

Gender-Inclusive Approaches in Urban Development

Urban Development Planning and Design

Gender Issues

Gender-responsive urban planning can contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment in significant ways through the provision of (i) accessible and affordable infrastructure and services for water supply and sanitation, waste disposal, electricity, transport, and housing; (ii) security of tenure; (iii) employment and income-generating opportunities through formal and informal labor markets; and (iv) safety and security for all citizens in growing urban neighborhoods.

Gender-Responsive Design

Infrastructure and Service Delivery

- Develop mechanisms (e.g., participatory consultations and mandatory quotas, as necessary) for involving women in the planning, design, management, operation, and maintenance of urban infrastructure and services.
- Closely involve women in site planning and design.
- Consider gender-responsive physical design of urban infrastructure—vendor markets, bus and train terminals, municipal buildings, and separate male and female toilets in public spaces and buildings.
- Consider redesign of service technology and equipment (e.g., easy-to-handle water taps and lighter garbage bins and containers).

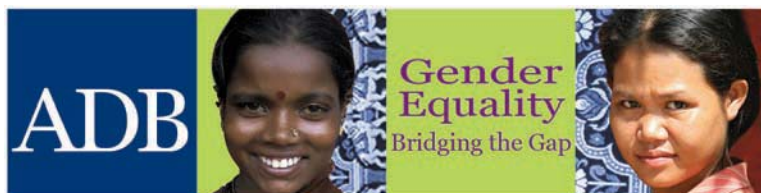
Framework for Gender Issues in Urban Development

- Access and affordability of services
- Technology choice, location, and pricing options
- Women's participation and representation in decision-making bodies
- Safety and security issues
- Clean environment and better health
- Employment and entrepreneurship opportunities
- Land, property, and asset ownership

- Ensure accessibility and affordability of basic services such as water supply and sanitation, electricity, waste disposal, transport, and health care.

Economic Development

- Train women as engineers and technicians, sanitation masons, system operators, and bill collectors.
- Promote both skilled and unskilled women's access to employment in infrastructure construction, operation, and maintenance with decent working conditions; set targets or quotas and compliance clauses in civil works contracts for adherence to core labor standards.



- Promote wage parity between men and women in construction and civil works.
- Consider maintenance contracts for women’s groups for small civil works, roadside maintenance, drainage clearance, solid waste management, etc.
- Consider how poor women’s employment and entrepreneurship can be supported and enhanced through expanding local markets, simplifying business registration procedures, establishing women’s business associations, improving access to credit for poor women, providing off-peak bus services, and regularizing labor contracts for civil works to hire local labor with equal wage.



ADB Photo

Zoning and Land Use Planning

- Consider zoning and land use planning that offer poor households security of tenure close to informal markets and employment centers.
- If relocation of households is inevitable due to infrastructure construction, consider locating new housing developments with better access to water and sanitation facilities, transport, and security services and close to markets or manufacturing centers or both, to give women and men more employment and income-earning opportunities.

Physical Safety and Security

- Collect sex-disaggregated data on safety and security.
- Consider issues of privacy and safety for water and sanitation facilities.
- Provide street and lane lighting, pavements, and sidewalks in urban settlements.
- Provide links with local police units for safety and security.
- Consider conducting “violence against women” surveys, safety audits, and exploratory walks.

Capacity Development

- Train local authorities in gender-inclusive urban policy making and programming.
- Improve capacity of women’s groups and informal neighborhood networks to engage in urban planning and decision-making processes.

Urban Water Supply and Sanitation

Gender Issues

Water and sanitation services are critical for poverty reduction, particularly for women and girls, as these (i) reduce the drudgery and heavy workload for women and girls in their household roles for water collection, carriage, storage, and treatment; (ii) release girls from the burden of water collection, allowing them to potentially attend school; (iii) improve the health of women and their children through reduced waterborne diseases; (iv) reduce women’s caring activities due to health improvement of the family; and (v) reduce women’s time poverty, enabling them to spend more time on income-generating activities, community development initiatives, social obligations, and leisure. Women also have opportunities to become active agents of change in the water and sanitation sector in their communities through leadership and membership in water users’ associations, sanitation committees, and waste disposal management committees, as they can contribute to critical decisions affecting their lives.

