

## Achieving Gender Equality in Cities

### The Cities Alliance Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017

#### Executive Summary

##### Commitment

Each member of the Cities Alliance is committed to advance gender equality and women's empowerment within their own respective mandates and programmes. This Gender Equality Strategy (GES) describes how the Cities Alliance Membership will extend these commitments into their joint activities for sustainable urban development, operationalizing the Cities Alliance Charter, to become the pre-eminent partnership promoting gender-inclusive cities.

##### Why Focus on Gender Inequalities in Cities?

**Discrimination against women has a price:** The Members of Cities Alliance maintain that women are vectors of positive change in cities, promoting household economic resilience and more equitable decision-making. Yet throughout the world a range of policies, customs and practices divert resources *away* from women, so that they have fewer opportunities, capabilities and rights, despite the known development advantage of directing resources *towards* them. This paradox directly undermines the inclusiveness and sustainability of urban development, and imposes huge financial costs on development, including through lost purchasing power, lost taxes and distorted demand for public services<sup>1</sup>.

**The disaggregation imperative:** Inclusive development requires a highly contextualized approach to the political economy of the inclusive city – a second apparent paradox; the need to disaggregate analytically in order to plan and act for greater unity. An aggregate focus on “the poor” or “citizens” does not capture the heterogeneity of poor urban populations. The inclusive city can best be achieved by inclusive approaches, such as gender mainstreaming, that capture the textured, non-linear nature of urban dynamics. These approaches are currently not widely used in urban planning, leading inevitably to partial and even exclusionary results: a situation that Cities Alliance is determined to reverse.

##### Vision

The Cities Alliance envisages inclusive cities increasingly characterized by effective and transparent local government, engaged citizens from all social groups and improved and responsive service-delivery to poor urban men, women, girls and boys of all backgrounds. The achievement of this vision presupposes cities in which:

- **Economy and Community:** both women and men have decent jobs, political voice and services designed to support them in their multiple and intersecting roles as breadwinners, carers and community managers;
- **Basic Services:** men and women, girls and boys are well educated, enjoy optimal health and can move around freely and safely;
- **Mixed-used planning** reflects the ways in which men and women, girls and boys actually live and work and learn;
- **Local government policy** is committed to working with grassroots citizens to ensure relevant financial and business services and gender-responsive housing and land-use policy; and
- **Local government officers** know how to ensure in multiple ways that equitable growth and gender equality go hand in hand, and are committed to the sustainable achievement of both, for the optimal benefit of the city as a whole.

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<sup>1</sup> The Cities Alliance Medium Term Strategy 2014-2016, page 2.

## The Business Case for Gender Equality

The business case for the Cities Alliance commitment to gender equality is three-fold: (1) the rights of women and girls under international law and global consensus; (2) the high costs of not acting; and (3) the comparative advantage of Cities Alliance to intervene in this area.

### The Rights of Women and Girls

The entitlement of women and girls to non-discrimination, and to the full enjoyment of rights and freedoms on an equal basis with men and boys, has been established in international law by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)<sup>2</sup>, to which the vast majority of countries, including every country in which Cities Alliance is currently active, are States Party. National governments are required to hold local government and all branches of civil society accountable for their adherence to CEDAW.

Because human rights are indivisible and all forms of discrimination and exclusion are related, paying attention to women and girls can be a highly effective means of opening broad avenues to mutually reinforcing change processes in multiple areas, reflecting the relationships among class, gender, race, ethnicity, faith, disability and all other socio-economic variables.

In addition, a global consensus has emerged over the past 25 years on the centrality of women's rights to the world development agenda, including at the city level through Habitat II, the Habitat Declaration and Agenda 21. The entire inter-governmental and multi-lateral development community is committed to operationalizing that consensus, using tools and approaches that are now well established, as described in this strategy. All that is required is the political will to do so.

### The High Costs of Not Acting

Attention to gender equality is a matter of development impact as well as rights!

The financial costs of gender inequality are considerable, and its impact extends far beyond the women and girls concerned, and their families, to affect society as a whole. Taking steps to prevent discrimination against women in cities, and eliminate it from local government policy, and practice, could release considerable funds for productive city development.

