safetipin's ongoing role is that of a facilitator and technology partner, updating its platforms, managing the data ecosystem, and building capacity.
- » Trained community members sustain the initiative's momentum by conducting periodic audits and advocating for continued maintenance, acting as a vital feedback loop to hold authorities accountable.

This collaborative model ensures the initiative's long-term impact.

→ Institutional changes

Government partners played a crucial multi-faceted role, primarily as implementers and end-users of the evidence generated by Safetipin. Their involvement evolved from data users to strategic partners, exemplified when the Delhi Government funded a second phase of data collection to measure the impact of initial interventions.

Key agencies like the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), and the Public Works Department (PWD) utilized this data to guide infrastructure upgrades, directly addressing over 7,500 lighting deficiencies. The partnership was institutionalized when the Delhi Government integrated Safetipin's data into its official city dashboard (GSDL). The Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) collaborated on audits of bus terminals, while the Delhi Police used the data to optimize patrol routes. This model ensured community-collected data directly informed government-led implementation.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **A Project focused on women and girls in Delhi**, to enhance the safety, mobility, and freedom in public spaces.
- » **Engaging local women and youth as active participants**—training them as data collectors and safety advocates—which empowered them to drive change in their own communities.
- » **Women from local communities as central agents of change.** In the Needs Assessment/Diagnosis stage, women participated in safety audits and community consultations, using their lived experience to identify critical safety gaps. For Capacity Building, they were trained to use the Safetipin app and conduct structured safety assessments, enhancing their technical skills. This training enabled their active Community Engagement/Participation, where they transitioned into roles as data collectors, community mobilizers, and advocates. They presented evidence to authorities, ensuring community priorities directly influenced urban planning and infrastructure upgrades, thereby strengthening their voice in public decision-making.
- » While the primary focus was on women and girls, the project's findings and advocated infrastructure improvements, such as better lighting and walkability, inherently benefited other vulnerable groups, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- » **Women in key leadership roles are driving the project.** Women held pivotal leadership roles at multiple levels. The project was co-founded and led by a woman, ensuring a gender-sensitive approach was embedded from the top. The core team executing the project—managing technology, data, and community engagement—was also predominantly female. On the ground, data collection was primarily driven by women, including architects and youth from local communities. Critically, within government, a senior female IAS officer, serving as Power Secretary, chaired a multi-stakeholder committee that oversaw the implementation of safety improvements, directly linking community-collected data to actionable government accountability.



Learnings

The project yielded several critical learnings:

1. **Grassroots Data Drives Accountability:** Community-collected data provides an undeniable evidence base that compels government action, turning subjective safety concerns into objective, addressable infrastructure problems.
2. **Institutional Integration Ensures Sustainability:** Embedding data into official government systems (like the GSDL dashboard) is more effective than standalone reports, as it makes safety a routine metric for planning and unlocks public budgets for implementation.
3. **Women are Key Agents of Change, Not Just Beneficiaries:** Training and empowering local women as data collectors and advocates unlocks deep local knowledge and creates a powerful, sustained constituency for safe public spaces.
4. **Multi-stakeholder Partnerships are Non-negotiable:** No single entity can create a safe city. Success hinges on coordinated action between communities, civic agencies, police, and transport authorities, each playing a distinct role.
5. **Safety is a Dynamic Metric, not a One-Time Fix:** Continuous monitoring is essential, as urban environments change. Periodic re-auditing is required to track progress, identify new risk areas, and ensure that improvements are maintained over time.

The project also encountered several persistent challenges:

1. **Sustaining Active Community Engagement:** Maintaining consistent participation from women and marginalized community members was difficult due to competing domestic responsibilities, social constraints, and varying levels of comfort with technology.
2. **Navigating Government Bureaucracy:** Coordinating with multiple, siloed government departments (municipal corporations, transport, police) often led to procedural delays in approvals and action, slowing the pace of on-ground improvements.
3. **Instability in Government Partnerships:** Frequent transfers and reshuffling of key officials within partner agencies disrupted continuity, requiring repeated efforts to re-orient new personnel and rebuild institutional momentum.
4. **Limitations in Infrastructure Budgets:** While data could pinpoint infrastructure gaps, the actual remediation (like installing new lights or rebuilding footpaths) was contingent on government budgets and priorities, which did not always align with the audit findings.
5. **The Complexity of Measuring Perception:** Quantifying the impact on the subjective “feeling of safety” was challenging, as it is influenced by cultural norms, personal experience, and factors beyond physical infrastructure, making it harder to directly correlate interventions with changed perceptions.

Impacts

- » **Direct Infrastructure Upgrades:** The most tangible outcome was the use of audit data to drive physical improvements, most notably the installation and repair of **over 7,500 streetlights** across Delhi, directly addressing the critical issue of dark spots.
- » **Institutionalization of Data:** Safetipin's safety metrics were formally **integrated into the Delhi Government's Geographic Spatial Delhi Limited (GSDL) dashboard**, embedding evidence on women's safety into the city's official planning and monitoring framework
- » **Enhanced Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** The project successfully fostered and sustained operational partnerships with key agencies like the NDMC, DTC, and Delhi Police, who used the data for tasks from **optimizing police patrol routes** to auditing metro stations and bus terminals.
- » **Community Empowerment and Capacity Building:** The project trained and equipped **women and youth from marginalized communities with the skills to conduct safety audits and advocate for change, transforming them from beneficiaries into active agents of urban safety.**
- » **Shifting the Policy Dialogue:** Through consistent evidence and initiatives like She RISES, the project elevated the discourse on **gender-responsive urban planning**, moving safety from a peripheral concern to a recognized necessity in city governance.



Replicability

The project's future goals are to scale its impact by deepening institutional adoption and broadening community engagement. A primary objective is to scale up adoption in new territories, expanding beyond Delhi to other cities in the NCR and across India. To achieve this, Safetipin has continued to play a crucial, though evolved, role as a **strategic knowledge and technology partner to government agencies**, working to formally integrate safety audits into public systems and policies.

This is supported by continuous **capacity-building** programs for both government officials and community groups, ensuring local ownership and expertise. Together, these efforts will drive sustained, evidence-based progress toward gender-responsive and inclusive urban development.



Additional resources

- » Safetipin website: <https://safetipin.com/>
- » Reports on Delhi: <https://safetipin.com/report/delhi/>
- » She RISES Framework: <https://safetipin.com/sherises/>
- » Delhi Impact Story: <https://safetipin.com/the-safetipin-impact-on-delhi/>
- » Khadar ki Ladkiyan Rap Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7d6awx1E1J8&t=3s>

23

Green and Safe Mobility through a Network of Women-led e-rickshaws

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Development Alternatives (DA), India

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Social Enterprise

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Work4Progress, Climate-KIC, Gates Foundation, Fundación ISS and the "la Caixa" Foundation

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Women's Group and Local Institutions

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM)

CITY, STATE

Mirzapur/ Uttar Pradesh

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2018 - ongoing

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City (expanding to new geographies: Varanasi, Kaushambi, Jhansi, and Gorakhpur)

TARGET GROUP

Women & Young Girls

GOAL

To build a women-led safe mobility ecosystem that expands livelihood opportunities, enhances the freedom and safety of movement for women and young girls, and inspires their leadership in non-traditional sectors contributing to social, economic, and environmental development.



Practice details

safe mobility is critical to facilitate access to necessities, resources, information and mainstream economic opportunities. In particular, women's mobility is often heavily influenced by societal norms and patriarchal structures that shape their levels of economic and social empowerment. Limited access to safe mobility also impacts women's right to the city, as well as girls' school dropout rates. Women experience sexual violence in mobility systems, a highly male-dominated sector, with low participation of women in this sector.

The e-rickshaw model supported by DA caters to this specific gap in the state of Uttar Pradesh and has helped achieve the following:

1. Ownership over and increased everyday mobility for women and girls in Mirzapur, and expanding to cities of Varanasi, Kaushambi, Gorakhpur, and Jhansi.
2. Parallely, an increase in women e-rickshaw drivers has facilitated the mobility of women entrepreneurs and enhanced access to education and other resources for young girls and women.
3. Reducing carbon emissions: one electric e-rickshaw saves about 2.88 tonnes of carbon a year .
4. Challenge gender stereotypes as women take on non-traditional enterprises, thereby also altering gender roles within the private sphere.
5. Building solidarity among e-rickshaw women entrepreneurs through Aarya Manch and Aarya Groups to create a self-sustaining network and entrepreneurial ecosystem that can be replicated across other districts and states in India.

Fleet of women e-rickshaw drivers, Mirzapur. Photo credits: Development Alternatives



In 2017, DA became part of the Work4Progress (W4P) programme (implemented under the “la Caixa”), through which several prototypes were co-designed with communities to introduce systemic changes in local entrepreneurship ecosystems. The women-led e-rickshaw model emerged as one such systemic prototype.

Deep listening is central to DA’s approach. During listening sessions in Mirzapur, a recurring barrier identified by women was mobility; many felt unable to step out, sell their products, or pursue enterprises outside their homes. In one such session, a woman expressed her aspiration to drive and build something around mobility. This shifted the team’s perspective. Instead of asking why women were unable to travel, the team reframed the question: *could a mobility solution operated by a woman help unlock entrepreneurship for others? If one woman could provide safe mobility services, would more women feel empowered to pursue their own enterprises?*

This question led to the setup of the first woman-led e-rickshaw in Mirzapur, marking the beginning of a model that addressed both mobility constraints and aspirations for non-traditional livelihoods.

In May 2023, DA received an Experimentation Fund from Climate KIC under Systems Innovation Learning Partnerships (SILP)⁶¹ to expand their work further and scale it to the state level. This phase of the initiative focused on strengthening the e-mobility network to make it into an investible model for replication in other cities or states. Building on the existing informal solidarity network among the e-rickshaw drivers, DA co-created *Aarya Groups* with the women and subsequently created a platform called *Aarya Manch*, where stakeholders (such as Regional Transport Officer (RTO), Traffic Police personnel, Women police officers, e-rickshaw vendors, Block mission managers (BMM), District Mission Managers (DMM), cluster-level federations (CLF) Leaders) from the safe mobility ecosystem could come together, address issues and co-create solutions.

⁶¹ SILP is a learning partnership between the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and EIT Climate-KIC, which is a climate innovation agency and community in Europe.

- » **Deep Listening and nurturing micromovements of local champions:** Understanding the complex interrelationships between different actors and the unique challenges faced by various stakeholders involved in this ecosystem was a key aspect of the deep listening approach. Through these processes, local champions like Pragya Devi and many others were recognised and identified as one of the first e-rickshaw entrepreneurs in the community, who played a pivotal role in shaping the initiative, particularly in the early days of implementation.
- » **Addressing systemic issues by building entrepreneurial ecosystems: Formation of Aarya groups and Aarya Manch (2023):** As the number of e-rickshaw drivers began to increase, they shared a solidarity and began supporting one another in the challenges they faced. Building on this informal network, DA co-created Aarya Groups (small groups of women living approximately within a 5–6-kilometre radius) mainly to enable women who drive at night, support each other, voice their needs, and plan collective action.