Gender-Responsive Design

1. Consider women’s needs in accessing water points; number, types, and location of facilities; and child safety.
2. Consider women’s preferences on technology (community taps or pumps, household connection, and wells), and individual or shared facilities.
3. Design water infrastructure to be women-friendly, e.g., hand pumps or taps they can operate easily.



4. Include women in the supervision of well construction.
5. Prioritize location choices for water supply and sanitation facilities that reduce the heavy work burden of women and girls, and consider their needs for privacy and security.
6. Involve women in decisions on latrine design (including communal toilet blocks), technology, location, financing, and maintenance.
7. Address affordability concerns among low-income households and those headed by women. Consider free connection or fees into billing for equitable tariff structure. Analyze what connection fees, pricing, payment methods, and operation and maintenance arrangements best fit the needs of women and men.
8. Identify specific roles and set targets for women's participation in water users' associations and water user and sanitation committees.
9. Adopt policies for equal training opportunities for males and females (50% for each) in system operation and maintenance, water source protection and water quality monitoring and testing, meter calibration, and public and personal hygiene awareness.
10. Consider government incentives (e.g., grants and scholarships) to train female engineers and water technicians.
11. Improve water supply operations and services by introducing ways to make utilities accountable for gender inclusiveness and responsiveness:
 - Ensure customer service departments target women-consumer groups.
 - Establish sex-disaggregated consumer database.
 - Target women's groups for hygiene, sanitation, and efficient water use awareness programs.
 - Include women in public consultations on water connection charges and pricing.
 - Set female targets or quotas for new recruitments in utilities (e.g., customer services, meter readers, water quality testing) including more women in management.
 - Subcontract to women's self-help groups for meter reading, billing, and collection.

Urban Governance

Gender Issues

Urban governance is more than just operation and maintenance of infrastructure and urban services. It is also civic engagement and ensuring participation of all stakeholders in decision making. Women and men have different priorities and needs in terms of infrastructure and services regarding water supply and sanitation, transport, and housing. Women's lack of participation or low representation in decision-making processes related to urban services and governance means their needs and priorities are rarely considered in urban planning and investments.

Gender-Responsive Design

1. Support meaningful participation of women and men in urban development by identifying community needs and priorities through baseline surveys, consultations, and community-based awareness-raising campaigns.
2. Promote gender-responsive good governance by increasing women's voice in local decision making by
 - electing women to key leadership positions in urban governance structures, e.g., town and ward-level committees and market management committees, trade associations, water users' associations, water user and sanitation committees, and slum improvement committees;
 - ensuring women's representation in financial management (reviewing tariffs and user fees) and in budget and tender committees;



ADB Photo

- involving more women in operation and maintenance and in setting service standards (solid waste collection, transport, etc.); and
- involving women in the planning, design, and location of services.

3. Strengthen the capacity of women's community-based organizations or nongovernment organizations and civil society partners to mobilize women in advocating for their needs and priorities, and holding service providers accountable in providing safe, reliable, and affordable services.

Urban Housing and Housing Finance

Gender Issues

While women have access to land and housing, they often do not have property rights and control over resources, which limit their (i) asset base, (ii) decision-making power on housing location and design, (iii) productive and/or income-earning activities, and (iv) access to credit and housing finance.

Gender-Responsive Design

1. Collect information on men's and women's legal rights to land and property, and inform women of their legal rights through awareness-raising campaigns and community consultations.
2. Provide joint titles for husbands and wives in all housing developments.
3. Encourage secure tenancy or ownership for both women and men. Long-term tenure can stimulate the building of extensions where women can operate small enterprises and earn income.
4. Consider mixed-use zoning (residential and commercial) allowance in low-income housing settlements to promote women's home-based enterprises.
5. Instead of relocating poor households to new sites (often in the periphery of the city), consider in situ relocation by granting land titles to those with makeshift shelters (joint titles for husbands and wives) and provide better access to water, sanitation, transport, and security services in the area.