Most research focuses on the national level, although the concentration of population in cities makes it likely that the costs of gender inequality are even more intense at the urban level. Examples of such costs include:

- a) In 2013 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demonstrated a GDP per capita loss of up to 27 percent in some regions as a result of not fully engaging women in the labor force. In some countries the loss is even greater: in Egypt raising women's workforce participation rate to that of men would lift the country's GDP by more than an estimated 33 percent.<sup>3</sup>
- b) Estimates of the loss of economic growth due to gender inequality in education range from 0.38 per cent per annum in Sub-Saharan Africa to 0.81 per cent per annum in South Asia. This accounts for between 11 and 41 per cent of the lower growth in these regions compared with East Asia and the Pacific<sup>4</sup>

#### DFID Gender Equality Strategy

DFID has developed a strategy to stop poverty before it starts by investing as early as possible in girls and women, so that the impact of all development interventions is multiplied. The aim is to create an enabling environment for gender equality by developing sustained political commitment to services and opportunities for women and girls, building effective legal frameworks to protect their rights, challenging discrimination and increasing both the value ascribed to them and their power to make informed choices and control decisions that affect them. The intention is to delay first pregnancy, and support safe childbirth, for example by preventing early marriage and increasing access to contraception; get girls through secondary school by means of a stronger pipeline of girls graduating from primary school, and more female teachers; get economic assets directly into the hands of women through financial services and protection of land rights; and prevention of violence against girls and women, by strengthening data, providing support service to victim/survivors and supporting security and justice systems to prevent and respond to violence. All of these are central to well-managed urbanisation and inclusive cities

<sup>2</sup> United Nations. 1979. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*. A/34/180. Entry into Force 3rd September 1981. This reaffirmed and expanded the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948).

<sup>3</sup> International Monetary Fund (IMF) Strategy, Policy, and Review Department and Fiscal Affairs Department, 2013. *Women, Work, and the Economy: Macroeconomic Gains From Gender Equity*.

<sup>4</sup> OECD/DC 2010. Evidence for Action : Gender equality and economic growth by Chatham House with DFID <http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/45568595.pdf>

- c) In 1996 the estimated costs of social services provided to women victims of domestic violence in the London Borough of Hackney was £7.5 million. The extrapolated cost for London as a whole in that year was £278 million (equivalent to about US\$750 million at today's prices).<sup>5</sup> This figure does not include other costs such as workdays lost, reductions in commercial output, tax losses, medical costs, police costs and long-term costs (such as the mental health and criminal justice services that may be required throughout the lives of children affected by domestic violence).
- d) In 2000 UNFPA reported that countries with three female students or fewer for every four male students could expect 25 percent less GNP per capita than countries with greater parity in education.<sup>6</sup>
- e) In 2007 ESCities AllianceP found that "Gender discrimination has widespread ramifications and clear economic and social costs. The Asia-Pacific region... is losing US\$42-\$47 billion per year because of restrictions on women's access to employment opportunities – and another US\$16-\$30 billion per year because of gender gaps in education. Those are just the economic costs – added to them are social and personal costs".<sup>7</sup>
- f) In 2013 a commentator calculated that women's low participation in the labour force might have reduced India's growth rate by 4% per annum over the previous 10 years.<sup>8</sup>
- g) In 1999 Kathy Matsui of Goldman Sachs wrote that Japan could increase GDP by 15 percent by tapping the potential of women. Fifteen years later, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has made greater female workforce participation the cornerstone of his strategy to accelerate the Japanese economy and has proposed new policies that will address childcare, tax distortions, and female representation in government.
- h) Canada estimated that in 2003 that the national cost of gender-based violence was C\$1.5 billion, the direct medical costs alone representing about 1 percent of GDP. In 2000 Australia estimated the cost to be A\$1.5 billion, or about 4.5 percent of GDP.<sup>9</sup>
- i) Improving gender equality appears to lower the level of corruption. For example, an increase of about 13 percentage points in women's share of the labour force is associated with a one point improvement in the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) corruption rating, with indications of even greater improvements associated with increases in women's participation in Parliament.<sup>10</sup>

### *The comparative advantage of Cities Alliance*

The Cities Alliance comparative advantage to address gender inequality in urban development is its ability to draw on the complementary range of expertise, knowledge, experience and approaches of its Membership. Selected examples of these experiences are given in the boxes. Cities Alliance will leverage these synergies into comprehensive team-based approaches to inclusive and equitable urban development.

