

SIDE EVENT @ THE 2023 SDG SUMMIT

WHAT IF WOMEN DESIGNED THE CITY?*

Intersecting SDG 5 and SDG 11



A KEY TRANSITION
DIALOGUE

 18 SEPTEMBER
2023

 14h00-15h30
(EST)

 UN Headquarters,
New York, USA

Background

Women and cities are key elements within the indivisible SDGs agenda and are therefore key for achieving world-wide progress across the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Cities generate their own wealth, shape local and often national policies and are spearheading a thrilling new vision of governance for the implementation of the SDGs. Pragmatic in approach, close to people and their problems cities also contain the seeds of their own regeneration. However, historically, cities have been planned and built primarily through taking the male experience as the reference. As a result, cities tend to function better for men than they do for women.ⁱ

This dialogue is at the intersection between two megatrends informing the world we live in: women's repositioning in society and the accelerated pace of urbanisation. It builds upon a series of recent documents and reports by international 'agenda holders'^{ii iii} and 'knowledge brokers'^{iv v vi} reaffirming that the systematic exclusion of women from urban planning means women's daily lives and perspectives rarely shape urban form and function.^{vii} Furthermore, what is known as gender-neutrality in urban planning it usually adopts a male perspective, reproducing gender stereotypes and often limiting women's realities to the role and function of carer.^{viii}

Hosted by UNITAR and facilitated by May East, UNITAR Fellow and author of the book *What if Women Designed the City*, the dialogue:

- Examines the interdependencies and gaps between SDG 5 Gender Equality and SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities;
- Explores how women are de facto contributing to the SDGs urban targets through a mosaic of women-led regenerative interventions in cities at the forefront of gender-sensitive urban planning;
- Considers a disaggregated data revolution's impact on urban policy and practice for greener, inclusive, liveable cities.

More specifically, this Dialogue adopts SDG 5 target 5.5 '**ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life**' as a lens to appraise women's roles in advancing SDG 11 targets, whilst mapping the gap between policy aspiration and place-making implementation.



Hear from Vienna in Austria



From master planning to women-led place-making interventions, the city has since 1992 developed over 60 gender-sensitive projects including the Aspen Seestad neighbourhood and has embedded gender-mainstreaming in its urban planning decisions. Vienna’s creative patterns of place making pays particular attention to the soft measures democratising the way women and girls use and experience public spaces.

Hear from Lyon in France



Hear how Lyon became the largest city in France to implement a gender-sensitive budget conceived as a transformative instrument addressing societal inequalities and ensuring that funds are spent equally between women and men in all the public policies. Started in 2021, the city is adopting the budget genre in sports facilities, fine arts, green spaces and in public policies informing urban planning.

Hear from Barcelona in Spain



Hear how the feminist urbanism of Barcelona is deeply informed by participatory processes embedded in community and neighbourhood networks where women are seen as experts of everyday life and active players in urban diagnosis and transformation.

Hear from Glasgow in UK



Declared the First ‘Feminist City’ in UK, Glasgow is re-inventing itself a gender-sensitive city by promoting walkability, proximity to services, safe public spaces and open green spaces.



Hear from the World Health Organization



By emphasizing the intersection of gender equality, health, and urbanisation, the WHO highlights the need to integrate women's health and well-being into urban planning. This includes ensuring access to healthcare, reproductive rights, and sexual health services. The WHO's insights can bridge the gap between SDG3, SDG 5 and SDG 11, fostering inclusive urban policies that promote both sustainable development and the overall health of women and communities.

Urbanization is often associated with greater independence and opportunity for women. However, it is also characterised by housing inequality, a transport infrastructure informed by private car ownership, intersectional violence, inadequate disaster preparedness, and decision making that reflects deep gender-based inequalities. Understanding the key urbanization trends likely to unfold over the coming years, and revisiting the role women may play in their mediation of space and making of place, are crucial to forging a timely gender-sensitive framework of urban development. This Dialogue advocates that it is in the experience and practice of the city that we have the best chance of making a just world.

Join us!

Register here today!

Or go to: https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/7116929845097/WN_YiweqRXDR0qVBuUbtG93w#/registration

Limited Spaces face to face
Unlimited Spaces on-line

* Title of the forthcoming book of Dr May East.

ⁱ World Bank (2020). World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The World Bank.

ⁱⁱ UN Women (2019). Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2019. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Statistics Division.

ⁱⁱⁱ UN-Habitat (2014). Gender Equality Action Plan (2014-2019). UN-Habitat. 019/15E.

^{iv} World Bank (2020).

^v OECD (2021) Gender and the Environment: Building Evidence and Policies to Achieve the SDGs. OECD Publishing, Paris.

^{vi} URBACT EU (2022). Gender Equal Cities Report. [online] Available at: <https://urbact.eu/gender-equal-cities-2022>

^{vii} World Bank (2020).

^{viii} Damyancovic, D. & Zibell, B. (2013). Is there still gender on the agenda for spatial planning theories? Attempt to an integrative approach to generate gender-sensitive planning theories. The Planning Review, 49:4, pp. 25-36.

^{ix} Sandberg, L. & Rönnblom, M. (2016). Imagining the ideal city, planning the gender- equal city in Umeå, Sweden. Gender, Place & Culture, Vol. 23, Issue 12, pp. 1750- 1762.



Program and Speakers

14:00

Welcoming Remarks

The interdependent and indivisible nature of the SDGs



Mr. Nikhil Seth

UN Assistant Secretary-General,
Executive Director, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

14:10

What if Women Designed the City?

Leverage Points to make your city work better for women and girls



Dr. May East

UNITAR Fellow

Vienna- Democratising the Use of Public Spaces



Ms. Lena Rücker

Senior Planner
City of Vienna

Glasgow, the first UK Feminist City



Ms. Sarah Shaw

Senior Planner
Glasgow City Council

Gender-Sensitive Budget Addressing Inequalities within Public Policies



Ms. Audrey Hénoque

Deputy Mayor Finance and Public Procurement
Mairie de Lyon

Planning for Everyday Life



Ms. Ana Paricio Cárceles

Senior Planner
Barcelona Regional

Urban Planning and the Impact on Productive Health and Gender Equality



Dr. Anna Coates

Gender Equality Advisor,
Sexual and Reproductive Health Research
WHO



15:00

Moderated Q & A Session

Dr. May East
UNITAR Fellow

15:10

Commentator



Mr. Charles Landry
Author and International Adviser
on the Future of Cities

15:20 - 15:30

Closing Remarks



Mr. Alex Mejia
Director, Division for People and Social Inclusion
UNITAR





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

*Strengthening human capacities
to advance sustainable development*



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