

Strengthening the role of Women and Girls in Participatory, city-wide Slum Upgrading

SDG 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

SDG 11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums

SDG 11.7 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

SDG 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere

SDG 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

SDG 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

SDG 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

New Urban Agenda Key Statements

13. c) 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; by ensuring decent work and equal pay for equal work, or work of equal value, for all women; and by preventing and eliminating all forms of discrimination, violence and harassment against women and girls in private and public spaces;

13. f) Promote age- and gender-responsive planning and investment for sustainable, safe and accessible urban mobility for all, and resource-efficient transport systems for passengers and freight, effectively linking people, places, goods, services and economic opportunities;

15. c) Adopt sustainable, people-centred, age- and gender-responsive and integrated approaches to urban and territorial development by implementing policies, strategies, capacity development and actions at all levels, based on fundamental drivers of change, including.....

KEY STATEMENTS:

- Urban poverty is becoming increasingly feminized¹ - there are more women and girls, than men and boys, who live in poverty in urban centers around the world².
- Slums and informal settlements are one of the most visible urban contexts highlighting female poverty. These settlements are characterized by a disproportionately high-level of female-headed households³, which means that women are more likely to experience the five household deprivations of slums and informal settlements⁴ and have their right to adequate housing⁵ violated.
- In addition, women and girls face a set of unique challenges in slums and informal settlements with regards to (1) urban safety in the form of gender-based violence (GBV) (i.e. threat of physical violence at home and in public spaces) (2) access to public spaces and essential infrastructure and resources, which often denies them access to the right to health⁶ and the right to education⁷ and (3) climate change impacts.
- Participatory, city-wide slum and informal settlement upgrading provides a mechanism for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment by:
- Providing opportunities and approaches for the participation of both women and men in urban governance, management, and planning of improvements to slums and informal settlements.
- Beginning the process of raising awareness and addressing the specific challenges faced by women and girls in relation to the five slum and informal settlement household deprivations, the right to adequate housing, climate

change impacts, urban safety, and access to public spaces, health and education.

- Delivering tangible outcomes for gender equality and women's empowerment by delivering genuine improvements to the lives of women and girls - such as improved basic urban services, access to decent work and livelihood opportunities, and access to informed participation in decision-making⁸.

KEY MESSAGES:

- In many urban settings, especially in slums and informal settlements, women do not have access to and/or influence over essential infrastructure and resources to improve their own lives. Many cultural norms and practices discriminate against women, hindering their access to and/or influence over essential infrastructure and resources. This discrimination often translates into unequal rights in legislation and policy frameworks.
- Gender equality and women's empowerment is an internationally recognized human rights issue with a number of legal frameworks to address discrimination and advocate for the improvement of the lives of women and girls. These frameworks must be reflected in upgrading slums and informal settlements so that sustainable changes in lives of women and girls are achieved⁹.

KEY RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt participatory, city-wide slum upgrading to promote actions to improve the lives of women and girls in slums.

KEY ACTION:

Use the development of a national and city-wide slum upgrading strategies – including the data collection phases, the management structures like the Country Team and the community managed funds - to promote the inclusion of issues relevant to women and girls as well as actions on the ground that improve their lives.

1 Tackle, C. (2012) Urbanization, Gender and Urban Poverty: paid work and unpaid care work in the city IIED & UNFPA, 2012.

2 Tackle, C. (2012) UNFPA Technical Briefing: Urbanization, gender and poverty IIED & UNFPA, 2012.

3 Chant, S. & C. MacLaine (2016) Cities, Slums and Gender in the Global South: towards a feminized urban future; Oxon: Routledge

4 (1) access to improved water, (2) access to improved sanitation, (3) security of tenure, (4) durability of housing, (5) sufficient living area plus a range of other challenges.

5 Refer to The Right to Adequate Housing, Fact Sheet No. 21 (Rev. 1) (OHCHR & UN-Habitat)

6 Art. 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and Art. 12 of the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), for more treaty references see The Right to Health, Fact Sheet No. 31 (OHCHR & WHO).