Under the guidance of its Executive Committee and General Assembly, the Cities Alliance Secretariat will consult on optimum ways to leverage collective experience, centred on emerging thinking about its three pillars - Equitable Growth, Gender Equality and Strengthened Partnerships, into joint activities and institutional effectiveness for sustainable urban development.

In the post-2015 period the global development community is likely to emphasise a need for broad-based patterns of economic growth, balanced by a complementary set of policies to manage growth and redistribute national income more fairly, including specific measures to ensure that redistributed wealth is shared equally by both men and women from all social groups (see also discussion of informality below). The Cities Alliance is well positioned to contribute to this development direction. *he Cities Alliance Gender Equality Programme*

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<sup>5</sup> Day, T. McKenna, K. & Bowlus, A. 2005. *The Economic Costs of Violence Against Women: An Evaluation of the Literature*. An expert brief compiled in preparation for the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women. United Nations. p. 22. The authors of the study chose not to use aggregate national statistics, fearing these "might not accurately reflect the diverse nature of life in an Inner London Borough". Instead they used survey techniques to calculate the prevalence rates of service use, and impute costs from these.

<sup>6</sup> UNFPA, 2000. *State of World Population*. Press summary p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> ESCities AllianceP. 2007. *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific*. p. viii.

<sup>8</sup> Jaishankar, D. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/03/the-huge-cost-of-indias-discrimination-against-women/274115/>

<sup>9</sup> UNDP 2009. Global Conference on Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Policies, Actions and Impact. Caracas, Venezuela, 21-22 April 2009. Summary Report.

<sup>10</sup> OECD/DC 2010. Evidence for Action: Gender equality and economic growth by Chatham House with DFID <http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/45568595.pdf>

## Specific Objective and Goals

The overall Development Objective of the Cities Alliance GES is to address and reduce gender inequalities in developing cities. The specific goals are:

- a) **Programme:** Joint activities prepared, contributing to these outputs before the end of 2017:
  - National policy frameworks developed and/or enhanced that address urban development needs in sustainable, equitable and gender-responsive ways;
  - Local pro-poor, gender equitable and climate resilient strategies and plans developed, and resources mobilized;
  - Tailored mechanisms to engage both men and women of all backgrounds in city/urban governance developed;
  - Capacities of cities in pro-poor, gender equitable and climate resilient governance and management strengthened.
- b) **Institutional Effectiveness:** required institutional mechanisms and processes established before the end of 2015, and functioning well; and
- c) **Gender Parity:** equitable employment practices and a positive organisational culture in place, so that gender parity at each level of the Secretariat is achieved within five years.

The underlying intention is to transform the joint activities of Cities Alliance members, finding new alliances and partners, and new, more inclusive and egalitarian dimensions for all their collective endeavors. Activities will involve:

Through a Joint Working Group on Gender Equality in Cities, Cities Alliance members will develop and lead a range of collaborative activities, centering on an over-arching Joint Work Programme on Gender Equality for Sustainable Urban Development. Cities Alliance Country Programmes will be prepared or revised to ensure that all gender equality considerations have been taken into account. The Cities Alliance Catalytic Fund will make a call for projects that specifically target innovative approaches to gender equality in urban settings, and the various screening processes will be updated so that no opportunity for gender mainstreaming is missed. Suggested areas of collaboration include:

- Land tenure and housing as a central issue for women's economic empowerment, security and well-being.
- Women in local government and decision-making positions, including local-to-local dialogue and peer learning and collaboration among local governments, worker movements and community groups.
- Safety in the city,
- Income and growth creation, in tandem with implementation of the Equal Growth Pillar of the MTS, to demonstrate the linkages between equal growth and gender equality
- Activities to develop men and boys' understanding of the importance of gender equality, to work with men and boys as allies in the pursuit of gender equality and to engage men and boys in prevention of discrimination against women and gender-based violence.
- The Cities Alliance will foster the collection of data disaggregated by age and sex in the context of all its activities, and support local governments to improve their own capacities and practices in disaggregated data collection and analysis.