Subsequently, the *Aarya Manch*, formed in 2023, created a space for women e-rickshaw entrepreneurs and local system stakeholders (including RTO, traffic police, e-rickshaw vendors) in Mirzapur district to convene, actively engage in discussions around evolving challenges and opportunities in the local e-mobility ecosystem, and share learnings. During their first meeting in 2023, they were able to raise important concerns, including discriminatory behaviours experienced by the women drivers in the community, issues of traffic fines, and lack of access to capital from banks. The women were able to address some of these concerns and simultaneously gain additional information and insights on other ongoing challenges.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **Women as agents of change:** The first few women who were able to challenge existing gender roles at home and work, and redefine their agency, triggered a systemic change, inspired their peers to follow suit and helped nurture the local entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- » **Building a collaborative and peer support system:** Through the Aarya groups and Aarya Manch, the women were able to establish alternate licensing for the e-vehicles, set up an informal woman-led driving training academy (where women with permits could train others), access financing and resources for their e-rickshaw businesses, and expand their service by signing MOUs with local schools to transport school children. They were also able to expand their knowledge and understanding of e-transportation.



Learnings

What began as a pilot intervention now has an 180+ network of women led e-rickshaws in Mirzapur, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Kaushambi and Jhansi today. These women were able to step away from hard labour roles or unemployment and achieve economic empowerment through entrepreneurship. They have also simultaneously challenged existing social structures, and continue to tackle discriminatory behaviour, harassment and other challenges they face at both the domestic and work front with mutual support and a shared sense of community.

- » 100,000 + women and girls have access to safe mobility in Uttar Pradesh
- » Women's leadership and entrepreneurship are strengthened through platforms and coalitions like Aarya Groups and Aarya Manch



Replicability

Given the systemic changes that the women's e-rickshaw network has brought on, the project has garnered interest from the State Government and the Gates Foundation. To scale up the program, the initiative is focused on building and strengthening the CLFs to help sustain the ecosystem and is currently working with the UPSRLM. DA's on-ground Implementation partner, MDSS- an NGO, is continuing to support and expand the initiative to other cities across the state, including Varanasi, Kaushambi, Gorakhpur, and Jhansi.

However, DA recognises that with replication, scaling would need context-specific intervention strategies. The team is currently in the process of establishing a robust system that continues to sustain once DA withdraws its support. As initial steps, awareness campaigns have been organised across the state to help inform the community about the methods, their benefits and challenges of engaging in non-traditional enterprises and continue to drive systemic change.



Additional resources

- » E-rickshaw: Women Empowerment through Green Economies https://devalt.org/newsletter/aug22/of_3.htm
- » Micromovements of Change, Safe Mobility Factsheet, Development Alternatives
- » SIDA Experimentation Fund, Cohort I. Final Learning Report
- » Development Alternatives (2024), Wheels of Change https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHD_Hotf_CU

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Community managed Sanitation Scheme

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Municipal Corporation of Gwalior

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Municipal Corporation of Gwalior (MCG), UN-Habitat and Water Aid (1:1:1 financial support targeting 5000 families)

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

MCG/ Women Self Help Groups

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Sambhav, and the Mahatma Gandhi Seva Ashram

CITY, STATE

Gwalior/ Madhya Pradesh

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2004– 2008

TARGET GROUP

Women

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City



GOAL

Achieving open-defecation-free slums in the city of Gwalior by mobilising, strengthening, and engaging with women's groups in the community to raise awareness on sanitation and hygiene issues, and enable them to manage the community toilets.

Practice details

Urban slums often have limited or no access to basic services and experience a threat of eviction due to the absence of land tenure. The available infrastructure is often not maintained, making it defunct and causing health and sanitation issues for the community. There is also a lack of community ownership, and the revenues from the local authorities to sustain the financial operations and maintenance of the existing facilities are also limited, further exacerbating the problem.

In Gwalior, approximately one-third of the population lives in slums (according to the Gwalior municipal corporation), and open defecation is a common practice due to a lack of adequate facilities, causing a serious impact on health, sanitation, environment and overall well-being of its inhabitants. Lack of public toilets disproportionately impacts women and girls, as they are more likely to experience sexual violence, harassment and assault when they must travel to desolate locations to defecate, especially at night. These practices also increase the risk of infection when women restrict their bodily functions or consume less water to reduce a toilet trips.

In the year 2004/05, Gwalior identified a total of 135 community toilets in their 226 poverty pockets, and out of these, over 80 were in dilapidated condition and unusable. To address the sanitation challenge in these vulnerable communities, the Gwalior Municipal Corporation, in partnership with UN-HABITAT and WaterAid, implemented the Slum Environment Sanitation Initiative (SESI) to achieve open defecation-free slums in the city. The campaign was run with the help of local NGO Sambhav.

As part of the initiative, 16 slums were identified, where Laxmanpura, a 150-year-old slum, was developed as a model for the con-



Women Managing Toilets. Source: Municipal Corporation of Gwalior.
Community Managed Sanitation scheme in Gwalior. Photo credits: PK Nandy, Water for Indian Cities Program

struction of a community toilet. The women's self-help group of the Laxmanpura slum played a crucial role in mobilising civic improvements through their local activism and awareness generation. The project implemented the construction of 203 individual toilets and one community toilet. The project was also nominated for the National Urban Water Awards in 2009.

→ Poverty Mapping Survey

Utilising the Municipal Action Plan for Poverty Reduction, the MCG, with the aid of the local NGOs, carried out a poverty mapping survey to create a poverty and environmental infrastructure deficiency matrix. Based on the mapping, 16 slums were identified out of the 229 poverty pockets, which have no access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.

→ Local Awareness and Sanitation Fund

A community-based organisation (CBO) in Laxmanpura, Nirmal Samiti, helped raise the community's demand for water and sanitation facilities and engaged with local government and other political forums to aid the community with their appeal. The Samiti also helped raise awareness of having a toilet within a household, for which women and children were particularly targeted, as they experience greater consequences in the absence of these facilities. An SHG comprising 15 women were also created after 6 months of engagement and dialogue with the community. This SHG was pivotal in the decision-making process, aiding in the dissemination of critical information and encouraging a behavioural shift towards increased hygiene practices. They also took responsibility of supervising the construction of toilets and the maintenance of the new community toilet, which was built over the defunct facility.

As part of this process, a Sanitation Fund was created to make available alternative financial sources, in the form of loans, which could help facilitate the construction of necessary facilities. The cost of the individual toilets was about Rs 4000 – Rs 6000, where Water Aid contributed to about Rs 800-1200 per toilet, and the rest was paid by the beneficiary. The SHGs supported in providing masonry services and supervision, and the households paid for the material cost.

→ Education Campaigns

Campaigns on awareness were organised by NGOs from Tiruchirapalli, where similar initiatives were implemented. Local schools were targeted to introduce water, sanitation and hygiene-based programs, and teachers were also trained on these issues.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **Women-driven, community-led initiative.** Jasoda Bai, Sheela Bijor and Sheela Birla were identified as the key individuals of the women's group who were pivotal in driving this initiative since 2004. The women SHGs played a key role in sensitising the community, mobilising the community's needs and maintaining the existing facilities.



Replicability

The Laxmanpura slum was declared open-defecation free, and the community took ownership of maintaining their community toilet facility. The initiative positively enabled a behavioural change of the community towards adopting safer, sanitary and hygienic practices. As of 2012:

- » 203 individual toilets and one toilet were built in Laxmanpura, and the slum was declared 'Open Defecation-Free Slum in 2008'.
- » The community toilet was equipped with an incinerator for the disposal of sanitary pads and included disabled and child-friendly access and facilities.
- » The Laxmanpura CBO (SHG) was made responsible for user collection charges of the toilet and maintaining the facility.

The model was replicated in 28 other slums in Gwalior city and further expanded to around 60 slums in four other cities- including Jabalpur, Indore, and Bhopal.



Additional resources

- » National Urban Water Awards 2008. Compendium of Good Initiatives
- » [Community Managed Sanitation Scheme, Municipal Corporation of Gwalior \(2005\)](#)

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Educational and Social Ramifications of Inadequate Toilet Access for Girls

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Jagori

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Non-Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

-

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

-

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Mahila Suraksha in Panchayat (MSP) Core Group

CITY, STATE

Jharkhand

CITY

Gwalior

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2024

TARGET GROUP

Girls (primary school- going)

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

State

DEVELOPED FROM DESK REVIEW

GOAL

Exploring the intricate relationship between sanitation facilities in schools and girls' education outcomes (especially on girls' attendance, participation in school activities, and dropout rates) in Jharkhand by assessing the status of sanitation infrastructure, and identifying specific challenges faced by girls in accessing adequate sanitation facilities



Practice details

The interrelationship between water, sanitation and hygiene and its impact on women and girls is often exacerbated due to gender norms, especially in the rural areas and urban slums of India. It is a widely discussed concern among practitioners and academics and requires immediate attention. The lack of toilets and sanitation facilities has a direct impact on health outcomes, potentially leading to increased infections and diseases. For women and girls, unsafe sanitation and open defecation (OD) have been linked to increased experiences of sexual harassment, violence and insecurity, especially when travelling to and fro between these OD sites. To avoid some of these challenges, women often limit their water and food intake, which, in turn, affects the nutrition of women and girls. Access to clean water, availability of safe, clean and private cleaning and washing facilities are critical for menstrual hygiene.

A recent study by Khanna and Das (2016, 3) highlights that 'poverty, inaccessibility of water, insecure tenure and lack of space' are some of the main constraints for constructing toilets within the household, along with an overlay of gendered impacts of inaccess to information and resources for women and male decision-making around household sanitation. In the schools, lack of adequate (separate) sanitation facilities, including clean, safe, sanitary and functional toilets, equipped with access to water, is essential to maintain hygiene. In the absence of these facilities, girls feel discouraged from going to school, especially during their periods, which eventually leads to disengagement and school dropout. This worsens the existing poor attendance and school-going rates for girls, determined by societal expectations around domestic responsibilities, early marriages.

Beyond Restrooms: Understanding the
Educational and Social Ramifications of Inadequate
Toilet Access for Girls in Jharkhand



Jagori

The state of Jharkhand has a very low percentage of women with 10 or more years of education, and a high rate of marriages for girls before the age of 18 years, especially in the rural areas. Jagori linked these trends with the lack of toilets in schools, resulting in school drop-out, especially for girls post puberty age. This research initiative emphasises the need to prioritise the need for safe, hygienic and functional toilets, to address the sanitation gap in schools for promoting gender equity and reducing school dropout rates. The research study employed a rapid assessment across 154 schools in seven districts of Jharkhand - East Singhbhum, Gumla, Khunti, Lohardaga, Palamu, Ranchi, and West Singhbhum.

