



Prepared by CAF - Development
Bank of Latin America,
Inter-American Development
Bank (IDB), and UN-Habitat for
the Urban 20 (U20)



GENDER INEQUALITIES IN CITIES

2020



Cataloging-in-Publication data provided by the
Inter-American Development Bank
Felipe Herrera Library

Gender inequalities in cities / Nora Libertun de Duren, Catarina Mastellaro, Pablo Brassiolo, Elena Cardona-Papiol, Edgar Lara, Angie Palacios, Xuesai Ma, Myles Sven Hallin; editors, Angela Mwai, David Thomas.

p. cm. — (IDB Monograph ; 750)

Includes bibliographic references.

1. Sex discrimination against women. 2. Women-Housing. 3. Women-Employment. 4. Women-Political activity. 5. Gender mainstreaming. 6. Equality. 7. Women-Social conditions. 8. Women-Economic conditions.

I. Libertun de Duren, Nora. II. Mastellaro, Catarina. III. Brassiolo, Pablo. IV. Cardona-Papiol, Elena. V. Lara, Edgar. VI. Palacios, Angie. VII. Ma, Xuesai. VIII. Hallin, Myles Sven. IX. Mwai, Angela, editor. X. Thomas, David, editor. XI. Inter-American

Development Bank. Housing and Urban Development Division. XII. CAF Development Bank of Latin America.

XIII. United Nations Human Settlements Programme. XIV. Series.

IDB-MG-750

Gender Inequalities in Cities

JEL CODES:

J16 Economics of Gender • Non-labor Discrimination

O18 Urban, Rural, Regional, and Transportation Analysis • Housing • Infrastructure

R2 Household Analysis

KEYWORDS:

gender inequalities, women’s empowerment, inclusive cities

ABSTRACT:

This White Paper elaborates on gender related challenges in urban planning and governance from three major perspectives regarding women’s access to city space and resources: service, political, and economic accessibility. First of all, in the absence of gender-sensitive urban planning, women can see their access to services restricted by limited access to land and affordable housing due to discriminatory legal and cultural constraints, increased disease burden due to the lack of adequate basic services, and limited mobility due to safety issues and to the costs incurred in using public transportation. As for political accessibility, there is an array of specific barriers and vulnerabilities that women face in the form of gender-based discrimination that results in unequal community and public participation, and limited access to information. Gender inequality also limits women’s access to economic resources and opportunities, and the possibility for them to realize their full potential in the job market, either as salaried workers or as entrepreneurs. As urbanization usually does not provide the same benefits to individuals from different genders, this paper gives practical recommendations for national and local governments on how to mainstream gender in urban planning, regulations and governance to promote cities that are inclusive and cohesive.

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Urban 20 (U20) is a new city diplomacy initiative developed under the leadership of, Horacio Rodríguez Larreta, Mayor of the City of Buenos Aires, Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris and Chair of C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40).



Launched on December 12, 2017 at the One Planet Summit in Paris, the initiative is chaired by the cities of Buenos Aires and Paris, and convened by C40, in collaboration with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG).

U20 seeks to highlight the expertise of cities in a range of global development challenges and to raise the profile of urban issues within the G20. In 2018, U20 offered solutions and clear recommendations for consideration by national leaders ahead of the 2018 G20 Summit and it culminated in the inaugural U20 Mayors Summit in Buenos Aires on October 29-30, which represented a stepping stone towards ensuring a dialogue between cities and the G20.

In total, 26 cities have participated in Urban 20 in 2018: Barcelona, Beijing, Berlin, City of Buenos Aires, Chicago, Durban, Hamburg, Houston, Jakarta, Johannesburg, London, Los Angeles, Madrid, Mexico City, Milan, Montreal, Moscow, New York, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, São Paulo, Seoul, Sydney, Tokyo, and Tshwane.

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***Gender Inequalities in Cities* is a document prepared by CAF, IDB and UN-Habitat as a voluntary contribution to enrich the discussions of the Urban 20 process.**



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IMG 1. Source: Oleksii, Hrecheniuk. Ballerina doing splits in the air on the square. 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

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Executive summary

going rapid urbanization, which brings about not only opportunities for scale development, but also challenges, such as socio-economic inequalities, exclusion and segregation. Men and women, boys and girls in different social contexts and situations experience cities in very different ways, and face various challenges and needs that cities have to address. Specifically, the negative consequences of rapid urbanization are likely to influence women, particularly in terms of safety and adequate mobility in cities, gender-based violence in public spaces, disproportionate domestic responsibility, gendered labor division, unequal access to resources and limited public participation.

This document elaborates on gender related challenges in urban planning and governance from three major perspectives regarding accessibility: service, political, and economic accessibility.

First of all, in the absence of gender-sensitive urban planning, women can see their access to services restricted by limited access to land and affordable housing due to discriminatory legal and cultural constraints, increased disease burden due to the lack of adequate basic services, and limited mobility due to safety issues and to the costs incurred in using public transportation. As for political accessibility, there is an array of specific barriers and vulnerabilities that women in cities face in the form of gender-based discrimination that results in unequal community and public participation, and limited access to information. Gender inequality also limits women's participation in the economy and the benefits from urban interaction. The economic dimension of women's empowerment, therefore, refers to access to economic resources and opportunities, and the possibility for them to realize their full potential in the job market, either as salaried workers or as entrepreneurs. To sum up, urbanization usually does not provide the same benefits to individuals from different genders. These three dimensions were selected due to their importance, but also to facilitate the analysis and the identification of targeted interventions. The authors are aware that many of the efforts to achieve gender equality in cities will require multi-sectoral interventions as well as the collaboration between different actors and levels of governance.

IMG 2 (background). Source: ChameleonsEye. Silhouette of one young woman walks alone in a dark tunnel. Violence against women concept. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



IMG 3. Source: UN-Habitat. Women empowerment, 2019. Urban 20 White Paper

In order to enhance the sustainable development of cities that are inclusive and cohesive, it is essential to mainstream gender in urban planning, regulations and governance.

Achieving gender equality is also explicitly upheld by the Sustainable Development Goals in SDG 5, New Urban Agenda and other international frameworks, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. While many development agreements are adopted at the national level, many of the actions therein fall upon local authorities who are primarily responsible for many of the areas outlined in this document. Therefore, national and local governments should make joint efforts to recognize and respond to the different needs, concerns and interests of urban women, men, girls and boys. It is vital that national authorities empower local authorities and endow them with appropriate decision-making power and financial resources. Similarly, local authorities should consult with national authorities to ensure efficient and effective service delivery and to give feedback on outcomes of national programs.

In summary, this document examines gender related challenges in cities and gives practical recommendations for national and local governments on how to mainstream gender and achieve gender equality in cities through urban regulations, governance, public policies and other directives.

Glossary

Discrimination

Any distinction, exclusion or restriction which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, by any person, of human rights, and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Empowerment

The process of gaining access to and developing one’s capacities with a view to actively participating in shaping one’s own life and that of one’s community in economic, socio-cultural, political and religious terms.

Equal Rights

A truly egalitarian situation in which women and men share equal economic, political, civil, cultural and social rights.

Gender

The roles, duties and responsibilities which are culturally or socially ascribed to women, men, girls and boys.

Gender analysis

A systematic analytical process to identify, understand, and describe gender differences, and the relevance of gender roles and power dynamics in a specific context.

Gender-based violence (GBV)

Any act or threat of physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual violence that is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships between women, girls, men and boys.

Gender discrimination

The systematic, unfavorable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies rights, opportunities or resources.

Gender equality

Equal enjoyment of rights and access to opportunities and outcomes, including control of resources, by women, men, girls and boys.

Gender equity

Equivalence in life outcomes for women and men, recognizing their different needs and interests, which may require a fair redistribution of power, resources, opportunities and responsibilities.

Gender gap

The differences between women and men in access to and control over resources, especially as reflected in political, intellectual, cultural or economic attainments and attitudes.

Gender relations

Hierarchical relations of power between women and men, which tend to disadvantage women.

Gender roles

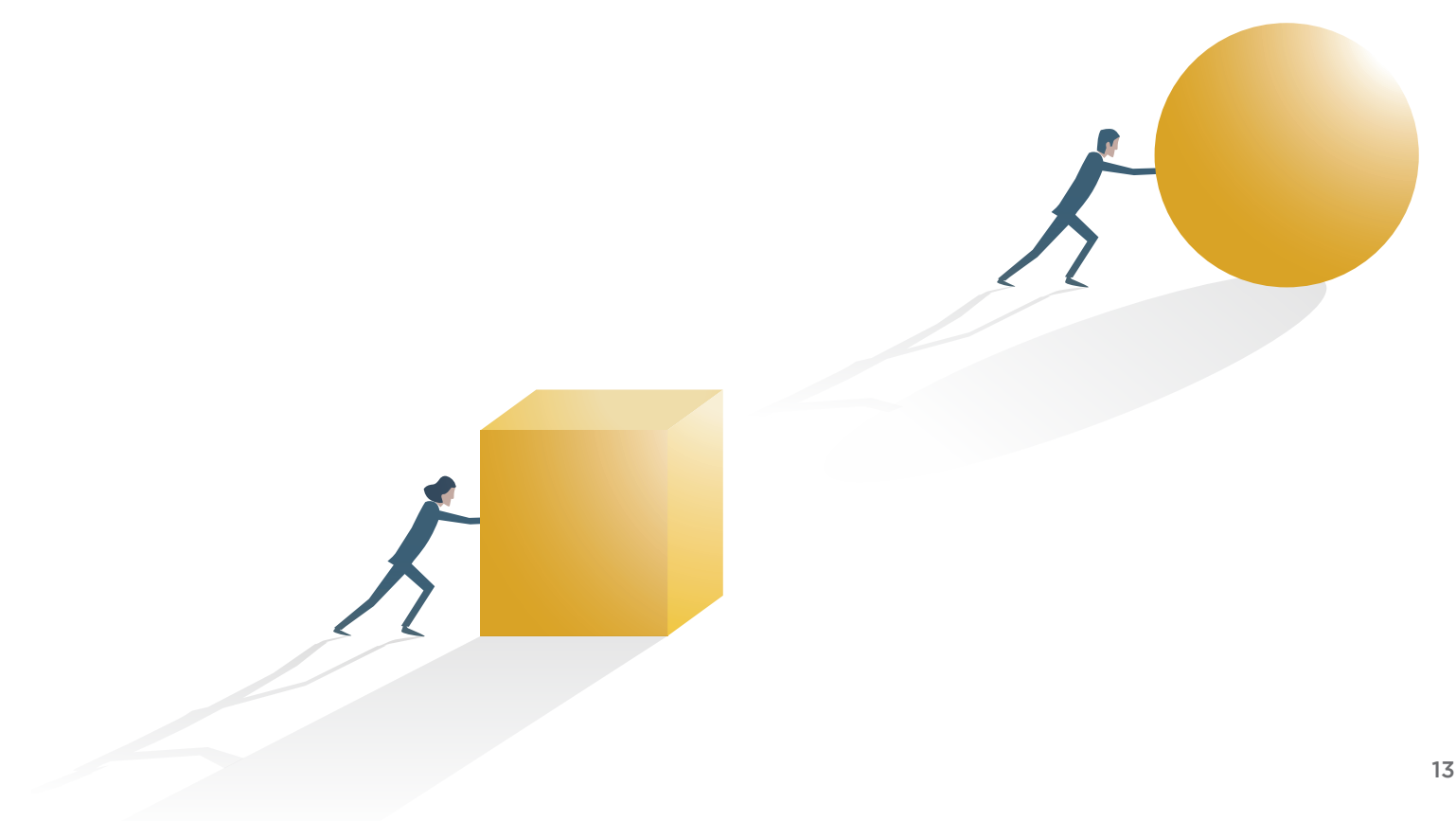
Activities, tasks and responsibilities that are considered by society as ‘natural’ for women or men.

Sex

Biological differences between men and women.

Sexual harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.



Introduction

Rapid and massive urbanization is one of the prominent trends in our contemporary world.

It is estimated that over 50% of the world’s population is living in cities, and this figure is projected to increase to 60% by 2030 (UN-Habitat, 2016). While urbanization brings opportunities for efficient economies of scales on many levels, this does not necessarily translate into equal and adequate urban quality of life for all; instead, urbanization has resulted in marked socio-economic inequalities, exclusion and segregation. Men and women, boys and girls experience cities in very different ways due to gendered social rules, norms and culture(s), subtle discrimination instances against women, institutionalized gender bias in different agencies in cities, and structural asymmetrical distribution of power and resources between men and women. Moreover, the concept of “women” refers to a heterogeneous group, where social and personal circumstances, such as being old or young, being a single mother, or belonging to an ethnic or religious minority, shape the challenges and needs they face in cities in various ways. Similarly, people whose gender identity does not fall into the binary male-female schema or have different sexual orientations are also likely to have a differentiated experience of urbanization, public spaces, urban resources and city services. The negative consequences of rapid urbanization are likely to disproportionately influence women in different situations and people of other genders. Some of the challenges facing urban women are: lack of safety and adequate mobility in cities; gender-based violence in public spaces; disproportionate domestic responsibility and gendered labor division; unequal access to information and education; and exclusion from political and socio-economic participation.

Achieving gender equality is also explicitly upheld by the Sustainable Development Goals in SDG 5 and other international frameworks, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Therefore, urban policy makers and planners should make efforts to recognize and respond to the different needs, concerns and interests of urban women, men, girls and boys (UN-Habitat, 2015).

Gender equality is at the center of building an inclusive and cohesive society that supports sustainable and steady urban development.

Cities, as the hubs of economic growth and social change, can become incubators for positive transformations and sustainable social development. Sustainable Development Goal 11, “Sustainable cities and communities”, aims at enhancing “inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries” (SDG 11, Target 11.3).Indicator 11.3.2 measures the participation of civil society in urban planning and governance, including women’s groups, and Goal 11.7 calls for the provision of universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, the New Urban Agenda, adopted in Ecuador in 2016 by all Member States, outlines the vision for urban development by 2030. A key component of this Agenda is the vision statement, which envisages cities that “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal rights in all fields, as well as in leadership at all decision-making levels, by ensuring decent work and equal pay for equal work, or work of equal value, for all women by preventing and eliminating all forms of discrimination, violence and harassment against women and girls in private and public spaces” (13.c). These international agendas clearly prioritize women and girls’ empowerment in cities, and the potential of urbanization as a transformative force to achieve gender equality.

This document examines gender related challenges in cities around three major aspects: gender inequalities in service accessibility; political accessibility; and economic accessibility, with case studies in each section. These three dimensions were selected due to their importance, but also to facilitate the analysis and the identification of targeted interventions. The authors are aware that many of the efforts to achieve gender equality in cities will require multi-sectoral interventions as well as the collaboration between different actors and levels of governance. Following the elaboration on the substantive topics, this document gives practical recommendations for national and local governments on how to mainstream gender and achieve gender equality in cities, through urban regulations, governance, public policies and other directives. The recommendation section also showcases other two best practice examples about Gender-Responsive Budgeting and a Gender Indicator System.



IMG 4. Source: Ciudad Mujer, 2019.
Woman Ciudad Mujer

Linking local and national authorities

While many development agreements are made at the national level, including the SDGs and New Urban Agenda, many of the actions fall upon local authorities. As such, in order to achieve the vision and goals set by these international agendas, it is vital to localize these actions and targets. Local authorities have to play a pivotal role in the achievement of the SDGs, in particular the urban targets and SDG 11.