These activities will build on and complement the existing experiences of Cities Alliance member organisations to generate applied research, diagnostics, disaggregated data, knowledge products, and contribute substantively to policy dialogue.

## Making the Cities Alliance Fit for Purpose

As stated in the MTS 2014-2017, it will be necessary to make some changes to organizational procedures, and monitor them carefully, to ensure organizational capacity to achieve the programme goals systematically. This will be achieved through:

### GIZ Stresses Internal Change in its Gender Strategy

The GIZ Gender Strategy recognizes gender equality is a goal in its own right and at the same time a key to and enabler of sustainable development. Gender equality is a principle that shapes the values and work of GIZ. The GIZ Gender Strategy is based on five complementary strategic elements:

- **Political will and accountability:** Managers clearly demonstrate their support for the issue of gender equality and follow up the implementation of the strategy.
- **Corporate culture:** We establish patterns of behaviour and codes of conduct within the company that help ensure gender equality.
- **Gender equality within the company:** We ensure that men and women work together on equal terms and that there is a balanced gender ratio across all hierarchical levels and fields of responsibility within the company
- **Gender competence:** We ensure that our staff know about imbalances in gender relations and ways of correcting these.
- **Processes:** Our procedures and instruments are gender-sensitive, especially in relation to

- **Accountability** of all Cities Alliance personnel for implementing the Gender Equality Strategy, established through the performance appraisal process. Specifically, the Cities Alliance Director is accountable to the Cities Alliance Joint Working Group on Gender Equality in Cities.
- **Performance Indicators, Monitoring and Reporting System:** the Cities Alliance Joint Working Group on Gender Equality in Cities and the Cities Alliance Director will ensure adjustment of existing monitoring and screening tools so that the required performance can be achieved, and will report regularly to the Cities Alliance Assembly on progress in implementing the Gender Equality Strategy.
- **Evaluation and Oversight:** Cities Alliance will comply with United Nations norms and standards for gender responsive evaluation.
- **Financial Resource Allocation and Tracking:** Cities Alliance membership will allocate sufficient funds to its gender programming activities.
- **Human Resources, including Gender Parity:** a Gender Focal Point Team has been established, and progress will be made towards gender parity in staffing.
- **Capacity Development:** The Joint Working Group on Gender Equality in Cities will ensure that they and Cities Alliance Secretariat staff have the needed capacity to implement the GES.
- **Coordination and Knowledge Management:** The Joint Working Group on Gender Equality in Cities will ensure internal and external distribution of information on all issues related to gender equality in urban development.

**UCLG promotes women in local, national and global decision-making**

UCLG recognizes that local governments are key promoters of gender equality and can improve the quality of women's lives and increase their opportunities. The gender equality agenda of UCLG focuses on the advancement of the status of women, promoting in particular the participation of women in decision-making.

UCLG provides advice and monitoring of gender policies, supports exchange between elected women, makes the voice of women mayors and councilors heard in the United Nations and hosts the Global Conference for Elected Women through its Standing Committee on Gender Equality

## Gender Issues in Urban Development

Issues related to the interaction of gender equality (and other aspects of urban diversity) with urban development are under-represented in discourse on the inclusive city, despite their centrality to its attainment. Here are a few key issues.

### *Equitable Growth and Gender Equality*

The nexus between economic growth and gender equality is a contested and theoretically complex policy arena. This is a critical area for attention by Cities Alliance as its two pillars of equal growth and gender equality are intricately linked in complex ways.