→ Questionnaire for Rapid Assessment

Using a questionnaire comprising three distinct sections, information was supplied by three groups: a. data collectors, b. school authorities, School Management Committee (SCM) members and teachers, and c. school-attending adolescent girls. The data collectors, primarily volunteers from Mahila Suraksha in Panchayat (MSP) Core Group, were oriented on the methods, before and after the process, to help maintain consistency and quality in data collection. Feedback from an initial test pilot helped in further refining the questionnaire.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **Driven by women for women:** This research study was conceptualised by Jagori's Director, Jayashree Velankar and was supported and nurtured by Anagha Khot, advisor to the process. The research team and data collectors were also women.
- » **Bringing gender concerns around sanitation facilities in school to the forefront:** The rapid assessment uncovered several factors, such as poorly maintained facilities, inadequate water supply, insufficient lighting factors that impact the safety, privacy and menstrual hygiene management of girl students.



Learnings and replicability

The report highlighted the impact of inadequate sanitation on girls' education and made recommendations at the institutional and school levels to address the challenges.

Some of the findings of the study from the 154 schools surveyed:

- » 80.5% had toilet facilities within the premises of the school, whereas in 19.4% schools, they were located outside.
- » While the government mandates require separate toilets for boys and girls, with one toilet each for schools with fewer than 20 students, and two toilets for students between 20-35, and 4 for more than 60 students, the study showed that there was typically one toilet for 17-410 girls.
- » Among the 68.2% of the toilets that were cleaned regularly, a majority of these were cleaned by the girls themselves.
- » Broken doors, or lack of doors entirely, were noted as a concern for safety and privacy in about 5% of the schools.
- » Additionally, 60% of the schools lacked any lighting, and another 56.4 % lacked water facilities in the toilets.
- » 65% of schools lacked essential hygiene provisions (facilities for handwashing, availability of soap), and 35.7% had no proper mechanisms for managing waste.
- » More than 95% of the schools had no provisions to accommodate disabled individuals.
- » While 83.1% schools provided sanitary napkins, over 57.7% of the girls reported challenges of disposing of used pads due to a lack of dustbins in toilets.
- » Nearly half of the girls remain absent during periods, and 12.3% schools have reported girl dropouts due to a lack of proper facilities in school toilets.
- » 32.4% of girls surveyed reported feeling unsafe to use the toilets alone.

The report recommends strengthening coordination between the Gram Panchayat and School Development Plans to jointly address girls' sanitation needs, including toilet construction, maintenance, and menstrual hygiene provisions. It calls for integrating safety, sanitation, and toilet infrastructure into the School Gradation System, which currently prioritises educational quality. Schools must provide clean, accessible, and disability-friendly toilets with proper staffing, demonstrate transparency and accountability in the funds used, through regular monitoring by relevant departments. School Management Committees should prioritise girls' safety and sanitation concerns, manage funds responsibly, ensure access to sanitary napkins, and conduct biannual safety audits to improve toilet facilities and overall school environments.

The rapid assessment was replicated in over 150 schools across 7 districts of Jharkhand, and the framework can be easily adapted to urban contexts as well to build an understanding of this correlation between sanitation facilities in schools and their impact on girls' education.



Additional resources

- » Jagori Resources: <https://jagori.org/resources#researchreport-tab>
- » Khanna, Tina, and Madhumita Das. 2016. 'Why Gender Matters in the Solution towards Safe Sanitation? Reflections from Rural India'. *Global Public Health* 11 (10): 1185–201.



26

Public Spaces and Pocket Parks in Kohima

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Kohima Smart City Development Limited (KSCDL);

Kohima Municipal Council (KMC)

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

KSCDL; Government of Nagaland

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Kohima Municipal Council, Kohima Village Council, Kohima Village Youth, Local Community

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

WRI-India (Technical partner), KSCDL, KMC, Association of Kohima, Municipal Wards Council. Other important stakeholders: Traffic Police, Social Welfare Department, Department of Health & Family Welfare & Naga Hospital Authority Trust

CITY, STATE

Kohima/ Nagaland

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2017- ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Young children (0-6 years) and their caregivers (including mothers, fathers, grandparents)

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

GOAL

Developing city-wide pocket parks by prioritising the needs of women, young children and caregivers, in all 19 wards of the city of Kohima by actively engaging and co-creating with the local community and respecting local socio-cultural customs and traditions.



Practice details

Kohima is a hilly city and the capital of the state of Nagaland. The city is made up of 19 wards spanning 1,463 square kilometres with a total population of approximately 115,000. The city has a scarcity of open spaces, where the local community—especially families with young children—have limited opportunities for outdoor recreation and play at the neighbourhood scale. Shortlisted as one of the top 10 cities in the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge (NNC)⁶² Kohima addressed this gap by initially testing 5 pilot park projects in three localities as part of the initiative. Given the hilly terrain and unique topography, the city saw a unique opportunity in several unused, deteriorated spaces or invisible pockets, such as those around steep corners of roads, that could potentially be developed as neighbourhood parks.

These pockets were especially crucial, given the context of the unique land holding system of the city, where about 80% of the land is privately owned by the local indigenous and tribal community (protected by the Indian Constitution Article 371A), and public land available for developing public spaces is limited. Careful, sensitive and continuous engagement with the community was necessary to inform them about the benefits of the initiative and gain consensus to help reclaim portions of private land for some of the projects. It was also necessary to consider and plan around the natural topography of the region, which is prone to frequent landslides.

⁶² The Nurturing Neighbourhood Challenge (NNC) is an initiative by the Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), supported by the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) with World Resources Institute (WRI) India as the technical partner.



These projects were able to demonstrate the positive transformations that sensitive redesign can bring, raise awareness, and garner further support from the community for future initiatives. The city is currently undertaking a city-wide implementation of pocket parks in each ward.

Kohima is also the only city in India that was shortlisted as a top contender in all three challenges of MoHUA: Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge (NNC), Cycles4Change(C4C) and Streets for People. This presented the city with a unique opportunity to develop several pilots with a cohesive vision, with the support of multiple sources of funding and resources, as part of the challenges.

→ Multi-stakeholder engagement, Capacity building, Active Community engagement for co-creating safe and inclusive park spaces and streets

The city organised workshops to bring together stakeholders from both governmental and non-governmental organisations to develop strategies for scaling up public spaces for all and specifically prioritising the needs of women and children. The city also organised site visits to other cities in India to help build the capacity of the team involved, through peer-to-peer learning.

→ Pedestrian Mobility Mapping, an example of PHQ junction:

KSCDL first used ICCV vehicular and pedestrian traffic data to analyse the existing issues related to traffic congestion, unorganised parking, and safety of pedestrians (particularly for young children and their caregivers). Based on this analysis, a comprehensive junction compacting design was developed in close consultation with the Kohima traffic police. Upon approval of relevant stakeholders, a tactical urbanism trial was conducted at PHQ Junction to test the feasibility of the refuge island and pedestrian crossing design using paints and traffic cones. The tactical trial demonstrated improved traffic flows and greater pedestrian safety, following which the changes were made permanent.

→ Participatory process for identifying pocket park parcels:

Under NNC, Kohima Municipal Council, with technical support from WRI India, organised capacity building sessions in all 19 wards of Kohima to advocate the importance of outdoor play spaces for young children, which could also serve as an important community space for the neighbourhood. The ward councillors were advised on how to identify potential residual or under-utilised spaces within their wards to be transformed into pocket parks and recommend them to KMC & KSCDL. After which, a participatory planning approach followed, involving the ward youth, ward women's associations and respective ward councils to devise a design that incorporated a safety lens for women and young children.

→ Leveraging funding and resources from multiple stakeholders

Funding from the smart cities (both central government and state), combined with the NNC challenge fund, with the 50 lakh rupees prize money from the Streets for People challenge, and an additional 1 crore rupees from the Cycles for Change, facilitated the implementation of several infrastructure improvement projects around the city. In some cases, crowdfunding supported the development of pocket parks. For example, the Forest Colony Pocket Park combined Community Funding with Smart Cities Mission Funding, and the Naga Hospital Courtyard converged Smart Cities Mission Fund and Naga Hospital Authority Kohima Funds to implement the project.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » Women-driven processes. Several women's association group members were an integral part of the ward capacity-building sessions conducted in collaboration with KMC. Smt. Avelu Ruho, Joint CEO, Kohima Smart City Development Ltd. and Smt. T. Lanusenla Longkumer, CEO of Kohima Municipal Council, were identified as key champions in advocating the importance of young children and caregiver-friendly public spaces, as well as supporting in on-ground implementation of projects.
- » Designing contextually relevant and culturally sensitive pocket spaces by prioritising the needs of women, young children, and caregivers. The design for the waiting spaces in the maternity ward of Naga Hospital and the Rooftop Sensory park at Phoolbari junction are two such examples that demonstrate these objectives. In the Naga Hospital, the open waiting spaces along the maternity and children's ward were redesigned to include seating spaces that specifically consider the needs of breastfeeding mothers, mothers with young children. The seating areas were planned around two courtyards to allow the mothers to keep an eye on their children while they play nearby.
- » In the case of the sensory park, the rooftop of a pay & use toilet block located in the city centre market was redeveloped mainly for the women and children who frequent the area. The rooftop was accessible from street level on a parallel road from the rear side of the toilet block, given the sloping terrain of the region. The park included multi-height seating arrangements around pine trees and a shaded gathering space for the community. It was also specifically designed for children with all abilities, and included vertical gardens, tactile installations, and braille walls.

Impact and replicability

Despite the challenges of limited land ownership by the government and limited revenue of the state, the projects could leverage funds from multiple sources and develop budget-friendly projects by co-creating the design with the community. In particular, the projects developed on the ground have positively impacted the lives of tribal women. These carefully designed public spaces act as comfortable and peaceful rest and pause points for mothers and other caregivers, subconsciously supporting them in their daily activities.

- » Implementing one pocket park in all 19 wards of Kohima
- » Institutionalising the initiative at a policy level

Under NNC, the city created a scale-up plan to include 1 pocket park in each of 19 wards, and so far, more than 10 projects have been implemented. Additionally, several pedestrian walkability improvement projects, along with improvements of critical traffic junctions, are underway. The Kohima Smart City is dedicated to creating projects that address the needs of the community, and it continues to work closely with them in co-creating these spaces.

Public Space in Kohima. Photo credits WRI India



Additional resources

- » Stories of Smart Cities: Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2024.”
- » Streets for People. Pathways of change from India’s Smart Cities
- » Vibrant Public Spaces 50+ Water & Parksapes from India’s Smart Cities Mission



27

Gender Park

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Government of Kerala

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

UN WOMEN and Department of Women & Child Development

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

-

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

-

CITY, STATE

Kerala

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2013-ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

State

DEVELOPED FROM DESK REVIEW



GOAL

Achieve a society where all genders have equal access to opportunities, resources, and benefits with an equal voice in key decision-making that impacts their lives, communities and the state.

