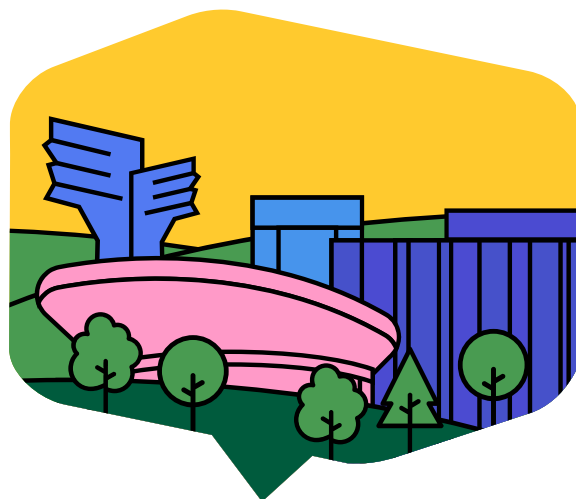


# WORLD URBAN FORUM

ELEVENTH SESSION



KATOWICE, POLAND | 26-30 JUNE 2022

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## "Urban metabolism and gender equity"

Monday, June 27, 2022

01:30 pm to 03:00 pm CEST

Voices from cities Room B (n°10)

| Hybrid event |



**Moderator:** Constance Koukoui, Cités Unies France

## ■ Word of welcome:

**Celine Papin, Deputy Mayor of Bordeaux, President of the Latin American and Caribbean Dynamic (DALC), Cités Unies France. Co-chair of the session,**

- Special thanks to the distinguished guest speakers, the public in Katowice and online, and of course the co-organizers of this event.
- The theme of the World Urban Forum is “Transforming Our Cities for a Better Urban Future” in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 11 – “making cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.” Our session today aims at contributing to that goal, and it is a great joy and pleasure to walk together with so many cities in the right direction.
- There is a real problem reaching women, getting them to participate in our round tables.
- Focused on schoolyards as traditionally: “boy games” are at center and the girls are on the outsides. Bordeaux made sure to have plans to rearrange the space and address climate and gender equality in renovating yards.
- Finding the right, efficient indicators is indeed a key issue and one we work on within the Gender workgroup at CUF.



**Ms. Elise PEREIRA-NUNES, Deputy Mayor of Ville de Tours (France), Delegate for gender equality, the fight against discrimination, international relations, city networks, and the Francophonie – President of the Gender workgroup at Cités Unies France.**

**Chairwoman of the session (videoconference)**

- Cites Unies France’s Gender workgroup was created in 2020, at the request of its members French cities and local governments that wanted to work together and with their international partners to advance gender equality and inclusion in all matters of public policies.

### **Philosophy of the Workgroup :**

- Belief in the role local government play in advancing such issues locally, in answer to the request of our citizen,  
Efficiency of peer-learning and the sharing of inspiring best practices,  
Strength of our collective voice to advance gender-mainstreaming at all level of governance.
- It started from the observation that even for the most convinced among us, advancing gender inclusion requires knowledge, methods, and processes.
- Political will is of course critical, but it must be followed by meaningful action, starting within our own institutions, to ensure that gender is systematically factored into our public policies.