Research indicates that greater gender equality contributes to economic growth. Measures that enhance women's employment are also likely to contribute to economic growth. Gender equality in education, healthcare, basic services and employment regulation are important means both to achieve equitable growth, and establish a secure platform on which growth can be sustained over time and resist shocks.<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, evidence on the reverse proposition that economic growth contributes to gender equality is less robust, and where growth is based on the degradation of employment it probably reduces gender equality. Thus growth strategies that include redistributive measures, such as housing subsidies, decent jobs and well-designed basic services, are necessary if economic growth is to contribute to greater gender equality.<sup>12</sup>

This parallels emerging thinking on the relationship between growth and poverty reduction more generally. Growth maximization approaches to development that originated in the decades after World War II assume that growth produces a corresponding market-led reduction in poverty through 'trickle-down'. Over the years, these approaches have been tempered by a growing recognition of the systemic character of poverty and the very limited incidence of trickle-down.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Kabir N. and Natali, L. 2013. *Gender Equality and Economic Growth: Is there a Win-Win?* IDS Working Paper No. 417

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> For example Jolly, R and Mehrotra, S. 1997. *Development with a Human Face: Experiences in Social Achievement and Economic Growth*. UNICEF Publications. UNDP. Annually. *The Human Development Report*. United Nations 2012. *The Future We Want*. A/CONF.216/L.1

Recent perspectives have focused on the ways in which growth without redistribution actually increases economic inequality,<sup>14</sup> and that income inequality is in turn associated with a range of inequalities and disbenefits in other areas, including gender inequality.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, it must be remembered that major areas in which poor women experience discrimination, for example within the household and in segments of the informal sector, lie largely outside the monetized economy, and therefore are not reflected in national accounts and measurement of growth. Nevertheless, the time and energy spent in many of these activities, especially in the so-called “economy of care”, directly influence the productivity of labour and hence economic growth. Protection and service provision to the men and women performing these activities contributes to both greater equality and indirectly to growth.<sup>16</sup>

### *Informality, Employment & Self-Employment*

One critical component of a broad-based approach to equitable urban growth is attention to urban employment. Given the demographics and spatial arrangements of many secondary cities in the developing world, this is likely to mean informal employment. Women are clustered in the informal sector, where poor quality jobs, lack of protection and insecurity perpetuate both income and gender inequality. Decent work<sup>17</sup> is an essential pathway to poverty reduction, and providing decent work to both women and men is a central strategy for the achievement of both gender equality and equitable growth.<sup>18</sup>

However, the term “informal” does not mean that there are no rules or norms regulating the activities of workers or enterprises. Men and women engaged in informal activities have their own political economy – their own group rules, arrangements, institutions and structures for mutual help and trust, providing loans, organizing training, transferring technology and skills, trading and market access and enforcing obligations. Very often parallel cooperative networks and sets of rules for men and women will be in operation. The nature of these informal rules, whether and how they observe the fundamental rights of workers in general and women in particular, and how they mediate the contributions of the informal economy to inclusive urban development, are not well known.<sup>19</sup>

The World Bank estimates that almost 90 percent of 143 economies researched still have at least one legal restriction on women’s economic opportunities, including seventy-nine economies (over 50 percent) that restrict the types of jobs women can perform. There is also a lack of role models to inspire more women to join the workforce and change societal attitudes.<sup>20</sup> With regard to self-employment women face several constraints, further slowing both growth and the employment of others. Women are less likely than men to know other entrepreneurs, and tend to have weaker professional and commercial networks.<sup>21</sup> An estimated 70 percent of women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises in the formal sector in developing countries lack access to capital, resulting in a global financing gap of \$285 billion.<sup>22</sup> In Kenya, women own half of all small and medium enterprises, but these demonstrate less growth than male-owned businesses due to a lack of support and resources.<sup>23</sup>

In bridging the gap between formal and informal sectors, and finding creative ways to include informality in urban planning, in particular with regard to slum upgrading and future proofing, the questions of security of tenure, employment

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<sup>14</sup> Ostry, J. Berg, A. and Tsangarides, C. 2014 *Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth*. IMF Research Department.

<sup>15</sup> Wilkinson, R and Pickett, K. 2010 *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone*. London. Allen Lane

<sup>16</sup> Razavi, S. 2007. *The Political and Social Economy of Care in a Development Context Conceptual Issues, Research Questions and Policy Options*. UNRISD Gender in Development Programme Paper No. 3 . Folbré N. 2006.” Measuring Care: Gender, Empowerment, and the Care Economy”. *Journal of Human Development*. Vol. 7, No. 2.

