

## **GENDER - Habitat University Network Initiative (UNI) Thematic Hub**

Hosted by: National University of Cordoba, Argentina

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### **PART A: Description**

#### **1. Name of Hub:**

Gender – Promising practices for effective dialogue and delivery of sustainable urban development with a gender perspective

#### **2. Main UN-Habitat thematic priorities to which this Hub connect:**

The Gender Hub aims to mainstream the thematic areas of UN Habitat, with emphasis on:

- *Urban Legislation, Land and Governance*
- **Urban Planning and Design**
- **Urban Economy**
- *Urban Basic Services*
- *Housing and Slum Upgrading*
- *Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation*
- **Research and Capacity Building**

#### **3. Short description of Hub:**

The Gender Hub serves to document the advance in research, policy and practice; their transference; as well as to promote effective governance models that assume the diversity of social actors and city stakeholders. The Hub works to disseminate, exchange, and transfer processes and tools so as to deliver sustainable urban development with a gender perspective within the continually shifting frameworks of critical global urban trends. The Hub is built on a repository of shared knowledge and the bringing together of various actors whilst contributing to and supporting UN Habitat Units, local governments and civil society organisations.

*"UN-HABITAT's work helps to make cities develop sustainably, with effective and inclusive services that benefit all residents. An important component of this is gender equality. This is why we strive to improve women's rights, promote equal participation in decision-making, and develop services that benefit women and men equally in all our programmes"*<sup>1</sup>

#### **What:**

The Gender Hub will provide a platform for the documentation, analysis, definition and promotion of a global agenda on gender equality and women's rights to the city.

"The gender equality action plan aims to promote women's rights, women's empowerment and gender responsive sustainable urbanization policies and practices at the national and local levels. With its goal of reducing gender discrimination and promoting equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men in the provision of adequate services, security and employment opportunities in cities, the plan strives to

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<sup>1</sup> Making Urbanisation Work Equally for Women and Men, [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)

create an environment for Governments, cities and local authorities to fulfil existing policy commitments related to gender equality in sustainable urbanization.”<sup>2</sup>

The Gender Hub will focus research on the following issues:

- Advocacy and gender mainstreaming
- Urban Planning
- Women’s rights to the city
- Land and Housing
- Urban Services
- Everyday life quality and Time

**Why:**

More than half the world’s population now lives in cities, but women and girls still make up three-fifths of the world’s one billion poorest people. Women are also underrepresented in decision making, especially in public administration, the private sector and politics. They make up only 18 per cent of parliamentarians and 20 per cent of local councillors worldwide. Nowhere are the inequalities facing urban woman clearer than in slums and informal settlements, where the picture around the world is almost invariably of women experiencing the greatest degrees of poverty, reproductive health risks, sexual threats and violence, as well as the worst barriers to education, employment, housing, and basic services like water and sanitation.

*These are just a few examples of gender issues affecting housing and urban development:*

- *Women own less of the world’s private land than men, as little as 2% according to some estimates.*
- *A woman’s right to land and housing is often linked to marital property and inheritance rights, and subject to cultural and traditional practices.*
- *Poor urban design choices, such as poor street lighting and secluded underground walkways can make women more at risk of violence and sexual attacks in public spaces.*
- *Girls in many areas of informal settlements fail to attend school, particularly after the onset of puberty, when separate toilet facilities for boys and girls are not available.*
- *Women and girls are most often tasked with collecting water, and in informal settlements sharing a water supply with more than 200 households is not unusual, making water collection a laborious and time-consuming task that can impede education and employment.*
- *Even though women have more opportunities for work in urban areas, they still typically earn less than men, partly because they are concentrated in low-paying jobs and sometimes because they are paid less for the same work”.*

**Who:**

The Gender Hub supports a network of academics and professionals to link and share their practices and experiences regarding gender, urban planning, and women’s rights to

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<sup>2</sup> UN Habitat Gender Equality Action Plan 2008 – 2013.

the city in order to stimulate and promote global action on gender and its respective issues within urban development. The Hub is supported and reinforced through its linkages with UN Habitat (specifically the Gender Unit) and the organisation's associated international capacities whilst remaining closely connected with the Advisor Group for Gender issues created by the Executive Director of UN Habitat.