- The Gender workgroup therefore mobilized expertise to create training sessions for the members of the group, notably on how to enroll our institutions – fellow representatives, public agent – in gender sensitive public actions, locally and within our partnerships abroad.
- Another action was to create a “Directory” of French Cities involved in gender-mainstreaming in their local and international policies, in order to: facilitate peer-learning, disseminate best practices and inspiring actions, encourage other local government, in France and abroad, to embrace the issue and take action.
- For the past 18 months, the group has addressed and explored many fields of local public policies, such as : actions against gender based violence, gender-inclusive education, gender-sensitive economic development and job creation, actions and ways to advance gender-inclusivity in the very fabric of our cities.
- The group worked on such topics as women invisibilization in the public space ; gender bias in usages, sociability and mobility in our cities, and how to address and mitigate them.
- Our platform shares practical solutions and initiatives, on such topics as gender-sensitive budgeting, data collection to inform decision-making, efficient ways to enroll and involve women in public policies. The group also actively participates in advocacy work at the national and international level, to push for the inclusion of a gender-sensitive approach in all agendas.
- In regards gender-inclusivity in our cities and in the urban agendas, we are aware that the topic has been explored many times. We are also aware that despite the issues being repeatedly identified, it is still too often overlooked and progress slow. Meaning that repetition is still necessary, advocacy is still crucial, proactive resolution and commitment is still very much needed. We still have to collectively work towards a more inclusive future.
- Which is why the Gender workgroup has joined the collective movement and contributes to the international discussion led by UCLG on the Feminist Municipalism movement. It is also why we remain committed, together with our friends and colleagues in other networks of local government around the world, to keeping this conversation front and center at all levels of governance and in all aspect of public policies.

### ■ **Introduction: *State of research and local practices regarding the need for gender inclusion within the urban space***



**Lorenzo Kihlgren Grandi, Director of the City Diplomacy Lab at Columbia Global Centers | Paris (France)**

- The Lab’s perspective is known to be hybrid, in that it integrates both the theoretical aspects proper to a research center with the practical ones, as it is directly engaged in strengthening and spreading the practice of city diplomacy to make the world more juste and green.
- Research since the 1970s has been revealing contradictions regardingn spatial configuration and functioning in relation to gender. Contradictions that take the form of profound inequalities.
- Various researchers have identified different types of "barometers" to assess such inequalities. Among the most celebrated are those related to the presence of women within the professions and professional contexts that have the main responsibility for shaping and reshaping the technical functioning, the built environment and the public space of a city. In fact, in most countries of the world, overwhelming majorities of men in the fields of

architecture, urbanism, engineering, transportation, energy, water and sanitation, and waste management.

- This means that cities are designed and structured according to the expectations and goals of half of the "urban body". And this is without mentioning the female presence in local decision-making processes.
- According to the City Mayors Foundation survey, in 2018, women represented only 20% of mayors worldwide. On the bright side, representation in local government legislative bodies is slightly higher than in parliaments worldwide (36% and 24.9%, respectively), On the other hand, as is well known, there is an overwhelming majority of women in the care-related sectors & unpaid social work, which Secretary Diana Rodríguez Franco will tell us about.

### URBAN METABOLISM

- The urban metabolism approach, which invites us to look at city society as a complex but unique natural ecosystem, is helpful in understanding that such discrimination, in addition to being morally deplorable, is also so from the perspective of urban functioning
- Urban metabolism presents the city as a set of different flows of people, goods, services, and energy, driven by very many socio-demographic, regulatory, economic and cultural variants. It is, therefore, a very complex process, as it requires marked interdisciplinarity and a holistic view that cannot be separated from a multi-actor and multi-level approach, as we will undoubtedly discuss today. In summary, the urban metabolism approach urges combating inequalities for the good of the entire urban ecosystem.
- Research shows that women, and particularly poorer and ethnic minority women, are among the main victims of the detrimental effects of air pollution. The same was shown for access to urban green space, and in general the feeling of safety in the urban environment.
- Fortunately, there is evidence of global leadership by a growing number of cities, such as those represented today, that are pursuing a bold policy agenda, with a consequent allocation of economic resources, to foster a transformation of the city in a direction of true and full social, economic and environmental sustainability and justice.
- Second, it is worth noting that many of the municipal leaders taking climate action and engaging in diplomacy are women. Take the climate summit hosted by U.S. President Joe Biden in April 2021: almost all of the national leaders who sat - virtually - at the table were men, aside from Angela Merkel and Ursula von der Leyen. But in the subnational part of the summit, all the speakers were women, highlighting once again the gender bias of our contemporary governance system, while providing an example of shared leadership from the local level.