<sup>17</sup> ILO. 2002. *Decent Work and the Informal Economy*. International Labour Conference Report No. VI.. p. 4

<sup>18</sup> Chen, M, Vanek, J and Carr, M. 200r. *Mainstreaming Informal Employment and Gender in Poverty Reduction: A Handbook for Policy-makers and Other Stakeholders*. Commonwealth Secretariat

<sup>19</sup> ILO 2002. Op cit.

<sup>20</sup> World Bank and IFC, 2013. *Women, Business and the Law 2014: Removing Restrictions To Enhance Gender Equality*.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> McKinsey & Company and IFC, 2010. *Two trillion and counting: Assessing the credit gap for micro, small, and medium-size enterprises in the developing world*.

<sup>23</sup> International Finance Cooperation. 2009. *Annual Report*.

opportunities, respect for fundamental principles and rights at work, social protection, financial systems and social dialogue all have gender dimensions that must be understood if urban development is to be inclusive and equitable.

## Urbanisation

The world urban population is projected to grow from 3.9 billion in 2014 to 6.4 billion 2050, and in many countries natural increase, rather than migration, accounts for 60% or more of urban population growth, with nearly 90 per cent of the increase taking place in secondary urban areas of Africa and Asia.<sup>24</sup> However, current projections for urban population growth assume a steady decline in fertility. If fertility were to remain constant and the pace of urbanization remain as projected, world urban population would almost double to 7.4 billion by 2050: an extra 1 billion, about 15%, more people.<sup>25</sup>

There is a strong and well-established causal relationship between the empowerment of women and girls and rate of natural increase. Indeed the empowerment of women and girls is second in effectiveness only to availability of contraception as a route to reduced fertility. Thus the best management of urbanization is in large part dependent on steps to empower women and girls. The form of empowerment most explicitly linked with fertility reduction is education, so all contributions to gender equality that tend to facilitate the education of girls, such as decent jobs for their mothers, basic services that enable mothers to send their daughters to school, infrastructure, transport, sanitation and spatial design factors that increase the accessibility of schools to girls, are likely also to contribute to a more “future proof” urbanisation.

Nevertheless, urbanisation will also continue to be driven by large flows of migrants of both sexes to cities from the cities’ rural hinterlands and internationally. Managing these flows presents significant challenges to the cities concerned, and here again disaggregated and responsive planning methodologies, including gender mainstreaming, are most likely to foster non-discrimination, equality and inclusion.

### Housing Policy and Equitable Growth in Brazil

Brazil has adopted a macro-economic strategy of “equal growth”, including redistributive mechanisms such as annual minimum wage increases established in law, that have been greater than the growth in GDP for the terms of the past three presidents. At the same time, Brazil has been introducing progressive laws and policies to advance women rights and gender equality. Some highlights are the creation of a National Secretary for Women Policies, with ministerial status, a related National Council of Women’s Rights, and the approval of “*Law Maria da Penha*” that changes Brazil’s criminal code and establishes stronger punishments for domestic violence, which has particularly high incidence in vulnerable urban areas such as favelas and low income housing developments.

In addition, steps have been taken to ensure that within Brazil’s overall strategy of re-distributive growth, mechanisms are put in place that ensure the economic empowerment and security of women. For example, the Ministry of Cities, since its creation in 2003, has followed an increasing trend of providing the titles to new houses to the woman within each household. In 2009 a major programme of housing subsidy was created, the *Minha Casa, Minha Vida*. The national law that created the programme stated that housing finance loans provided through it would be preferentially allocated to the woman in a household. In 2012 this procedure became obligatory, and included a revolutionary clause whereby in case of divorce the housing unit is held by the women, unless the man has custody of the children, signaling a change in the National Civil Code.

The result is that *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* is responsible for more than 3.5 million contracts (50% of formal housing production in Brazil) with approximately 90% on the name of the woman (equivalent to about 45% of the total new housing stock). This is one of the main pillars of Brazil’s national housing policy, and is currently a strong instrument of wealth and land redistribution in Brazil’s historically highly unequal cities.

