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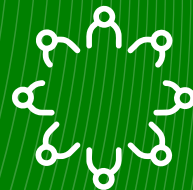
RIYADH 2020
URBAN

Removing Barriers to Mainstreaming Gender Equality

Inclusive Prosperous Communities

Contents

About Urban 20

Urban20 (U20) is a city diplomacy initiative that brings together cities from G20 member states and observer cities from non-G20 states to discuss and form a common position on climate action, social inclusion and integration, and sustainable economic growth. Recommendations are then issued for consideration by the G20. The initiative is convened by C40 Cities, in collaboration with United Cities and Local Governments, under the leadership of a Chair city that rotates annually. The first U20 Mayors Summit took place in Buenos Aires in 2018, and the second took place in Tokyo in 2019. For 2020, Riyadh City is the Chair city and host of the annual Mayors Summit. The first meeting of U20 Sherpas was convened in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on the 5th – 6th February during which the foundations were laid for the U20 2020 Mayors Summit in the Saudi capital later this year.

About the Urban 20 Taskforces

As U20 Chair, Riyadh has introduced taskforces to add additional structure and focus to the U20. These taskforces explore specific priority issues and bring evidence-based solutions to the final Communique.

Each taskforce has commissioned whitepapers led by chair cities, and with input from participating cities and knowledge partners. These whitepapers help us build an evidence-based, credible and achievable set of policy recommendations.

Taskforces activation

The taskforces workstream was an innovative and recent introduction to the three-year-old U20 initiative by the chairmanship of the city of Riyadh this year. Three thematic taskforces, each guided by one of the U20 Riyadh 2020 overarching themes of Circular, Carbon-neutral economy, Inclusive Prosperous Communities, and Nature-based Urban Solutions, were officially launched and activated during the U20 First Sherpa meeting back in February. During the meeting, the U20 priority topics that fell within the three overarching themes and intersecting with the three cross-sectional dimensions of Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, Urban Innovation and Technology, and Urban Finance and Investment were prioritized and refined through the statements delivered by all attending cities. The top 5 topics were then chosen to be the focus of whitepapers for each taskforce.

The top 5 topics under each of the three taskforces and cross cutting dimensions were then chosen to be the focus of whitepapers for each taskforce:

TF 1 — Circular, Carbon-Neutral Economy
- Increasing energy efficiency & diversification
- Zero-carbon mobility & reshaping of mobility
- Reducing, reusing, recycling, and recovering materials
- Carbon neutral buildings and construction
- Sustainable production & consumption

TF 2 — Inclusive Prosperous Communities
- Affordable housing
- Cultural inclusivity
- Mainstreaming gender equality
- Upskilling for future of work — international and local opportunities
- Youth empowerment

TF 3 — Nature-Based Urban Solutions
- Resilience towards natural disasters and extreme weather events
- Green and blue infrastructure
- Ecosystem services for health, safety and wellbeing
- Sustainable water management, clean air, & healthy soils
- City-region food systems & food security

Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals
- SDG mainstreaming in policy and planning
- Cross-silo, cross-sector governance
- Institutional capacity & governance mechanisms at local level
- SDG Localization

Urban Innovation and Technology
- Smart city and 4IR technologies
- Innovation ecosystems
- Agile and economically diverse cities
- Social innovation

Sustainable Urban Finance and Investment
- Access to global & local finance sources — public, multilateral, & private
- Investment readiness and project bankability
- Innovative finance instruments and value capture models
- Impact financing

Cities and Partner Engagement

The vast majority of the twenty-three cities who attended the first Sherpa meeting, representing 12 G20 countries, along with the U20 Conveners, agreed to the importance of having taskforces as interactive platforms to produce knowledge-based and evidence-based outcomes that can effectively feed into an actionable U20 Communique. During and following the meeting, several cities demonstrated interest in volunteering in the capacity of chairs and co-chairs, leading and overseeing the activities of each taskforce. The cities of Rome and Tshwane co-chaired Taskforce 1 on Circular, Carbon-neutral Economy, Izmir

Taskforce 2 on Inclusive Prosperous Communities, and Durban on Nature-based Urban Solutions. Others expressed interest to participate in the taskforces, some in more than one, both during and after the meeting.

Alongside interested U20 cities, several regional and international organizations proffered to engage in the work of the taskforces, in the capacity of knowledge partners, to share their knowledge and experiences with cities in producing whitepapers. Some of the knowledge partners volunteered to play a leading role as Lead Knowledge Partners, supporting the taskforces' co/chairs in review and guidance.

All participants who actively took part of the taskforces were subject matter experts nominated by the cities and knowledge partners and have enriched the taskforces' discussions with their know-how and experiences. In over 3 months, all three taskforces, with great effort and commitment from all their participants, produced a total of 15 evidence-based focused whitepapers, bringing about more than 160 policy recommendations addressing the national governments of the G20 Member States.

The taskforces content development efforts is comprised of 23 U20 cities and 31 U20 knowledge partners. The 100+ experts and city representatives produced 15 whitepapers which widely benefited and informed the development of the first draft of the communique.

23
U20 Cities

18 Participating Cities

5 Observer cities

14 G20 member countries represented (including EU)

Argentina Turkey Japan Canada Germany Brazil South Africa France Italy Saudi Arabia China Mexico Russia EU

100+
experts and city representatives

31
U20 Partners

3 Lead Knowledge Partners

27 Knowledge Partners

11 Academic, research, and strategy consulting institutes

6 Biodiversity and health organizations

5 City networks and global initiatives for local governments and city diplomacy

3 International economic and finance organizations

3 Regional development banks

2 Gender-centered and human rights organizations and committees

1 United Nations program regional offices (KSA and Jordan)

Content Development

Under the leadership and guidance of the chair city, Izmir, and the lead knowledge partner, Metropolis, the work of Task Force 2 kicked off with an orientation for all participants in mid-March.

During the period between March and April, the participants of Taskforce 2 presented more than 24 concept ideas and 11 concept notes and developed initial outlines for the whitepapers focusing on topics of interest. Teaming up into five author groupings, the cities and knowledge partners developed five outlines of whitepapers. Refined and revised outlines were then developed into draft whitepapers that underwent several iterations for development and finalization, ensuring that each paper delivers a set of concrete and targeted policy recommendations that address the different U20 stakeholders.