- Encourage learning through transformative research, training, and knowledge dissemination
- Achieve gender mainstreaming through all stages of planned action- from policy formulation to implementation
- Enable space for collaboration and innovative partnerships to implement sustainable entrepreneurial and business practices

Practice details

The Gender Park, established in 2013, is an initiative of the Government of Kerala to advance gender equality and empowerment in the state. It is housed under the Department of Women and Child Development and is intended to serve as a hub for all gender-related activities. The park offers a platform for policy analysis, research, advocacy, capacity development, and economic and social initiatives.

As an equal partner with UN Women, the goal is to scale the Park into a South Asian hub for gender equality—a platform for sharing knowledge and experiences from across the region.

Initiatives implemented by the Gender Park:

→ She Taxi, launched in May 2020

It is one of the flagship programmes of the Gender Park, focused on the economic empowerment of women. Women serve as both owners and drivers of their cabs, and operations are managed by the drivers through the She Taxi Federation, with support from a fleet operator. The service is available across all 14 districts of Kerala.



The initiative has won a special mention at the South Asian Study Tour in Gender in Transport, by the World Bank, in Vietnam, and the Chief Minister's Award for Innovation in Public Policy in 2014.

→ International Conference on Gender Equality (ICGE): Hosted by the

Gender Park, this conference brings together scholars, practitioners, policy makers and professionals from around the world to advance gender-just development. It serves as a forum for sharing knowledge on good practices and innovative interventions. The following conferences have been organised so far:

- » **ICGE 2015 - Gender, Governance and Inclusion**, organised in Association with UN Women and supported by UNFPA, held in Kovalam, November 12 – 14, 2015. The conference focused on gender inequalities and ways to strengthen the inclusion of women and transgender individuals in the development process.
- » **ICGE 2021 - Gender in Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Social Business: The Mediating Role of Empowerment**

→ International Institute for Gender and Development-Women in Sustainable Entrepreneurship (WiSE)

The institute aims to function as a centre for gender and development, where selected fellows will be trained to establish, operate and scale up sustainable entrepreneurs.

- » According to the GenderPark.gov.in *“the WiSE Fellows will be partnered with nascent women entrepreneurs requiring support for operationalization and expansion of their ventures (referred to as WiSEpreneurs). Each pair of WiSE Fellow and WiSEpreneur will be trained and mentored by selected experts from the industry and academic institutions through different stages, including bureaucratic and business processes, creative thinking, marketing and customer acquisition.”*
- » **International Women's Trade Centre (iWTC)**: The aim is to establish a one-of-its-kind trade centre that specifically caters to women in business, providing a one-stop retail and business support facility to nurture their growth.

- » **Gender Library:** Located in Kozhikode on the Gender Park campus, the Gender Library aims to promote gender awareness, enhance research and foster empowerment of distinct gender groups in society. The space is disability-friendly, and the digital library will be made accessible to users with impaired vision and hearing.
- » **Heritage Museum:** The museum brings to the forefront the history of women and their journeys through time.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Gender Park incorporates an integrated approach to achieving gender equality across all its initiatives. For example:

- » **She Taxi** challenges gender norms by creating opportunities for women to become entrepreneurs as taxi operators. It follows a 'for woman by woman' model.
- » iWTC provides entrepreneurial support to women in business.
- » The Gender Library aims to deepen understanding of gender in everyday life, normalise it and enhance acceptance.

ICGE 2015 saw the participation of over 75 national and international speakers, while ICGE 2021 brought together over 90 speakers and attendees from over 20 countries, both remotely and in-person.

Gender Park activities. Photo credit: Gender Park



Gender Park activities. Photo credit: Gender Park



Additional resources

» Gender Park: <https://genderpark.gov.in>



28

Children focused vulnerability assessment and city resilience action strategy

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group (GEAG)

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Non-Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

UNICEF

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

N/A

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Urban Local Bodies, Para-statal, State Governments, National Government, CSOs, Communities, Children and Academicians among others

CITY, STATE

Patna/ Bihar and Udaipur/ Rajasthan

CITY

Patna and Udaipur

DURATION/ TIMELINES

December 2016 – December 2017

TARGET GROUP

Urban children “most at-risk” and women/ mothers living poverty conditions

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

GOAL

Build resilience options and facilitate good urban governance mechanisms to address the climate change and disaster risk vulnerabilities of urban deprived children and marginalised populations.

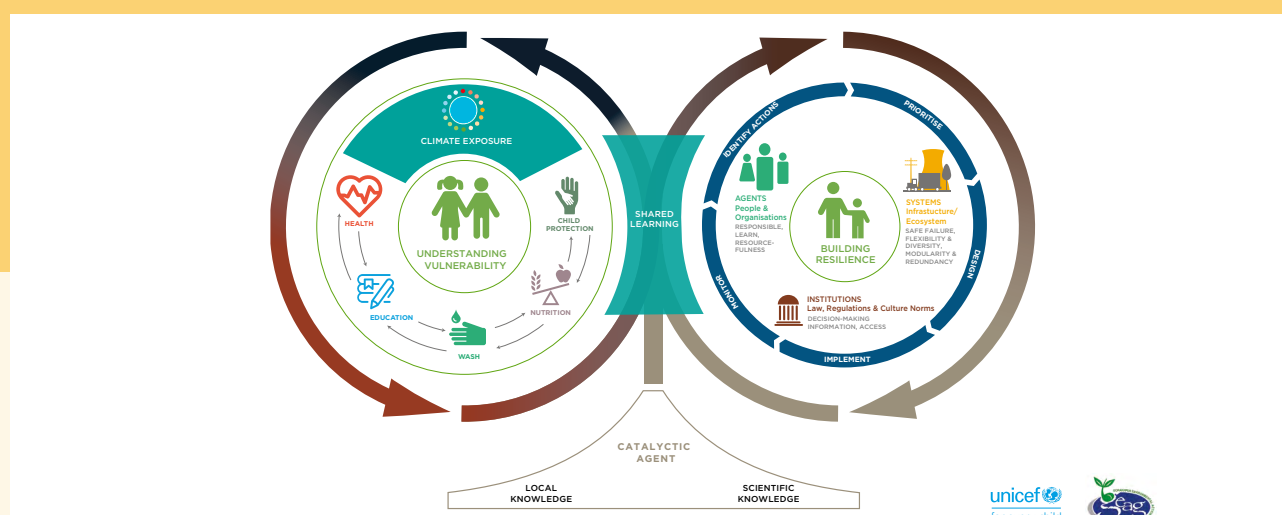
- Understand the differential impacts of climate change on children, youth, girls, and boys, and their basic rights to quality of life.
- Develop comprehensive evidence-based research on the nature of vulnerabilities
- Engaging urban stakeholders and governments to develop child-centred urban climate change resilience strategies and implement local climate change solutions
- Build and share knowledge for greater advocacy.
- entrepreneurial and business practices



Practice details

Gorakhpur Environmental Action Group (GEAG), with the support of UNICEF (New Delhi), undertook an initiative aimed at developing resilience strategies and strengthening urban governance systems to better respond to climate change and disaster-related risks faced by urban poor children and other marginalised groups across four cities representing diverse agro-climatic zones—Bhopal, Patna, Udaipur, and Vishakhapatnam. The project adapted the Child-Centred Urban Change Resilience Framework from ISET International, which considers UNICEF’s five key developmental parameters: Health, Education, Child Protection, Nutrition and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) for developing a comprehensive framework to assess the vulnerability of children and women across the four cities. This case highlights the methodology and findings from the cities of Udaipur and Patna.

In addition to the varying climatic conditions and extreme climatic events (like extreme temperatures, cyclones, storms), children are frequently exposed to physical hazards (like polluted water, open sewer systems), inadequate public transport, lack of limited safe play areas or cultural facilities, overcrowding or toxic local environments. This study highlights some of these differential impacts



Child-centred Urban Resilience Framework [Image resource: GEAG and UNICEF]

on girls and boys. For example, in the aftermath of a flooding event in Patna, the girls' school dropout rates increased, and their mobility and access to health, education and other resources subsequently decreased. Further, adolescent girls' menstrual hygiene was impacted when they cannot access medical facilities and pharmacies when there waterlogging. Across Patna and Udaipur, girls were likely to be engaged in domestic work, while boys engaged in industrial work as child labour, after dropping out of schools and therefore exposing them to danger and also increasing heat stress in extreme weather conditions.

→ Climate Resilience Framework

Between 2009- 2018, GEAG was a part of the Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN)⁶³ program funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, where 10 cities across four countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia developed a city-level vulnerability analysis and developed a resilience strategy for climate change. Later, GEAG continued their work in the space with the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities (100RC)⁶⁴, initiated in 2013, aimed to develop resilience at both individual cities as well as build a global practice of resilience among different stakeholders. As part of this program, the Climate Resilience Framework (CRF) was developed by ISET International.

The framework proposes a planning approach to building resilience to climate change by considering the dynamic relation between three elements (GEAG, 2017):

1. **Systems:** infrastructure, ecosystems, water and food supply, energy, transport, shelter and communications
2. **Agents:** individuals, households, private and public sector organisations
3. **Institutions:** governance, laws, policies, socio-cultural norms.

As shown in the figure, the left circle helps assess vulnerability due to climate change based on the five key development parameters of UNICEF, whereas the right circle highlights Agents, Systems and Institutions, which are critical in understanding key resilience mechanisms across the five parameters.

63 Introduction to ACCCRN: https://www.acccrn.net/sites/default/files/publication/attach/16.%20ACCCRN%20Intro_Bellagio%20Donor%20MTG_11NOV2010.pdf

64 100 Resilient Cities: <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/100-resilient-cities/>

The methodological framework comprised three key steps, replicated across all cities:

1. Literature review, climate data projections and policy review:

- *Assess the existing literature* linking urbanisation, climate change, urban poverty and the status of urban poor children across 4 cities
- *Examine vulnerability assessments of infrastructure and systems in the city.* For example, in Udaipur, the City Development Plan of Udaipur (CDP), City Sanitation Plan of Udaipur (CSP), Master Plan of Udaipur, Report of the Udaipur Municipal Corporation (UMC), Rajasthan State Action Plan on Climate Change (RSAPCC) and Rajasthan State Disaster Management Plan (RSDMP), were reviewed, along with the analysis of climate data projections of historical data to predict the future probable impacts of climate change.
- *Analyse existing policies and governance framework* to identify where adaptation and disaster risk measures could be integrated.

2. Stakeholder workshop: A two-day participatory workshop aimed at understanding the city, the impact of climate change, the stresses and drivers, analysing the vulnerability of the children, identifying resilience options, devising short, medium and long-term interventions, and understanding the roles which different stakeholders could undertake. The main stakeholders were the government, academics, practitioners, media, and civil society organisations from different disciplines.

3. Field visit and community consultation: Shared Learning Dialogues (SLD) and Focused Group Discussions (FGD) with the community, and key informant interviews with the government were a key part of this approach.

Further, the Casual Loop Diagram (CLD) tool was used to establish the interrelation between the different variables and to do a causal analysis of the vulnerabilities of community groups, especially children.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Highlighting the differential impact on girls in the analysis and findings of the initiative, for example:

» **In Patna:**

- Low enrolment in schools and an irregular return of girl children after flooding events, due to low priority for girls' education
- Lack of separate, clean toilets impacted girl enrolment rates.