In urban areas, local authorities are primarily responsible for many of the issues outlined in this document. Water and sanitation, transport, public spaces and land-use planning are all managed by local authorities. Similarly, community participation in urban planning and management is primarily the responsibility of local authorities. Meanwhile, broader political access, housing and access to finance, employment and education are generally the responsibility of the national government. Notwithstanding that, it is clear that local and national authorities must work closely together to empower women in cities and improve gender equality.

It is vital, then, for national authorities to empower local authorities with appropriate decision-making powers and financial resources. Local authorities should be involved in national-level decision-making that has an impact on their work. Similarly, local authorities must consult with national authorities to ensure efficient and effective service delivery, and give feedback on the outcomes of national programs.

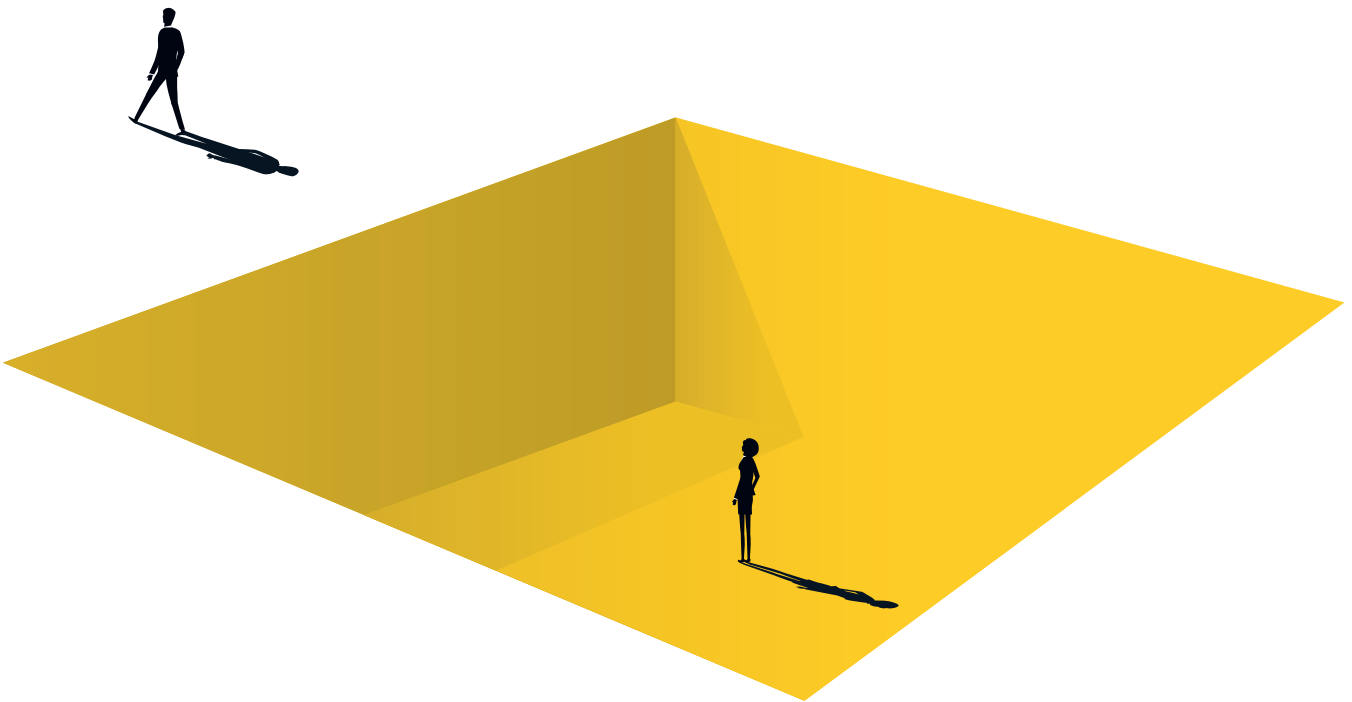
1 SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY

Cities can promote better opportunities than rural areas for women and girls, as they provide more options for women’s personal and economic development. As cities tend to be more open to social change, urbanization is often associated with greater independence for women, as they are less impacted by conservative cultural norms and have more opportunities to challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes. However, gender inequalities persist in most cities due to existing patriarchal social structures, and urban policies that fail to acknowledge that women and men face different challenges in access, which can prevent urban contexts from promoting gender equality and inclusive growth.

In the absence of gender-sensitive urban planning, women can see their access to cities — and to the opportunities they offer — limited by access to land and affordable housing issues, increased disease-burden due to the lack of adequate basic services, and limited mobility due to safety issues and to the cost of public transportation.



IMG 6. Source: Ciudad Mujer, 2019.
Woman Ciudad Mujer



The promotion of urban policies and targeted investments that recognize and address existing gender stereotypes and the specific needs of women is crucial to ensure that women are empowered and can equally benefit from urbanization.

Beyond ensuring women’s equal access to cities, gender-responsive urban planning benefits all citizens, as it promotes the development of cities that are inclusive not only for women and men, but for everyone throughout the human life cycle.



IMG 7. Source: UN-Habitat, 2019.
Urban 20 White Paper

Discriminatory laws, gender stereotypes and urban development

Patriarchal social structures, such as formal laws and policies (e.g., divorce, inheritance and wage discrimination), as well as cultural norms and attitudes (e.g., the idea that women are better in the domestic space and that men should be the breadwinners for their families), give men better resources and reproduce gender stereotypes, which remain present in most cities. The persistence of these structures prevents women from accessing land, but also from having a political voice on urban development and from feeling empowered to demand specific services. Without the representation of women and of people from different backgrounds in city planning and management, due to cultural norms or to the assumption that city planning is a “neutral discipline”, the urban landscape is designed in a way that reinforces and exacerbates existing gender inequalities and compromises women’s access to urban services.

Male-dominance in urban planning has often led to urban forms that separate residential and commercial areas, and prioritize cars over public transportation. Similarly, the gendered division of labor and the existence of wage discrimination make it harder for women, particularly in the most vulnerable groups, to afford to rent or purchase a house in a better location or to access automobiles.

In this context, a long commute, combined with limited public transportation options, limits women’s mobility, preventing them from accessing different services and certain parts of their cities. In the absence of affordable childcare and early-childhood education facilities in strategic locations, these cities also contribute to the replication of gender roles, such as the assumption that women have to perform more domestic work than men and make a “choice” between their career and family life.

Housing and security of tenure

There is limited data on women’s land rights, but studies suggest that most land titles are still registered under men’s names (UN-Habitat 2013).

UNICEF estimates that women account only for 25% of the landowners in Latin America, both in urban and rural contexts (Chant and McIlwaine 2015).

In addition, women face discrimination in accessing and securing housing due to persisting cultural practices, lack of legislation promoting joint-titling, and the existence of discriminatory laws, particularly inheritance laws, that prevent women from having equal rights, and perpetuate traditional practices in the event of divorce or widowhood (Rakodi 2015). This is particularly relevant for women living in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, where they tend to face higher restrictions in relation to their property and inheritance rights (World Bank 2018).

Figure 1: Core of assets managed by women, according to the existence of legal restrictions on their property rights, by region. A score of less than 100 depicts at least one legal constraint on women’s property rights. Source: Women Business and the Law database (WB, 2018)

Managing assets average score by region:

Europe & Central Asia	100
OECD high income	98.75
Latin America & Caribbean	97.42
East Asia & Pacific	79.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	73.62
South Asia	55
Middle East & North Africa	45.26

Reforming national and municipal legislation to ensure women’s land and housing rights is; therefore, key to ensure their equal access in cities. Raising awareness about women’s rights is also critical, since in many cases, despite the existence of formal laws promoting gender equality towards land rights and joint tenancy in marriage, women still lag behind men in land title registration due to lack of information.

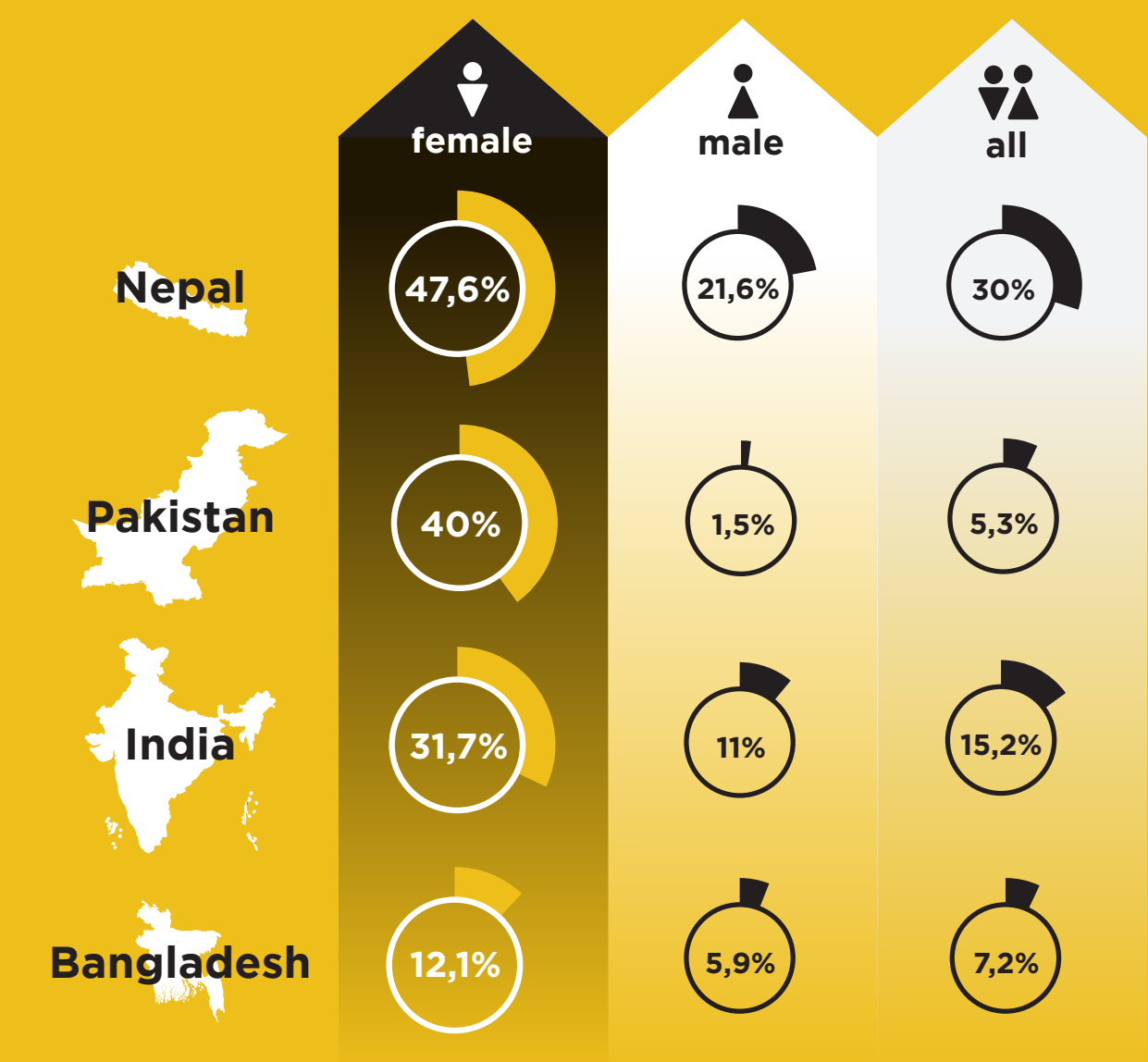
Studies show that security of tenure is important to promote women’s intra-household negotiation power, which can translate into them being less exposed to gender-based violence, either due to a change in men’s attitudes (Amaral 2017) or to the fact that they can feel less vulnerable and more inclined to leave abusive relationships and domestic (or intimate partner) violence (Moser 2016).



Beyond protecting women’s housing rights and contributing to the prevention of gender-based violence, security of tenure can also promote women’s economic empowerment and contribute to the reduction of income inequality, as women with housing ownership (or some form of security of tenure) can access bank loans more easily, which could, in turn, enable them to develop their own businesses (IADB 2013). Since home-based work accounts for a significant share of female urban employment in some cities, in particular in Asia, where it is estimated at 47.6% in Nepal, 40% in Pakistan, and 31.7% in India (Chen and Sinha 2016), security of tenure – as well as adequate housing design – directly impact women for whom a home is also a workplace, affecting their productivity and their livelihood security.

Figure 2. Source: Chen and Sinha 2016.

Home-based workers as percentage of:

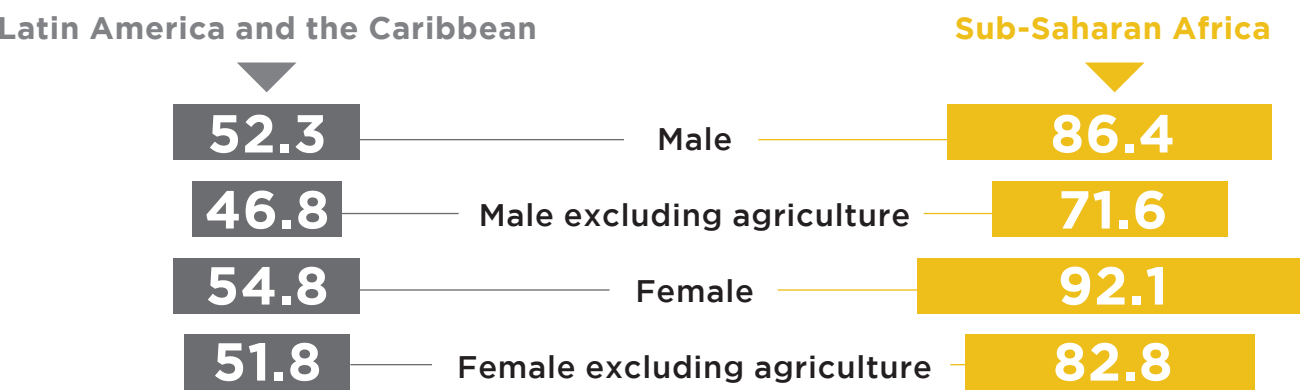


Housing location also affects women disproportionately. Mixed land use makes it easier for women to balance paid work with their domestic responsibilities (Taccoli and Satterwhite 2013), as it tends to reduce the distance between housing, workplace and public services. Conversely, when cities expand without adequate planning, poor households headed by women are the most disadvantaged, as they tend to be located in precarious neighborhoods, with limited access to efficient means of public transportation. In Puebla, Mexico, for instance, more than two thirds of the households in affordable housing units located more than 30 kilometers away from the city are headed by women. Their daily commute takes between two and three hours, which limits their options for personal and economic development (Libertun de Duren 2018). In addition, these women usually make long journeys at early or late hours, when the frequency of public transportation is very low, increasing their exposure to sexual violence in their daily commute.

It is also worth noting, despite an increasing percentage of female-headed households throughout the world, that women still find it more difficult than men to access credit for housing, due to discrimination, inequality in wage compensation, and the disproportionate percentage of female workers in the informal sector in the case of developing countries, which can prevent them from accessing well-located housing. In the United States, for instance, where women earn around 76 cents on the dollar compared to men, the gender wage gap in housing affordability can be as high as 148.6% in the case of Seattle, where women can only afford to buy a little more than one third of the homes men can afford (Estatey 2018). In the case of cities in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Sub-Saharan Africa, one of the main barriers to women’s access to credit is their disproportionate participation in the informal sector in relation to men, with the gap between female and male informal workers in the urban sector in these regions estimated at 2.5% and 11.2%, respectively (ILO 2018).