The five whitepapers under Taskforce 2 (listed below) explore priority topics on affordable housing, mainstreaming gender equality, socio-cultural inclusion and cohesion, upskilling for the future of work, and youth empowerment, and are titled as follows:

1. "Securing affordable housing delivery in cities: investing for better outcomes"

2. "Removing barriers to mainstreaming gender equality"

3. "Urban inclusiveness, safety nets and social compacts in the time of a pandemic"

4. "Inclusive creative economy and the future of work"

5. "Youth empowerment for prosperous and inclusive cities"

Taskforce Activities
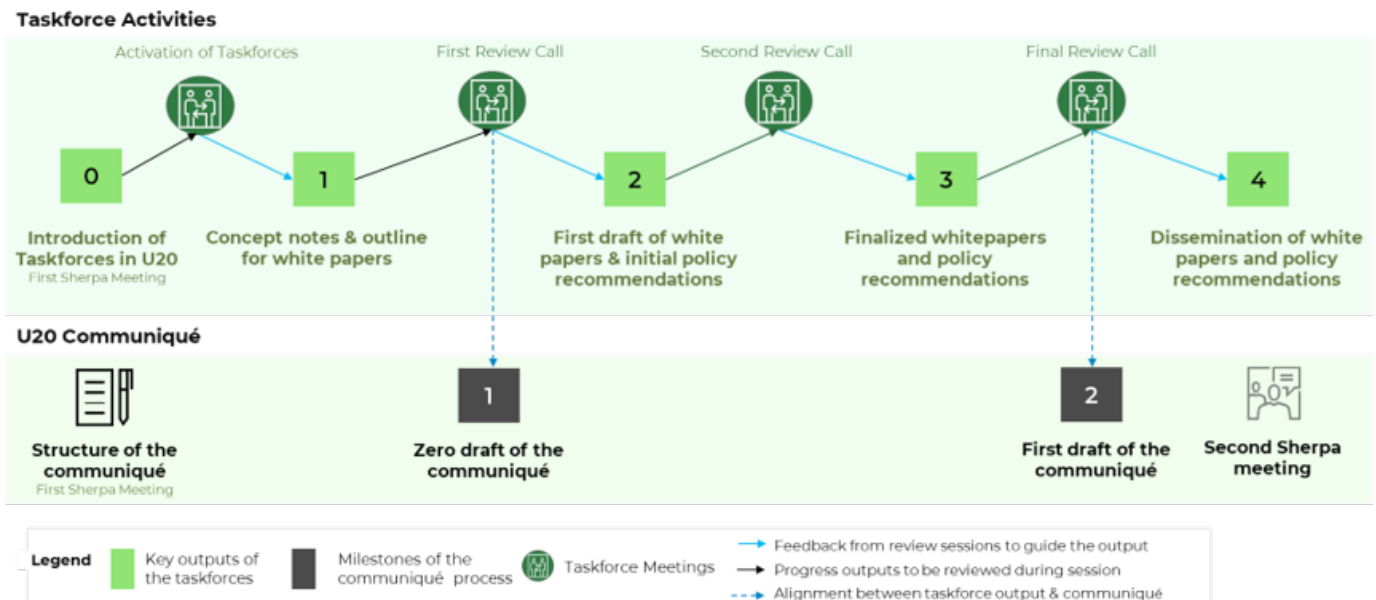
Along the taskforces timeline of activities, three review meetings were held where co/chairs and lead knowledge partners presented and discussed with the U20 Executive Team the progress and findings of the taskforces they represent, leading to the U20 Second Sherpa meeting that took place during the first week of July. Parallel to the taskforces activities, the first draft of the U20 communique was developed by the U20 Executive team incorporating recommendations presented at the third (and final) review meeting.

About the Inclusive Prosperous Communities Taskforce

Cities need to provide indiscriminate access to opportunities and services for all the diverse people that live, work, and play in them to prosper Cities need to empower all citizens to thrive, by preparing them for the future of work and overcoming the digital divide, ensuring cultural inclusivity and integration, and providing safe public spaces and infrastructure.

The U20 taskforce on Inclusive Prosperous Communities, addresses challenges and priorities covered in global agendas that are faced by cities and these include affordable housing, mainstreaming gender equality, socio-cultural inclusion and cohesion, upskilling for the future of work and youth empowerment. Cities face daily challenges on the fronts of inclusivity, equality, accessibility, and cohesion and have been the epicenters of the recent COVID-19 pandemic worldwide.

Cities are the melting pots of different social and cultural textures are at the heart of the G20 nations' power. Cities are in constant action to provide and ensure urban social safety nets and social protection to urban residents, far before the pandemic and are today, in a tougher position to prevent potential deterioration and speed up a healthy recovery. The priority topics addressed by this Taskforce are at heart of the cities' battles, where each topic is portrayed in focused whitepapers that describe the situational challenges, present opportunities for change and improvement, and design action-driven sound recommendations.

12 cities

U20 Participating cities

Barcelona	Mexico City
Berlin	Montréal
Guangzhou	Riyadh
Johannesburg	Strasbourg
Madrid	

Chair city
Izmir

U20 Observer cities
Amman
Dammam

15 knowledge partners

Knowledge partners

- Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI) and Global Observatory linking Research to Action (GORA Corp.)
- Brookings Institute
- Indonesia Creative Cities Network
- International Finance Corporation
- Lee Kuan Yew Center for Innovative Cities
- Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation
- National Institute of Urban Affairs
- The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Lead knowledge partner
Metropolis

- World Economic Forum
- World Enabled
- UN-Habitat
- UCLG - Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights
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U20 Cities

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Nicholas You is a veteran urban specialist and thought leader. Prior to his retirement he was the senior policy and planning advisor to UN-Habitat and the manager of the Habitat II Conference held in Istanbul in 1996. He is the founder and honorary chairman of the UN-Habitat World Urban Campaign Steering Committee, former chairman of the Assurance Group for Urban Infrastructure of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, former Chairman of the Urban Strategy and Innovation Council for ENGIE and former co-President of the Global Cities Business Alliance. He is currently the Executive Director of the Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation, co-Chair of the Open Green City Lab in Shenzhen and adjunct for the Centre for Liveable Cities, Singapore. He regularly advises central and local governments, technology companies and civil society organisations on urban sustainability, urban governance and urban innovation including the nexus between water, waste, transport and energy. He also works as a strategic planning and governance advisor to many metropolitan authorities worldwide.