» **In Rajasthan:**

- Low literacy rates among girls impact health awareness and the use of available government schemes and services.
- Socio-cultural barriers and climate change impacts result in increased girl dropout rates, forcing them to engage in domestic work or manual labour.



Learnings

- » UNICEF continued the work with local authorities to build climate resilience in their programmatic interventions in the respective states.
 - » **Mainstreaming UCCR and Resilient Development in Planning School Program⁶⁵:** In partnership with the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), New Delhi, the agenda of Urban Climate Change Resilience (UCCR) and child-friendly cities was integrated into their Post Graduate studio programme, which is undertaken in different cities in Andhra Pradesh. The training materials for this course included the impacts of climate change, understanding differential impacts on gender, children, and disabled individuals, among other vulnerable groups, and how to protect natural resources. The program is intended to shape the future generation of planners in building cities with a child-friendly and gender lens.
- » Integration of the agenda of UCCR and child-friendly cities into planning schools to sensitise future planners on the issue.
 - » National workshop on urban climate change and governance



Replicability

By replicating its methodology across four cities, GEAG has demonstrated the robustness of its framework and approach, which can be adapted to other contexts as well.



Additional resources

- » [Children Focused City Resilience Action Strategy for Patna Urban](#)
- » [Children focused vulnerability assessment and city resilience action strategy of Udaipur city](#)
- » [Climate Change and Disaster Risk Resilience for Urban Children](#)
- » [Udaipur Factsheet](#)
- » [Building climate change and disaster resilience for urban children](#)" A Snapshot of key findings of GEAG-UNICEF's Interventions in four cities: Bhopal, Patna, Udaipur and Visakhapatnam

⁶⁵ Collaboration with SPA – post graduate workshop/ studio: <https://www.geagindia.org/publication-detail.php?pid=Mzl=>

29

Prioritising caregiving services- child-friendly spaces and open spaces

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Rourkela Municipal Corporation

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Government Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

Nurturing Neighbourhood Challenge (NNC), Rourkela Municipal Corporation and Rourkela Smart City Limited (RSCL) and funds leveraged from existing parallel schemes at local, district, state and national level.

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

Community (particularly Women SHGs) and Slum Dwellers Association (SDA)

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Multi-sectoral Nurturing Neighbourhood Cell lead by Rourkela

Rourkela Municipal Corporation and Rourkela Smart City Limited with technical support from WRI India

CITY, STATE

Rourkela/ Odisha

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2021- ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Children and women (caregivers) in slum communities/ Infant Toddlers and Caregivers (ITC)

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

GOAL

Develop child-friendly spaces and open spaces across Rourkela using a data-driven approach to map and prioritise vulnerable communities in informal settlements; actively engage with the local Women Self-Help Groups as key stakeholders, to bring in the perspectives of women, caregivers and young children in planning and implementation of the project; and enable the community (especially the women) to take ownership of the spaces created through regular upkeep and maintenance.



Practice details

Rourkela is one of the major industrial towns in the state of Odisha with a population of 0.5 million (Census 2011). A significant population belongs to the tribal community, and the city comprises several vulnerable settlements, including those with leprosy rehabilitated people. Despite this, there are very few public spaces and parks that are accessible or available to them. For women and children living in precarity and exposed to frequent climate disasters, parks and play spaces can play a crucial role in their well-being and development in their everyday lives. The project responds to this gap by adopting a city-wide, data-driven approach to develop parks and child-friendly spaces and open spaces by actively engaging women and caregivers from vulnerable communities as key stakeholders.

In 2021, Rourkela was shortlisted among the top 10 cities under the Nurturing Neighbourhood Challenge (NNC)⁶⁶. As part of this initiative, the city first launched nine pilot initiatives across two vulnerable neighbourhoods, impacting over 40,000 people. A key component is the active engagement and inclusion of local Women Self-Help groups (SHGs) (from local Slum Dwellers Associations) in planning, implementation, operation, and maintenance of child-friendly interventions. This enabled the prioritisation of the

⁶⁶ The Nurturing Neighbourhood Challenge (NNC) is an initiative by the Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), supported by the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) with World Resources Institute (WRI) India as the technical partner.



Clustering of caregiving facilities in slums of Rourkela through convergence of national and state missions [Source: Rourkela Smart City Limited as cited in Saha (2024)]

needs of women, caregivers and young children. SHGs were also integral in facilitating women-led data mapping to identify potential projects, as well as in the ongoing management and maintenance of some of the infrastructure developed, such as parks and mobile libraries.

Another critical facet is the convergence of several local, city, and state schemes to facilitate the creation of these caregiving amenities and facilities. The State Government of Odisha has already undertaken several initiatives towards slum development in the state, including The Odisha Land Rights to Slum Dweller Act (OLRSDA) and the Odisha Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Act (OMC). Under the Odisha Liveable Habitat Mission (JAGA Mission), multiple state schemes were converged with national missions to provide basic services and facilities, such as water, sanitation, electricity, drainage, and open spaces, among others, for slum upgradation.

As noted by Saha (2024), local Women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are often integrated into these small and large infrastructure projects by local governments for the upkeep and maintenance of amenities. However, this results in women being double-burdened with additional responsibilities, while caregiving roles remain unchanged at the household level. Therefore, in this context, engaging SHGs in the processes not only allowed women to voice their concerns as primary caregivers at the household level (facing housing, water and sanitation challenges) but also allowed them to benefit from development initiatives centred around their needs. Their role was pivotal in driving a community-wide change while simultaneously nurturing their role as community advocates, organisers and leaders.

When the project became a part of NNC, a multi-sectoral NN cell was constituted by the Rourkela Municipal Corporation to pilot initiatives with learnings from these efforts, subsequently translated into the incorporation of a city-wide child-friendly planning lens.

→ Multi-stakeholder engagement, convergence and leveraging funds at multiple scales for caregiving interventions

Existing funds, schemes and policies at various scales were converged to facilitate the implementation of this project. At the city level, funds from Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) and Rourkela Smart City Limited (RSCL) were leveraged with District Mineral Funds (DMF), and State funds such as JAGA mission, MUKTA, Mission Shakti (Women self-help groups, WSHG), UNNATI (Urban Transformation Initiative) missions and national missions AMRUT (Saha, 2024).

- a) **City-wide mapping and gap assessment:** A city-wide mapping using a young children and a caregiver oriented approach at the neighbourhood level was implemented, incorporating project-level user data at various stages of the project. This exploratory analysis approach, combining geospatial data collection with women and caregivers in the slums, included a transect walk to identify vulnerable settlements with limited access to early childhood development (ECD) facilities and public spaces.
- b) **Capacity Building for Caregivers and Anganwadi⁶⁷ teachers in slums:** Rourkela city has utilised its monthly capacity-building programs to raise awareness about the Importance of outdoor play and the use of play as a learning tool, aligning these efforts with the training conducted under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). The Anganwadi teachers and women caregivers have also been involved in data collection and analysis at the centres, providing inputs, supporting care planning and shaping decisions on urban infrastructure, financing mechanisms, and key management of critical data (Saha, 2024).



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » **Nurturing the Women Self-Help Groups members as community change-makers and leaders.** SHGs and SDAs were involved throughout the process from planning through implementation stages, and they play a pivotal role in leading the operation and maintenance of the facilities designed.
- » **Integrating climate mitigation solutions in child-friendly spaces.** Integrating plantation drives and including rainwater harvesting pits helped improve air quality and reduce heat-related vulnerabilities for the benefit of those most at risk, including women and children.
- » **Integrating everyday lived perspectives and experiences of women, caregivers and children.** As of 2023, 10 child-friendly *Urban Health and Wellness centres* and 10 mobile libraries in major slums have been built. Additionally, child-friendly market spaces, special units for children, age-specific play areas were built in 24 parks across the city's public health centres. Over 80 Anganwadis are being planned for redevelopment, where some centres are clustered with Mamta Griha (or maternal health centres) to develop multifunctional utility. Some of these Mamta Grihas are also equipped with breastfeeding pods.

⁶⁷ Early childhood education and care centres



Learnings

One of the significant impacts of the project was the reclamation of unused and deteriorated spaces into stimulating and safe public spaces like parks and play areas for children at a neighbourhood level. During evenings, women have also begun to utilise the open gym and park spaces for daily recreation and leisure. The learnings have helped Rourkela adopt a map-based analysis of the entire city to identify the locations of parks and have included this information in the slum development authority.

As noted in 2023, there was

- » 120% increase in access to ECD services
- » 70% increase in access to public spaces
- » 500+ stakeholders involved



Additional resources

- » Saha, A. (2024). Planning for Urban Infrastructure of Care in Vulnerable Neighbourhoods of the Global South, Urban ARC Unpacking Marginalities, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Bengaluru, 13 January. Bengaluru: Indian Institute for Human Settlements
- » Conference Proceedings: IIHS (2024). Unpacking Marginalities: Conference Proceedings 2024. Indian Institute for Human Settlements
- » Smart Cities Mission (June 13, 2023). Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge Stories from Rourkela and Indore <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ey7fyf2j9hg>

30

Kanpur Flower Waste Management

INSTITUTION/ORGANISATION

Kanpur Municipal Corporation

TYPE OF ORGANISATION

Governmental Organisation

FUNDING SOURCES/ AGENCY

-

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR OPERATIONS/ MAINTENANCE

-

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Phool.co and GIZ

CITY, STATE

Kanpur/ Uttar Pradesh

DURATION/ TIMELINES

2024- ongoing

TARGET GROUP

Women

SCALE OF INTERVENTION

City

DEVELOPED FROM DESK REVIEW

GOAL

Converting temple flower waste to usable, sustainable products by employing women to provide them with livelihood opportunities



Practice details

Flower waste is a serious environmental issue in countries like India, where large volumes of flowers are utilised for cultural, religious and commercial activities. India produces 2284 tonnes of loose flowers and 947 thousand tonnes of cut flowers; however, a substantial amount is wasted or disposed of inappropriately (Shaji et al. 2025). Given the religious sentiments, sacred flowers offered for religious purposes are either left in water bodies or left to decay, but rarely mixed with garbage or recycled. Flowers disposed of in water bodies release chemicals that were used to extend their freshness, thereby contributing to water pollution and impacting the biodiversity of the water

In Uttar Pradesh, nearly 1000 tons of flowers are dumped from the temples into the Ganga River every day. The city of Kanpur, an industrial city along the river Ganga, generates 4 metric tonnes of flower waste every day, making it a major contributor to the river body pollution. The Kanpur Nagar Nigam was looking for solutions to tackle the flower waste issue, and with the facilitation of a fair organised by GIZ, the city was able to collaborate with innovators who were converting waste into wealth products. [Phool.co](#)⁶⁸, which was converting flower waste to charcoal-free incense sticks, was facing challenges in securing flower waste in bulk from the temples, which were refusing to sell it to them. Through the fair, Phool was able to collaborate with the Kanpur Nagar Nigam, convince the temple authorities and secure the waste flowers required for their production. The flower waste was segregated at source and then redirected to Phool, who upcycles them into incense sticks. The process particularly employs women from marginalised communities, who were previously scavengers and engages them in making handcrafted products. This pilot project was a part of

68 It is a biomaterials startup found by Ankit Agarwal and Prateek Kumar in 2017.



GIZ's CCPME ("Cities Combating Plastic entering the Marine Environment") project funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) to reduce plastic waste leakage into marine environments by improving municipal solid waste management in Indian cities. The flower waste management has provided a tremendous opportunity for economic and social development in the area.