Figure 3. Source: ILO 2018

Share of informal employment in total employment by sex and region:



Many countries have acknowledged these issues and started promoting housing subsidies targeting female-headed households. Brazil, for example, has combined a progressive legal framework, at the national and municipal levels, to protect women's housing and land rights, with a nationwide social housing program, called My House My Life, that prioritizes low income female-headed households and protects women's housing rights in the case of divorce

(Federal Law MPV 561/2012).



IMG 8. Source: Brastock. Woman inside her old and simple house in a neighborhood of Poções, Bahia (Brasil). May, 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



IMG 9. Source: Casiano, Marcos. A poor young woman sitting out in front of home in the impoverished community of Planaltina, Goiás, (Brasil). December, 2018. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Mobility



Having a young child in the house will increase the number of trips a woman makes, for example:



LONDON
United Kingdom
(IDB 2015)



BUENOS AIRES
Argentina
(Ochoa et al 2014)

As women tend to have less access to automobiles due to cultural and socio-economic reasons, they rely more on public transport than men. In Latin America and the Caribbean, on average over 50% of public transportation users are women and, in the case of Argentina, women represent over 60% of the public transport users in the city of Buenos Aires (IADB 2017). However, most of the existing public transportation systems in the region are not designed with the needs of women in mind (IADB 2015). This can be observed when buses and pedestrian routes do not take into consideration the specific needs of caregivers travelling with baby trolleys (which tend to be women), or when bus stops are not designed to prevent long walks to commercial and employment centers, which can be particularly dangerous at night on unsupervised and poorly lit roads. The lack of transportation services planned according to the specific demands of men and women is due to existing cultural norms and gender stereotypes, which have traditionally associated women to domestic spaces, preventing them from being employed in the transportation sector and from participating in decision-making processes to contribute to designing better solutions so as to enhance their mobility.



IMG 10. Source: Karavaev, Vlad. Peruvian woman in traditional boat floats on water street in Belen. Boats are only mode of transport in a poor area of Iquitos, Peru. April 29, 2010. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



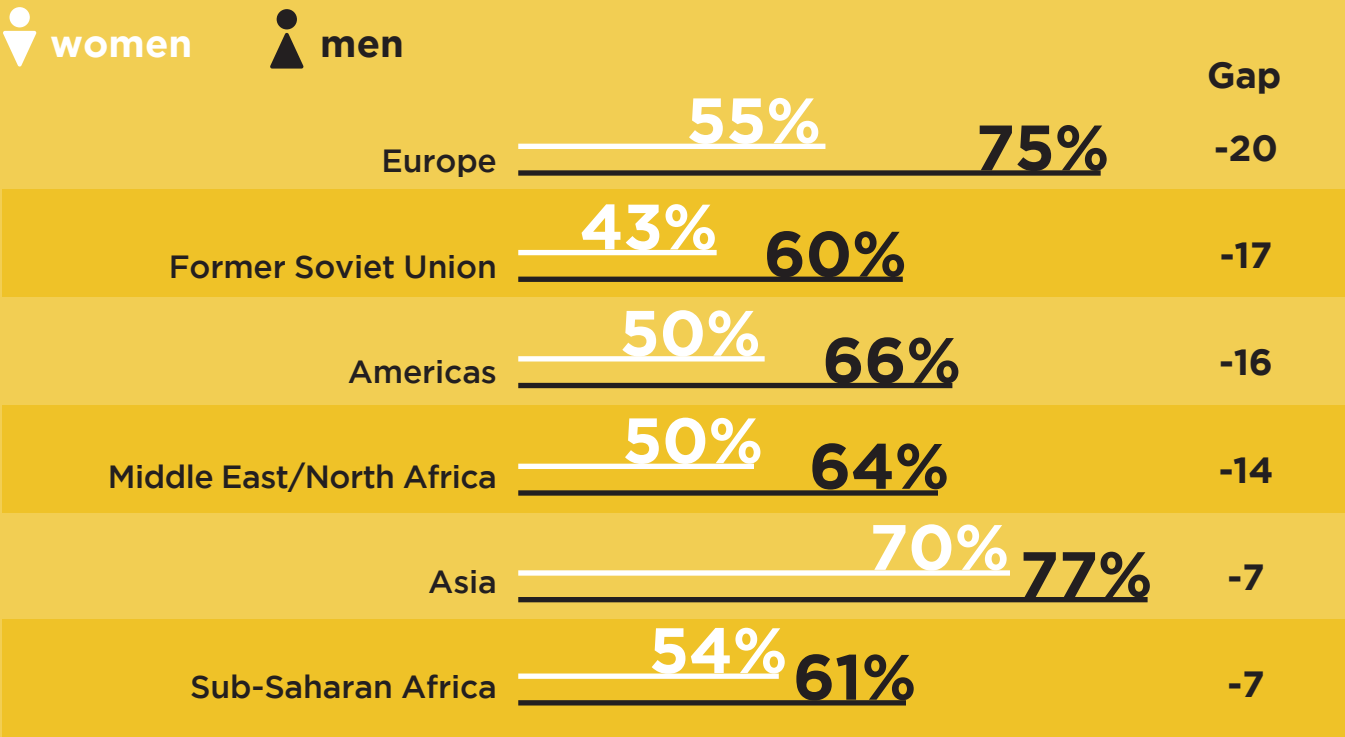
IMG 11. Source: TonyV3112. Woman on bike in Shanghai (China). 2018. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



IMG 12. Source: Drop of Light. Woman with a child in New York City subway (USA). 2016. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020.

Beyond acknowledging the differences in travel patterns between men and women, inclusive mobility policies need to contain preventive actions against gender-based violence on public transportation, as women are more exposed to sexual harassment, which prevents them from enjoying equal access to mobility.

According to a global survey (Gallup 2011), worldwide women feel less safe than men walking alone at night:



In Mexico City, over **65%** of women using public transportation have experienced sexual harassment while travelling (IADB 2015).

A survey with girls living in Australia found that **30%** of them limit their movements and avoid taking public transportation when they are unaccompanied after dark (Plan 2016).



IMG 13. Source: IDB. *Bájale al Acoso. Iniciativa Quito* (Ecuador). 2019

Just as the lack of gender-responsive planning can make travelling with small children too complicated for women, or the lack of affordable and integrated public transport fare systems (allowing users to take multiple rides within a period of time) can make public transportation more expensive for women than for men, safety issues also restrict women’s mobility.

In view of these challenges, the city of Quito, in Ecuador, has been implementing a program called “Bájale al Acoso” (Spanish for “Stop harassment”), an initiative that promotes the prevention of sexual harassment in public transportation and improves the response to cases of violence against women. The initiative includes training and awareness activities with male and female staff (including bus drivers and workers in construction sites) to raise awareness and prevent gender-based violence in public transportation, as well as the creation of a facilitated procedure for victims to report incidents of sexual harassment (via text message) to the Metropolitan Police (UN-Women 2017).



IMG 14 & IMG 15. Source: Nagareyama’s Train Station Children Drop-off (Japan). 2018.

Case study — Invest in women



The strategy of a Japanese city to boost the local economy.

The Japanese city of Nagareyama, located on the eastern side of Tokyo, has been promoting the creation of a family-friendly city where both men and women can balance their professional careers and family duties as part of an investment strategy to attract more working age residents and contribute to boosting the local economy (IADB 2018). The strategy included the development of a survey to identify specific working women needs and priorities, which was used to inform the design of public policies. As the survey showed that local women prioritized a combination of convenient access to public transportation and easy access to work with organized public and green spaces suitable for parenting (IADB 2018), targeted interventions by the city government included the creation of children transportation services next to the city’s train station, which enables working parents to drop their kids off on their way to work in a safe place from where they are taken by teachers to childcare facilities and nursery schools. This service is convenient for working mothers because most women have to commute to Tokyo for work and many children go to childcare facilities located in different districts, which would add additional stops to the daily commuting for at least one of the parents. The city also promoted the creation of public spaces with recreational facilities for children of different ages, an entrepreneurship program designed specifically for women, and the provision of subsidies for residents willing to launch their own businesses in vacant commercial properties located in the city. For Nagareyama mayor Yoshiharu Izaki, the interventions are a strategy to “make the city more attractive and improve its fiscal management”, and they have contributed to increase the number of families moving into the city and the number of children per family.



Basic services and infrastructure

Limited access to basic services and infrastructure disproportionately impacts women. Only 3 in 5 people living in urban areas worldwide have access to safe, readily available water at home (UNICEF/WHO 2017).

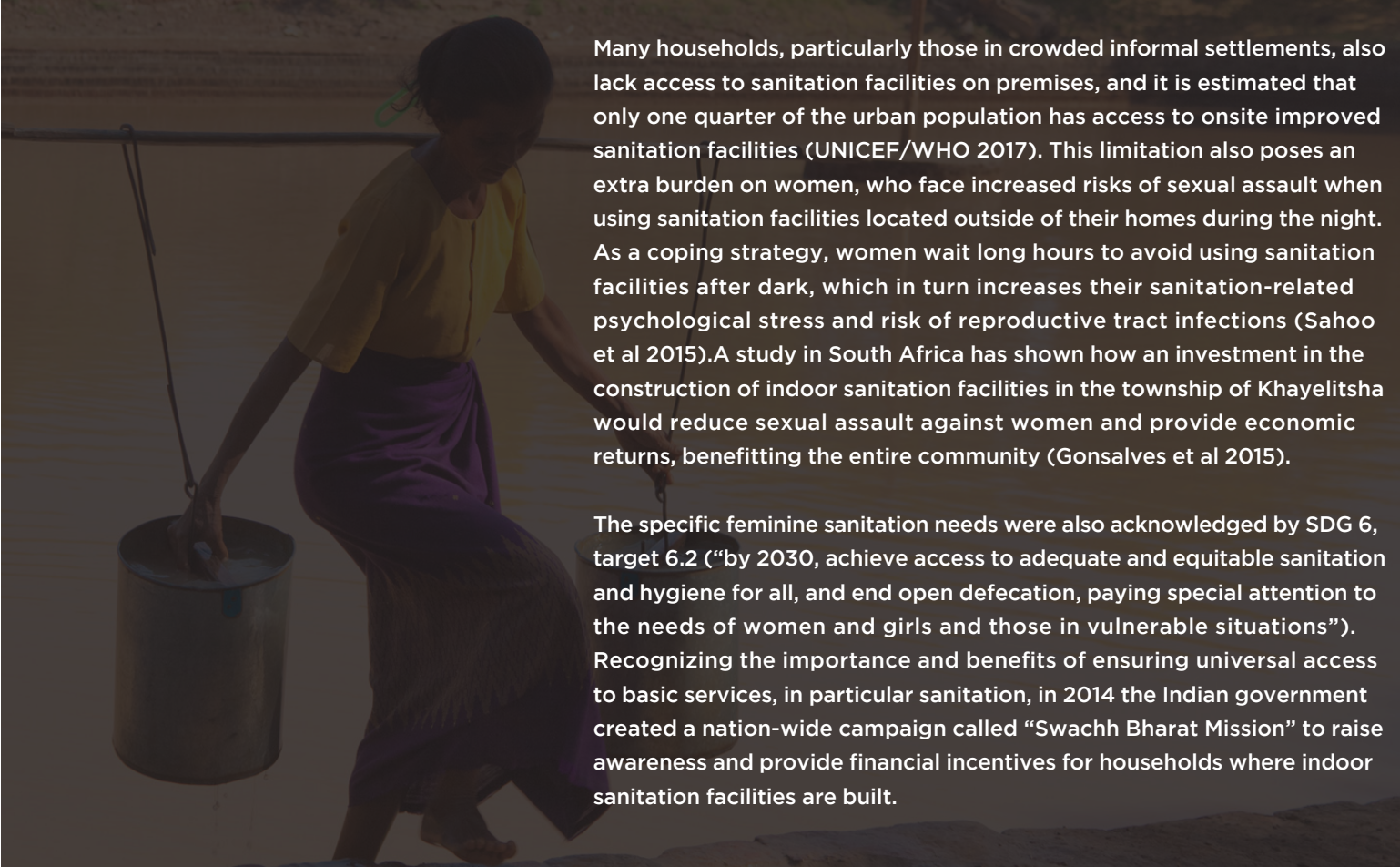
Women and girls are responsible for water collection in **80%** of the households without access to water on premises (UN-Women 2018).

Besides being a physically demanding and time-consuming task, in many informal settlements families rely on water provided by informal, unregulated water suppliers, which increases the costs incurred and the risks of buying contaminated water. Since women are often responsible for providing care around the household due to pre-established gender roles, the burden of taking care of ill children due to water-borne disease falls on women (Bapat and Agarwal 2003), limiting their options for personal and economic development.

Limited access to clean and affordable household energy, and in particular the lack of electricity, is also disproportionately felt by women, who tend to spend more time than men cooking for the household due to pre-established gender roles, and are therefore more vulnerable to indoor air pollution and health issues caused by inadequate sources of energy, such as wood-burning stoves. This also represents a time-burden for women, as they have to spend extra time buying fuel and cooking more often because of limited access to refrigeration (UN-Habitat 2013).



IMG 16. Source: Wheaton, Ashley. Children stand beside the main drain of Malgudam community, India. Each morning, many children from the community come to the drain together to defecate and urinate. April, 2019. SuSanA Secretariat



Many households, particularly those in crowded informal settlements, also lack access to sanitation facilities on premises, and it is estimated that only one quarter of the urban population has access to onsite improved sanitation facilities (UNICEF/WHO 2017). This limitation also poses an extra burden on women, who face increased risks of sexual assault when using sanitation facilities located outside of their homes during the night. As a coping strategy, women wait long hours to avoid using sanitation facilities after dark, which in turn increases their sanitation-related psychological stress and risk of reproductive tract infections (Sahoo et al 2015).A study in South Africa has shown how an investment in the construction of indoor sanitation facilities in the township of Khayelitsha would reduce sexual assault against women and provide economic returns, benefitting the entire community (Gonsalves et al 2015).

The specific feminine sanitation needs were also acknowledged by SDG 6, target 6.2 (“by 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations”). Recognizing the importance and benefits of ensuring universal access to basic services, in particular sanitation, in 2014 the Indian government created a nation-wide campaign called “Swachh Bharat Mission” to raise awareness and provide financial incentives for households where indoor sanitation facilities are built.



IMG 17. Source: Nishasharma. woman cooking food in traditional way in rural area of India. 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

IMG 18 (background). Source: Mateev, Ivan. Middle aged burmese woman collecting water in a buckets from a dirty pond. For a dozens of people this pond, filled by the rains is the only source of water. Bagan (Myanmar). February 26, 2011. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Public spaces



IMG 19. Source: Mastellaro, Catarina. 2019

As a consequence of the gendered division of labor, the construction and planning sector has been dominated by men, while women have traditionally been associated with private spaces (domestic environments). This is reflected in the prevalence of public spaces that do not include adequate recreational areas where children of different ages can play with limited supervision, in the lack of public sanitary facilities separated by sex in public markets, as well as in the absence of adequate lighting in many public parks, all of which negatively affect the safety of women and children in public spaces. This has also been reproduced in many housing projects that do not include adequate public spaces and common areas that could promote women’s social interaction and inclusion in the public sphere.