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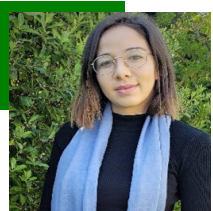
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Women 20

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Disclaimer note

The views, opinions, positions and recommendations expressed in this White Paper are developed under the chairmanship of the City of Riyadh as U20 Chair City 2020 and are those of the authors and contributors, including contributing U20 cities and partners. They do not necessarily represent the views of all the U20 cities or any of its chairs, conveners, and partners. Many of the references in this White Paper will direct the reader to sites operated by third parties. Neither the institutions nor the authors of this White Paper have reviewed all the information on these sites or the accuracy or reliability of any information, data, opinions, advice or statements on these sites.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The last two and a half decades since the 4th Women's Conference held in Beijing in 1995 have witnessed substantial progress in the mainstreaming of gender equality. Overall, gender equality is no longer a contentious issue and all tiers of government, all forms of civil-society organizations and business and industry are paying more attention to gender equality and gender-responsive policies and strategies. This having been said, there remain persistent challenges and barriers to achieving gender equality. These barriers are not just legislative in nature, they encompass a myriad of social, economic, political and bureaucratic regulations and practices that prevent women from gaining access to the same pay scales, credit, housing and land, social benefits and protection that are accorded to men. In addition, little progress has been achieved in terms of recognizing the critical role that women fulfil in caring for the sick and the elderly and in bearing the brunt of domestic work.

These barriers to achieving gender equality have become all the more evident with the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst the urban poor have been the hardest hit by the pandemic, women constitute the majority of the frontline workers and workers in essential services. Yet, they represent, for the vast majority of cases, the lower end of the pay scale. The pandemic has also revealed the inherent weaknesses in preventing gender violence on the one hand, and the lack of support for women-owned businesses and enterprises on the other.

This whitepaper looks at some of these persistent barriers to mainstreaming gender equality. The key areas of focus are: (i) Unpaid and underpaid work and care; (ii) The right to the city and equal access to public goods and services; (iii) Gender violence and freedom from harassment; (iv) Housing and security of tenure; (v) Women empowerment and entrepreneurship; (vi) Leadership and access to technology; and (vii) Gender parity in the political and decision-making process.

Case studies of peer-reviewed good practice are provided as evidence of how these persistent barriers to gender equality could be addressed. Lessons learned from these case studies provide the basis for policy recommendations that fall into three broad categories: (i) Actions that should be taken by the G20; (ii) Actions that should be taken by national governments; and (iii) Actions that should be taken by local/sub-national governments and their stakeholders including the private sector and civil society.

Background

Background

This whitepaper was prepared just as the COVID-19 pandemic emerged. The measures taken to contain and mitigate the spread of the virus revealed, in all G20 countries and cities, just how fragile our societies and systems are. Far from being resilient, entire health systems and related supply chains were taxed to breaking point. In far too many cases it is the most vulnerable members of society who suffered the most and continue to suffer disproportionately from the consequences of the pandemic.

While there is no doubt that the urban poor are the most affected by COVID-19 in general, women and girls have borne the brunt of consequences. First and foremost, women comprise, in most G20 countries and regions, the majority of the front-line work force. They are the nurses, the caretakers, the lab technicians and, in many cases, represent a substantial proportion of workers in essential services. Despite the higher risks of contagion, these workers constitute, with few exceptions, low wage earners and those that have few if any job-related benefits.

On the domestic front, the issues of gender equality and domestic violence have become more salient during periods of lockdowns and "shelter at home" policies. With schools closed, mothers have had to combine, more than during normal times, childcare, education, work-at-home and domestic duties. In summary, the social and economic impact of COVID-19 has revealed the true extent of gender inequality in all of its aspects. These include:

- Governance models that continue to be gender blind and do not empower women to have an equal voice in public affairs, public policy and decision making, especially in decisions that affect their own livelihoods and well-being of those they care for;

- Gender mainstreaming, as a tool and strategy to reduce gender inequalities, must be viewed as first and foremost a critical component of any public policies that are designed to help fulfill the right to the city for women and girls;

- The COVID-19 crisis has underscored a long-standing challenge in dealing with social inequality and injustices – the fact that our sex disaggregated data collection and statistical analysis tools and systems are still blind to many aspects of importance to women and girls. These are particularly salient for low income wage earners where women are at a disadvantage when it comes to equal access to basic services and education, equal access to safe drinking water and decent sanitation and safety and protection from abuse. As such, collecting sex-disaggregated data is therefore critical to formulate informed policies.

- Women empowerment and entrepreneurship remain critically important for realizing more just, economically vibrant and resilient communities. Studies have shown that women, unlike men, return up to 90 percent of their earnings or profits back into their families, their communities and their businesses. The economic ravages caused by the pandemic require that we look for innovative ways to boost employment and enterprise. Empowering women is definitely a win-win strategy going forward and can be achieved through, interalia, equal pay for equal work, access to land and land tenure and equal access to credit.

Introduction

Introduction

Gender equality as part of the development discourse gained considerable momentum after the 1995 Women's Conference in Beijing, which was preceded by global conferences on the same issue in Nairobi in 1985, Copenhagen in 1980 and Mexico in 1975. Over two and a half decades of dedicated expert meetings, consultations, conferences and a myriad of activities organized by the international community with the strong support human rights activists encompassing Non-Governmental and grassroots organizations, led to a broad consensus that gender equality required, at the very least, two parallel and mutually reinforcing approaches.

One approach was devoted to promoting and adopting proactive gender-sensitive policies and legislation to overcome generations of deeply embedded discrimination. The other, focused on removing the numerous barriers to gender equality that are not necessarily found in national laws and stated public policies, but are omnipresent in the administrative and planning practices and norms at the local level.

The Beijing Women's Conference also impacted local and regional governments' perspective and their responsibility in implementing specific policies to tackle gender inequality, in line with the growing demands coming from civil society. Over the past 20 years, an increasing number of local governments across the world have raised their voices to defend women's rights at the local level on the basis of their own policy-making experiences and willingness to participate in a shared agenda at the global level. In 2011, the network United Cities and Local Governments adopted the Paris Local and Regional Government Global Agenda for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, addressing the barriers to mainstream gender equality and defining priorities and orientations for local agendas.