### **How:**

The Hub operates through the continual interaction of interested academic institutions from around the world, acting as an intermediary in the recording and cataloguing of knowledge on gender practice, research, processes, projects, and policies in urban development. The Hub is accessible through the UNI portal for all members of the Hub and various other interested parties or members of the public. Further online discussions are being promoted to develop the on-going priorities of the Hub. Recently, the Hub has been working within three key areas:

#### *Online Presence*

- Develop UNI portal to provide for on-going Hub needs and areas of work.
- Core team identify areas of focus for continuing online discussions.
- Core team investigate links with other UN programmes.
- Core team create templates to record information on UNI portal.

#### *Knowledge Generation*

- Decision on 3-4 areas of focus to specifically work on based on call out responses.
- Core team produces report on 'call out' and records key themes in line with current global trends.
- Develop links with other relevant UN programmes
- 'Call out' to Hub network for papers on critical issues in gender and urban development.

#### *Outreach*

- Finalize and confirm the list of committed representatives from university
- Work towards sharing areas of focus and collaboration with other UN programmes at WUF7 in 2014 and Habitat 3 in 2016
- Linking research and researchers together; supporting collaboration amongst researchers and practitioners.
- Based on the initial gathering of promising practices, initiate collaborations between academia.
- Create a wider group of university-government partnerships (long term goals include representation of more cities).

## **4. Linkages to UNI Pillars**

Education: The Hub will serve as an online platform to share knowledge and lessons learned regarding promising practices, transference, and teaching methodologies on topics related to gender issues. Connecting institutions and knowledge across regions and disciplines will also facilitate the exchange opportunities and shared knowledge for students. Over time interested members of the Hub will exchange students, and be partnered with specific knowledge bases through the Hub for mentorships, events and publications.

Research: The hub creates a framework for connecting academic researchers across institutions, to develop a state of the art of the advances and approaches from different disciplines and regions. It will serve to share research topics on habitat issues from a gender perspective. It will also contribute to academic exchange through conferences and workshops, seminars and scientific events to give impulse to academic research, as well as coordination between researchers and professionals.

Professional Development: The Hub will enable professional development between academic institutions and different academic fields, and link academia with private and public practice as well as NGOs and research centres. The Hub will enable new linkages and collaborations to be conformed and explored between the different interested and disciplines involved in cities themes and governance for sustainable urban development.

Knowledge Management: The Hub will strongly give impulse and supports the gathering of specific and innovative knowledge to be shared across the network. Promoting and facilitating the dissemination of the work of all the network members, both institutional and individual, in the aim of raising awareness for promising practices for gender equity which could be replicated in other cities, and the adaptation of which could be supported by Hub initiated university-city collaborations.

#### **5. Possible linkages to related projects: UN-Habitat and other universities/institutions/ organizations**

- › Advisory Group on Gender Issues (AGGI)
- › Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)
- › Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR)
- › Millennium Development Goals
- › United Nations Secretary General’s Campaign “Unite to End Violence Against Women.”
- › Un Habitat Safer Cities Programme
- › UN WOMEN Global Programme to end Safe Cities Free of Violence Against Women and Girls
- › Civil Society as the International Networks as Huairou Commission and the Networks participating as Women and Habitat Network of LAC, WICI –Women in the City International-, among others.

#### **PART B: Outputs**

The Gender Hub is part of the UNI UN Habitat initiative and in close relation with the UNI coordinator and staff and will work closely with the Gender Unit of UN Habitat. The initiative seeks to gather interested academics from different parts of the world. The goals are:

- 1) To document the studies and research of universities in order to influence and contribute to the UN Habitat Agenda and local governments, as well as civil society and organizations and networks, translating research into actionable policies and practices.
- 2) To set up a common strategy to contribute and influence the World Urban Forum 2014 in Medellin, Colombia and Habitat III 2016 and the Post-2015 Debate.

- 3) To disseminate, exchange and transfer processes and tools so as to deliver sustainable urban development with a gender perspective in the context of current critical global trends.
- 4) To mainstream the priorities thematic areas of UN Habitat with emphasis on the main issues of work within the agency such as: urban land, urban governance, urban planning and design, urban economy, basic services, housing and slum upgrading, resilience, risk reduction, environment, amongst others.

The Hub will closely be connected to AGGI, the Advisor Group for Gender Inclusion, created by the Executive Director of UN Habitat, Dr. Joan Clos. Two members of the AGGI - Ana Falu and Teresa Boccia – are driving the Gender Hub.

The Hub will be based on knowledge and people coming together to share experiences, and contribute to and support UN Habitat Units, local governments and civil society for gender focused good governance.