Beyond limiting women’s access to public affairs, the absence of safe and adequate public spaces for women increases their risk and exposure to gender-based violence and, in particular, to sexual harassment. The typical urban locations that cause fear and insecurity to women are dark areas, isolated public parks, empty and poorly lit streets, underground parking lots and pedestrian underpasses. The lack of culturally appropriate, adequate sanitation facilities in public spaces also increases women’s risk of sexual assault and their exposure to disease, which is disproportionately felt by female street vendors.

As women tend to experience sexual harassment in public places more frequently than men, with 92% of women in Rabat, Morocco, and 68% of women in Quito, Ecuador, having experienced sexual harassment in public spaces (UN-Women 2017), urban design and interventions that reduce vulnerability to crime and harassment in public spaces becomes an issue of great relevance for women’s equal access to the city. This includes promoting accessibility and “social eyes” in public spaces, meaning that these areas should be made visible from the closest streets and windows facing them. SDG 11, target 11.7, also recognizes the need to promote safe public spaces for women (“By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities”). In some contexts, beyond promoting changes in urban design to make cities safer for women, interventions need to include sensitization and awareness campaigns and activities targeting specific groups of men, such as bus and micro-bus drivers, on their role in stopping harassment.



IMG 20. Source: Mastellaro, Catarina. 2019

Involving women and girls in discussions and decisions regarding the design of public spaces in their cities is key to promote safe and inclusive spaces that respond to the needs of all citizens. Residents can give valuable input to policy makers about what is not working and what is limiting their movement within the city, which should inform the design of urban interventions and public policies.



Based on the experience of female residents, the city of Vienna, Austria, has been mainstreaming gender equality into urban planning since early 1992, when a municipal office for the promotion and coordination of women’s affairs was created, in order to promote the consideration of the different needs of men and women in all aspects of urban policies. To support urban managers with practical know-how, the city has published a Manual for Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning and Urban Development, devised to inform land-use planning and design, which includes examples of gender-sensitive public spaces, with adequate lighting, sanitary facilities and recreational facilities, in addition to housing and mobility projects.



IMG 21 & IMG 22. Source: Hawelka, Daniel. Seestadt. 2019. Access 03/11/2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/may/14/city-with-a-female-face-how-modern-vienna-was-shaped-by-women>

Case study — Women’s safety audits and crowdsourcing apps



IMG 23. Source: Casiano, Marcos. Poor woman standing out in the backyard of her house in the impoverished community of Planaltina. Planaltina, Goias (Brazil). November 23, 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Women’s Safety Audits are exploratory walks led by women and girls based on a methodology first developed in Canada in 1989 by Toronto’s Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) in order to map and assess the safety of existing public spaces from the perspective of women and girls and prevent violence against women in the city with the support of the local community. These walks aim at identifying elements of public spaces that could contribute toward creating a sense of safety or vulnerability, while at the same time promoting a discussion about gender-based violence and possible interventions to prevent it. Many countries have adapted the methodology since its inception, with a well-documented case being India (Jagori 2010). With the advance of smartphones and crowdsourcing data, many cities have started to use online apps for generating geo-referenced data about the results of these audits, such as SafetiPin, which consists of a collaborative platform where users can easily share information about their perception of safety in a certain area. Usually, a combination of 9 parameters of safety are assessed during Women’s Safety Walks: lighting, openness, visibility, crowd, security, walk path, availability of public transport, gender diversity and feeling.

Women’s Safety Audits can also be a powerful tool for collecting recommendations from local women and girls to inform public interventions such as urban upgrading programs. In São Paulo, Brazil, for instance, through Women’s Safety Audits it was identified that many women disapprove advertisement totems in bus stops as they can prevent them from being seen in the case of an aggression or from seeing who is standing behind them. (Sampapé 2018)



IMG 24. Source: IDB. Woman’s Safety Audits. 2019

2 POLITICAL ACCESSIBILITY



IMG 25. Source: Quintanilla. Green silhouette of couple of two women holding hand in pedestrian traffic light, public symbol lesbian and gay friendly, in Madrid city streets. Spain. 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Access to public spaces, governance and meaningful participation are crucial for the development of a sustainable and inclusive urbanization. Human settlements and cities are becoming increasingly important spaces to challenge gender inequality. The rapid increase of global urbanization challenges both national and local governments to develop compact, inclusive, connected and integrated cities. Ensuring that there is equal political accessibility across genders is necessary for the development of sustainable and inclusive urban planning and governance. Failure to effectively mainstream gender equality into urban planning, legislation and economic development hinders city inclusiveness. Lack of gender-equal political accessibility prevents the successful integration of women, girls and LGBTI+ communities into the economic, social, political and cultural life of cities. This can have significant negative impacts in a variety of ways, including diminishing economic prosperity. Different genders experience urbanization differently and as such, benefit differently from the opportunities available within urban areas. In many developing cities, both women and girls often benefit less from urbanization than their male counterparts.

The root causes that hinder women political accessibility are two-fold. On the one hand, the patriarchal values that are internalized in traditional gender norms and standards lead to gender-based discrimination and are likely to confine women to the private sphere and hold them back from public participation. On the other hand, these values and norms are also institutionalized into social structures, which usually manifest in the form of gendered poverty, unpaid care-work, women’s limited control over assets, fewer opportunities, less recognition in public participation and decision-making, and barriers to information, education, employment, housing and basic services. To combat this, meaningful participation is crucial, as well as inclusiveness in terms of governance, and equal accessibility to information and public life.



Gender norms and gendered institutions

Patriarchy and male-dominated values are embedded in gender norms in many societies where women are often considered inferior in public life, less capable in professional domains, and expected to be submissive, kind, and to take on most household and care-giving work. From a historic perspective, women are traditionally confined to private spheres where their domestic work was treated as inferior, while men usually dominated public spheres and public life, which seem more prominent and valued. These cultural traits limit women from full public participation and self-fulfillment. This gender dynamics does not only manifest on an individual level, but is institutionalized in urban lives. The society is less likely to recognize women’s professional competence and tends to look down on women who do not “do a good job” taking care of their families. This two-layered burden contributes to situations such as gendered labor division in cities, gender biased workplace dynamics and glass ceilings for women.

Cities are both important carriers of culture and catalysts of change.

On the one hand, they are the arena where culture and tradition are produced and reproduced; on the other hand, the New Urban Agenda acknowledges culture as a key enrichment resource for humankind and for sustainable urban development in terms of social cohesion and economic development. Gender responsive urban governance opens opportunities for women to be heard and considered on the macro level. The dynamics of cities can also be capitalized to enhance networking and communication among individual women and women’s organizations, in terms of information sharing, participation in public affairs and capacity building. These will contribute to changing the collective status of women in society, which in turn will potentially change the perception of women and gender relations in cities.

Community participation

Meaningful participation of all inhabitants and relevant stakeholders in decision-making processes is fundamental to building socially cohesive and inclusive cities, promoting civic engagement and developing a sense of belonging and ownership among their inhabitants. Full and equal participation of women and girls does not only ensure that their voices, perspectives and needs inform policies and actions in urban planning, management and governance, but also provides a way for them to claim and enjoy their human rights (UN Women, 2017); as such, a meaningful participation approach that ensures gender parity contributes to achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment in urban lives. Gender parity and women’s meaningful participation is also upheld in many international normative frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG5, Target 5.5: ‘Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.’), the New Urban Agenda (‘We envisage cities and human settlements that achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal rights in all fields and in leadership at all levels of decision-making, ...’), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.



IMG 26. Source: Zulian, Julia. Indigenous people at Aty Guasu Assembly, a Guarani-Kaiowá woman encounter. Raised money with sales goes to help them fund new meetings and events. Mato Grosso do Sul (Brazil). September 18, 2018. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

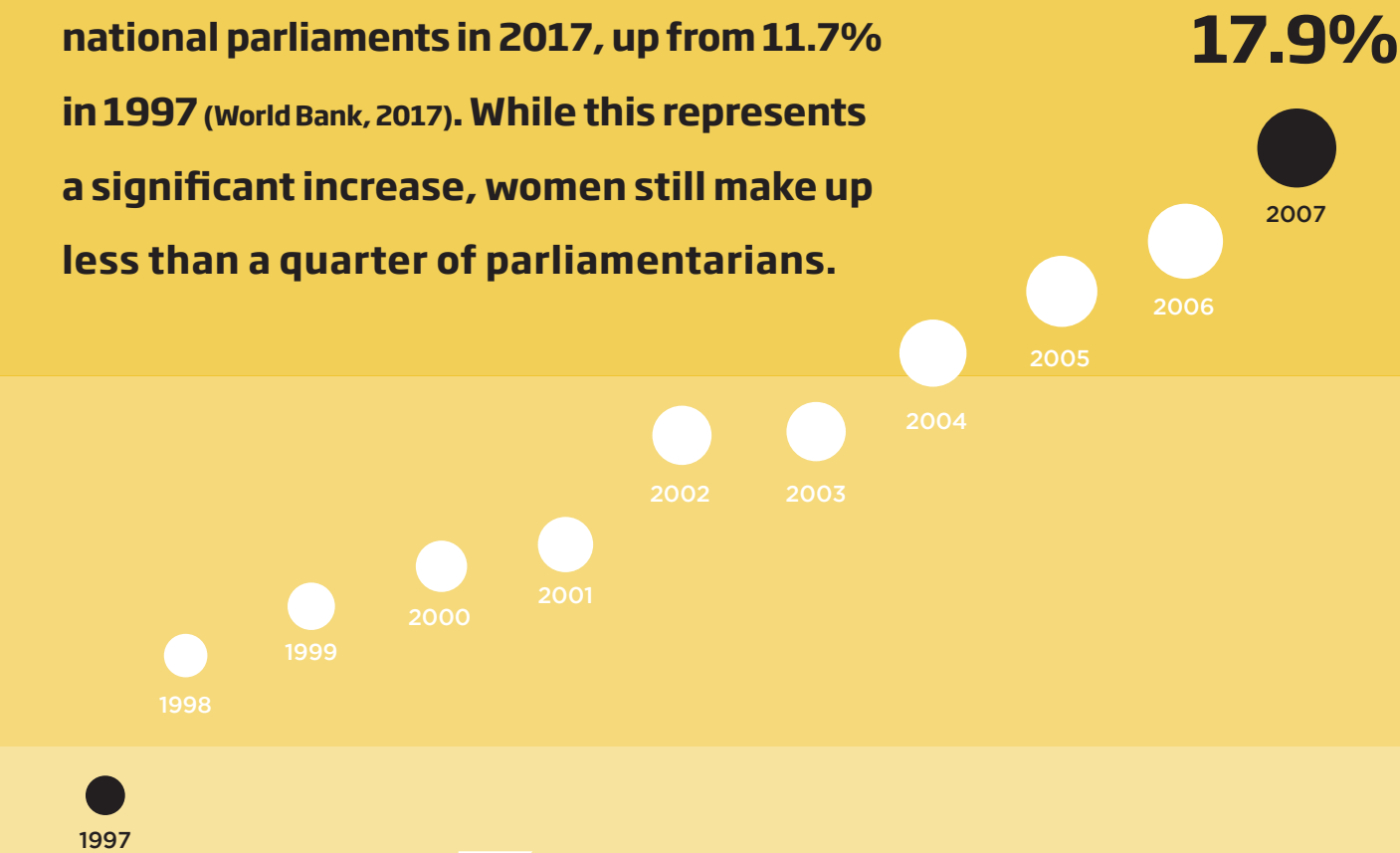
IMG 27. Source: Master1305. Destroying gender stereotypes. Female builder in orange helmet standing against industrial background. Safety specialist, engineer, occupation, businesswoman, job concept. Woman in the male profession. 2019 Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



Political participation

A lack of meaningful participation in decision-making is also reflected in the number of women elected for leadership.

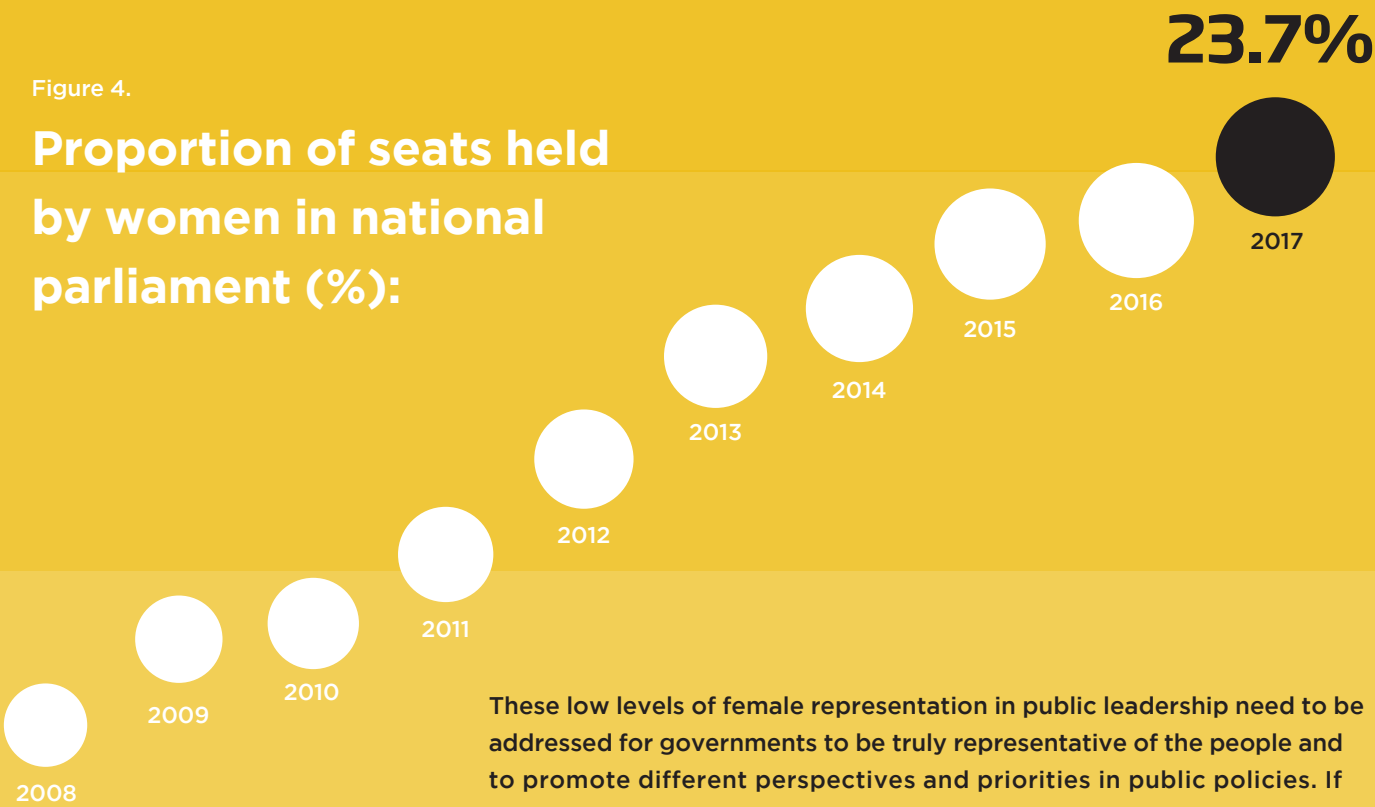
Globally, women held 23.7% of seats in national parliaments in 2017, up from 11.7% in 1997 (World Bank, 2017). While this represents a significant increase, women still make up less than a quarter of parliamentarians.



At the local level, women make up less than 10% of mayors, and of the largest 300 cities in the world, only 25 have female mayors (City Mayors, 2017).