UN-Habitat, the lead UN agency for housing and urban development started, shortly after the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference, to document best practices in addressing gender equality and women's rights at the city and community levels as part of the follow-up to the 1996 Habitat II Conference, and the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. This task continues to date and is complemented by several awards and recognition systems, among them the Guangzhou Award for Urban Innovation that is dedicated to the local implementation of the global agendas and pays particular attention to gender equality.

These practices and initiatives provide some interesting and compelling entry points to how local authorities and their partners have been successful in addressing a multitude of barriers and challenges. These latter include:

- Unpaid and underpaid work and care

- The right to the city

- Gender violence and freedom from harassment

- Housing and security of tenure

- Leadership and access to technology

- Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB)

Methodology

Methodology

The Committee on Social Inclusion, participatory democracy and human rights of UCLG, gathers local experiences from UCLG membership that advance the realization of the right to the city and the implementation of human rights at the local level. Tackling violence against women and girls is a key priority and the CSIPDHR has been supporting peer to peer exchange, showcasing how public policies can be instrumental to improve women's rights and highlighting the improvement of public policies in this area through concrete examples.

The Guangzhou Award for Urban Innovation, co-created by UCLG and Metropolis, with C40, ICLEI, the World Resources Institute and others as major partners, is devoted to the identification, documentation and dissemination of peer-reviewed initiatives in urban innovation undertaken by local/sub-national governments from around

the world. It collaborates with a global network of multilateral and international organizations, local government and professional associations, academia and civil society and grassroots organizations to assess hundreds of case studies from around the world on how cities, big and small, have been able to engage large portions of their inhabitants in co-creating innovative urban solutions to common challenges. One common challenge is gender inequality.

Lessons learned from the case studies show that what appears to work best at the local level is when the agenda is not limited to legislation, or simply removing legal barriers. Deeply embedded forms of discrimination exist in a myriad of by-laws, practices and culturally-determined behavior patterns that constitute the less visible social-economic barriers and obstacles to gender equality and the full rights of women.

Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges and Opportunities

A gender-based approach to sustainable development will enable central and local governments alike to address the challenges of multiple SDGs and the Urban Agenda simultaneously. The most notable ones include SDG 1 on poverty, SDG 4 on education and life-long learning, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 10 on reduced inequalities, and SGD 11 on sustainable cities and communities. Doing so, however, requires a clearer understanding of the specific challenges that are facing women and girls. The following paragraphs look at some of the major outstanding challenges and possible opportunities.

The Challenge of Unpaid and Underpaid Work and Care

According to UN Women, women do at least three times more unpaid care and domestic work than men. With the COVID-19 pandemic, this situation is aggravated as a result of school and day care closures and the increased needs of older people. In addition, the majority of frontline health workers and care providers are women. They are the ones that bear the highest risks and yet they earn low wages and often work long hours. The coronavirus pandemic revealed that these health workers are critical to the health and wellbeing of our societies and need to be recognized and placed at the center of our economy.

Equal pay and equal economic opportunities are still distant goals in many G20 countries. The average gender pay gap in EU countries is 16 percent compared to 19 to 20 percent in the US and Brazil, 24.5 percent in Japan and above 25 percent in South Africa. Women are often paid less for the same work, suffer more from job insecurity and do not have the same opportunities as men when it comes to starting a business or an independent activity. These issues are compounded by very uneven policies and practices across G20 countries with regards to parental leave and access to childcare facilities and arrangements. In addition, according to UN Women, some 740 million women work in the informal economy worldwide. While there are few in-depth studies regarding the gig economy, a recent study in the United States shows that more women are participating in the gig economy as such jobs make it easier to combine productive and reproductive and caring roles. The study reveals, however, that the vast majority of women working in the gig economy fall in the low to moderate income categories. Both of these sectors are suffering very badly from the fall out of lockdowns caused by Covid19.

Challenges and Opportunities

Case study: Turkey

In Turkey, the Mezitli Metropolitan Municipality is a fast-growing city in the Mersin region. Since 2014, Mezitli has been implementing a women's empowerment initiative that consists of a women-only market. The municipality has experienced rapid population growth due to internal migration as well as an influx of people from neighboring war-torn Syria. This led to the need for economic projects as well as an inclusive approach to mitigate poverty as well as potential conflict. In this context, improving women's access to economic opportunities was identified as a priority.

Traditionally, women in the region have tended to be largely confined to the home, economically dependent on male relatives and husbands. This leads to lack of confidence and inability to make many life choices independently. Options for productive activities are often limited by lack of capital as well as an administrative environment that discourages women.

The women-only market is free (no fees) which makes entry easy for women. A wide range of products is sold, including farm produce from neighboring rural areas as well as traditional handicrafts. Having a women-only market brings into one space women from different ethnic, educational and socio-economic backgrounds. This promotes exchange and mutual support that build women's confidence. The market is also used to organize women, educate them on production and marketing practice as well as informing them of their rights and encouraging them to participate in public life.

Since the initial model market started in 2014, seven more markets have been opened and the intention is to eventually have a women-only market in each of the 40 sub-districts of Mezitli. The municipality is also working on forming a women producers' cooperative that will be in charge of organizing the market.

This initiative demonstrates a multi-pronged approach to gender equality and social inclusion. By providing a dedicated space for women to take part in economic activities outside the home, the initiative has raised women's, and families' economic status, empowered women to participate in public life and enhanced social cohesion.

Other good examples on fostering access to employment and training can be found in the Izmir, also in Turkey, and with the "Lunas" program of Mexico City,[1] Sao Paulo's Home of the Brazilian Women[2] or Montevideo[3] and Rosario[4] and their respective dedicated initiatives to foster women's integration in the labour market.

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[1] https://news.culturacolectiva.com/mexico/gobierno-cdmx-pone-en-funcionamiento-lunas-centros-apoyo-para-mujeres/
[2] https://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/cidade/secretarias/direitos_humanos/mulheres/equipamentos/index.php?p=288423
[3] https://montevideo.gub.uy/noticias/genero/otra-oportunidad-para-mujeres-victimas-de-violencia-de-genero
[4] https://www.rosario.gob.ar/web/gobierno/personal/capacitacion-en-genero-y-violencia-contra-las-mujeres

Challenges and Opportunities

"Right to the City"

Women and men experience and use public space, public transport and public facilities differently. The issue of safety is often at the top of the agenda for women. Besides the issues of personal safety in poorly lit and poorly designed or maintained public spaces, there are issues that need to be addressed for mothers to be able care for young children or the elderly without being isolated from society, and for women to feel safe and free from harassment in public facilities and on public transport. Gender mainstreaming requires concerted actions to bring on board women's specific interests concerning urban planning and financing, designing gender responsive public facilities, transport, parks and gardens and ensuring gender-sensitive access to public services.