## Resilience

Impoverished urban communities, especially slum dwellers, are already living in more or less permanent conditions of actual or imminent crisis. As the principal community managers are typically women in such societies, they play a large part in daily resilience to this constant adversity. When disaster strikes they intensify the community support mechanisms that are already in place, drawing on shared understandings and networks, often honed over many years of mutual cooperation.

In seeking to minimize merely reactive planning approaches, it would be simply wasteful to overlook these deep pools of community knowledge. A failure to identify and support these existing mechanisms is part of the process by which resources

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<sup>24</sup> UNDESA Population Division 2014. *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision*.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

tend to be diverted away from women, as described in the Cities Alliance Medium Term Strategy.<sup>26</sup> Any future proofing activities that leverage and complement this local experience, mainly held by women, are likely to make better use of Cities Alliance Member resources.

### **Spatial Planning**

In a wide range of planned and un-planned urban environments, men and women have consistently been found to have very different experiences and needs.<sup>27</sup> Yet the form and function of the built environment reflect the dominant values of society, which are typically neither inclusive nor equitable. Rather, urban planning has drawn largely on siloed neo-classical economic models to develop spatially segregated towns and cities, with distinct residential and employment zones, often linked only by extensive road systems, with little public transport provision.

For example, traffic has become a dominant feature in cities of all sizes, disadvantaging the vast majority of women relative to men. Women's daily travel patterns are typically more complex than men's, combining work with childcare and other home-making commitments. Women generally spend many more hours working in and near their homes and communities than do most men. They are frequently more active than men in community management and in informal local leadership. Typically they require tangential rather than radial transport systems, and own fewer cars. Cities have not typically evolved or been designed with attention to the safety of citizens. In many cities gender-based violence (targeting women, girls and low-status or non-conforming men and boys) is a grave concern. Careful design of open spaces, parks, lighting, the siting of markets and latrines and the provision of safe transportation, including the training of drivers and conductors, are all areas that could contribute to greater safety for all.

However, those involved in land use planning and design are becoming increasingly aware of the disbenefits of approaches that tend to channel resources, such as transport systems and managed public space, to the already powerful, and many are also moving away from past tendencies to exclude the experiences of women in urban space when defining, interpreting and acting upon planning issues.<sup>28</sup>

For example, more inclusive approaches to urban development have promoted mixed-use neighbourhoods in many cities. These have short travel distances between work, childcare, schools, shops and services, with extensive pedestrian environments and public service provision. Integrated use of urban space is a closer reflection of life as it is lived by most people (both men and women), ensures vibrant urban development, and is frequently called for in consultations with women in particular. Measures to ensure that the perspectives of women as well as men shape urban space offer an important antidote to inefficient, spatially segregated and socially exclusionary urban sprawl.

### **Safety in the City**

Robust regulation and official guidance provide an essential framework for both prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV), while well-informed and trained police, judiciary, emergency response and social services personnel, acting in planned synergy with each other, are also necessary. Cities must provide services that respond quickly, respectfully and constructively to the needs of victims/survivors of violence (both men and women), so that their trauma is minimized, physical recovery accelerated and appropriate legal action taken. Such services both minimize the social and economic costs of GBV and contribute to prevention by reducing impunity. GBV tends to increase during emergency and disaster of any kind, so national and local mitigation plans must address the speedy re-establishment of services.

Partnership is a critical factor. In 2012 a comparative study on the most effective ways to reduce GBV in 70 countries found that the mobilization of strong, independent women's movements active on the issues is a more important force in reducing violence against women than the economic wealth of a nation or the representation of women in government. Such movements help to shape public and government agendas and create the political will to address GBV.<sup>29</sup> Partnership with men is also critical for both prevention, response and advocacy.