Figure 4.

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%):



These low levels of female representation in public leadership need to be addressed for governments to be truly representative of the people and to promote different perspectives and priorities in public policies. If governments are predominantly male, policies will naturally reflect and focus more on men’s needs and priorities. Furthermore, promoting women in leadership also tackles issues relating to traditional gender roles and empowers young women and girls. The low status of women, and issues such as discrimination against women, unequal power and resource allocation between women and men, and the socio-cultural devaluing of women limit women’s equal and full participation in urban governance. (UN-Habitat, 2015)

To achieve meaningful and gender-balanced participation is to incorporate and empower both men and women so that they have control over decision-making processes at all levels and in every phase. The New Urban Agenda promotes participatory gender-responsive approaches in every stage of the urban and territorial policy and planning processes, from conceptualization to design, budgeting, implementation, assessment and review. The full and equal participatory approach is rooted in new forms of direct partnership between governments at all levels and civil society, which involves inclusive and thorough consultations open to all, transparent knowledge and information sharing with men and women, collection of gender-disaggregated data and records on the nature of participation in all kinds of monitoring and assessment actions, as well as broad-based, well-resourced permanent mechanisms and platforms for cooperation. Moreover, it is also important to provide training and capacity building activities for women, so as to support their meaningful political participation, since in many societies women are likely to have more restricted access to education and resources. Other actions that help improve women’s participation in urban governance include female networking, where women can collectively examine problems, develop solutions and inform policies.

Access to information



IMG 28. Source: Linch, Alex. Shadow of a mother and daughter walking hand in hand, on city sidewalk from above. 2019 Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020.

Large gender gaps still exist in access to information and education. UNESCO Institute for Statistics has revealed some impactful figures: more girls than boys remain out of school. 16 million girls never attend a classroom, and women make up two thirds of the 750 million adults without basic literacy skills (UNESCO, 2018). Urbanization brings both challenges and opportunities for equal access to information and education for men and women.

Adequate access to information, knowledge and education plays a transformative role in terms of women’s empowerment. It lays the foundation for public participation of women, develops economic engagement capacity, improves women’s employability, and thus helps fight gendered poverty in cities. Therefore, this is a fundamental part of building cohesive, inclusive and sustainable cities, where both men and women are equally engaged in public life, in a self-sustained and purposeful manner. Equal access to information, communication technologies and education has been highlighted both in SDGs (SDG 5, Target 5.B: ‘Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.’), and in the New Urban Agenda (‘We commit ourselves to promoting equitable and affordable access to sustainable basic physical and social infrastructure for all, without discrimination, including ... education, culture, and information and communication technologies. We further commit ourselves to ensuring that these services are responsive to the rights and needs of women, ...’).



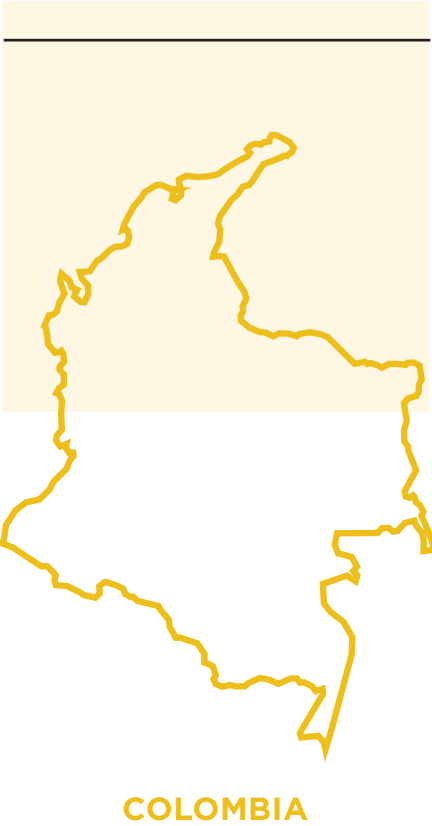
IMG 29. Source: Katz, A. Hundreds of thousands gathered to rally & march to commemorate the one year Women’s March. New York City (USA). 2018 Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

On the one hand, urban poverty disproportionately affects women, and consequently restricts their resources to afford adequate education, which further contributes to the gendered labor division, and the knowledge and information gap between men and women. On the other hand, urbanization is often accompanied by greater and more flexible information flows and by the proliferation of communication technologies that build opportunities for better access to information and education. Therefore, cities can be a catalyst for gender equality and women’s empowerment by implementing gender-responsive information and education policies and actions that promote equal access to information for both men and women, build capacity for women in terms of information and communication technologies, enhance women’s education opportunities, and ensure that women and girls learn and feel safe in schools, thus helping deconstruct normative gender roles.

IMG 30. Source: Meunierd. Unidentified School girls posing for portrait. One-third of girls in rural Peru never finish primary school. November 25, 2010. Cusco (Peru). Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



Case study —Increasing women’s representation in the public sector in Colombia



Colombia has undertaken a number of positive actions to ensure that women get fair representation in government. There are two key laws that ensure that women are represented both as elected officials and public servants. Law 581 of year 2000 establishes the participation of women in at least 30% of the top decision-making positions in the public administration. Law 1475 of year 2011 establishes the participation of women in at least 30% of the political parties election ballots (UNDP 2012). While these legal safeguards are a strong example of affirmative action taken to ensure that women have equal voice in government, their implementation has proven challenging: at the national level the quota is met, but there are large variations among ministries and agencies, and women are particularly poorly represented in senior management positions. Yet, there appear to be no sanctions imposed on ministries that repeatedly fail to meet the quota (UNDP 2012).

Although quotas are an important instrument to promote female participation in politics and in decision-making positions in the public administration, many organizations have also highlighted the need for initiatives that tackle other barriers faced by women to access the political realm. These include, for instance, increasing women’s access to financing during their campaigns and strengthening professional networks that can support the increased participation of women as candidates as well as decision-makers.



IMG 31. Source: Sabo, Ivan. The National Capitol situated in Plaza de Bolivar, a historic square in the heart of Bogota, Colombia. 2014. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Case study —Promoting women’s active engagement in local governance in India through quotas



India enacted the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts (CAAs) in 1992, which underpinned the representation of under-represented or unrepresented groups of people and communities, including women, in urban and local governments. These CAAs, which aim at ensuring women’s active engagement in governance, stipulate mandatory reservation of one-third of all seats at all levels in all panchayats for women (Article 243D), and laid the foundations for the emergence of strong bottom-up women leadership. Since their introduction in Mumbai Municipal Corporations, these female quota reservations have increased almost 10 times; in Andhra Pradesh, the number of women councilors/corporators rose to over 1,000 after the approval of the 74th CAA, which means four or five times the previous figure. The Second Administrative Reform Commission indicated that women elected to panchayats and municipalities in India performed creditably.

IMG 32. Source: Talukdar, David. Women voter shows her voter ID card while standing in a queue at a polling station during the 2nd phase of the panchayat elections in Barpeta, Assam (India). December, 2018. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



IMG 33. Source: Arindambanerjee. A woman Delhi police constable keeping a close eye on the BJP supporters during a rally. May, 2014. New Delhi, India. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020.



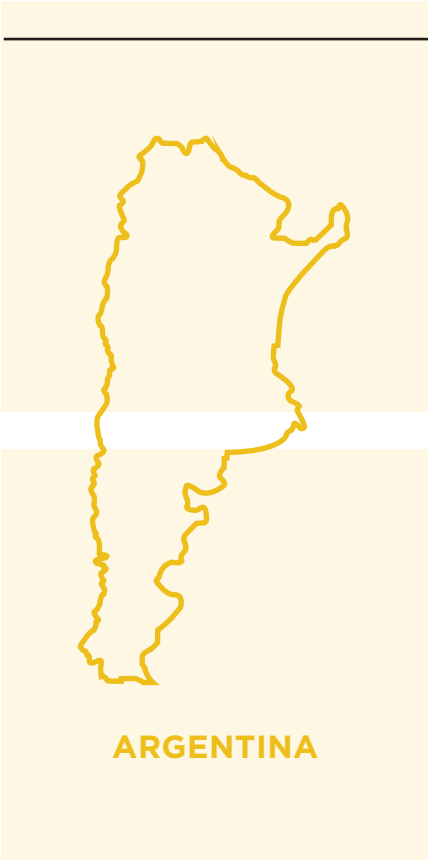
The impact of CAAs is manifesting in the long term: India has witnessed women’s unique role and contributions in urban governance. Women in governance positions play an important role as catalysts of social development causes, especially those aimed at women and children, which include:

- 1 Giving easier access for women and ways to express their concerns in gender-sensitive issues such as rape, sexual abuse and gender-based violence,
- 2 Fostering better mobilization for local women to participate in constructive activities,
- 3 Building support structures to enable the implementation of municipal development programs that take into consideration gender and children issues, as well as other vulnerability-sensitive aspects and groups,
- 4 Supervising the implementation of development projects particularly those related to women,
- 5 Facilitating the constitution of women’s committees in local governments, and
- 6 Facilitating mass movements against discrimination and struggles to enhance gender equality.

IMG 34. Source: Bidouze, Stephane. Women voter shows her voter ID card while standing in a queue at a polling station during the 2nd phase of the panchayat elections in Barpeta, Assam (India). December, 2018. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



Case study —Addressing the gap in gender statistics in Buenos Aires



ARGENTINA

The Gender Indicators System, launched in early March 2018 by the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, provides audiences with a comprehensive view of parity and gender statistics in the capital of Argentina. The system is based on the idea that in order to implement successful reform, it is necessary to first have a grasp on the situation realities. Accordingly, the system aims to close the statistical gap through the publication of socio-demographic, economic, and political information regarding gender in an open format with downloadable views.

The information is organized according to the conceptual framework of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), which divides the information into three dimensions. The Decision-Making Autonomy Dimension covers variables regarding women’s participation in different spheres of public life in Buenos Aires. These spheres include the city’s executive, legislative and judicial branches, in addition to local branches within individual neighborhoods. The Economic Autonomy Dimension covers various indicators on paid and unpaid labor. This data is gathered from the Annual Housing Survey, the Labor Indicators Survey, and the Time Use Survey. The Physical Autonomy Dimension collects data on gender violence, access to healthcare, sexual and reproductive health, and safe use of public spaces. This system’s differentiating feature is its use of management data, collected from citizens’ records on use of services offered by the city administration, such as sport and health centers.

The ability to refer to relevant data on gender enhances the quality of the public discussion and gives journalists, experts, activists, and the academia an effective tool to help take steps towards progress on gender equality. The data also enables the government to make decisions based on evidence, design improved policies, and monitor the progress of its interventions.



IMG 35. Source: Silver, William. The Casa Rosada, the most prominent landmark located on the historic Plaza de Mayo. Buenos Aires, Argentina. April, 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

3 ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY

From a general standpoint, women’s empowerment can be conceived as the improvement in the ability of women to access the essential elements of development, such as healthcare, education, earning opportunities, and political participation (Duflo, 2012). The economic dimension of women’s empowerment, therefore, refers to access to economic resources and opportunities, and to the possibility for women to realize their full potential in labor markets, either as salaried workers or as entrepreneurs. Moreover, women’s economic empowerment tries to reverse gender inequalities originating in the gendered division of labor, and to defy gender norms consistent with patriarchal values.



Improving economic accessibility for women is not only justified from a human rights and equality perspective, but also for efficiency reasons.

The evidence shows that economic growth —although it tends to benefit women, in relative terms, by reducing poverty and increasing opportunities—, is not enough to close gender gaps in economic access (Duflo, 2012). Therefore, achieving equality between genders is a desirable goal in itself. Moreover, improving women’s economic access, by improving the efficiency in economic allocation and labor productivity, may accelerate economic growth and development, starting a virtuous circle.

Indeed, studies have shown that advancing women’s economic empowerment could add up to \$12 trillion to the global economy (McKinsey 2015).



IMG 36. Source: Zignaigo, Vadim. Andean women knitting a belt at Chinchero craft market. For this kind of knit, uses wool natural hand dyed whit natural dyes. Chinchero, Cusco (Peru). May, 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020.

As seen in the first chapter, cities can either foster gender equality or replicate this type of inequality. First, trends towards urbanization and the growth of cities may promote gender equality, since economic development is associated with migration flows from rural to urban areas, favoring a structural transformation process characterized by the relocation of labor from agriculture and manufacturing into services. The expansion of the service sector can explain a large part of the convergence observed in labor market outcomes between men and women during recent decades (Olivetti and Petrongolo, 2016).

Historical and current trends show that women have taken more jobs in the service sector, particularly in areas such as retail, healthcare and social work: 84% of employed women worked in the service sector in 2015 (60.7% of men), 11.6% in industries (32.6% of men); and 4% in agriculture (6.3% of men) (OECD, 2017).

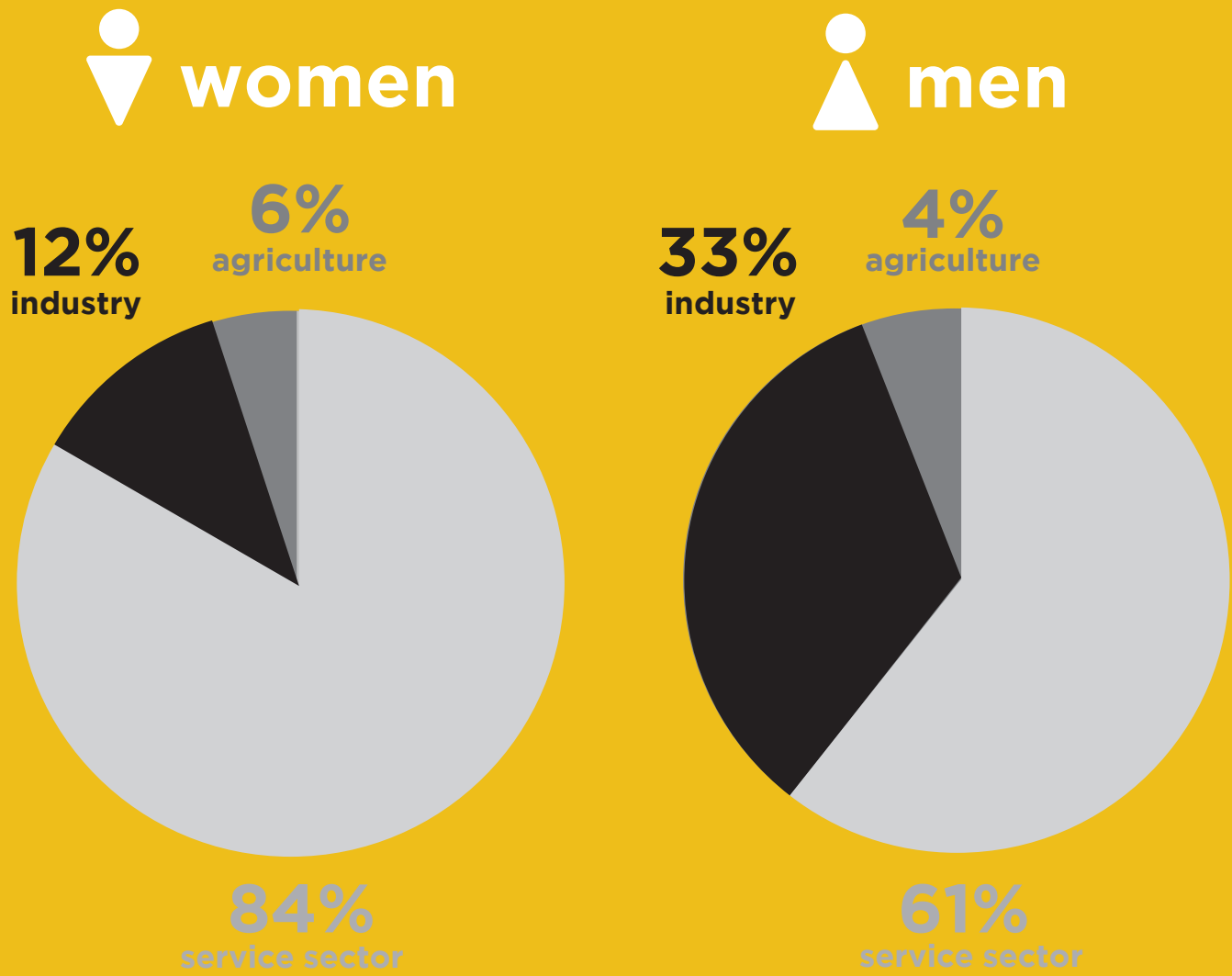


Figure 5. Percentages of women and men employed in different sectors in 2015.