Public parks and gardens are a typical case in point. Men usually use these spaces for sports and recreation. Many women often use these spaces daily to ensure the health and wellbeing of children or the elderly. These spaces are not always designed to the specific needs of women and multiple surveys show that mothers are constantly concerned about the safety of their children in neighborhood parks and gardens.

"Mother Centers"

The Mother Centers are a grassroots self-help movement in Germany that help stay-at-home mothers break through the isolation they experience in German society when they have pre-school children and are not available for full-time employment. There are about 400 mother centers in Germany that provide a drop-in space for mothers with children where they can meet other mothers and where their children can make friends. They also provide organized activities and services such as laundry, hair care, and childcare, provided by mothers themselves on a part-time basis. These centers ease the isolation that mothers feel when they are out of the workforce, and they also help women ease the transition back into the workforce. In Munich the mother centers were empowered by local authority to work with professionals to design public parks and gardens that are more user-friendly and child-safe. In Izmir, in order to facilitate the participation of women in the workforce, Fairy Tale Houses provide both a learning and playing space for small children enabling their mothers to attend vocational training courses.

In Guangzhou, China, the municipal authorities, in support of the call by public health authorities and the WHO to promote breast feeding of infants, have adopted a policy and strategy to provide mother-friendly spaces within the public realm to be able to breastfeed their children in a clean, safe and protected environment. This policy was adopted after numerous surveys showed that women were reluctant to extend breast feeding of their infants to the desired period owing to the lack of user-friendly facilities in the public realm.

Challenges and Opportunities

The realization of the right to the city for women also calls to foster women participation in designing, implementing and monitoring policies aimed at realizing gender equality. In Mexico City, a participatory process specifically targeting women was put in place at the neighborhood level with a view to address socio-spatial disparities on this topic between city areas. Municipalities like Iztapalapa (metropolitan area of Mexico City) also give voice to women to define what thematic areas should be a priority for local policymaking. These examples are also highlighting that gender equality should be a pillar of participatory metropolitan governance and promoted as a cross-cutting approach and not only a sectoral policy. Dialogue with local civil society movements and organizations promoting women's rights is also instrumental to develop adapted responses to the existing needs and key to success of the policy process.

Gender Violence and Freedom from Harassment

Public transport is another example where women and men use transport facilities very differently. Men mostly use public transport for single purpose trips. Women often combine different activities (childcare, schooling, shopping, work and caring) making trips more difficult to coordinate and often more costly.

Safety and fear of harassment, however, remain the primary concern. Surveys conducted in several U20 cities around the world have shown that the lack of safety and fear of harassment in public transport and its impact on mobility of women and girls is a major barrier to achieving gender equality and social inclusion. Reduced mobility implies reduced access to public facilities and services, social activities, learning and economic opportunities.

Several cities have taken innovative approaches to addressing this specific need, especially for commuters that work late hours and live in outlying suburbs. As early as in 1992, the City of Montreal, working with several local authorities and women's groups implemented "Between 2 Stops" enabling women to get off a bus at a point closest to their final destination. Similar initiatives exist in Izmire and as recently as 2018, Paris is also allowing women to get off the bus on demand. This measure is further complemented by an additional 650 staff dressed in plain clothes to monitor safety and security on buses and trains. In 2019 several women-only bus services were rolled out in several Indian cities. These buses known as "Pink Express" are air conditioned, are equipped with Wi-Fi and charging stations and tracking devices. They are designed to encourage working women to use public transport without fear of harassment.

Case study: Santa Ana, Costa Rica

In Santa Ana, Costa Rica, the local government decided to launch the "Vigorous Transportation and Women's Empowerment" initiative. The municipality, realizing the mobility was largely defined as using cars in Santa Ana, decided to adopt a city-wide approach to mobility. This approach consisted of raising awareness of alternative means of urban mobility. The "hidden agenda" was, however, to empower women by teaching and encouraging them to ride bicycles to take advantage of newly

(continued)

Challenges and Opportunities

Case study: Santa Ana, Costa Rica

created bicycle lanes and paths. The broader agenda of sustainable mobility was more acceptable to the general public than a narrowly defined gender equality agenda. The outcome, nonetheless, was a better transportation and mobility policy for the inhabitants of Santa Ana with major benefits accruing to women whom, for the first time in the city's history, are able to exercise their rights to an alternative and affordable mode of transport, thereby increasing their mobility and broadening their social and economic horizons.

The Seine Saint Denis department counts with a local Observatory on Violences against Women functioning since 2002. The Observatory has a wealth of experience in regards to coordinating action on this issue among different government spheres (local, regional and national), launching awareness raising campaigns and producing information, data and relevant tools . Cities like Barcelona, Bogotá , Bologna , Montevideo, Naples, Neuquén , Pikine , Renca or Sao Paulo count with their own municipal service for supporting women who have been victims of violence through all kinds of means - emergency accommodation, coordination with the justice department and police officers and awareness-raising campaigns.

Other cities have focused on creating safer public spaces for women and girls, as in the case of Mexico City and its "Camina Libre, Camina Segura" (Walk Free, Walk Safe) initiative,[14] Quito's programme "Safe City for Women and Girls"[15] or Umea (Sweden) exploratory marches with a feminist perspective.[16]

Recent reports throughout G20 countries have shown how various local authorities have implemented innovative approaches to try to mitigate the rise in domestic violence as a result of lockdowns and shelter at home policies. This range from special guest houses in Izmir to coded messages that women could use in pharmacies, clinics, hospitals as well as dedicated hotlines in many countries in Europe.

Housing and Security of Tenure

There is still a significant income differential between women and men - thus women-headed households inevitably have a higher cost burden for housing. No G20 country has a housing policy that differentiates rent or mortgage payments according to gender and gender-specific needs. This translates into less resources available for single women and women-headed households for other essentials such as food, transport, education and health and childcare, even in the wealthiest G20 countries. Studies in these counties including Canada, the UK and the USA have shown that what is needed is differentiated responses to specific situations such as women-headed households, single women-headed households, girl mothers, etc.