6. Consider resettlement only if it is inevitable and make sure new housing settlements are close to markets and employment centers.
7. Involve beneficiary women and men through community-based organizations (including women's groups) in determining housing designs and locations, and incorporate their various preferences such as
 - Avoid a housing design that would unnecessarily add to women's domestic work (e.g., earth floors or overcrowding of different functions).
 - Consider a housing design that will provide women with adequate space and facilities (i.e., work space, storage, and lighting for home-based income-generating activities); provide electrical outlets in cooking areas to allow for the possible use of electrical appliances in the future (this may encourage families to save money for the purchase of labor-saving devices).
 - Design simple house plans that could easily be expanded as household income grows.
8. Promote community-based savings and credit groups to give the urban poor and women access to small loans for incremental housing improvements.
9. For housing finance applications, establish criteria that
 - do not discriminate against women and men in informal sector employment with irregular incomes;
 - ensure eligibility for couples in consensual unions; and
 - ensure eligibility for poor and disadvantaged households and those headed by women, with possible quotas and affordable down payment, repayment, and collateral requirements.
10. Minimize paperwork and bureaucratic procedures to encourage uneducated or illiterate women and men to apply for housing finance.

Urban Transport (Mass Transit Systems)

Gender Issues

Women and men have different needs and constraints and are affected differently by transport services. Well-designed, gender-responsive urban transport services



can (i) improve women's access to education, health, and social services; (ii) provide easier and faster access to markets and employment; (iii) improve mobility and save time for women; (iv) reduce workload and improve welfare; (v) increase returns with higher usage uptake as women are often the main users of public transport; and (vi) better respond to demand for all users, both men and women.

Gender-Responsive Design

1. Gender-responsive physical design features and gender-specific planning of mass transit rail or bus infrastructure systems can improve transport service accessibility, safety and security, convenience, and affordability.
 - Consider separate buses or sections for female passengers, and separate female carriages on rail services.
 - Consider whether the steps are too high for women to climb onto buses and whether the handrails are too high for women to reach; and make space for strollers, baby carriages, and shopping bags.
 - Ensure well-lit stations, bus stops, and surrounding areas for security and safety.
 - Ensure separate male and female toilets at bus and rail stations.
 - Consider separate seating spaces at stations, especially in some cultural contexts.
 - Assess affordability of transport services and multimodal ticketing.
 - Consider bus and train schedules that meet needs of both men and women (during both peak and off-peak hours).
2. Employ female transport workers—drivers, ticket sellers and collectors, and station attendants. Consider targets and quotas.



ADB Photo

Capacity Building and Project Management

Gender Issues

Institutional capacity to plan, manage, implement, monitor, and evaluate gender-inclusive urban development projects is weak in most development agencies. To achieve gender-equality results in development, government agencies and their partner institutions in project implementation need to integrate gender-inclusive measures in their operational work and institutional policies and strategies to ensure women can directly participate in and benefit from development programs.

Gender-Responsive Design

1. Include gender equality issues in sector policy, procedures, and operations manuals.
2. Promote more women in government, nongovernment, and private service providers.
3. Train elected female ward councilors and heads of water user and sanitation committees in understanding their roles, and provide them with leadership skills.
4. Engage women as staff, consultants, and facilitators.
5. Provide gender awareness training for executing and implementing agencies, and municipal and elected officials.
6. Expose project directors and staff to good practices in gender mainstreaming through study visits, peer exchanges, and lateral learning forums.
7. Assist sector agencies with development of institutional gender strategies covering both operational work and human resources development policies.
8. Improve the capacities of executing agencies and project implementing units to collect, analyze, and use sex-disaggregated data.
9. Establish sex-disaggregated monitoring, reporting, and evaluation systems.
10. Use proven tools, such as gender action plans, to guide implementation and achievement of gender-related targets and activities in project and program works.