Second, the process of urbanization may also affect male and female workers differently within each sector, if it favors the rise in occupations where women are overrepresented.

One reason why gender gaps in the labor market outcomes have declined with city size is that urban agglomeration economies tend to reward those sectors that have traditionally been female dominated (Bacolod, 2016).¹





IMG 37. Source: Ivanov, Anton.
Woman sells goods at the Kumasi
market (Ghana). January 2017.
Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020.
Shutterstock.com

There is also a downside to rapid urban growth for gender equality. Often women do not benefit from the increased access to formal employment or the opportunities to accumulate physical and financial assets and move around the city safely. In fact, in many cases, gender equality indicators show low levels of systematic correlation with urbanization rates, levels of poverty or GNI per capita (Chant, 2015). Moreover, typical congestion costs of urban environments, such as higher levels of housing costs, transport costs, and crime rates, among others, not only tend to increase poverty and inequality within cities but may affect women from various groups differently. In some cases, rapid urbanization brings with it the emergence of slums, with limited access to urban infrastructure and services, which may exacerbate imbalances between women and men. The challenge for urban policy is, therefore, to take into account the different dimensions of poverty while recognizing that gender inequality is the result of socially constructed norms that act on a multi-dimension, multi-sector and multi-spatial domain.

To sum up, gender inequalities in economic access have declined over the past fifty years in both developed and developing countries. In spite of this progress, large and persistent gender gaps remain in many dimensions such as labor market outcomes, education outcomes, unpaid household and care work, and financial inclusion.



IMG 38. Source: Master1305. Busy and serious craftswoman grinding
timbers with special machine. Concept of gender equality. Male profession.
2019 Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Gender roles, human capital and discrimination

Prevailing social norms determine the role of women and men in society, since they dictate what is appropriate for men to do and what is appropriate for women to do. The prescription that women should work at home while men should work in the labor force could explain why female labor force participation rates are lower than male ones.



IMG 39. Source: Flydragon. A mother and her child living in a slum. There are an estimated 7.3 million people that are considered to be in poverty in Bangkok (Thailand). July 26, 2006. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Moreover, in some countries, patriarchal norms and conservatism go even beyond that, and actively discourage women participation in formal labor markets. Similarly, gender norms that favor men over women in some professions also contribute to gendered occupational segregation. Several studies show that women and men differ in psychological attitudes and preferences (e.g. risk preferences, attitudes toward competition, attitudes towards negotiation, and altruism), and that these differences matter in formal labor markets. To the extent that these differences are in part driven by socially constructed gender norms, rather than a consequence of biological differences, there is room for public policy intervention.²

Despite progress in women educational attainment in recent decades, gender imbalances in human capital persist and contribute to explain gender gaps in labor market outcomes. Workforce interruption and part-time work, often associated to care responsibilities, lead to significant differences in effective work experience between men and women over their life cycles. Moreover, the human capital of men and women starts to diverge early on, while in school.

2. Indeed, the bulk of the evidence suggests that gender roles are acquired through learning, and that gender role attitudes are determined early in childhood with the influence of parents, teachers, and peers.

By the age of 15, boys are, on average, more than twice as likely as girls to expect to work as engineers, scientists or architects, and ten times more likely to wish they become ICT professionals. In higher education, women are still poorly represented in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) (OECD, 2017).



IMG 40. Source: vicspacewalker. NASA flight engineer S.Cristoforetti before entering Soyuz TMA-15M spacecraft hatch for a fit check in the Baikonur Cosmodrome Integration Facility. Baikonur (Kazakhstan). November, 2014. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

Another barrier to women’s empowerment is gender discrimination.³ This discrimination may be a question of taste or prejudice-based (e.g. employers or workers have preferences for working with men but not with women) or statistical (e.g. employers may decide to pay women less, offer them less specific training, or deny them promotions, if they anticipate that they are more likely to drop out of the labor force at some point in their career). Moreover, if women anticipate the presence of discrimination in labor markets, they would have fewer incentives to invest in their human capital in early stages, which would worsen their economic opportunities even more. Finally, there is one more type of discrimination which is more subtle and has been termed “implicit discrimination” in the economic literature (Bertrand et al., 2005). The idea is that discriminatory attitudes can be unintentional or unconscious, for instance if employers unconsciously associate gender categories with some positions or tasks (e.g. a managerial position associated to men, or an administrative task associated to women).

There is enough empirical evidence that proves that at least part of the observed gaps in outcomes is due to discrimination. Some studies that focus on homogeneous groups of workers, like lawyers and MBAs, and are able to control for a rich set of worker characteristics, provide convincing evidence of gender discrimination. These results have been confirmed by studies that take advantage of experiments, either naturally occurring in specific labor market events, or intentionally designed in the lab or in the field, to provide persuasive evidence of discrimination.⁴

3. There is gender discrimination in labor markets if gender imbalances in outcomes are not fully accounted for by productivity differences, but due to gender differences in human capital and other relevant worker characteristics.

4. See Blau and Kahn (2017) for a discussion on this strand of the literature.

Labor force participation and employment

Female labor force participation has increased over the past 50 years in both developed and developing countries due to an increase in women involvement in labor markets.⁵ Despite this progress, female rates of labor force participation remain lower than male rates in most countries. In 2017 the world average labor force participation rate for females over 15 years of age was 49%, well below the 75% observed for males.

In some regions, such as North Africa, the female labor force participation rate remains as low as 22%, while in South Asia it is just about 28%. These figures reach 51% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 64% in Sub-Saharan Africa, 52% in Europe, 60% in East Asia and Asia Pacific, and 56% in North America.⁶ In Latin American countries, the labor force participation rate for women in their prime working age (25 to 64 years old) is 66%; in contrast, this figure goes up to 95% for men (Marchionni et al., (2017)).

5. Among the most important drivers behind the observed convergence in labor market outcomes for men and women, there are improvements in birth control technologies that reduced fertility (Goldin and Katz, 2002), medical advances that reduced the incidence of post-birth disablement, and substitutes for maternal lactation (Albanesi and Olivetti, 2016), as well as technological progress in the household, together with greater availability of childcare, which reduced the need for labor input in home production (Greenwood, Seshadri and Yorukoglu, 2005; Attanasio, Low and Sanchez-Marcos, 2008).

6. International Labor Organization, ILO modeled estimates.

IMG 41. Source: Evrymmnt. Stay at home mom working remotely on laptop while taking care of her baby. Young mother on maternity leave trying to freelance by the desk with toddler child. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



However, significant gender differences in actual work experience remain, since women are more likely than men to work part-time and to discontinue their careers due to childbearing.

A recent study (Goldin, 2014) posits that work interruption and shorter hours are important factors in explaining gender gaps in access to top positions, particularly in high earning occupations that impose heavy penalties on employees who want to work fewer hours or have more flexible employment arrangements (e.g. business and law).

Women are not only less likely to participate in the labor force, but also more likely to work in the informal economy, to be employed in low-paying occupations, and to face gender-specific barriers to progress in their careers (OECD, 2017). The so called “reproductive tax” that women bear results in longer working hours and lower market value of women’s work outside the home. While cities are experiencing a “feminization” of their labor, as more women are entering the remunerated labor market, this increase has also been accompanied by the informalization of labor (Chant, 2013). The gender gaps present in this market are due to a range of factors relating to skills, experience, start-up capital, as well as to a restriction in the use of space and time, particularly for poor women. Due to gender norms and disproportional care-giving burdens imposed on women, women’s spatial mobility is limited, thus confining their economic activities to the home. Women in slums, usually located at the periphery of cities, are further restricted when it comes to pursuing any income-generating activities due to inaccessible and unaffordable transport and poor basic infrastructure service provision.

Access to financial services

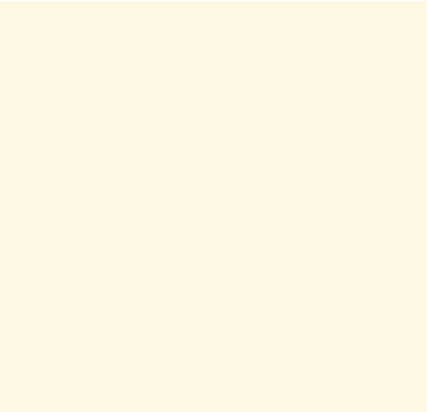
Despite important advances in expanding access to formal financial services in the developing world in recent years, there remain significant gender inequalities in access to credit and other financial services. Due to gender norms, women often face financial exclusion. The main barriers facing women when it comes to taking more advantage of financial services include the lack of bargaining power within the household, the competing demand on women’s time related to unpaid domestic work, the reduced mobility due to time constraints or social norms, the lack of assets for collateral, the lack of formal identification, and their concentration in lower-paying economic activities (Holloway et al., 2017).

The level of violence against women and the incidence of early marriage are also responsible for the gender gap in financial inclusion (Demirguc-Kunt et al, 2013). Moreover, lack of access to and control over financial resources within the household is a form of violence against women that is not always considered in national laws and regulations. In this regard, promoting women’s financial inclusion and economic empowerment may present itself as a means for both preventing and exiting gender-based violence.

Access to financial services is an important factor for the promotion of women’s economic autonomy, as it enables them to expand their possibilities of productive, personal and family development, and facilitates access to two important resources that are part of the city management, such as land and housing. Women are still lagging behind in financial services access and use. Globally, there is a 7-percentage point gender gap in account ownership, an 11 percentage-point gap in access to formal savings at financial institutions, and a 3 percentage-point gap in access to formal credit. Women are also overrepresented among the unbanked population: -56% (World Bank, 2018).



IMG 42. Source: MJTH. Business woman smiling holding credit card at bank cash point in the city. 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



There is also evidence that men have advantages over women in financial education; for instance, in the Andean countries of Latin America men score higher than women in financial knowledge tests: the differences are about 10% in Peru and Colombia, 8% in Bolivia, and 3% in Ecuador (CAF, 2015, 2018).

Lack of equal access to financial services among women limits their entrepreneurial potential. It is estimated that there is a significant financing gap for formal small and medium size enterprises owned by women, and that more than 70% of women-owned SMEs in developing countries have inadequate access to financial services or have no access at all (IFC, 2014; Goldman Sachs, 2014). Furthermore, when women have access to financial services, especially credit, they obtain smaller amounts and higher interest rates, despite the fact that women have lower default rates (IDB, 2010, SBIF, 2016).

There may also be discrimination in the financial system, which prevents women from accessing and using credit and other financial services more intensely. Demirguc-Kunt et al (2013) documented a persistent gender gap in access to formal and informal financial services in 140 developing countries and explored the degree to which legal discrimination and gender norms can account for this gap. They found that, due to differential treatment by law or by custom, women are less likely to own, manage, control or inherit assets and property, which limits women’s access to financial services. Furthermore, the gender gap in access to ICTs limits a greater use of digital financial products by women (Holloway, 2017), and such products have an important impact on women’s use of time.

The wage gap

While gender pay gaps have been narrowing in most countries since the second half of the twentieth century, this progress has stalled in the last couple of decades, and a significant gap remains, even controlling for observable characteristics of workers. Blau and Kahn (2016) have analyzed the long-run trends in the gender pay gap (1955-2014 period) in the United States.

After many years with a stable female to male earnings ratio of roughly 60%, women’s relative wages began to rise sharply in the 1980s, with a steady but slower rate of increase thereafter. By 2014, women full-time workers earned about 79% of what men did (on an annual basis).

Similar patterns (i.e. an initial decreasing trend in the gender pay gap, which becomes stagnant in recent times) can be found for other developed countries (Olivetti and Petrongolo, 2016), and for some Latin American countries (Ñopo et al., 2010; CEPAL, 2016; Marchionni et al., 2017). At present, according to the United Nations report (“Leave no one behind”), the global gender wage gap is around 16%. Latin America, East Asia and Asia Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe, and Central Asia have figures below the global average, while Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have larger gender disparities in pay.

One of the key drivers of differences in earnings between men and women relates to gender roles in home production and the unequal distribution of care responsibilities within households. Recent studies found evidence of a motherhood penalty for women (and a marriage premium for men).

Women’s prevailing role in childbearing forces them to reduce participation in formal work after motherhood, which entails a wage penalty for them. Goldin et al. (2017) found that the gender earnings gap expands dramatically in the first few years after school, around the typical ages at which people get married and have children, and that this gap remains for the whole working life. The gap widens among workers with higher education (i.e. college graduates).⁷ Recent research also proves that becoming a mother has negative and long-lasting effects on women’s wages and careers (Lundborg et al., 2017; Kleven et al., 2018).

7. She finds that the earnings differential between men and women expands by 34 log points from age 26 to 39 among college graduates and by 16 log points for those with high school degrees.



Education

Girls have been gaining access to higher levels of education in most countries. Primary school has become nearly universal, with greater progress in enrolment in low income countries, which has contributed to closing the gender gap. For secondary school, the gross enrolment has increased 15% for men and 22% for women during the same period, substantially narrowing the gender gap (World Bank, 2012).⁸ In Latin America, education attainment has increased relatively more for women than for men in recent decades (Marchionni et al., 2017), to the point where women have surpassed men.

Despite the increasing gender parity in enrolment rates, there remain substantial differences in test scores between boys and girls. While boys tend to perform better in sciences and math, girls achieve higher scores in reading and writing (OECD, 2016). These differences in schooling performance are associated to career choices that have impacts later on the labor market outcomes (i.e. performance in math tests is associated with the choice of math, sciences, and engineering-related careers, which tend to be better rewarded in labor markets). Considering the regions in which PISA examination is taken, Latin America has the greatest drawbacks for women in math and sciences, and also the least advantage for women in reading and writing skills (Marchionni et al., 2017).

8. The gross enrolment ratio over the relevant age group for all the countries is 69% for men and 67% for women in 2009.

IMG 43. Source: ESB Professional. Students during a class in a classroom at university. 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



Unpaid work and care responsibilities

Gender roles may also influence labor market outcomes indirectly through their effect on the allocation of work within the household. The gendered division of labor limits women's opportunities to engage in paid work, either because their duties within the household leave them with little time to work outside the home, or because in anticipation of this, they decide to invest less in their human capital in the early stages of their lives, limiting their labor market opportunities.

Berniell and Sánchez-Páramo (2011) show that women do most of the unpaid reproductive work and, consequently, spend less time than men doing productive work for countries in different income brackets.