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[14]https://www.obras.cdmx.gob.mx/storage/app/media/45-presentacion-camina-libre.pdf
[15]https://ecuador.unwomen.org/es/que-hacemos/poner-fin-a-la-violencia-contra-las-mujeres-y-las-ninas/programa-ciudades-seguras/quito
[16] https://urbact.eu/gender-equality-heart-city

Challenges and Opportunities

This situation is further compounded in informal settlements where, by definition, inhabitants have little or no security of tenure and are often at the mercy of slum lords. This predicament has often been described as one of the major contributing factors of the poverty trap for low-income women. Earning less than their male counterparts, yet caring for children and the elderly, contributes to one of the biggest challenges facing urban poor women. Their predicament is compounded by other barriers that prevent women living and working in the informal economy to gain access to credit, to decent schooling for their children, and paying a premium for water and other basic services. In summary, women living and working in the informal economy are caught in a vicious trap. They cannot do what middle- and higher-income people can do, namely to leverage their home – the single biggest asset or investment that low and moderate income people make in a lifetime – to gain access to credit.

This lack of credit worthiness of low-income women in the informal economy constitutes one of the biggest barriers to gender equality and undermines the potential contribution of half of humanity to more sustainable economic development.

While microcredit has contributed significantly to empowering women to save and access small amounts of credit to survive and thrive in the informal economy, it has an in-built glass ceiling. Very few micro-credit schemes have been able to "graduate" their members to access the formal credit system. The bridges do not exist, often by design, and the overall purpose of most microcredit schemes is to alleviate poverty through cash-flow assistance and not necessarily to create wealth by providing a source of seed or venture capital.

Leadership and Access to Technology

Women's participation in leadership and decision-making remains low throughout G20 countries and cities. The number of women leaders as mayors, civic leaders and leaders of public institutions remains low to very low. Mainstreaming gender equality, in the long run, is almost entirely dependent on the proportion of women that participate in public and political arenas and are encouraged and enabled to play a leadership role. Studies conducted in both the private corporate sector and the public sector have shown that the participation and leadership of women in decision making can make a significant contribution to the adoption of more sustainable development policies and strategies. These are not only economic and ecological, they also pertain to social inclusion and social justice.

Challenges and Opportunities

There are many ways that gender inequality holds half of the world's population back. Overall, the mathematics is simple: women who comprise more than half of the G20's population are financially stunted. One of the key elements that suppress the economic potential of women is access to banking services and finance, without strings attached.

Case study: M-Pesa

M-Pesa, the world's first mobile-phone based financial service invented and launched in Kenya in 2007, had an unintended or unforeseen consequence. For the first time in Kenya's history, a woman could manage her finances, including mobile banking and access to credit, without the authorization or oversight of a male member of her family. The reason was simple: a mobile telephone number is gender neutral. According to the World Economic Forum, M-Pesa has enabled several hundreds of thousands of women, women-headed households and households in general to climb out of poverty through gender-neutral access to banking services, cash flow loans and other financial services. This simple application that has since revolutionized mobile banking worldwide has empowered women and low-income households more than any other policy or legislation in Kenya and much of sub-Saharan Africa in recent history.

On the leadership front, several local and regional governments have also offered a platform to foster women participation in public affairs and women inclusion in government offices. The City of Sousse has been for instance at the forefront of a recently formed coalition of Tunisian local authorities calling for strengthened recognition of locally elected women mayors and councilors. Equally compelling are the lessons learned from cities and countries that have adopted quota systems for women representation in local councils. Research on panchayats (local councils) in India discovered that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62 percent higher than in those with men-led councils. In Norway, a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage was found.

The key to removing barriers to gender-balanced representation in leadership remains, however, the removal of barriers to the effective participation of women in public affairs. These range from:

(i) The individual level that includes levels of formal and civic education and capacity-building that inform women as well as other marginalized groups of their civic rights and how to exercise

(ii) The institutional level that includes the multiple barriers that women have to face to effectively participate in leadership roles and political decision-making. These include a wide range of obstacles such as the lack of recognition of unpaid work, the multiple demands on women in combining productive, reproductive and caring roles in society, and the lack of equal pay for equal work;

(iii) The socio-cultural level where the barriers are in-built into long-standing behavior patterns that put women at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to education, vocational training, banking and finance, and the ability to compete with men for leadership positions.

While the situation appears to be improving on the corporate front, progress remains slow. Norway takes the lead with 40 percent female board representation compared to 2.3 percent in South Korea, with most G20 countries falling in the range of 10 to 15 percent. (see Figure 1).

A seldom used policy tool for addressing the gender gap in board representation as well as in equal pay for equal work is public procurement when all tiers of government specify that gender parity in board representation and equal pay are incorporated as pre-qualifying criteria for competitive bidding.

Challenges and Opportunities

Figure 1

Gender Representation in the Boardroom

Source: https://corpgov.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/iss-1.jpg
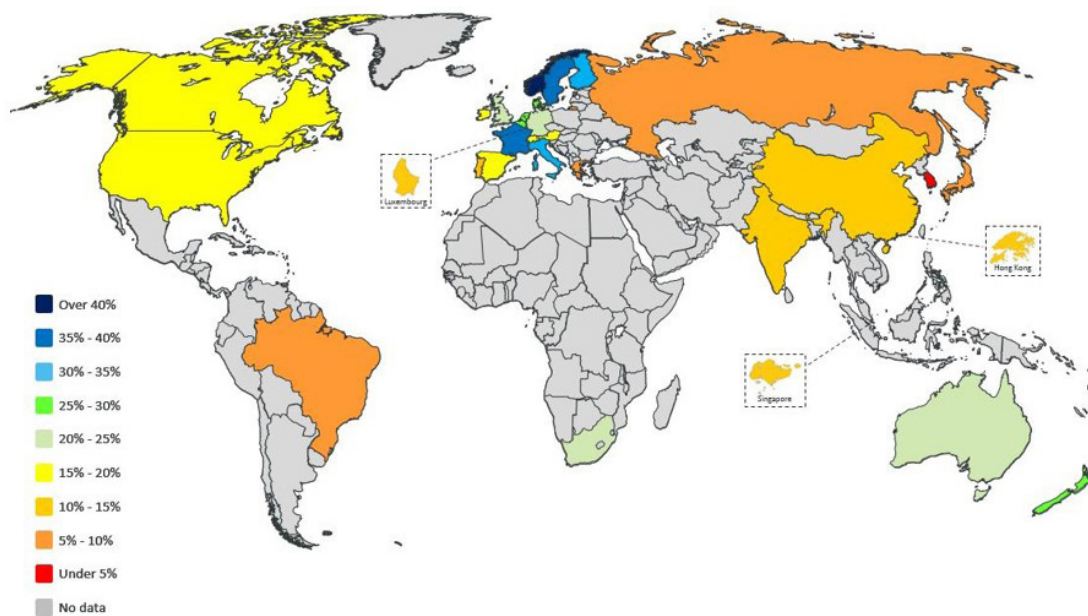
Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