→ Temple flower waste to incense sticks

In this process, GIZ offered training to help with the segregation of this flower waste at the source, which was later sent to Phool's processing centre. At the centre, the paper, plastic, cups, threads and all other waste are separated by hand and sent back to the Nagar Nigam for further recycling. Only the flower petals are saved for the incense sticks and sorted by species and colour. The buds and stems are used to create compost, which is sold as a separate product. The flower petals are dried on large tarps, powdered, and later mixed by hand and rolled into a dough, which is finally used to make the incense sticks. The entire product is handcrafted and made by women who were previously scavengers and belong to marginalised communities. The women of this community have been offered alternative livelihood opportunities, and believe that in the process of recycling, they are helping keep the temples and the river Ganga clean and take pride in their work.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH

- » The initiative specifically employs women who are from marginalised low-income communities. Phool employs over 300 women from underrepresented communities in collecting about 21 metric tons of floral waste each week from five temple towns in India: Ayodhya, Varanasi, Bodh Gaya, Kanpur, and Badrinath.
- » Phool provides the women with benefits such as a provident fund, health insurance and the option of a daily bus commute to the factory.

Impacts

This project has addressed a pressing environmental problem by simultaneously making contributions to both the circular economy and achieving gender equality.

- » The pollution on the river Ganga has been reduced by preventing at least 3.5 tonnes of flower waste from temple flowers from being dumped in the river.
- » 300+ women employed through the flower waste management in Kanpur



Replicability

Similar initiatives have been undertaken in other parts of the country, although contextual conditions shape the nature of collaboration and outcomes achieved. Many women across the country engage in formal and informal waste management by adopting principles of the circular economy, creating more jobs, tackling environmental problems and making a cleaner environment for all.

For example, in Shillong⁶⁹, women who were previously waste pickers have transformed waste management in the city by converting trash into saleable compost. In this case, the process emerged as a community-based effort from the Shillong Municipal Board (SMB) under the State Investment Program Management and Implementation Unit (SIPMIU). Here too, the women come from the poorest and marginalised communities, who were trained to convert organic garbage to compost. With more streamlined processes and the title of a 'recycler', the women began engaging in dignified work, which gave them confidence and better wages in comparison to their previous line of work. A story similar to that of Kanpur.



Additional resources

- » Flower Waste Management- Case study from Kanpur, GIZ Sustainable and Industrial Development <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGr3Qsc8LRg>
- » Shaji, Reshma, Mini Sankar, and AM Simmy. 2025. 'From Petals to Profits: Empowering Women Through Eco-Friendly Floral Waste Solutions'. Women Empowerment in Agriculture: A Pathway Towards Sustainable Development, 266.

69 <https://citizenmatters.in/shillong-womens-self-help-group-boosts-waste-recycling/>

3

Recommendations for
Enabling Gender-responsive
Urban Development

3. Recommendations for enabling gender-responsive urban development

The Compendium of 30 Global and Indian Gender-Responsive Urban Development Practices presented in this document has gathered lessons and learnings to inspire government institutions, non-profit organisations, women's groups and other stakeholders to implement intersectional feminist perspectives in urban planning.

This section summarises these learnings in the form of recommendations classified as **5 main elements** that should be developed while considering their interconnections. Most of the successful and sustained cases in the compendium have included these 5 elements, which have ensured not only physical urban transformations, but also gendered social changes in the use, transformation and appropriation of space.

3.1. Capacity building on feminist urban planning

Acknowledging and recognising gender and intersectional feminist perspectives as a field of expertise that needs to be integrated into all the phases of sustainable urban planning.

Gender-responsive approaches are not an addition to projects; gender is not a theme. Gender and feminist perspectives should be an integral part of sustainable urban development. This perspective must intersect and permeate all the phases of projects, policies and practices: from the conception, assessment, data analysis, elaboration of proposals, implementation and the posterior monitoring and evaluation.

Capacity building on Gender Transformative Planning is essential in all the scales of intervention and with all the stakeholders involved: politicians, urban planning departments, other local and regional governmental departments, other public stakeholders, community members and women's groups. Additionally, gender experts should be included in the design and execution teams of public projects.

In many cases, public institutions trained in feminist urban planning, both politically and technically, enable not only the development of urban transformation processes, but also the construction of common goods with organised feminist movements.

In this compendium, the cases Montevideo and Maputo at the global level, as well as the cases of Jodhpur's HAP, and from the works of Mahila Housing Trust, it was evident that integrating a gender lens was a crucial part of their approach and processes, where building the capacity of the community action groups drove a transformative change from the ground-up. Similarly, organisations that executed the cases presented such as Col·lectiu Punt 6 in Barcelona, Safetipin and Urban Catalysts in India, the Union d'Action Feministe in Morocco or the Association Dream Team in Italy, involve and engage with women from local communities as central agents of change- they are a part of the needs assessment, gathering data through safety audits, contributing to community engagement processes, among others.

3.2. Implementation of Gender Policies and Regulations

Guaranteeing public policies to integrate gender-responsive approaches, through political and technical support, and ensuring the implementation of national and international regulations on gender-responsive, sustainable urban development.

Cases that have advanced to making gender-responsive urban planning legally binding have had a strong government leadership and support, which has guaranteed the development, but also the maintenance of programs (example of city of Umea #1, Montevideo #2, Mexico City #4, Vienna #6, Chennai #18). This entails:

- » Creating regulations, legal instruments and policies that mandate the integration of a Gender-responsive approach in urban development
- » Designing guidelines and practices at the government level to give greater traceability and significance to the issues, so that they become mandatory elements to comply with.
- » Support long-term strategic plans, beyond one term of administration, with a 10-15 year vision, including short, medium, and long-term actions, measured and monitored through gender indicators.
- » Gaining political and institutional support to sustain and support programs and projects in the long run through multidepartment and multisectoral coordination and multistakeholder governance.
- » Creating specific areas within governments, for example, gender units, whose primary function is to ensure that gender strategies are implemented in urban development.
- » Implementing gender budgeting to ensure funding for the development of gender-responsive urban transformations.
- » Publishing guides and manuals that support Communities of Knowledge and share urban planning tools and strategies to integrate a gender and feminist perspective in urban planning
- » Involving multiple stakeholders and building platforms to bring together diverse stakeholders to start a dialogue. The success lies in the persistent and consistent efforts that help build a strong base for initiating any project.

Without this permeability in the whole governance structure, practices become anecdotal but not sustainable and sustained in time. A key component to this sustainability that was evident across most cases is ensuring trust-building between all the stakeholders, which grows incrementally and is nurtured and strengthened, when projects are able to demonstrate change in some way (for example, urbanism exercises in #16 Guwahati which brought varied stakeholders together to see, experience and visualise positive temporary changes, or walks organised in #19 K100 Citizens' Watway project in Bengaluru, to help stakeholders realise the need for collaborative efforts and later for the citizens to experience the built space and gain trust in the process and people involved. Establishing trust enables quick decision-making and later aids in institutionalising change, and therefore is a critical component.

All these elements are essential to change narratives and value and integrate the strengths of the multiple stakeholders.

3.3. Gender-responsive urban assessments

Integrating an intersectional and feminist perspective in urban studies: in official statistics and quantitative tools; but also in developing complete urban assessments gathering diverse and multiscale qualitative data through community participation.

Urban assessments are analysis and evaluation tools that allow for the verification of the integration of gender-responsive approaches, both in urban development projects and in its management. Studies and diagnosis are necessary to assess whether sustainable urban planning responds to people's needs without causing discrimination of any kind. It also contributes to developing multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination, across different thematic areas, at different scales. They help examine urban issues linked to everyday life and care for people and their intersectional needs by taking into account the inequalities they experience based on their gender, age, origin and functional diversity, among other factors.

To incorporate gender criteria and recommendations, a gender perspective must be integrated within the technical team, in community participation, as well as in the data collection and analysis tools. Thus, women and minorities need to be actively involved in community participation, to conduct needs assessments, but also to work collaboratively in the proposals and the action plans. This compendium has presented some examples of urban assessment and evaluation tools, through the works of #21 Urban Catalysts, #28 GEAG-UNICEF Framework, #25 JAGORI, #22 Safetipin, among others. These cases have demonstrated the robustness in their methods by replicating them across several sites and can be adapted to different contexts of study.

It is necessary to understand the context, understand underlying narratives, and build evidence by reframing the problem from the experiences, perspectives and insights of women, girls, and marginalised communities, build collaborations and drive a systemic change.

3.4. Participatory Transformation

Ensuring participation of women's groups as well as other under-represented collectives, along with technical experts at different scales of the process.

For example, participatory planning can be used in the transformation phase whether it is to elaborate a Municipal Urban Plan, a Neighbourhood Improvement Plan, the design of public spaces (such as street design, plazas and parks), in the improvement of mobility networks, among others. It is during this transformation phase where the results from the previous gender assessment are incorporated, introducing women's everyday experience and perception of safety in urban projects.

Participatory planning must incorporate an intersectional feminist perspective. This means that it must:

- » Focus on responding to the everyday needs of users, particularly women in all their diversity, placing care at the centre of the analysis and integrating the impact of gender-based violence on their use of urban infrastructures, everyday life, mobility or climate adaptation.

- » Recognise the impact of gender, age, class and cultural roles on people's participation dynamics, eradicating discriminatory attitudes that belittle the contributions of women and other groups that have historically been excluded from participatory and community processes.
- » Support a facilitation team that has proven experience in integrating a gender-responsive approach and uses adapted tools for data collection that accommodate the experiences and participation needs of each group.
- » Use dynamics that are accessible to all types of people with different levels of education, socio-economic status, origin or age, avoiding overly formal or technical language that may be exclusionary and ensuring that all voices are included.
- » Use methods that centre on the everyday life and safety to improve urban infrastructures, such as participatory and community mapping, exploratory walks, body-mapping storytelling, photovoice, and other qualitative tools. The structure of the activity and the methods should encourage the participation of all people and be flexible and creative. This should not detract from the depth and comprehensive analysis of the different spatial scales from the perspective of everyday mobility (neighbourhood, municipality, territory).
- » Ensure adequate spaces and schedules that are compatible with caregiving tasks. Participatory activities should include the diversity of realities in different aspects, such as location, timing, schedule, accessibility, compatibility with other tasks, and channels for disseminating the activity.
- » Ensure community engagement and ownership, since they are the users and experts of the territory where changes are being developed, by addressing the ethics of care in the participatory planning process and discussing levels of participation, decision making, power structures, authorship and ownership of the project.