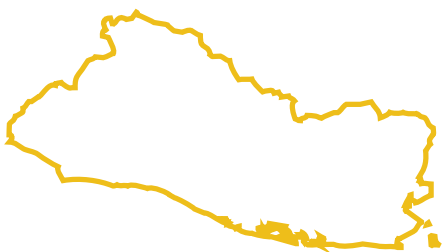
Women spend more time than men -from 30% more (in Cambodia) to six times more (in Guinea)- on unpaid household duties. Women devote from 70% more time (in Sweden) to ten times more time (in Iraq) than men to childcare. In Latin America, women spend three times more time than men on housework (ECLAC, 2016).

Gender roles in home production and childcare are probably one of the main barriers for women economic access and opportunities. Empirical evidence of the importance of gender norms for female labor market outcomes can be found in Fortin (2005, 2009). The first study, which used data from the World Value Survey for a sample of OECD countries over a 10-year period, showed that the social representation of women as homemakers and men as breadwinners, and egalitarian attitudes about gender are very predictive of labor market outcomes for women. The second study used data from the US over a longer period (30 years) and showed that the trend towards less traditional gender norms is associated to the rise in paid working women share.



IMG 44. Source: Yakobchuk, Olena. Mom and daughter doing shopping. 2019. Shutterstock. Acesso 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com

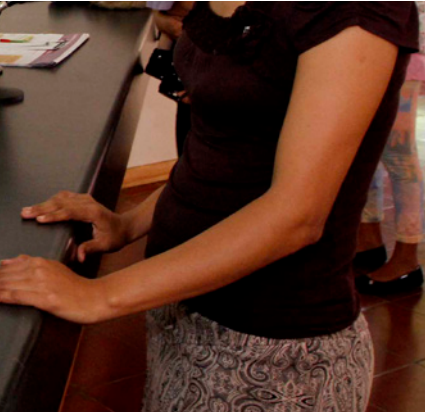
Case study —A one—stop center for women in El Salvador: from economic empowerment activities to services for survivors of gender-based violence



EL SALVADOR

The *Ciudad Mujer* program in El Salvador seeks to improve the living conditions of women through the provision of integrated services offered by comprehensive care centers. These services include sexual and reproductive health, prevention of gender-based violence and protection for victims, and economic empowerment. By integrating all these services in a single center and offering them free of charge for women, the initiative seeks to reduce the costs of access and use of these resources, as a step towards an improvement in gender equality.

The effectiveness of the program has been evaluated by Bustelo et al (2016). The authors find that women’s access to certain specialized public services substantially increased after the implementation of the program. Sexual and reproductive health are among the most commonly used services, as well as legal counseling regarding economic empowerment and gender-violence support. Results also indicate that women who accessed the services report higher levels of happiness. The impact on access and use of other economic empowerment and gender-based violence related services, however, remains low.



IMG 45. Source: *Ciudad Mujer*, 2019. Women Ciudad Mujer

Altogether these findings support the work of the centers. However, the authors mention some challenges that the program should address in order to strengthen its impact and make it sustainable in the long run, including improving and incorporating more services aimed at empowering women economically (e.g. labor intermediation, training, support for entrepreneurs, and access to credit), improving services for victims of violence (e.g. psychological support, police intervention and criminal prosecution), and strengthening the center information system in order to more effectively monitor the use of services by women.

Case study — The adoption of a Gender Equality Certification for companies in Costa Rica



In general gender equality certification programs seek to promote the adoption of good practices at the organizational level in order to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men in the job market. Costa Rica was the first country in Latin America to undertake a gender equality certification with the introduction of the Labor Certification System in Equality and Gender Equity (SIGEG, *Sistema de Gestión en Igualdad y Equidad de Género*) in 2002. The initiative aims to promote organizational changes that contribute to narrowing gender gaps in recruitment, pay, and opportunities for career advancement at all levels of the organization. By promoting and providing incentives for voluntary changes at the company level, the initiative also expects to raise awareness and sensitize workers and employers about the persistent gender imbalances in the corporate sector, favoring broader impacts in society.

Companies that want to be awarded the certification should comply with certain requirements regarding human resource management (e.g. career promotion, training, etc.), health (e.g. covering sexual, reproductive and occupational health), and work/family balance (e.g. childcare and parental leave). Compliance with these requirements and other gender equality conditions is verified by a third party auditor. So far, several companies have obtained their certificates, implementing initiatives such as training on gender and sexuality, informing gender and equity outcomes, and adapting practices and infrastructure to women.

After Costa Rica pioneered the implementation of this certification program, other countries in the region have followed the same path: Mexico implemented the Gender Equality Model (2003), Brazil followed suit with the Pro-Gender Equality Certification (2005), Chile implemented the Good Labor Practices with Gender Equality initiative (2009), Argentina developed the Gender Equality Model (2009), and Uruguay followed with the Quality Management with Gender Equality Model (2009).

The success of promoting voluntary measures to widely and sustainably improve the conditions for gender equality is not entirely known and more rigorous research on its impacts should be conducted. Nonetheless, it is likely that the effectiveness of voluntary certification to address gender imbalances in the corporate sector could be enhanced if these programs are supplemented with financial incentives that encourage companies to implement these good practices and legal regulations to ensure that the benefits reach all workers.

IMG 46. Source: *Ciudad Mujer*, 2019. Women Ciudad Mujer



Case Study — Making fiscal policies more redistributive through gender-responsive budgeting in Mexico



Generally, gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It entails a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process, and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality (Council of Europe, 2005).

Studies show that GRB initiatives can promote the adoption of policy developments to improve gender equality in some areas (i.e. education, labor market, health).

For example, in Mexico, gender-responsive budgeting resulted in gender-specific improvements in the health sector, including special attention given to diseases affecting women (such as cervical, ovarian and breast cancer), as well as teen pregnancy prevention initiatives. Similarly, in Brazil gender budgeting led to a comprehensive care program related to women’s health (Downes, 2017). In addition, Coello (2016) found that GRB initiatives in Latin America contributed to making fiscal policies more redistributive, by means of explicitly allocating resources to gender equality, facilitating the recognition and redistribution connected to unpaid social reproduction work; promoting more access for women to decision-making spheres, and contributing to improve institutional performance by promoting transparency.



IMG 47. Source: Fizkes. Diverse businesspeople discuss financial report in charts diagrams and graphs close up above view, business partners analysing common sales statistics presenting deal benefits at group meeting. 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020.

Institutionalization of GRB initiatives seems to be fundamental in order to succeed and survive changes in administration (Pérez Fragoso, 2016). In this regard, it is important to foster changes in budgetary processes, in terms of regulatory and legal frameworks, programs and budgetary formats or introduction of changes in accounting and financial systems. Preparing gender budget reports, creating institutional mechanisms to promote and accompany GRB initiatives and the establishment of monitoring and accountability systems to track budget implementation are other elements considered to contribute to this institutionalization process (Coello, 2016).

Recommendations

Based on the preceding analysis, the following recommendations are given to local and national authorities and leaders, in order to empower women in urban areas and make progress towards gender equality.



For national governments

1. Regulations

1.1 GENERAL PRO-GENDER REGULATIONS



HOUSING RIGHTS AND INHERITANCE LAWS

Adopt gender-responsive laws that protect women’s housing rights and contribute to changing negative social practices. The laws should promote registering housing titles in the name of both members of a couple, protecting women whenever possible. Inheritance laws that are discriminatory against women need to be reformed.



LAND POLICIES AND SECURITY OF TENURE

Promote the security of tenure for all citizens, paying special attention to women. The GLTN’s Gender Evaluation Criteria, for instance, provides a useful framework for assessing the gender responsiveness of land policies and dispute resolution (UN-Habitat 2009).



PARENTAL LEAVE

Promote the adoption of parental leave policies that afford women greater flexibility to address care-giving and childbirth, while providing incentives to remain in the workforce, and that encourage men to share responsibilities and increase male hours at home production. Paid, personal and non-transferable parental leaves can provide incentives to increase male take-up rates.



EQUAL PAY LEGISLATION

Review existing laws that may hinder or deprive women of their economic rights and reenact them in order to ensure gender equality. Pass laws against discrimination at work and gender pay gaps.



LEGISLATION AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Develop comprehensive national regulations and laws against gender-based violence, including all of its forms, such as sexual harassment and domestic violence, as they are key to provide women with legal protection and to promote behavior changes, and make sure to provide enough economic resources for their implementation.

2. Governance

2.1 WOMEN’S AUTHORITY



WOMEN’S VOICE

Make women’s voices heard, especially poor and marginalized women, so that their real experiences on exclusion reach the urban institutions that affect their lives. This can be done through the provision of platforms and opportunities for women and girls (and their organizations) to speak up about their experiences and share concerns without the fear of reprisal; the establishment of mechanisms that allow for women’s voices and concerns to inform policy-making, and the adoption of gender-specific quotas/targets to ensure women’s equal participation in public consultations.



WOMEN’S NETWORKS

Support the development of women’s networks and grass root women’s organizations that raise women’s collective awareness about their rights.



GENDER PARITY IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION PROCESSES AND WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION

Develop and implement affirmative action, such as gender quotas or legislative and leadership training, to promote women’s representation in legislative bodies; record, analyze and report sex-disaggregated data and qualitative information on levels of representation and participation of women and men at all levels of government, and formal and informal decision-making processes and structures.



DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Promote a participatory approach and provide opportunities to include women and girls in decision-making processes at the municipal and national government levels.



WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP

Expand leadership opportunities for women and strive for gender parity at senior technical and executive levels of national government organizations, particularly in the public transportation sector, which is traditionally led by men, as well as in urban planning and housing.



2.2 ACCOUNTABILITY

GENDER-ACCOUNTABLE INSTITUTIONS

Build governance accountability in institutions so as to enhance local and national authorities’ responsiveness to gender issues, for example through public consultations, engendered program evaluations, more female representation on local councils, etc.



TRANSPARENCY

Establish effective public information sharing and dissemination mechanisms and platforms that ensure easy access to public policies and regulations, governance transparency and public notice for both men and women.

3. Public Policies, Programs and Interventions

3.1 DATA AND INFORMATION



SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA

Collect sex-disaggregated data throughout situation analysis, consultations, decision-making, policy development, project planning, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation processes.



GENDER ANALYSIS

Conduct gender analysis to inform the design of public policies and consult gender experts relevant to the context.

3.2 PAY TRANSPARENCY



INTRODUCE PAY TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVES

Require companies to perform wage gap analysis on a regular basis and share information with their employees or, even better, make them public. Some countries have also adopted some form of pay equality certification. Although these initiatives are usually implemented at the national level, local governments have an opportunity to adopt equal pay and transparency measures for public bodies and state-owned companies.



3.3 AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY

GENDER SENSITIZATION

Promote awareness/ sensitization campaigns and activities to prevent sexual harassment in public spaces, particularly inside public transportation, and consider promoting targeted activities, such as “role reversal” exercises, with male workers and staff to enable them to understand what sexual harassment means to women and help prevent it (UN-Women 2017).



GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Raise awareness for both men and women to change attitudes that sustain discrimination against women. Display information campaigns in public places to disseminate gender equality values that foster cultural transformation and challenge existing gender norms. This should also include promoting training and capacity building on gender equality and gender mainstreaming among government officials in their field of work.

3.4 HOUSING SUBSIDIES



PROVIDE SUBSIDIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Targeting vulnerable female-headed households in order to enable low-income women to have equal access to housing, particularly since they are the ones more likely to face discrimination in access to credit and mortgages.

3.5 EDUCATION



GENDER-PARITY

Promote gender parity in urban education systems; provide online life skills, entrepreneurship and vocational trainings to women, whenever possible.



PROMOTE STEM CAREERS AMONG GIRLS

Introduce initiatives to induce more girls and young women to choose STEM careers (i.e., careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), through working with parents and teachers to build girls’ confidence in their mathematics and science abilities.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE EDUCATION

Introduce a gender perspective in the curricula in order to promote human rights and gender equality values and change gender stereotypes from early ages.

For local governments

4. Regulations

4.1 GENERAL PRO-GENDER REGULATIONS



GENDER-SENSITIVE URBAN LEGISLATION

Assess existing urban legislation, policies, economy and labor division, and public participation from a gender perspective to identify if there are assumptions and a culture that devalue women, discriminate against women or constrain women’s empowerment.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE EVALUATION

Develop a gender-responsive assessment approach for urban legislation systems and urban planning processes to understand and monitor the impacts of urban interventions on women and men.



WORK-LIFE BALANCE POLICIES

Encourage family-friendly policies, such as flexible working arrangements (e.g. tele-working, flexible time, part-time schedules), which could also help promote a better work-family balance, limit the career motherhood penalty and increase shared responsibilities within households.



FINANCIAL INCLUSION OF WOMEN

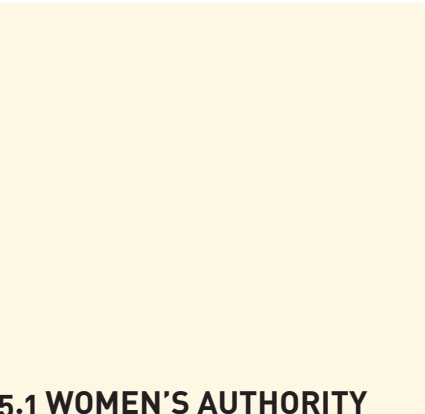
Foster a framework of action that articulates innovation in financial products for women, financial education programs, and the implementation of a gender indicator system that guides policy drafting in order to increase the financial inclusion of women.



GENDER-BASED AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Incorporate gender-based affirmative action related to labor intermediation, professional technical training and business development in order to reduce levels of occupational discrimination and sex segregation by sector.

5. Governance



5.1 WOMEN’S AUTHORITY



WOMEN’S VOICE

Make women’s voices heard, especially poor and marginalized women, so that their real experiences on exclusion reach the urban institutions that affect their lives. This can be done through the provision of platforms and opportunities for women and girls (and their organizations) to speak up about their experiences and share concerns without the fear of reprisal; the establishment of mechanisms that allows women’s voices and concerns to inform policy-making, and the adoption of gender-specific quotas/targets to ensure women’s equal participation in public consultations.



WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP

Expand leadership opportunities for women and strive for gender parity at senior technical and executive levels of local government organizations, particularly in the public transportation sector, which is traditionally led by men, as well as in urban planning and housing.



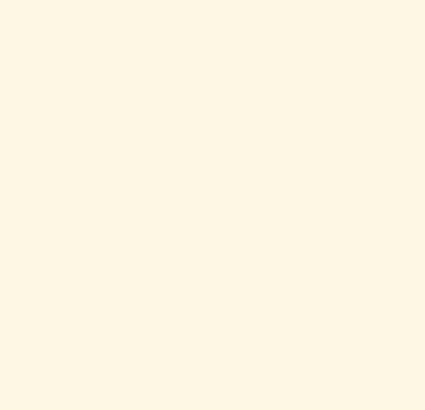
WOMEN’S NETWORKS

Support the development of women’s networks and grass root women’s organizations that foster women’s collective agency.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Support training and capacity-building activities that boost women’s meaningful and quality participation in public affairs, leadership and urban development related technical positions.



6. Public Policies, Programs and Interventions

6.1 DATA AND INFORMATION



SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA

Collect sex-disaggregated data throughout situation analysis, consultations, decision-making, policy development, project planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation processes; also develop gender-sensitive indicators that can contribute to monitor and evaluate intervention progress.