An often overlooked tool in removing barriers to gender equality is gender-responsive budgeting (GRB). GRB recognizes that the conventional budgetary allocation process in most local governments is not neutral and has unequal impacts on women and men and between age groups. In light of the expected aftermath of the pandemic, in terms of global economic downturn, the UN Women and the Women 20 (W20) engagement group called on G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to put women at the heart of recovery efforts; to implement gender-responsive impact reviews of the crisis, recovery packages and plans worldwide, especially for the worst-affected women and girls, in order to guide investment priorities, for greater

fiscal space for countries of the Global South, including through debt relief or cancellation, and expansionary monetary policies that enhance credit availability for women-specific sectors via loan guarantees and other loan instruments as well as greater investment in gender-responsive budgeting.

GRB attempts to overcome these inequalities that are inherent to the decision-making process by looking at the differentiated impact of expenditures on different groups. It is a process whereby local government budget allocations and decisions are viewed through the lens of gender equality and equity.

Challenges and Opportunities

Local governments that have adopted various forms of GRB have found that the differentiation by age and sex has helped to reveal other missed opportunities in addressing social and economic inequities. Many have also found that a logical extension of GRB is proactive contracting and procurement which can be applied not only to help mainstream gender equality but also other critical SDG goals and targets. GSB has proven to be an effective tool to:

(i)   Improve budget efficiency by ensuring that funds are allocated where they are needed most;

(ii) Strengthen government policies in addressing the needs of all, including the poor and the underrepresented;

(iiI) Improve information flow on the specific needs of the urban poor and vulnerable groups. In surrounding needs of those who are usually left behind.

In summary, GSB can be a very effective entry point to addressing the specific needs and priorities of not just women but all vulnerable groups in the realization of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.

Case Study Highlight: Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has been on the fast-track of progress on the gender equality path since 2017, placing itself at the top ranks on reform. The Vision 2030 that was launched in 2016 by the Kingdom gave considerable emphasis on the role of women for a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation. The Kingdom commits to be an economy that provides opportunities to all, men and women, young and old; an arena where everyone can bring out their potential and contribute to the nation's development and advancement. The vision also commits to invest in learning for working for women and men preparing them for the future of work. One of the vision goals that fall under the "Thriving Economy" pillar is to increase women participation in the workforce from 22 percent to 30 percent. The Kingdom's Vision acknowledgment of women as valuable assets to life, culture, and economy, built up a great momentum for reform initiatives and programs that target the empowerment of women and girls by trying to break down the barriers to their equal involvement and entitlement in everyday life. It also provided a solid groundwork towards the localization and realization of the SDGs, namely SDG 4 on education and life-long learning, SDG 5 on gender equality.

According to the World Bank 2020 report on "Women, Business, and the Law", the Kingdom dramatically climbed up the WBL index ladder from 31.8 out of 100 in 2017 to 70.6 in 2020. This was recorded as the biggest improved economy for gender equality globally and regionally with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Jordan, and Tunisia as Arab peers. The table below presents the World Bank's WBL scorecard for Saudi Arabia.

(continued)

Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study Highlight: Saudi Arabia

WBL Indicator	Score out of 100
Mobility	100
Workplace	100
Pay	25
Marriage	60
Parenthood	40
Entrepreneurship	100
Assets	40
Pension	100
WBL Index 2020	70.6 (out of 100)

Source: World Bank, Women, Business, and the Law 2020 Report

This remarkable leap in the Kingdom's WBL index can be attributed to several groundbreaking reform laws and initiatives, most of them going back to the period between 2018 and 2019. Groundbreaking reforms in employment laws were enacted. In 2018, sexual harassment in public and private sector employment was criminalized. Law amendments were adopted to protect women from discrimination in employment, to prohibit employers from dismissing a woman during her pregnancy and maternity leave, and to prohibit gender-based discrimination in accessing financial services and encouraging women entrepreneurship. The retirement age for women and men was also matched to the age of 60, extending the economic activity of women and thus, their earnings, savings, and contributions. Women's and girls' significant strides for mobility are also being gradually loosened mainly due to the changes in the guardianship laws where women were only allowed to move around, or travel escorted by a legal male guardian followed by granting women the right to drive in 2018; a step long-awaited following the diligent calls from the "League of Demanders of Women's Right to Drive Cars in Saudi Arabia" since 2007. Today, nearly 5.5 million Saudi women over 21 years of age are reaping the benefits of reforms and will continue to for generations to come.

(continued)

Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study Highlight: Saudi Arabia

Reforms in laws provided a fertile ground for a few non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based associations that took the matter of gender equality as its core value and goal that conceived a considerable set of national and local gender-targeted initiatives and programs during the last couple of years.

Alnahda Society (Alnahda) is a UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) accredited nongovernment organization in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Founded in 1962, the organization works to develop and maintain grassroots programs that work directly with female led households within lower income segments through: social and financial support projects; capacity building projects; and career education projects. Through the research center, the organization aims to shed light on challenges and obstacles women face that inhibit their ability to fully participate in social, economic, and governmental activities. With a strong understanding of national and globally relevant socio-economic policies and how they impact women, the organization engages in significant advocacy-based initiatives that include sharing information with other stakeholders, delivering awareness-based campaigns, participating in national committees and discussions, engaging in international forums and conventions, and lobbying directly with decision makers. AlNahda is the host organization for the Women 20 (W20) G20 engagement group under the Saudi Presidency of the G20.

