

Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design

Overview

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The World Bank

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“He’s just a baby... sometimes it takes a while before somebody offers me a seat. The bus takes too long and I have him in my arms, together with my purse, shopping bags... It’s all very complicated.”

Woman from Recife, Brazil (ITDP, 2018)

“It was about 7pm when I had gotten to the latrine only to encounter a group of four young men. I shouted, asking them to leave me, and I could feel them undress me and one of them say that they would teach me a lesson on why I should not be out at that time...”

Woman from Nairobi, Kenya (Amnesty International, 2010)

“I’ll go out to a park and I’m not trying to be the center of attraction, like they’re straight and they’re not really looking at you... so I feel really uncomfortable just trying to strike a conversation with a straight person because they don’t know where I’m coming from or they might take me offensive.”

Transgender woman of color from Los Angeles, USA (Wendel, 2017)

“In public spaces and in the street, the city is very dangerous. There are gangs, robberies, assaults; you can be kidnapped, followed, sexually harassed, [and] raped. Walking in the streets is dangerous, especially in desolate areas; it is more dangerous at night when there is low light.”

Young girl from Lima, Peru (UN-HABITAT, 2013a)

“There are pay-and-use toilets built outside the Chawl which charge two rupees for each use. Sometimes, when we are sick, it becomes really difficult for us to pay every time. The open drainage flows right outside each hut, so small children use the drainage, but for me as a woman, it is very difficult at night, so we have to hold everything ‘till the morning arrives.”

Woman from Jai Bhawani Chawl, Mumbai, India (COHRE, 2008)

“I have no house now. Everything was lost to river erosion... I could not afford to buy food. He [my husband] left us, telling us that he was going abroad... he never returned. This kid was in my womb back then while he left us.”

Woman from Dhaka, Bangladesh (Joungn, 2019)

LETTER FROM WORLD BANK

Closing gaps between men and women, boys and girls is central to the sustainable development goals, and achieving gender equality is a core tenet within the World Bank Group's mission of achieving prosperity for all. However, across development sectors, progress in closing gaps has been uneven and in some sectors, such as financial inclusion, even stagnant. Grasping and grappling with the complexities of gender norms, outdated institutional policies, and discriminatory laws and regulations — as documented, for instance, in *Women, Business, and the Law* — can be a daunting challenge. Urban planning and design practitioners are not immune to these issues — in fact, their disciplines have historically helped reinforce unequal gender roles and responsibilities, with adverse consequences on mobility, access to key assets and public spaces, and safety for women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities in cities around the world. Nonetheless, the role that today's urban planners and designers, alongside cities and community members, can play in promoting gender equality is significant. After all, urban planning and design decisions shape the very environment we live in.

This handbook aims to illuminate the relationships between gender inequality, the built environment, and urban planning and design; and to lay out a menu of simple, practicable processes and best practices for urban planning and design projects that build more inclusive cities — for men and women, for those with disabilities, and for those who are marginalized and excluded. The work is the result of a collaborative process between experts from the Urban, Infrastructure, Social Development, and Gender units within the World Bank Group, and external experts with extensive experience in participatory urban planning and design. Covering a comprehensive array of plan and project typologies and providing case studies from diverse contexts around the world, we hope this handbook will be an invaluable source of practical guidance and inspiration for World Bank Task Team Leaders as well as consultants and clients across all World Bank regions.

Caren Grown, Senior Director of Gender

Sameh Wahba, Global Director for the World Bank's Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience and Land Global Practice

Executive Summary

Urban Planning and Urban planning and design quite literally shape the environment around us — and that environment, in turn, shapes how we live, work, play, move, and rest.

As such, the processes of planning and design have a direct relationship with the structures and behaviors that define our societies, often both reflecting and reinforcing the inequities within them. While it is almost universally understood that women, girls, people with disabilities, and sexual and gender minorities face significant social and economic disadvantages when compared with able-bodied, cisgender, heterosexual men, what is still not fully understood and accepted among many planning and design practitioners is exactly how conditions in the built environment — and the lack of diversity in the voices shaping it — feed into and perpetuate gender inequity.

In general, cities work better for heterosexual, able-bodied, cisgender men than they do for women, girls, sexual and gender minorities, and people with disabilities. Key aspects of the built urban environment — related to access, mobility, safety and freedom from violence, health and hygiene, climate resilience, and security of tenure — create disproportionate burdens for women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities, thus exacerbating and reinforcing existing gender inequities. Faced with challenges ranging from transportation services that prioritize commuting over caregiving, to the lack of lighting and toilets in public spaces, many feel inconvenienced, ill-at-ease, and unsafe in the urban environment. These issues stem largely from the absence of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities in planning and design decisions, leading to assumptions around their needs and the encoding of traditional gender roles within the built environment.

Over the past few decades, theorists and practitioners have begun to ask: how might we design and plan cities that work well for everyone? What would such a city look like, and how would we go about creating it? However, with women and sexual and gender minorities still largely excluded from both the professional fields of planning and design, and from public decision-making processes around urban development, answering these questions in practical terms continues to pose a significant challenge.

The Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design aims to fill the gap between gender-inclusive policy and practice, and respond to the historic exclusion of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities from the processes of urban planning and design. It clearly presents the economic and social case for gender inclusion in urban planning and design and provides practical guidelines on how to implement gender-inclusive planning and design projects. In particular it seeks to fulfill the following objectives:

Why Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design Matter

- Demonstrate the ways in which gender inequities intersect with urban planning and design, with clear, digestible summaries of the negative impacts for women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities
- Make the clear economic case for addressing inequity and incorporating gender inclusion into urban planning and design
- Highlight the need to consider gender inclusion in an intersectional way, especially taking into account sexual orientation and gender identity, ability, and age

How Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design are Done

- Set out overarching commitments to guide gender-inclusive planning and design processes toward meaningful, effective outcomes and long-term improvements in the status of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities
- Provide practicable methodologies, activities, and good

practices for incorporating and elevating the voices of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities in participatory planning and design processes

- Give clear, specific design guidelines, appropriate for and adaptable to all regions, for a range of planning and project typologies carried out by the World Bank

The handbook has been written to support World Bank staff, clients, contractors, and consultants involved in implementing projects within the Bank’s urban development portfolio. It may also be a valuable resource for external practitioners seeking to take concrete steps toward a more gender-inclusive approach.

Gender biases in the built environment contribute directly to gendered social and economic inequities, feeding into the systemic oppression of women, girls, sexual and gender minorities, and those with disabilities. Faced with such a built environment, women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities often:

- Struggle to access gainful employment, education and other basic human endowments
- Struggle to accumulate wealth and achieve economic independence
- Spend more on basic services
- Have fewer social freedoms — hindering them from building social networks to cope with risk, stress, and shock
- Struggle to exercise agency in public decision-making, including decisions that shape the built environment

However, the social and economic costs of gender inequity in the built environment also point to a critical opportunity.

If planning and design processes become more gender-inclusive, and the built environment more accessible, connected, safe, healthy, climate resilient, and secure, then women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities will make significant economic and social gains — and contributions to

sustainable development — around the world.

The ultimate goal of gender-inclusive urban planning and design is to advance gender equity and unlock more inclusive economic and social development. To achieve this goal, urban planners and designers must include women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities in planning and design decision-making processes, and work to combat the gendered imbalances in the built environment that prevent their full social and economic inclusion. Meeting these goals requires a fundamental shift in thinking and approach, and in particular a commitment to participatory processes, integrated approaches, Universal Design, building knowledge and power among under-represented groups; and financial investment. These commitments are a direct answer to the historic exclusion of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities from planning and design, and form the starting point for the practical planning and design guidelines in this handbook.

GENDER-INCLUSIVE PLANNING AND DESIGN ARE...

- Participatory: actively including the voices of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities
- Integrated: adopting a holistic, cross-cutting approach that centers gender throughout and promotes citizen-city relationship building
- Universal: meeting the needs of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities of all ages and abilities
- Knowledge-building: seeking out and sharing robust, meaningful new data on gender equity
- Power-building: growing the capacity and influence of under-represented groups in key decisions
- Invested-in: committing the necessary finances and expertise to follow through on intentional gender equity goals

GENDER-INCLUSIVE PLANNING AND DESIGN ARE NOT...

- Prescriptive: designing and planning *for* women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities instead of *with* them
- An add-on: considering women separately from other beneficiaries and project goals; failing to connect the dots or the actors involved
- Exclusive: being concerned with the needs of able-bodied women or female persons alone
- Uninformative: operating in a vacuum without engaging with and contributing to broader knowledge on gender
- Disempowering: repeating or reinforcing historical imbalances in representation and agency
- Uninvested-in: assuming gender goals are achieved if women are among beneficiaries without investing the required time and resources to follow through

The Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design presents clear and practical guidelines for both (i) implementing gender-inclusive planning and design processes; and (ii) creating gender-inclusive plans and projects. The aim of this breakdown is to provide guidance on both “process” and “product”. The Process Guidelines give guidance on flexible, adaptable actions and activities that can be applied throughout the course of a plan or project development in any context, with a focus: on establishing gender principles; monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning; community participation; and considerations for project implementation. Included is a menu of seven gender-inclusive engagement activities that will enable project teams to garner community buy-in, gather qualitative and quantitative data, and co-design solutions with project beneficiaries. The “Planning and Project Guidelines” provide guidance — including good practices and, where possible and applicable, minimum design standards — for the implementation of the following types of plan or project:

- Urban Land Management Plans
- Metropolitan Development Plans
- Master Plans and Integrated Urban Development Plans
- City Mobility and Transportation Plans
- Neighborhood Development Plans
- Informal Neighborhood Upgrading Plans
- City Climate Action Plans
- Disaster Risk Management Plans
- Housing
- Public Transport, Mobility Infrastructure, and Road Safety Interventions
- Streetscapes
- Public Spaces
- Basic Urban Services
- Energy
- Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
- Solid Waste Management
- Communications and ICT

Several cities around the world are making strides in gender-inclusive planning and design, providing valuable learning opportunities and sources of inspiration. Case studies of gender-inclusive projects from these cities show how simple measures to improve access to land can dramatically increase agency and wellbeing; how increasing visibility and participation for disadvantaged groups can promote safety and access to the public realm; how proper planning with a gender lens can ensure the full participation of underrepresented voices; how better representation can yield innovative designs that serve everyone — not just women — better; and how short-term, “stop-gap” measures can complement and even enable long-term strategic efforts to improve gender equity. At the same time, the case studies reveal areas in which gender-inclusive strategies can come up short — from poor monitoring and evaluation to financial under-commitment and a failure to marry simple measures that improve convenience and safety with strategic efforts to challenge gender inequity. Lessons such as these point the way to how project processes and outputs can be improved in the future.

Women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities make up more than half of the world’s population. This handbook, a valuable and much-needed addition to the existing literature and resources on gender inclusion, seeks to bring their knowledge and skills, and their needs and desires, to the forefront of urban planning and design. By reimagining and reshaping cities in a more gender-inclusive way, community members, practitioners, and governments can unlock new economic and social opportunities to promote prosperity for all.

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World Bank 2020

Kounkuey Design Initiative

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