3.5. Gender-responsive Monitoring and Evaluation

Designing and using gender indicators to evaluate the implementation of gender-responsive actions.

Gender indicators are necessary for monitoring and evaluating sustainable urban planning. Gender indicators are tools that enable the measurement and understanding of gender and power relations and gender changes in a society over time. They provide direct evidence of the status of women, men and non-binary persons, enabling knowledge of the factors of inequality, awareness and action on these factors in order to modify them.

Indicators can be quantitative (such as reduced travel time) and qualitative (such as the perception of safety in a public park). Although quantitative indicators seem easier to collect, it is essential to develop and collect qualitative indicators that provide more detailed information and allow us to triangulate and validate the implementation of the Gender-responsive approach.

The evaluation must be consistent and encompass future projects as well as urban transformations already developed. This can also be done with women's participation, as it will help to determine if the interventions are suitable for the needs of a specific population. A women's group can form part of a monitoring process along with other special technical groups in the evaluation of the urban context with a focus on gender.

In short, gender-responsive approaches should be integrated in the whole project cycle from beginning to end, always ensuring women's active participation and engagement.



Glossary

Glossary⁷⁰

Ableism: Ableism is prejudice and/or discrimination against people with disabilities. It can take a variety of forms: ableism may mean that people with disabilities are defined solely by their physical or cognitive abilities; it may specifically emphasise the person's potential "despite" their disability; it may ignore specific needs; or it may convey a sense of superiority on the part of the non-disabled.

Adaptive capacity: The combination of the strengths, attributes, and resources available to an individual, community, society, or organisation that can be used to prepare for and undertake actions to reduce adverse impacts, moderate harm, or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Agenda 2030: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at a UN Summit in New York on 25 September 2015. With the Agenda, the international community recognises that complex global challenges can only be resolved through collaboration and that all states must make their contribution to this process. With the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which form part of the Agenda, the international community has set itself objectives for achieving decent lives for all the world's people while preserving natural resources for the long term. Agenda 2030 calls on all countries to act in an environmentally compatible, socially just and economically efficient manner.

Binarism: In a general sense, binarism refers to a duality: a binary system classifies two components as a pair of opposites. The gender binary system which prevails worldwide differentiates between men and women. Trans or queer persons are regarded as a deviation from the norm. With the gender binary system, a power relationship is constructed between the sexes within society and specific roles and capabilities are associated with being a man or being a woman (see Glossary entry: Gender roles and stereotypes).

Care work: Care work may be paid or unpaid. It refers to the provision of care and support to people, including children and other persons, as well as housework and voluntary community work in a private context (e.g. families) or in the public care sector (e.g. health professionals). Data from 2020 show that as a global average, around 75 per cent of unpaid care work is performed by women.

Climate adaptation: Climate change adaptation refers to actions that help reduce vulnerability to the current or expected impacts of climate change like weather extremes and hazards, sea-level rise, biodiversity loss, or food and water insecurity.

Climate change: A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use.

Climate justice: Climate justice means putting equity and human rights at the core of decision-making and action on climate change. One aspect of climate justice relates to the unequal historical responsibility that countries bear in relation to the climate

⁷⁰ Feminist Development Policy For Just and Strong Societies Worldwide. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Government of Germany. <https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/153806/bmz-strategy-feminist-development-policy.pdf>

crisis. The concept suggests that the countries, industries, and businesses that have become wealthy from activities that emitted the most greenhouse gas emissions have a responsibility to help mitigate the impacts of climate change on those affected, particularly the most vulnerable countries and communities, who often are the ones that have contributed the least to the crisis.

Climate resilience: Climate resilience is the capacity of a community or environment to anticipate and manage climate impacts, minimize their damage, and recover and transform as needed after the initial shock.

Feminism: Feminism is the belief in and advocacy of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes. The common feature of the evolving socio-political movements and ideologies of feminism is their opposition to discrimination and oppression and their commitment to gender-equitable power relations. Feminist theories and movements which have evolved across the world over the last 200 years and more have taken diverse forms, depending on their historical and social context. This diversity of feminist movements is reflected in the different focuses of the movement (the core issue that is being addressed in a particular historical and socio-political context). In one context, ethnicity has been foregrounded to a greater extent alongside gender (e. g. Black feminism); in another, the emphasis is on religion or class (e. g. socialist feminism). One form of feminism puts sexual and reproductive health and rights front and centre, while others focus on advocacy for women's equal participation in economic or political life.

Gender: Gender draws attention to the social implications of gender identity and to the gendered relationships that are influenced by culture and society. The term describes how attributions, behaviours, expectations, attitudes and norms are associated with a specific gender identity. Gender is therefore distinct from sex. It is constructed by society and is therefore context-dependent and capable of change (see Glossary entries: Sex; Gender roles and stereotypes; Gender identity).

Gender development approaches: There are different scales and ways in which gender perspectives have been integrated into projects and policies. These approaches can vary based on the context, political engagement, project objectives, available resources, data limitations, availability of a supportive institutional framework, in addition to other contextual factors and challenges that can impact the design, implementation and long-term sustainability of envisioned strategies and interventions. If we look at the level of integration and implementation of gender perspectives, on one end of the spectrum are gender blind approaches, that overlook gender considerations in their programs and policies, whereas, on the other end are gender transformative approaches, which aim to address the root causes of inequalities and transform unequal gender relations and norms, integrating an intersectional feminist development perspective.

Gender-responsive development: This approach systematically integrates the specific needs of the genders into their measures (e. g. by providing childcare facilities during training events), but may not aim to actively transform existing gender-specific inequalities.

Gender-sensitive development: This approach acknowledges contextual conditions that define gender roles and responsibilities, and power relationships between different individuals, but does not challenge the underlying norms.

Gender- transformative development: This approaches brings about sustainable change in the gender inequalities that are the result of patriarchal power relations. To

that end, gender norms and power relations are critically analysed. The approaches aim to raise society's awareness of the drivers of inequalities in order, on this basis, to actively transform existing gender-specific inequalities: harmful norms, practices and stereotypes.

Gender equality: Gender equality is a key pillar of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. Gender equality – beyond (theoretical) equal treatment in law – must be understood as a political process. It aims to ensure that people's diverse interests, needs and priorities are taken into account so that equal treatment is realised in practice. This means that everyone is able to assert their rights, perform their duties and access opportunities on an equal basis. It is about eliminating deep-rooted forms of gender-specific discrimination and enabling political, economic and social participation by all genders based on equal rights.

Gender identity: Gender identity is the profound, innate and personal conception of oneself as belonging to one gender, several or none. This perceived gender may or may not correlate with the sex assigned at birth (see Glossary entry: Sex). Woman, man, trans, non-binary, and queer are examples of gender identity.

Gender roles and stereotypes: Gender roles encompass society's general expectations relating to the behaviour of specific genders and are culturally mediated. For example, women are often considered to be kind and caring by nature, whereas men are assertive and decisive. Non-compliance with these expectations or demands can often lead to exclusion and discrimination, up to and including hate and death threats. As these tend to be clichéd notions of what it means to be man or woman, the term "gender stereotypes" is used.

Intersectionality: Intersectionality has been used by post-colonial and post-structural feminists as a critical feminist proposal to disrupt essentialist conceptions of being a "woman." The term looks at how structural systems of gender, race, ethnicity, class, caste, religion, sexual identity, age, disability, origin, and migration status exist within a hierarchy of power, as well as how they intersect with other forms of structural oppression such as racism, homophobia, and classism, among others⁷¹.

Intersectionality describes how different characteristics that give rise to discrimination against individuals are combined and become mutually reinforcing. This means that multiple forms of discrimination on the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social or national origin, disabilities, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or belonging to or being associated with a particular religion, for example, cannot be viewed as separate from each other or as merely cumulative; instead, new modes of discrimination emerge at the

intersections between them. For example, a migrant woman from a marginalised caste or a minority religion experiences discrimination not only as a woman due to society's patriarchal structures, but also as a migrant and as a person belonging to a minority group of a certain caste or religion. The interaction of these multiple power systems of **patriarchy**, casteism, classism and racism produces a new form of layered discrimination: discrimination against a migrant women. An intersectional approach puts the perspective of the marginalised person or group front and centre and takes into account the interaction of diverse inequalities resulting from different power systems (e.g. racism, classism). Intersectionality is thus a helpful tool in gaining a holistic overview of social inequalities and assists in addressing them.

71 Kimberly Crenshaw 1989, 1991, Patricia Gill Collins 1998

Leave no one behind: Leave no one behind (LNOB) is the core pledge made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations. All member states undertake to leave no one behind and thus to focus particularly on addressing the needs of marginalised persons and groups. To that end, it is essential to eliminate discriminatory laws, policies and social norms that undermine people's rights and limit their capacity for action.

LGBTQI+: The abbreviation "LGBTQI+" stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, inter-sex and queer persons. The plus sign (+) at the end recognises that there are other gender identities and sexual orientations that are not mentioned specifically in the abbreviation. LGBTQI+ persons continue to experience violence and discrimination everywhere in the world.

Marginalised groups: include those experiencing poverty and social exclusion, bullying, mental health difficulties and/or special educational needs, students at risk of early school leaving, as well as some groups of migrants and minorities. Such groups need a distinct focus on processes and structures for their representation and participation

Patriarchy: The term "patriarchy" describes a system or social order which is structured around general male dominance over women and constructs a power relationship between the genders. In a patriarchal society, all the key values, norms and behavioural patterns are determined by men and aligned with their needs and interests.

Post-colonial: Colonial continuities and racist thinking are still present in development policy and cooperation to this day. The aim is to eliminate these continuities and ways of thinking from development cooperation and to establish an equal partnership between the Global North and the Global South. A post-colonial development policy involves continuous reflection on our own role and position in the power structure and critically analyses our own understanding of what "good development" means.

Racism: Racism is discrimination and prejudice against persons on the basis of origin, ethnicity, skin colour, religion/worldview, culture, name, language and other characteristics. Racism is closely linked to European colonial history and is founded on the fiction that, based on these characteristics, people belong to a particular race and these races can be ordered hierarchically. Even now, racist attributes are used for the systematic oppression of people all over the world. It often leads to mental abuse, physical violence and, in extreme cases, mass killings or genocide.

Sexism: Sexism is a form of discrimination based on a person's sex or gender. It often takes the form of prejudice and unequal treatment, but it can also include oppression and mental and physical abuse. In patriarchal structures in particular, men are generally assigned a higher status. Sexism goes further than this and may include the demeaning and devaluing of all persons with feminine traits; it can also affect queer and trans persons.

