

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 gender perspective

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

The Gender Hub aims to mainstream the priorities 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 hub proposal is to document the advances in universities, policies and practices, the transference of the promissory practices and research results, as well as to promote effective governance models assuming the diversity of social actors and focusing in gender. Also is the aim to disseminate, exchange and transfer: processes and tools to deliver sustainable urban development with a gender perspective in the frame of the current critical global trends. The Hub will be based on knowledge and people coming together to share experience, and contribute and enable UN Habitat Units, Governments and civil society for a gendered good governance.

“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”¹

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

¹Making Urbanisation Work Equally for Women and Men, www.unhabitat.org

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

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:

“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”.*³

Who:

The Gender Hub will provide a network of academics and professionals that can linked and share their practices and experiences about gender urban planning and women’s rights to the city in order to create and promote a global agenda on gender and urbanization issues.

The proposal is to strength linkages from the UN Habitat international capacities and the university representatives to be part of the core group. The Hub will be closely connected with other related UNI thematic Hubs as Urban Government, Urban Futures, among other; and with others UN-Habitat and UN Programmes.

The Hub will be closely connected to AGGI, the Advisor Group for Gender issues created by the ED of UN Habitat.

The Hub will work closely with the Gender Unit of UN Habitat.

²UN Habitat Gender Equality Action Plan 2008 – 2013.

³Making Urbanisation Work Equally for Women and Men. www.unhabitat.org

How:

Following this initial online gathering of interested academics from different regions of the world, templates to record information on research, processes, projects, policies, others being carried on, will be created and made accessible through the UNI portal for all members of the Hub and other hubs and interested public. Further online discussions will be promoted to develop the priorities of the work agenda of the Hub.

Activities:

- › Online set up
 - Core Think Tank 'meet' online, and test the UNI portal
 - Develop UNI portal to provide for Hub needs and areas of work
 - Core team identify areas of focus for first online discussions
 - Core team investigate links with other UN programmes
 - Core team create templates to record information on UNI portal.
 - Template made available to all Hub members

- › Hub knowledge
 - Hub decides on 3-4 areas of focus to develop in detail, based on 'call out' responses
 - Core team produces report on 'call out' and records key themes in line with current global trends
 - Hub develops links with other relevant UN programmes
 - 'Call out' to Hub network for papers of gender and urban and cities development, critical issues.
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- › Hub outreach
 - Finalize the list of committed representatives from university- from at least 10 global cities.
 - Hub works toward sharing areas of focus and collaboration with other UN programmes at WUF7 in 2014 and Habitat 3 in 2016
 - Hub links research and researchers together, and supports development with collaborators.
 - Based on the initial gathering of promising practices, initiate collaborations between academia engaged in the Hub in the direct development and spreading of these practices.
 - Create wider group of other university-government partnerships (long term aspiration, 100 cities represented?).

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 could 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 would also contribute to academic

exchange through conferences and workshop, 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 can 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.