International colloquium

Culture for the Future
Creativity, Innovation and Dialogue for Inclusive Development

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Inequalities, gender, cities

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Gender equality begins by ensuring that the needs and experiences of women and girls are being effectively integrated into every society[1].

Inequalities, gender[2], cities

Draft background note[3]

Summary

The paper focus on gender inequalities in cities and in the creative sector.
Gender unbalance, as one specific area of inequalities in cities, is related to issues such as poverty, division of labour, domestic violence, vulnerability in the public sphere or limits in democratic participation. The nexus between culture and female inequalities relate both to the cultural dimension of gender inequality, as well as to the relevance that the larger challenges faced on new strategies to be developed to improve the right to the city for women have for women artists and cultural operators. Finally, under certain conditions, cities are a key driver en enabler for the creative sector contribution to sustainable development; however, girls and women face additional unequal opportunities compared to men. The paper proposes a set of principles and approches that could foster gender equality in cities, therefore addressing a broader set of inequalities (economic, social and cultural ones).

A / CITIES AND GENDER

Context and background

Cities host half of the world's population today and will host over 65% by 2050. While a growing attention is given to secondary cities, in order to limit the negative effect of rapid and often uncontrolled urbanisation, in developing countries, the « urban » dimension of sustainable development is crucial to tackle inequalities, reinforce equal access to all to social, economic and cultural rights.

Challenges such as poverty eradication, climate change impacts, migration, the co-existence of multiple cultures within a same territory, youth unemployment, equal access to essential services and public goods, gender equality and safe space of proximity as well as public spaces are impacting the everyday life of citizen. Therefore, without substituting the need for national, regional and international regulation, supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in cities and human settlements can foster social and economic innovations that could be adapted and/or replicated in other contexts.

Un-Habitat[4] acknowledges that **cities offer opportunities to girls and women in cities** thanks to:

•   More diverse employment opportunities to increase financial independence;

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[1] Source : United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
[2] In this paper « gender » will be considered in the restrictive approach of male/female balance; howeve**r LGBT** should be mentioned as well as **youth**, as gender challenges may increase in relation to youth ones, combining two key factors that are potential sources of inequalities
[3] Author : Valeria Marcolin
[4] Source : https://unhabitat.org/urban-themes/gender/

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- Greater ease in accessing education at different levels,
- Better access to healthcare;
- More opportunities to socialize outside the home;
- More prospects to take up community or political leadership roles and, most notably,
- More possibilities to redefine the traditional roles of men and women.

However **cities remain also a space of gender inequalities** because:

- Informal Settlements can have an impact on education and human capital acquisition, notably after puberty, on safety, and health, including sex education;
- Land property regulation can exclude women or limit their rights;
- Unequal access to decent work and persisting Gender Pay Gap and little financial and physical assets;
- Unpaid domestic work, caring for dependent family members (twice as much time as men) that limits time to pursue income generating, educational and leisure activities
- Weak intra-urban and urban-rural mobility modes ;
- Limitations to freedom of expressions, little representation in formal structures of urban governance;
- Gender-based violence, lack of safe places
- Adult interactions and role models
- Environmental risks[5].

2 / Institutional Framework

In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (notably SDG 11) the Paris Agreement, and other global development agreements and frameworks, the New Urban Agenda (Habitat III)[6] highlights the vision of a city « *for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all* ».

Human settlement should, among others:[7]

- Fulfill their social function, including the social and ecological function of land (…)
- Be participatory, promote civic engagement, engender a sense of belonging and ownership among all their inhabitants, prioritize safe, inclusive, accessible, green and quality public spaces that are friendly for families, **enhance social and intergenerational interactions, cultural expressions and political participation, as appropriate, and foster social cohesion, inclusion and safety in peaceful and pluralistic societies,** where the needs of all inhabitants are met, recognizing the specific needs of those in vulnerable situations
- **Achieve gender equality (SDG 5) 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;

[5] Sources: ibidem and http://citiesprogramme.org/focus-area/womens-empowerment-and-gender-equality/
[6] UNITED NATIONS, New Urban Agenda, 20 October 2016. Available at : http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf
[7] ibidem

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At the European Union level, the **following references and tools** may notably be considered, in relation to the support of better governance and development through cities and local authorities empowerment and gender equality

• Commission Communication on 'Empowering local authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes',
• the Council Conclusions on 'Local Authorities in development' (2013)
• the New European Consensus on Development (2017)
• Toolkit on Mainstreaming Gender Equality in EC Development Cooperation (2014)
• Joint staff working document « Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 » (2015)
• Resource Package: Tools to advance the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Gender Equality(link is external)

Furthermore, other directorates general of the European Commission have developed an extensive number of policies, studies, programmes that highlight and s**upport the roles of cities and regions in local development through culture[8].**

B / PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN CITIES THROUGH CULTURE AND IN THE CULTURAL SECTOR

Gender inequalities exist in cities both in developed and in developing countries and tend to be be nuanced by socio-economic class, access to education, cultural backgrounds, religion etc. A general trend indicating that cities are need to rethink their spaces and governance to better achieve gender balance is confirmed by many research papers and studies on cities and gender[9].