GENDER ANALYSIS

Conduct gender analysis to inform the design of public policies and consult gender experts relevant to the context.



CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

Recognize men and women of different social backgrounds as stakeholders and hold extensive consultations to identify and understand their challenges and needs in the context of specific interventions, as well as the potential risks that the interventions could bring about.



GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

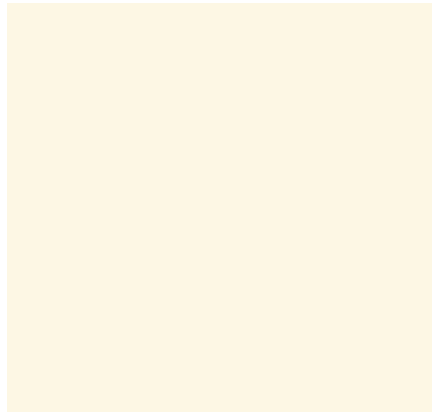
Promote and implement gender-responsive budgeting, restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to improve gender equality in sectors areas (i.e. education, labor market, health).

6.2 URBAN DESIGN AND PLANNING



MIXED LAND USE PLANNING AND ZONING

Promote a mixed land use planning and zoning approach as women usually shoulder more domestic responsibilities combined with other needs and occupations. Mixed use of land will help enhance women's mobility, safety, life efficiency and access to services in cities.



6.3 SOCIAL HOUSING



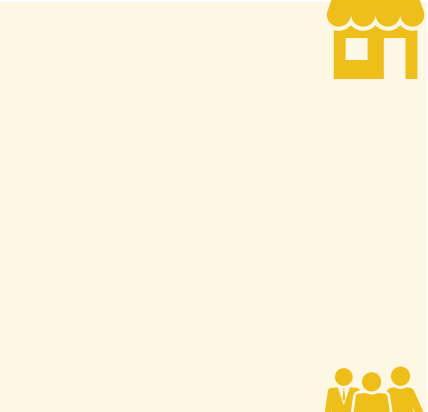
AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Plan and provide affordable housing solutions that are close to public services and better employment opportunities, as many women need to combine paid and unpaid care work.



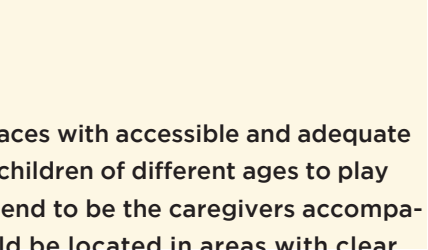
DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Take into consideration different household compositions and the possibility to use part of the house for commercial activities, contributing to the livelihoods of home-based workers, who represent a large share of informal female workers in developing countries.



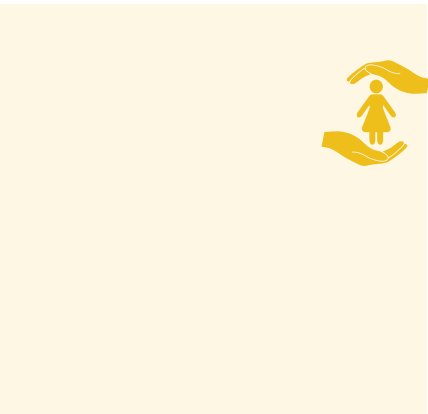
SAFETY

Make use of design techniques that can be effective in reducing crime and violence, known as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). This includes identifying strategic locations for the creation of public parks, with a high flow of people, and the construction of buildings with windows facing streets and public areas, as well as promoting the use of public lighting and the construction of culturally appropriate sanitation facilities.



ACCESSIBILITY

Promote the construction of public spaces with accessible and adequate recreational facilities that are safe for children of different ages to play under limited supervision, as women tend to be the caregivers accompanying them. Also such facilities should be located in areas with clear separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic at limited speeds.



WOMEN'S SAFETY AUDITS

For existing public spaces, consider organizing women's safety audits to identify what is not working and make improvements as needed.

6.5 MOBILITY



GENDER-RESPONSIVE TRANSPORTATION

Consider adopting an integrated fare system that enables users to make multiple trips and combine different means of transportation within a given timeframe, as women tend to travel shorter distances and make more stops than men.



CHILDREN-FRIENDLY INFRASTRUCTURE

When designing bus stops and pedestrian lanes, keep in mind that women are likely to spend more time moving with children, which increases the need for safe pedestrian routes and public transportation that is adapted for the use of baby strollers.



SAFE BICYCLE LANES

Design and build bicycle lanes that are clearly separated from car lanes, as women tend to give more importance to safety than men (IADB 2017).

6.6 BASIC URBAN SERVICES



Promote the construction of intra-household sanitary facilities, considering providing subsidies to low-income families in developing countries. Promote the provision of affordable water supply on premises or within a short walking distance (less than 10 minutes) from the home.



Promote households' access to clean and affordable sources of energy.

6.7 CHILDCARE SERVICES



AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE SERVICES

Promote access to high-quality and affordable childcare services in order to facilitate the participation of women in the workforce and to reduce the opportunity cost of schooling for girls and young women. Since motherhood is a key determinant of gender gaps in earnings and a serious threat to women's career progress, reducing the cost of being a working mother and promoting a more equal division of parental responsibilities between mothers and fathers should be a top priority in the gender agenda – for both the public and the private sector.

6.8 SHELTER AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO SURVIVORS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



NETWORK OF SHELTERS

Build a network of shelters for survivors of gender-based violence and provide them with healthcare, financial and educational support services. Consider building the so-called “one-stop centers”, such as Ciudad Mujer, that offer a variety of services to women in one place.

6.9 MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION



WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Promote entrepreneurship at the local level, to include a gender perspective into the urban agenda. These initiatives include access to finance, skill training, coaching and mentoring programs, business incubators, among others.



GENDER EQUALITY IN MANAGEMENT

Promote the involvement of women in the management of public facilities, since when women participate in facility management, facilities are more effective and better managed.



PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES

Assess existing regulations regarding all aspects of the participatory processes, including urban legal reform, urban planning and design, public policy development, and urban project design, to understand how inclusive and supportive they are in terms of women's meaningful participation.

6.10 AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY



GENDER SENSITIZATION

Promote awareness/sensitization campaigns and activities to prevent sexual harassment in public spaces, particularly inside public transportation, and consider promoting targeted activities, such as “role reversal” exercises, with male workers and staff, so as to enable them to understand what sexual harassment means to women and help prevent it (UN-Women 2017).



GENDER MAINSTREAMING

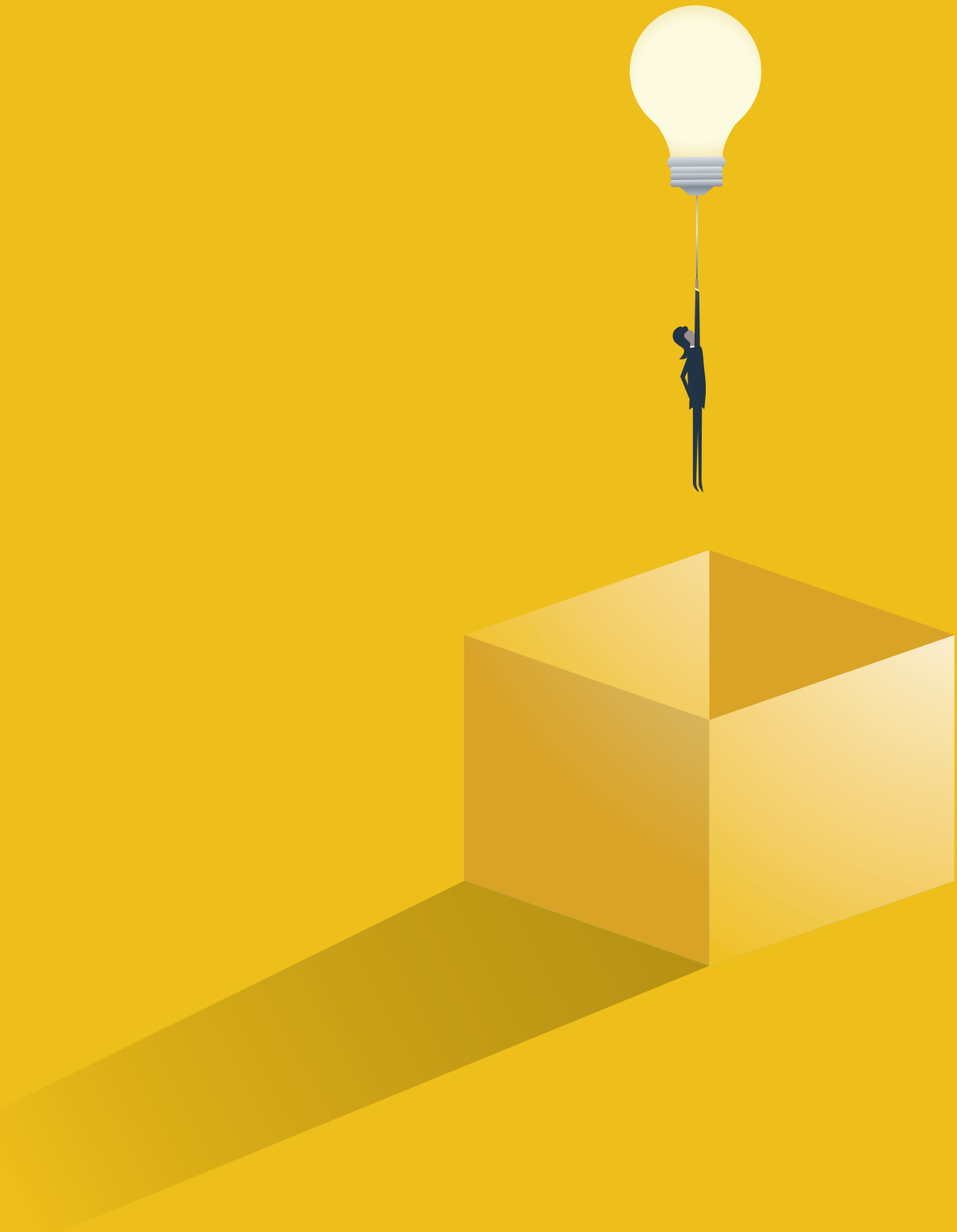
Raise awareness for both men and women to change attitudes that sustain discrimination against women. Display information campaigns in public places to disseminate gender equality values that foster cultural transformation and challenge existing gender norms. This should also include promoting training and capacity building on gender equality and gender mainstreaming among government officials in their field of work.

Conclusions

Gender equality is at the center of our efforts to build inclusive and cohesive cities for sustainable urban development. As shown in this document, besides the opportunities that rapid urbanization processes provide, cities have brought about a range of challenges to women who are usually disproportionately burdened with domestic responsibilities, restricted by traditional gender roles and norms, and are often on the receiving end of acts of subtle gender discrimination. Consequently, women tend to benefit less from urbanization and face more difficulties accessing urban services, participating in political and public life, and benefitting from economic opportunities in cities.

To address these issues and enhance gender equality in urban development, both national and local governments play indispensable roles in this cause, and should base their initiatives to promote gender equality on sound research and evidence. At the legislative and regulatory level, national governments have a major responsibility to ensure the basic rights of women, especially through housing rights and inheritance laws, land policy and security of tenure, housing subsidy policies and systems, parental leave and childcare policies, equal pay legislation and laws against gender-based violence. On the governance level, both national and local governments should make efforts to increase the meaningful participation of women and people with specific vulnerabilities, in urban governance, especially in decision-making processes. It is also important to establish effective, accountable and transparent governance mechanisms that respond to the specific needs, interests and challenges facing women and men, girls and boys, and vulnerable people in general.

Moreover, local authorities can further advance gender equality by bringing gender-responsive regulations and governance to the ground, developing and implementing gender-responsive interventions. It is vital that national authorities empower local authorities with appropriate decision-making power and financial resources. Similarly, local authorities must consult with national authorities to ensure efficient and effective service delivery and to give feedback on national program outcomes.



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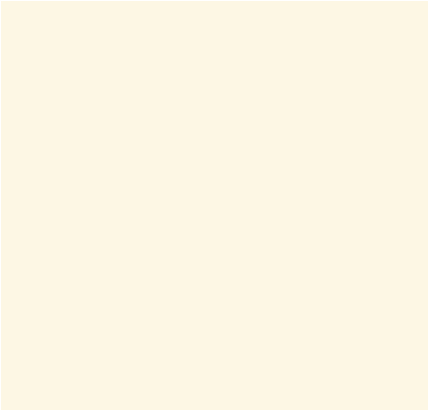
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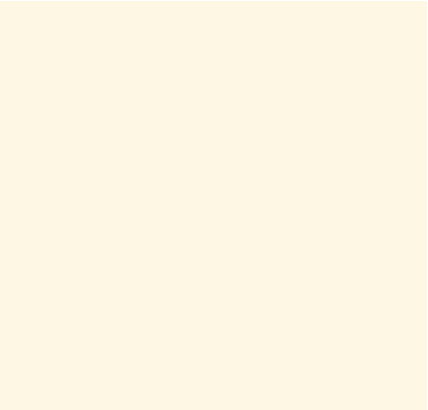
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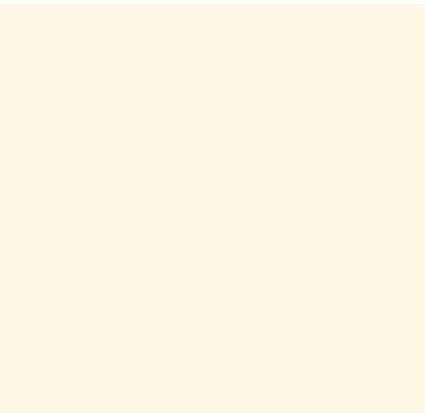
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IMG 49. Source: Arslanian, Sarine. Women selling eggs to people visiting the Kimironko market in Kigali (Rwanda). August, 2015. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



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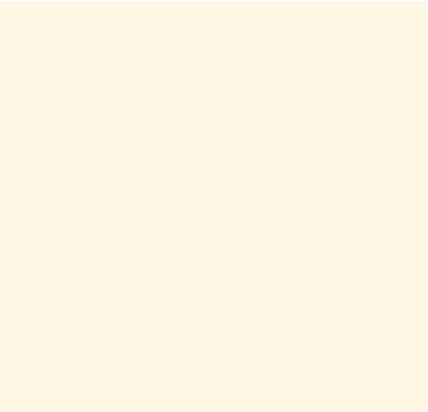
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IMG 50. Source: Souza, Joa. Women are seen working on building construction work of a church in the São Caetano neighborhood in Salvador, Bahia (Brazil). December, 2014. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



Acknowledgements

The Authors would like to acknowledge the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, for their leadership, coordination and dedication, as well as colleagues of the three organizations that work tirelessly around the world for gender equality in cities:

CAF - DEVELOPMENT BANK OF LATIN AMERICA

Pablo Brassiolo
Elena Cardona
Edgar Lara
Pablo Lopez
Angie Palacios

INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IADB)

Nora Ruth Libertun de Duren
Martin Nicolas Soulier Faure
Catarina Mastellaro

UN-HABITAT

Xuesai Ma
Angela Mwai
Myles Hallin
David Thomas

GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF BUENOS ARIES

Jessica Pérez Rocha Segovia
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IMG 51 (back cover). Source: Aldana, Julio. Woman observing the view in Guanajuato during the day (Mexico). 2019. Shutterstock. Access 03/11/2020. Shutterstock.com



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GENDER INEQUALITIES IN CITIES

2020