On a city-scale, the Royal Commission for Riyadh City partnered with Alnahda on a multi-phased initiative titled: Activating female community leaders in Central Riyadh Development. The project collaborated with local organizations and members of the community on carrying out household and building surveys that would inform policies and programs for economic and social development. Through this collaboration, the project aimed to build trust within the community as well as invest in their capacity development. Additionally, through the reliance on a female lead survey team the project was able to increase female representation in the data collected, by encouraging female household members to take part in the survey and capture their perspective on the needs of their neighborhood. Phase 1 of the initiative surveyed 10 neighborhoods in the city center and 21,000 households. The next phase will evolve around the delivery of social programs identified by the needs assessment of phase 1.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

The lessons learned from these and other case studies point to some key areas for follow up action. These include:

- Innovation in social practices: the need for new social practices that better meet the needs of women especially in working conditions, education and life-long learning opportunities, health and mobility. This includes the removal of barriers for advancing entrepreneurship to boosting women empowerment;

- Innovation in collaborative approaches in co-creating public services and public safety: The need for cities to create space for testing new ideas and solutions with grassroots women's organizations especially in the area for collaborate public services and the design and management of safe public spaces;

- Innovation in finance and gender-responsive budgeting: how can cities use their purchasing power to catalyze change in the marketplace? Cities are often the single biggest source of procurement for a wide range of goods and services within their respective jurisdictions. How can changes be introduced to contract and procurement processes and criteria to mainstream gender equality, especially in terms of decent jobs, working conditions and business opportunities? Similarly, how can

gender-responsive budgeting be mainstreamed as a means not only of helping to identify gender-responsive needs and priorities but as an important tool towards empowering women and their grassroots representatives to take part in the democratic process that makes a difference.

- Innovation in the use of technology and the bridging of the technological divide between men and women to accelerate the mainstreaming of gender equality and women empowerment.

- Policies on gender equality are increasingly becoming more consolidated across the world. Gender equality has been incorporated as a mainstream priority of numerous local and regional governments, reflected in budget allocation, public service delivery or public works. This trend can be greatly accelerated with better coordination between different tiers of government and between government, civil society and business and industry.

- The co-creation of local policies for women's rights is key to ensure effective responses and a cross cutting approach, addressing the multiple layers of gender inequality.

Recommendations

Recommendations

Policy Recommendations Addressed to G20 Leaders

National governments should:

- Provide global leadership in convening periodic dialogues between all tiers of government and their stakeholders to take stock of progress, identify priority areas of action and propose mechanisms for collaboration and coordination regarding the advancement of gender equality policies and legislation.

- Achieve gender in public political decision-making by ensuring equitable access and representation of women in politics and policy making bodies. This includes domestic, international, ministerial, and other policy positions through the implementation of targets or quotas in order to achieve gender parity by 2030;

- Adopt more enabling legislation to protect the housing and land tenure rights of women, especially female-headed households and front-line workers to ensure that they are adequately protected in times of difficulty;

- Take further action to close gender gaps in income, wages, pensions and other earnings, to align with the SDGs, including recognizing, reducing, redistributing, and measuring the value of unpaid care and domestic work and its estimated contribution to the economy and valorize care work with equitable pay;

- Develop regulation and standards for sex disaggregated data collection across hiring, job progression and access to education and usage to create greater transparency and confidence on opportunities for women;

- Establish regulations for digital inclusion ensuring that women have access to the internet and more importantly to array of digital services like education, digital literacy, as well as implementation of Digital ID programs that allow monitoring and measurement of equitable access for women to these services.

Recommendations

Policy Recommendations Addressed to Local/ Subnational Governments and Their Partners and Stakeholders

Local/ subnational governments and key stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, should:

- Secure the protection of housing and land tenure rights of women, especially for female-headed households and front-line workers to ensure their adequate protection.

- Significantly increase public funding towards affordable, quality and professionalized childcare and long-term care so that by 2030 these services are available to all women in or re-entering the labor market.

- Implement by 2030 policies for mandatory paid parental leave schemes including non-transferable entitlements for a second caregiver to promote shared responsibility of care work and a better work-life balance.

- Develop innovative ways to increase funding and other resources for the prevention of gender-based violence and provide protection and assistance to women and children affected by domestic violence. They should also ensure that the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises in the future do not undermine women's access to basic health care services, including reproductive, sexual health (including pre- and post-natal health care).

- Ensure that grassroots women's organizations are represented and regularly consulted in the management and oversight of public services, especially those dealing with transport, health, education, welfare and safety;

- Adopt gender-responsive budgeting to ensure that all public expenditures respond to the specific needs of women and girls and other vulnerable groups;

- Integrate the mainstreaming of gender equality as a key principle and criteria in the awarding of public contracts and procurement;

- Ensure that women's organizations are represented and regularly consulted in the management and oversight of public services, especially those dealing with transport, health, education, welfare and safety. Key tools in removing barriers to mainstreaming gender equality at the local level include gender-responsive budgeting and gender-sensitive contracts and procurement.

- Incentivize the investment community to incorporate a gender lens in their decision-making across all asset classes and foster the development of gender-responsive business loan officers and investors (including women angel investors and venture capitalists) with a view to increasing women's access to capital.

Business and industry should increase the number of women decision-makers in business by taking the necessary steps, including targets and quotas, to ensure full gender parity on the boards of public and listed companies by 2030, and providing incentives for employers that achieve gender parity in decision-making positions.

Recommendations

Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of Beijing+25. This has led to a vacuum in terms of a space and an opportunity for governments, civil society organizations, industry and academia to take stock of progress and chart ways forward. This vacuum needs to be filled and the G20 could provide global leadership in convening periodic dialogues between all tiers of government and their stakeholders to take stock of progress, identify priority areas of action and propose mechanisms for collaboration and coordination.

Data Collection and Sharing

There is a need for better coordination and communication between member states and their local government and civil society partners in the collection, analysis and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative data on gender equality. This includes the mapping of "who is doing what where" in data collection and analysis, the documentation and dissemination of innovative policy initiatives and best practices and monitoring and evaluation. This could take the form of a gender mainstreaming facility or "virtual institute" to serve as a node and platform to facilitate the sharing and exchange of knowledge, expertise and experience between existing networks, institutions and organizations within and outside the G20.

Training and Capacity Building

Grassroots women's organizations need to be sensitized and trained in local politics and decision-making. Key entry points for more effective representation and having one's voice heard in the decision-making processes is to better understand how local government budgets are prepared, approved and executed and the intricacies of local government contracts and procurement processes that have a major influence and impact on all aspects of local business and local economic development.

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