In order to secure inclusiveness of cities and human settlements that welcome and engage women and girls, including through their cultural expressions, stakeholders need to consider also the cultural dimension of development and the specific needs of women in the cultural sector and practices.

In this respect revisiting the notion of « public spaces » in different cultures appear an essential topic to be considered. « Encouraging the use of public spaces begins with an intentional invitation. For people of all backgrounds (and gender, note of the editor) to believe they belong in public spaces, they must first experience a welcome. In order to spark deeper civic engagement and provide socioeconomic mixing, public places must reinforce a sense of membership for everyone »[10]. The co-existence of different cultures on a same territory may also challenge the notion of public space(s) among citizens and their effective inclusiveness.

 Culture is understood here as asserting the ability of cultural values, forms and expressions to evolve, and recognising the diversity of ways of life that have existed across the world and history. Culture helps to expand freedoms and liberties, builds trust between peoples, promotes peace, and enables everyone to exercise all human rights. Yet conflicting uses of spaces, time also and

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[8] Source : https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policy/culture-policies/cities-regions_en
[9]Source https://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/urban/downloads/WomenWatch_Gender_Equality_and_Sustainable_Urbanisation-fact_sheet.pdf
[10] *9 Ways to Build Better Cities Through Public Places:* Part 2, Reimagining the Civic Commons, 7th March 2019, available at : https://medium.com/reimagining-the-civic-commons/9-ways-to-build-better-cities-through-public-places-part-2-1196230504b5

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conflicting cultural values should be managed and considered to secure social cohesion and well-being in cities and human settlement.

Suggested areas for discussion and action

To achieve gender equality and foster women's economic, social and cultural rights and their contribution to sustainable development, in cities and human settlements, the following principles and approaches should be considered:

Urban design and governance

The « Gender equality, heritage and creativity » UNESCO report (2014)[11] underlines that urban development can reflect and reinforce gender inequalities by the 'spatial expression of patriarchy' in cities (Valentine, 1989[12]) that can impact women's equitable access to space and resources, and can compromise safety and mobility in public spaces (Narayanan, 2012[13]). In relation to heritage, when intangible heritage is transferred to urban environment, « it may continue in the frame of modified contexts and forms, which may include changes in the gender dynamics of the element »[14].

City planners should recognize gender equality as a democratic principle and a human right and the conditions to create a greater access to culture for all, also considering the different uses of the city made by men and women. There is a need to a woman's perspective and experience into a broad range of policy-making (*gender sensitive policy making*) and urban design choices, including from a cultural perspective. « Specific location of economic activities for market and accessible commercial uses, public venues and other services »[15] could be designed, including for culture and creative industries. Solutions such as housing designed by woman architects that provides personal space for single mothers and encourages community support networks, redesign of parks, sidewalks, develop women friendly and women only spaces through participatory processes, strengthen public transports services ans new pedestrian paths could reinforce social cohesion towards women, but also children, the elderly, homeless etc[16].

Access and participation in cultural life for all[17]

The full exercise of cultural rights should be central in the design, implementation and evaluation of cultural policies and projects. This involves paying attention to disadvantaged groups and to factors which may lead to discrimination and inequality, including gender. Attention also needs to be paid to the intersections between gender and other categories (race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, marital status, class, educational level, etc.) which may reinforce patterns of inequality and discrimination. Guaranteeing full access and participation of all in cultural life, including women and girls, should be a commitment for cultural actors.

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[11] available at : http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/gender-and-culture/gender-equality-and-culture/the-report/
[12] Valentine, G. 1989. *The geography of women's fear*. Area, Vol. 21, No. 4.
[13] Narayanan, Y. 2012. *Violence Against Women in Delhi: A Sustainability Problematic*. Journal of South Asian Development, Vol. 7, No.1
[14] ibidem, p. 53
[15] Source: UN Habitat
[16] Source : https://urbact.eu/gender-sensitive-public-space-placemaking-and-spatial-justice-through-perspective-gender
[17] The following principles have been developed within a Call to Action"STRENGTHENING THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN CULTURE AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT launched in 2018 by the following convening organisations Culture et Développement, Africalia (Belgium), Arterial Network (Africa), British Council, UCLG (Committee on Culture), International Music Council, Interarts Foundation, UNESCO (Liaison Office, Brussels) and their associated partners ACP Secretariat, Bozar, CISAC, European Coalitions for Cultural Diversity, ICOMOS, More Europe, UCLG-Africa. It was adopted by these organisations following the European Development Days 2018 and drafted by Jordi Balta and Valeria Marcolin (author of this back groundnut). Available at : https://www.culture-developpement.asso.fr/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Call-for-action-STRENGTHEN-THE-GENDER-PERSPECTIVE-IN-CULTURE.pdf

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Gender balance and diversity in cultural heritage

The safeguarding, protection and transmission of cultural heritage is incomplete if women's narratives, symbolic places, practices and voices are not visible and properly recognised. A people-centred approach to cultural heritage involves the recognition and visibility of these lesser-acknowledged aspects, as well as the involvement of women in determining and interpreting cultural heritage, including their ability to modify or discard cultural traditions, values and practices.