### ■ How women fit into and how women must be included in urban development and planning?



**Ms Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, Mayor of Freetown, City of Freetown, Sierra Leone**

- Historically, they have been absent but in our situation, is not so much that women have been absent from the planning, it is the planning that has been absent from the development. And that in itself

has given women more challenges, not only could the planning be biased, but the planning is actually not there.

- For many women access to water, access to healthcare, access to energy, access to education facilities are missing, because with the lack of planning comes a fragmentation of service delivery. And absence of service delivery means the most vulnerable are the ones most impacted, inevitably women. So the way forward for us as a city, the tackling of introducing urban planning, land use planning, building permitting, this sadly is something which requires government approval and which we have not been able to attain yet. But the advocating continues and, we are hopeful we will get there in the not so distant future.
- The vulnerabilities **of** women (which results of vulnerabilities **to** women), which results from the absence of these development controls, are being tackled. So on the one hand it is what do we do to improve access even in an individual case-by-case basis, without the luxury of having a comprehensive urban plan. How we do ensure that women at community level are able to access water, able to access healthcare. This means improvements in of-network water solutions: we are building water points across the city, particularly in informal settlements we introduced green water harvesting systems; we are really proud of a project we've just launched which is particularly focused on women and water, making not just the access to water available but the management of the water system available to women and thereby giving a livelihood.
- The city of Freetown is part of change, of the cities' hub and network for gender equity. And we have been very deliberate, in first of all assessing what we are doing as a city council in terms of our own policies and our own employment of women and what does the status quo look like. And then going beyond that and ensuring that in alignment with our "Transform Freetown" objectives, that we are putting women and participation of women, mainstreaming them into our initiative: their participation, their voices and implementation.
- Women need to be part of this discourse within planning, need to be part of the direction of planning. In the absence of planning, women need to be part of participating in solutions and ensuring those solutions are really looking at the most vulnerable, which means by definition they are looking at access to services delivery by women and girls. And then taking a more long term view, moving from a prospective **of** saying "no planning challenges, making sure it goes through gender lens". To Now saying "even as we build the structures, anticipate , that we will soon, as a city, be able to implement land-use planning, zoning, building permits, all of these critical urban management tools, because we got the experience already, because the focus is there, because through the work of change we are already assessing our own 4 year track record to see how well we have been doing on gender".
- As we plan into the future we're doing so with that focus on insuring there are urban planning, land use planning, policies around environment protection, around sanitation, around access to water, transport, urban mobility, livelihood generation and creation, that these all have women at the heart of it. It is so important because the future of our city really depends on the well-being and the health of our residents and women form a key part of that: 51%, they count and we are making sure **that filters through** in what we do at Freetown city council and in # "Transform Freetown".

## ■ How did gender equity become an aspect of the urban policy in Bogota? What was the process?



### **Dr Diana Rodríguez Franco, Secretary of Women, City of Bogotá, Colombia**

- For the first time in Bogotá's history, and the first woman mayor: Claudia Lopez was elected in January 2020 and when she took office she was very clear: "we have to go beyond the symbolic aspect of the first woman mayor: it has to translate into concrete and clear actions, transform the life of women in the city."

- Bogotá is a city of 8 million inhabitants, of which a little over half are women.