The Gender Hub will relate and include the accumulated experience and developments of the networks working in themes related to Habitat and Gender

Other goals are:

1. To agree on methods and methodologies for the transfer of the promissory practices and research results to promote effective governance models focusing on gender.
2. To contribute to and influence the incorporation of gender perspective in the other HUBs of UNI

### **1. Description and frequency of outputs:**

#### *Phase 1: Academic Exchange*

This activity will present and open academic exchange within the Hub, initially focusing on international workshops with 4 working sessions. An accomplishment for WUF7 would be the contribution of the Gender Hub to host a meeting of academics, governments and professionals on the work of the Hub to date, and the specific areas of research that are particularly relevant in current urban debates. The sessions up until WUF 7 and Habitat III will be the occasion for central debates and agreements on the guided coordination of the Hub in order to select priorities themes and activities to define future partnership.

#### *Phase 2: Coordinated Research with Academic and Professional Collaboration*

Gender academics and activists have a considerable accumulation of work and information linked to empirical and theoretical research. Thus, the Gender Hub will coordinate research between member institutions. Both academic and professional collaboration is to grow organically out of shared research interests and objectives. It is expected that the first conference will allow member institutions to identify areas of common interest for joint research initiatives and future collaboration. Outputs for these phases will be determined at a later date as research initiatives and collaborations develop.

### **2. Expected accomplishments at end of term (WUF 7 2014/Habitat III 2016):**

Key expected accomplishment at the end of term include the consolidated network of gender experts from research and practice; global awareness of current promising practices regarding gender inclusion in cities so as to develop specific gender knowledge for more effective and participatory urban governance; increased engagement from academia in supporting the development and spread of knowledge and practice; increased university-city linkages related to gendered urban governance; development of a comprehensive database of on-going promising practices; and an overview of current advancements in the fields towards gender balanced governance models.

Each member is to be an active participant and contributor on the website with a current profile detailing past and present research initiatives. It is also expected that at least 2 or 3 joint research initiatives are to be underway, with academic and professional collaborations of seniors and junior researchers.

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**PART C: Governance**

1) **Proposed Hub Coordinator:**

Prof Arch. Ana Falu, Director of INVIHAB – Research Housing and Habitat Institute – Faculty of Architecture, Urbanisms and Design of the National University of Cordoba, Argentina.

2) **Proposed Hub Committee/Core Think Tank and other involved individual members**

Initial suggestion for regional university-government representatives:

<b>REGION</b>	<b>COUNTRY/ STATE</b>	<b>INSTITUTION/ ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>NAME</b>
<b>Latin-American</b>	Argentina	Director of INVIHAB – Research Housing and Habitat Institute- Faculty of Architecture, Urbanisms and Design of the National University of Córdoba.	Coordinator: <b>Ana Falú</b>  Research Group: Liliana Rainero, Patricia Morey, Natalia Cztaljo (National University of Tucumán)
<b>Europe</b>	Italy	LUPT Federico II University of Naples, Italy.	Prof. Teresa Boccia

<b>Europe</b>	Spain	Unidad de Mujeres y Ciencia/Women and Science Unit. Secretary of State for Research, Development and Innovation.- Ministry of Economy and Competition	Directora/Head Ines Sanchez de Madariaga
<b>Europe</b>	Spain	ETSAB	Dr Zaida Muxi Martinez Prof. Research group: Roser Casanovas, Adriana Ciocoletto y Blanca Gutierrez
<b>Latin-American</b>	Chile	Diplomado SUR Universidad Central	Olga Segovia Marin
<b>Latin-American</b>	Mexico/Guatemala	Diplomado UNAM Fundación Guatemala	Maite Rodriguez Blandon
<b>Latin-American</b>	Republica de El Salvador	Maestría en Desarrollo Local de la UCA (Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas)	Morena Herrera
<b>Latin-American</b>	Uruguay	Universidad de la Republica Uruguay	Silvana Pissano
<b>Europe</b>	Netherlands	Delft University	Lidewij Tummers
<b>Africa</b>	Kenya	University of Nairobi IDS Inst. For Development Studies	Winnie V. Mitullah PhD
<b>North America</b>	Canada	Urban Women's Canada	Prabha Khosla
<b>Asia</b>	India	Jagori - Delhi University	Kalpana Viswanath
<b>Asia</b>	Taiwan	Head-Professor/Director, Department of Social Work / Social Policy Research Centre, National Taiwan University	Lillian Li-Rong Wang
<b>Asia</b>	Bangladesh	Executive Director of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)	Shaheen Anam