Recognition of women as creators and authors

The role of women as writers, film directors, musicians or visual artists is very often secondary in cultural venues, festivals and the media. Recognising this gap is the first step towards raising awareness and taking effective measures, ensuring that opportunities for creative development exist in all fields, beyond those that have more traditionally been associated with women. Active commitment is necessary to stand against all forms of gender-related bans, attacks, and discrimination in the cultural scene.

Addressing salary inequality and other forms of discrimination

Salary gaps between men and women prevail in most societies and professional sectors, including culture. It is essential to adopt measures to recognise these imbalances where they exist, to address any underpinning factors, and to ensure equal pay for equal work, as well as full access to labour rights and support in balancing parenthood and career opportunities for everyone, irrespective of gender.

Cultural actors as advocates of equality, rights and freedoms

Artists and cultural organisations can give voice to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and raise awareness about social inequality, including that which affects women and girls. They also offer opportunities and safe spaces for expression and connecting with others. It is important to build partnerships between public authorities, organisations active in the field of women's rights, organisations representing other vulnerable groups and cultural stakeholders, exploring the potential of cultural practices and processes to advocate for equality, to change policies and practices, and to broaden rights and freedoms.

The cultural dimension of other human rights

Cultural contexts, traditions and values inform access to basic services and the exercise of human rights. Often, prejudice and tradition can work against women and girls' ability to access education, politics, employment or health, including sexual and reproductive health services. Cultural adaptation of services contributes to universal access and enjoyment of rights. Mainstreaming the role of culture to promote gender equality and diversity in other policy areas and collaboration between cultural stakeholders and other agents providing basic services (governments, NGOs, private companies, etc.) are fundamental.

Education and training as key areas for strengthening the place of women and girls in cultural life

Educational institutions are a key environment to broaden opportunities for women and girls to fully participate in cultural life and should ensure access to the arts and culture. Educational authorities and professionals should pay attention to the gender stereotypes that often prevail in areas of education and training, and to the values that are promoted in them. An emphasis needs to be

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placed on the education of men and boys, whose values, attitudes and behaviour can very often hinder opportunities for women and girls in social, economic, political and cultural life. Learning in this area must be understood to take place in a wide range of institutions and contexts, and address people of all ages. Attention also needs to be paid to the collection and analysis of data on how men and women access higher education and vocational training differently, and to giving visibility and platforms to female artists and cultural professionals as mentors and role models.

Full participation of women in decision-making and leadership

Full participation in public life includes the ability of women and girls to take part in decision-making on cultural policies and projects at local, national, regional and international levels. Hurdles need to be identified and addressed, including the 'glass ceiling' often preventing women from accessing senior leadership positions. Likewise, community consultation exercises in the context of sustainable development projects of all kinds should integrate a gender perspective and seek to actively involve women and girls.

The role of public authorities in fostering change

International organisations and national, regional and local governments and cities are in a privileged position to lead change. They should embrace the responsibility in raising awareness about gender equality and about the important links between culture, gender and sustainable development. They should drive change in their policies, practices and organisational cultures, and in those of others, by providing guidelines and models and by stimulating forms of participatory governance involving civil society organisations, private actors and individual citizens.

The importance of data collection, analysis and evaluation

 Reinforced efforts in research and evaluation are necessary, including through the collection of gender-disaggregated data, further analyses of the links between culture, gender equality and sustainable development, and the integration of a 'gender lens' in project and policy evaluation.

Based on those principles aiming at reducing gender inequalities, a set of recommendations have been developed by several entities[18].

C / Conclusions

The approaches above apply also to cities as local authorities and as facilitators of multi-stakeholders approaches in line with SDG 16 and 17[19].

Moderators and experts may wish to discuss on the following questions, among others :

- How the cultural dimension of female inequalities in cities and public spaces could be better taken into account in cooperation mechanisms? What are the good practices?

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[18] Refer, among others, to : Call to Action"STRENGTHENING THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN CULTURE AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ibidem, and UNESCO, *Gender equality, heritage and creativity (2015) available at :* https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000229418
[19] See also : Culture and International Development: Towards an Interdisciplinary Methodology
Available at https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/our-stories/cultureanddevelopmentreview

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- What challenges are faced by the cultural sector and female cultural actors in cities? What priorities and solutions could be integrated in policy design to reduce female inequalities[20] in cities and human settlements, in particular in relation to cultural and creative industries?

- How the narrative on gender inequalities, including in the cultural sector, could also address a larger set of inequalities in cities?

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[20] Moderators and experts could enlarge the debate to youth (young girls) and LGBT and other gender related inequalities

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