Sexual and gender-based violence: Gender-based violence (GBV) refers to harmful acts of violence that are directed at an individual based on their gender. GBV is a widespread everyday occurrence across all sectors of society. It is a serious human rights violation and a barrier to development. Women and girls in all their diversity are disproportionately (but not exclusively) affected. The term indicates that violence is rooted in the unequal power relations between the genders, in harmful gender norms and in the resulting experiences of structural discrimination and violence. GBV takes many forms, ranging from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) to digital violence, harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), child, early or forced marriage, conflict-related sexual violence, and social or structural violence. SGBV oc-

curs in many contexts and means sexual acts that are primarily about power and oppression and are imposed or forced on someone against their will or without their consent. Sexual violence covers a broad spectrum and includes sexual harassment, rape and sexual abuse.

Women's (rights) movement: The women's rights movement, or women's movement, is a social movement which advocates for women's equality in all sectors of society, politics and the economy. It encompasses women's efforts to achieve emancipation, freedom and equality, as well as women's advocacy for their rights.

Vulnerability: Vulnerability is defined as a function of the sensitivity of humans or ecosystems to the adverse impacts of climate change and their adaptive capacity, that is, their capacity to bounce back after suffering those impacts. Sensitivity to adverse consequences and adaptive capacities are unequally distributed across society and locations, and thus, there is a need to recognise the differential vulnerabilities that result. Vulnerabilities to climate change are politically constituted and socially produced by drivers of exclusion and oppression that have shaped uneven contemporary cities⁷².

72 Castán Broto, 2024.



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Appendix 1: History of Women's Movements and Feminism in India

Period	Context	Features
19 th Century Early Social Reform Movements (1820s to 1915)	- Colonial ideology and hegemonic control; emergence of bourgeois society. - Reformation of women was focused on, rather than the reformation of the society. - Emphasis on education of women, while not entirely questioning the gendered expectations of housewives and mothers.	- Social reform movement, propelled by first wave feminism of the west - Driven by educated elite (men) influenced by western liberalism, rationalism, yet defending the "traditional". - Targeting social challenges like, polytheism, polygamy, casteism, sati, child marriage, illiteracy - Expanded women's role within the public realm, beyond the traditional roles of wives, mothers confined within the private space
Pre-independence Nationalist Movements: (1915-1947)	- Period of Nationalist movements - Women were not only fighting against the British colonialism but also against patriarchy within their homes	- Large-scale mobilisation of women during Gandhian mass movements (Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience, Quit India) of freedom struggle. Women's presence was legitimised and expanded in public activities. - Women exercised leadership, especially when men at the forefront of the nationalist movements, were in prison. - First wave of organised woman's organisation
1947	- India gains independence in 1947. In the aftermath of partition, the country witnessed mass migration and communal - Right to vote for women and complete equality recognised in the constitution of India.	
Post-independence (1947-1960s)	- Focus on economic and political upliftment of women, through access to education, eradication of poverty, generating jobs and creating awareness on rights. - Women's rights subsumed into state-led nation-building	- Women as beneficiaries of welfare. - The Hindu Marriage Act legalised monogamy, outlawed polygamy, conferred equal rights of divorce to men and women. - Legalisation of inter-cast and interreligious marriages, Child marriage made a punishable offense.
Economic crisis (late 1960s – 1975)	- Economic stagnation, rising costs of living, increasing landlessness, and broad dissatisfaction in rural as well as urban contexts. - Women's rights were framed through a state-led reform agenda that reinforced dominant ideals of national integrity, modernity, and progress - State of emergency declared in 1975	- Women's mobilisation shaped by class struggles and emerging feminist critique - Beginning of shift from women's welfare to development approach on women's issues - Women recognised as productive contributors of the economy - Maoist women's organisation focused on anti-dowry campaigns, protesting eve-teasing, obscenity, price rise and fore fronted the issues faced by women in slums.

Key reforms & Policies

- 1829: Abolition of Sati
- 1872: Native Marriage Act/ Civil Marriage Act (raised marriageable age of boys to 18 and girls to 14, allowed widow remarriage, intercaste marriage, forbade polygamy)
- 1891: The age of consent act

Major Organisations/ Actors

- Women organisations supporting reforms at regional level: Pandita Rama Bai's Sharda Sadan (1892) in Poona;; Shri Mahipatramrupramanathashram in Ahmedabad (1892), Shri Zoroastrian Mandal in Bombay (1903), maternity and child welfare league in Baroda (1914), BhaginiSamaj in Poona (1916).
- National level organisations: Bharat Mahila Parihad (1917), Bharat Stri Mahamandal (1909)

- 1929: 'Child Marriage Restraint Act' or Sharda Act passed: prohibits child marriage, raised the age of marriage to 14 (girls) and 18 (boys)

- Major organisations:
 - All-India Muslim Ladies' Conference (Anjuman) 1914
 - Between 1917-1927, post WW I:
 - 1917: Women's India Association (WIA)
 - 1925: National Council of Women in India (NCWI) and,
 - 1927: All India Women's Conference (AIWC).
- Women were active participants in freedom movements, such as Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Devi Chattopadhyay.

violence.

- 1954: Special Marriage Act
- 1955-56: Hindu Code of Bill.
 - 1956: The Hindu Succession Act,
 - 1956: The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act
 - 1961: The Dowry Prohibition Act
- 1961: The Maternity Benefits Act
- 1951-1956: First Five-year plan
- 1956-61: Second Five-Year Plan: organising Mahila Mandals (women's groups)

- 1954: The National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) was formed - wing of Communist Party of India (CPI) and affiliated to the Women's International Domestic Federation (WIDF)
- All India Women's Conference (AIWC) continues advocacy

- Green revolution: scientific agricultural techniques applied to improve Agri yield
- Progressive Organisation of Women, formed in 1973-74 by Maoist women
- 1974: Towards Equality report published by The official Status of Women Commission published their report- landmark in exposing gender inequality.
- Third (1961- 66) and Fourth (1966- 1971) Five-Year Plans and interim plan: Focus on Women's Education

- 1970: Chipko Movement, early ecofeminist movement
- 1971: CPI (M) set up Shramik Mahila Sangathana to mobilise lower middle class and working women impacted by economic crisis and economic hardship.
- 1975: First International Women's Day celebration by Maoist women's organisation in Pune and Bombay.

Period	Context	Features
Resurgence of Women's movements (1975 to 1990)	– Un Women's Decade (1976-1985)-promoting gender equality, development, and peace for women worldwide. – Feminist resurgence across India – Rise of women's welfare organisations – Shift towards development and empowerment of women	– Voice against liquor consumption, missing girl children, VAW, women's work – Focus on providing services to individual women to claim their entitled rights granted by law- recognition and realisation of rights – Dalit women's and marginalised women's rights, women's representation in media, land rights, price rise, political participation of women – Institutionalization of Women's Studies and creation of women's cells in universities and colleges – Reorganisation of mahila mandals (women's groups) to better implement welfare schemes. The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) undertook several welfare measures through voluntary sector. – Measures to prioritise women's education and maternal and child health services,
Globalisation and Rise of NGOs 1990s	– Economic liberalisation – Rise of NGOs – Shift from women's development approach to empowerment approach- women considered as equal partners in development processes – New intersectional voices	– Growth of NGOs and donor-driven programs – Assertion of Dalit, Adivasi, minority women's voices – Caste, Sexuality, religion enter feminist agenda
Intersectionality expansion (2000s-2010s)	– Rise of Dalit feminism, queer activism, digital interventions – Policy focus on awareness and capacity building for gender-responsive planning — but it remained inadequately institutionalized and poorly operationalized in practice.	– Feminism intersects with caste, religion, sexuality and environment. – Major protests: Gujarat riots (2002), Nirbhaya (2012).
Fourth-Wave & Digital Feminism (2017–Present)	– Women's empowerment has become a core theme across multiple sectors. – Digital media expands feminist space – State vision: Sashakt Naari – Viksit Bharat: Shift towards women-led empowerment	– #MeToo India (2018) exposes workplace harassment. – Intersectionality central (gender + caste + class + sexuality)

Key reforms & Policies

- 1981: First National Conference of Women's Studies (SNDT Mumbai, 1981)
- 1982: UNESCO meeting of experts on women's studies and social sciences in Asia, held in New Delhi
- 1986: Indian parliament adopted a national policy on education, which also focused on education for women's equality
- 1988: National Perspective Plan for Women, Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).
- Five Year Plans:
- Sixth (1980-85): multidisciplinary approach with focus on health, education and employment of women
- Seventh (1985-90): continuation of development programs focused on economic and social status upliftment

Major Organisations/ Actors

- Several autonomous groups were formed which focussed housework division of work, party politics, rape and deaths links to dowry
- Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) was founded- focus on providing full employment and self-reliance to women. Granting social security to employees
- 1980s- 1990s: Narmada Bachao Andolan, women at the forefront of this mass movement.
- Emergence of Mahila Milan & slum federations; early urban women's groups

- 1992: National Commission for women was set up.
- 1993: 73rd and 74th amendment of the Indian constitution included reservations of seats for women in panchayats and municipalities- 33% reservation in urban and rural local bodies.
- Five Year Plans:
- Eight (1992-97): from 'development' to 'empowerment' focus.
 - Setting up of National Commission for women
 - Rashtriya Mahila Kosh- micro credit needs of poor and assetless women
 - National Nutrition Policy
 - Mahila Samridhi Yojana
 - Indira Mahila Yojana

- SEWA expands
- Dalit Women's collectives: National Federation of Dalit Women formed in 1995
- NGO sector grows (development, right)
- Kudumbashree (1998- recent), A women's community network integrating poverty alleviation, microfinance, and sustainable development.

- Legal reforms post-2012 Nirbhaya case.
- Five-Year Plans
- Ninth (1997-2002): Focus on empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes and Minorities)
 - Developing Panchayati Raj institutions
 - SHGs
- Tenth (2002-2007): Focus on women's access to information, resources and services. Gender-responsive Budgeting focus
- Eleventh (2007-2012): advancing gender equity goals (gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming)
- Twelfth (2012-2017): Focus on health, education, urbanisation, and governance. Special focus on aiding single women

- Campaigns: Pink Chaddi (2009), Blank Noise, Jagori's Safe Delhi Campaign, growth of Safetipin and gender audits
- Dalit & queer collectives.
- LGBTQ+ activism: Voices Against 377.
- Kudumbashree, Navdanya, ecofeminist scholarship.

- Post-12th Five-Year Plan: gender budgeting integrated under NITI Aayog.
- Continuation of gender-responsive planning efforts, though limited by funding and lack of expertise.

- Digital activism: #MeToo India, Pinjra Tod, Dalit Women Fight, student feminist movements.
- Digital activism around urban mobility and public space.
- Rural green feminism, women-led SHGs driving climate resilience

ABOUT SUDSC II

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is implementing the project "Sustainable Urban Development - Smart Cities II" (SUDSC II) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project supports the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India, and the partner state governments of Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana in developing resilient, sustainable approaches and solutions for sustainable urban development by considering disaster risk management and the principles of 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) and including aspects of gender. The project supports the cities of Guwahati, Mangaluru, Bengaluru, Kochi, Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore, and Manikonda in implementing the concepts of risk-informed, integrated, resilient, inclusive and sustainable urban development.