7 Art. 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); Art. 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), among others.

8 See the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979).

9 Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning and Urban Development (Vienna City Council, 2013)

Table 1: Key challenges, Recommendations and Actions for strengthening the role of women and girls in participatory, city-wide Slum Upgrading

CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS
<p>Limited security of tenure and access to land and property: In many countries women still do not have the same rights regarding land ownership than men, which makes them particularly vulnerable in situations of insecure tenure and threats of forced evictions. As women spend more time undertaking care-work activities and their economic activities are in and around the house, their socio-economic dependency on secure land and housing is also greater.</p>	<p>Recognize that legal frameworks and community norms often exclude women and girls from rights to property and land or make their capacity to have security of tenure very limited.</p> <p>Provide security of tenure, as a matter of priority, to women and their households living in slums and informal settlements.</p> <p>Promote an understanding that all urban residents, including women living in slums and informal settlements, should have legal protection against threats of forced eviction and harassment.</p>	<p>Undertake a participatory enumeration process to understand the degree and number of female-headed households and the type of tenure security they have. Ensure all data collection is disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, etc.</p> <p>Undertake a feedback session with the local authority and land administration on the results of the enumeration process and ensure the situation of women's tenure security is highlighted.</p> <p>Undertake a sensitization process (as part of the enumeration feedback session) to highlight the ways in which current laws and norms may exclude women from having security of tenure (such as women's rights to land within traditional or customary frameworks and marriage laws).</p>
<p>Limited access to finance and credit: Many women still remain excluded from many formal financial services. Women in slums and informal settlements often experience a double discrimination because they do not have appropriate documents and land titles to fulfill loan or credit requirements.</p>	<p>Invest in slum upgrading programs that are linked to livelihood generation activities ensuring women in slums and informal settlements' effective participation.</p> <p>Adapt practices from successful slum upgrading and livelihood generation case studies where micro-financing opportunities for women have been successfully implemented.</p>	<p>Undertake neighborhood enumeration and participatory planning processes to understand how women generate livelihoods as well as understand which infrastructure and services would be required to support women and girls to improve their living conditions.</p> <p>Support micro-finance schemes in slums and informal settlements using the city-wide slum upgrading strategy to start up supportive institutions and practices that are gender-responsive.</p>
<p>Limited gender-responsive planning and slum upgrading approaches: Often spatial planning is not gender-responsive. In addition, slums and informal settlements are not part of formal planning frameworks. This means that women and girls in slums and informal settlements are excluded from development and planning priorities.</p>	<p>Include women and girls as equal partners in decision making in the development of city-wide slum upgrading strategies.</p> <p>Include all key themes covered in planning and slum upgrading approaches, such as local economic development, climate resilience, basic service and infrastructure planning,.</p> <p>Develop plans and slum upgrading strategies that have dedicated budgets and actions to address gender inequalities and improve the lives of women and girls living in slums and informal settlements.</p>	<p>Gather data and information on key themes to inform the spatial plan ensuring there is information reflecting the experiences of women and girls (so age and sex disaggregated data) and include dedicated section in any report which documents the experiences and needs of women and girls.</p> <p>Utilize participatory and inclusive gender-responsive processes such as enumeration surveys, focus groups, etc. to understand and document the experiences of women and girls living in slums and informal settlements, particularly in relation to the slum household definition and livelihood generation.</p> <p>Link slum upgrading strategies with relevant plans to develop informed and practical responses to improve the lives of women and girls (e.g. by providing affordable and accessible child care and sexual and reproductive health services).</p> <p>Ensure that any management team in a slum and informal settlement upgrading project includes female slum and informal settlement dwellers and organizations working with women and girls in slums and informal settlements.</p> <p>Dedicate a proportion of funds for slum upgrading to gender specific projects and initiatives.</p>

CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS
<p>Safety and violence on the street and at home: Women and girls are vulnerable to experiences of violence, especially in communities with limited infrastructure and services. Women and girls in slums and informal settlements are unsafe around toilets, schools, shops, walkways near bars, and in secluded areas. Their vulnerability is compounded by the societal acceptance of violence against women and girls and limited associated consequences.</p>	<p>Recognize that both in public areas and in the homes, women and girls in slums are often extremely vulnerable to harassment and violence in a way that is different from men and boys.</p> <p>Recognize the challenges to women and girls' safety in public spaces and at home are directly addressed in spatial planning and slum upgrading strategies.</p>	<p>Undertake capacity development with key stakeholders including municipal staff and local community leaders and community members which highlight the relationship between gender-based violence (GBV) and cultural norms, limited housing rights and inadequate public space designs.</p> <p>Undertake safety audits in the proposed upgrading area as part of the city-wide slum upgrading strategy to understand how urban design actions like street lighting (especially at transport hubs) and appropriate public toilets can improve the safety of women and girls. Results from safety audits should inform spatial and land-use planning.</p>
<p>Lack of essential and basic infrastructure and services: As women undertake much of the livelihood generation activities for family survival and also the majority of work in and around the house such as cleaning, cooking and looking after family members - underdeveloped infrastructure and limited service provision (i.e. water and sanitation, education, transport, etc.) have a more significant impact on their lives. It increases the cost of living (e.g. cost of doctors and medicines due to ill health from contaminated water) and results in limited connectivity and proximity to employment opportunities. It also often reduces women's safety in public space and adds to the time-costs of carrying out necessary daily care work activities (i.e. cleaning, cooking, caring for children, the elderly and the sick) keeping women away from livelihood generation activities.</p>	<p>Improve access to basic services, such as water and sanitation that is informed by the experience and needs of women and girls in slums and informal settlements.</p> <p>Recognize women's and girl's lack of access to essential and basic infrastructure in spatial planning and slum upgrading strategies - as well as clear action points to bring about change in infrastructure.</p>	<p>Review the provision of basic services (i.e. transport, health, education, etc.) for women and girls living in slums and informal settlements and map out the incremental steps required to improve their provision and access.</p> <p>Use Community Managed Funds and Projects where women play a key role in developing local projects as well as in their implementation.</p>
<p>Limited planning and policies for livelihood generation activities that support women and girls Planning and policies often fail to make the strategic link between women and girls' over-representation in the care-economy, and how this impacts on livelihood generation. Due to caring responsibilities, women often have less time to undertake cash-based livelihood activities. This makes women and girls vulnerable to long-term poverty cycle. It is a dynamic particularly prominent in the lives of women in slums and informal settlements.</p>	<p>Recognize discriminatory social norms by highlighting and changing attitudes and values that put the main responsibility for care-work on women and girls.</p> <p>Support investments in infrastructure such as water and sanitation, as well as domestic technologies that reduce the time-consuming elements of care-work, empowering women to participate in livelihood generation activities.</p>	<p>Use the city-wide slum upgrading strategy as a mechanism to engage women in all phases of the slum upgrading process, particularly in relation to promoting actions and infrastructure that support livelihoods.</p> <p>Dedicate half of the community managed funds for women's local livelihood generation activities developed and managed by local women.</p> <p>Support gender-responsive micro-finance schemes for livelihood generation, using the city-wide slum upgrading strategy to develop recommendations as to how this can be achieved or strengthened.</p>

ADDITIONAL READING

Chant, S. & C. MacLaine (2016) *Cities, Slums and Gender in the Global South: towards a feminized urban future*; Oxon: Routledge.

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UNFPA (2007) *State of the World Population: unleashing the potential of urban growth*

UN-Habitat (2013) *State of Women in Cities 2012-2013: Gender and the Prosperity of Cities*.

UN-Habitat and Plan International (2013) *Adolescent Girls Views on Safety in Cities*.

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