### **Strategies**

- Strengthen the secretary for women: this means a budget and programmes. Actions have to go beyond the secretary and must adopt a general and mainstreaming approach to gender equality, which means that each sector must ask itself: what is the gender gap? What is the gender policy problem at the core of this policy?
- Mandates are 4 years term, no re-election, meaning policies have to be quickly on the ground.
- When we are putting together our developing plan, which was presented before the city council in April 2020: We said to all sectors, so the transport sector, the health sector, the education sector... We all ask ourselves: what is the main gender issue? So we have developed a 4-year programme:
  - 1) A clear housing policy with a gender target:**
    - There is a gender housing policy in which we offer conditional subsidies to women; for rent, under condition that women have to save their percentage of what they earn from that subsidy and what they receive from that subsidy and save it to then get accreditation and access to housing. These savings are now being used as a platform to access credit and housing.
    - Three populations of women are targeted:
      - Victims of armed conflict (of the 15 year long violence in Colombia)
      - Women victims of domestic violence, especially women at risk of femicide.
  - 2) Gender approach in the transport sector: buses operated and driven by women:**
    - Only women can drive these buses and not only drive the buses but also they are trained to drive these buses and trained in the technical aspects of bus maintenance: electricity of the buses.. :
    - It is a concrete gender approach to have, the first public transport service entirely driven by women in a traditionally masculinized sector.
  - 3) Access to justice: very clear objective of access to justice for women:**
    - We have set up "houses of justice": we bring together in one place the different institutions, especially for women victims of domestic violence and other forms of violence; in order to avoid going from one place to another and to ensure that all justice is brought together in one place. We offer free legal advice and assistance, free legal representation and we bring together all the institutions at local and national level in one place
    - Four houses of justice in different parts of the city.

- **4) Gender and equity budget monitoring:**
- We are implementing it in each sector to close the gender gap, to track if investment benefit women and to mitigate bias.
- **5) Care system : the burden of care, taking care of children, people with disabilities, elderly is mainly on women's shoulders:**
- So we designed and implemented for the first time a care system. It articulates existing services and new services to meet a high demand in terms of responsibility and care. Of course, there were care services in Bogotá before, there are childcare services, but they were considered as separate services, without a gender approach. They were not thought from a perspective of caretakers but only from the perspective of care receivers.
- We switched the lens, to include the fact that women carers bear a disproportionate weight: they have to give up a lot because of the care burden ( education, jobs...)
- The care system articulates existing services and new services for the caregivers, in an integrated system between local government, private sector, communities.
- Objective: to give women time for personal development, to take care of themselves and participate in political life, to pursue their life projects

#### **“3R” Policy:**

- Objective 1: Recognise carers and the role of care in society and families.
- Objective 2: Redistribute care between men and women, and share the burden of care between the public and other sectors.
- Objective 3: Reduce the care burden, so that women have time to care for their children.
- **The solution:**
- “Care blocks”: physical spaces in which we cluster services not only for carers but also for the people needing care.
- Access to services on foot, proximity (less than 1km)
- While the system takes care of children, senior, person with disability, woman can use other services (finish high school, do other tasks...).
- The aim of the care blocks is to offer services for women with an idea of proximity, flexibility and simultaneity: especially education services, leisure services and income generating services while their loved one is taken care of.
- At the same time, we have “cultural transformation” workshops, for example where men learn to cook, to parent, to care for a home... Because we need a cultural transformation to redistribute care
- Bogotá has ten of these care blocks and has offered more than 150,000 services up to now.

### ■ **How do cities develop a strong and efficient advocacy to push the issue and to make sure it is addressed in Urban agendas? What channels of organization is needed to foster support for local initiatives?**



**Ms. Julia Munroe, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Focal Point on Gender Equality**

- So intersectional, gender equality and agenda is really at the foundation of our works at UCLG and a such UCLG is really

committed to enabling and promoting the global feminist municipal movement, mobilising our equality gender constituency to foster the territories that are inclusively gender sensitive and put care for people and for planet, the communities and ecological systems at the center of policy and action; and I think we really seen amazing examples today already of the global feminist municipal movement.