The Cities Alliance Theory of Change for Gender EqualityThe Cities Alliance Medium Term Strategy recognizes that the achievement of gender equality in cities will require adjustments to the work programme of Cities Alliance, the composition

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<sup>26</sup> Cities Alliance, 2014, *Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2016*. p.2

<sup>27</sup> For example, Cesari, Bastros and Filtre compared the disparities between men's and women's occupations and income in urban sprawl and rural settlements in Brazil *Determinants of Income and Gender Discrimination in Brazilian Rural Areas in 2009*

<sup>28</sup> Commonwealth Local Government Forum. 2012. [Ten ways local government can advance gender equity](#) Factsheet.

<sup>29</sup> Htun, M and Weldon, S.L. 2012. "The Civic Origins of Progressive Policy Change: combatting violence against women in global perspective 1975 – 2005" In *American Political Science Review* Vol 106. No. 3

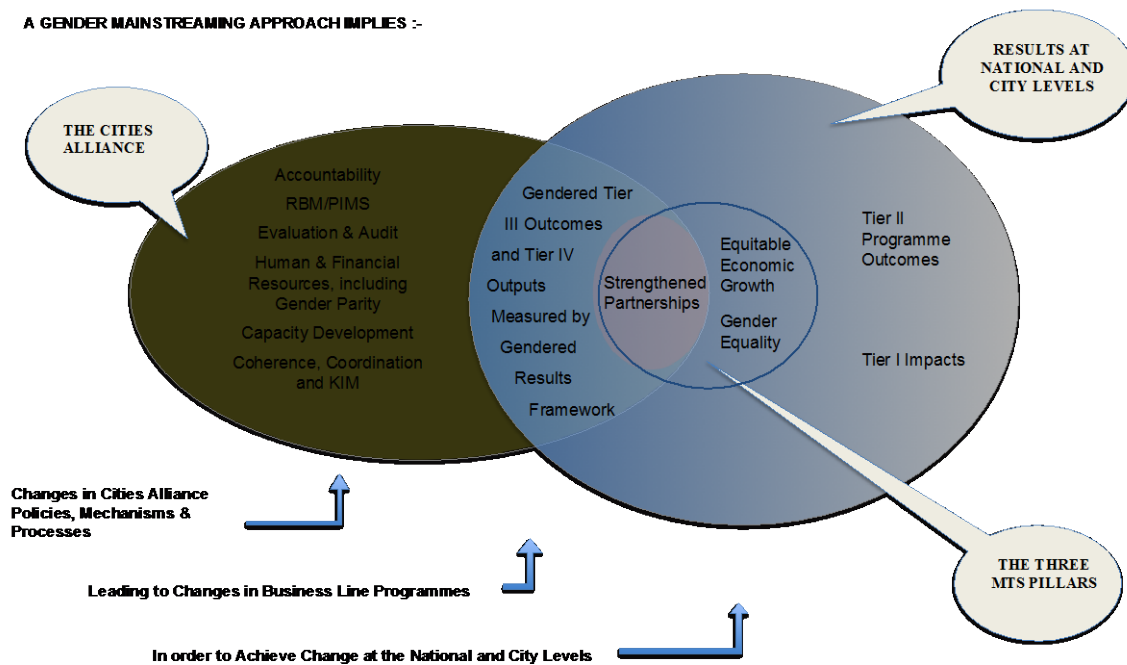


and practices of its Membership and the work of the Secretariat itself.<sup>30</sup> This insight is reflected in the theory of change adopted by the GES, based on a model of gender mainstreaming originally developed by Sida.<sup>31</sup>

According to this model, changes in Cities Alliance practices and procedures (the yellow ellipse) will lead to stronger gender equality results for Cities Alliance activities in urban settings (the blue ellipse), mediated by more effective programming (the green area where the two intersect). The Three Pillars of Cities Alliance programming are central to this model, with that of Strengthened Partnerships at its heart

**GRAPHIC 1  
CITIES ALLIANCE THEORY OF CHANGE FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

**A GENDER MAINSTREAMING APPROACH IMPLIES :-**



Derived from SIDA 1996

<sup>30</sup> Cities Alliance. *Medium-Term Strategy 2014-2017*. p.2

<sup>31</sup> Sida Department for Policy and Legal Services 1996. *Mainstreaming, A strategy for the Achievement of Equality between Women and Men. A Think Piece*.