- Feminism is not just about women, feminist municiplism not just about women rights or the number of women in power. It is for beyond that, it is all about a new type of society where all living things are valued and it's about a new way of governing, a different way of governing to what we've seen before. And it's a type of leadership that is based on empathy and proximity, peaceful collaboration care and well-being.
- The feminist municipal movement strives to increase the meaningful participation and decision making power of marginalized group including women, the LGBTQIA+ community and indigenou communities, people of colour, youth; all the person: person with disabilities and feminist leaders in order to ensure our cities territories can be built for all those who wish to inhabit.
- The feminist municipal movement advocates for stronger local public service provision and a valuing of care work as historically care work has not only been unpaid but also unvalued.
- municipal movement has been a champion of the transforming power of city diplomacy which is also central to today's
- Municipal international cooperation and decentralized cooperation, international local government diplomacy and mutual assistance... are a key contribution to multilateralism but they're showing to be vital for the construction of a more peaceful and just world to poster solidarity and advance the rights of communities
- This new type of leadership and governance that we see promoted by so many leaders of the feminist municipal movement around the world is testimony of the fact that promoting dialogue, co-vision and care, local regional governments can continue the long history of international solidarity and insuring peace-building is a foundation and a value deeply embedded in the cities as well as for thriving, caring sustainable and creative communities.

## ■ Q&A with the floor

1. Question from a Master's student in Urban studies in Milano (Italy)

What is the relationship between reaching gender equality and the make of public spaces, both in their physical and symbolical attributes?

- Try to think Cities with women but also for women.
- Care blocks are not just one building, but different buildings and public spaces in which, when we introduce care as a guiding principle of urban planning, then we can have more equitable cities.
- In Bogota urban master plan, it is included in the principles not only the right of cities for women, but also the principles of safe cities, (including more lightening and access infrastructure) but also the idea of: what are the services, the way the city should be planned and the capacity to move, in order to reduce the burden of care.



- The goal is to have 45 care blocks for the next 12 years as they are; the way cities are designed (15 and 30-minute cities) where everything is organised around care needs as a way for urban structures to feed into and reduce gender inequality.
- Example in Tours about visibility: “the streets are ours too”, participative process to feminize street names or public spaces, to inscribe women in our landscape and collective culture.

## 2. Question from a student in urban management in Berlin:

Gender equality in budget monitoring: what kind of indicators would you suggest to include or not include and how to assess them?

- There is a difference between tracking the money spent on women's programmes, and assessing whether the public money spent is closing the gap.
- An example: it is not the number of public ramps that is important, but whether these ramps that are built or installed in the city, are installed in the places that we have identified as the most unsafe for women.
- So it's not the number of ramps, but whether these ramps have been built in areas close to schools and hospitals, or where they are most needed.
- If the infrastructure is built, it is very important to identify the gender gap or the need beforehand. We have to interrogate “usual” ways of doing things.
- If we don't prioritise areas where there are more women and areas that are reported to be more dangerous or less accessible, we will not close the gender gap.

## ■ Conclusion

**Lorenzo Kihlgren Grandi, Director of the City Diplomacy Lab at Columbia Global Centers | Paris (France)**

- Cities can and are making a difference: this is great, this is linked to a great leadership and these benefits not only women but we can speak about urban well-being as being upgraded and thanks to this kind of action
- Just a point : We are unfortunately still talking about a challenge that is on-going, have very positive exceptions that have been presented but unfortunately they highlight the general approach is implementing activities that are “gender neutral”. Gender neutral is not enough: we need gender mainstreaming otherwise we have these inequalities that still inerts, that still blocks, the full well-being of cities.

## **3 great drivers :**

- The driver of participation of local actors, that generally contributes in shipping and guiding and have a co-responsibility of these innovative actions.
- We have the municipal feminist movement as highlighted by Julia that is spreading, is doing advocacy that Elise also mentioned that is been so important.
- Finally as Miss Aksawyes mentioned also, it is important to have at the level of national government, this is multi-level governance. Multi-level governance is something in progress; we have an opportunity at world urban forum to have different actors so all together collaborating and this is definitely something that can bring some optimism. I

think that in nutshell by joining forces we can all contribute to this development towards some more equal, just, green resilient and sustainable urban metabolism.