# GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN PROJECTS

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# Introduction

Socially constructed roles and responsibilities assigned to women and men, girls and boys have direct and indirect impacts on how they experience cities. Inherent social and structural constraints and inequities arising from cultural norms, legislation and policy frequently lead to gender disparities and the unequal access to and control over assets and resources, resulting in fewer social and economic opportunities for women.

Understanding the different needs of women and men, girls and boys and the different impacts that social, environmental, political or economic interventions may have on each group is crucial to creating inclusive, safe and sustainable cities, as well as to empowering women and vulnerable groups.

**Gender mainstreaming** provides project teams with an approach to understand the gender differences in play in the area of intervention and to tailor activities to harness social and economic opportunities and inclusion for women and vulnerable groups.

To ensure that projects effectively recognize gender perspectives and promote women's empowerment, gender considerations have to be mainstreamed throughout the project, starting at the design and planning stage and ending with the closure stage.

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## KEY CONCEPTS

### Gender and sex

**Gender:** Socially constructed roles – Masculinity/Femininity relate to culture, role and identity.

**Sex:** Biological XY or XX chromosome determinant – Male/Female are based on biological characteristics.

Source: WHO, Gender and Genetics, https://www.who.int/genomics/gender/en/index1.html
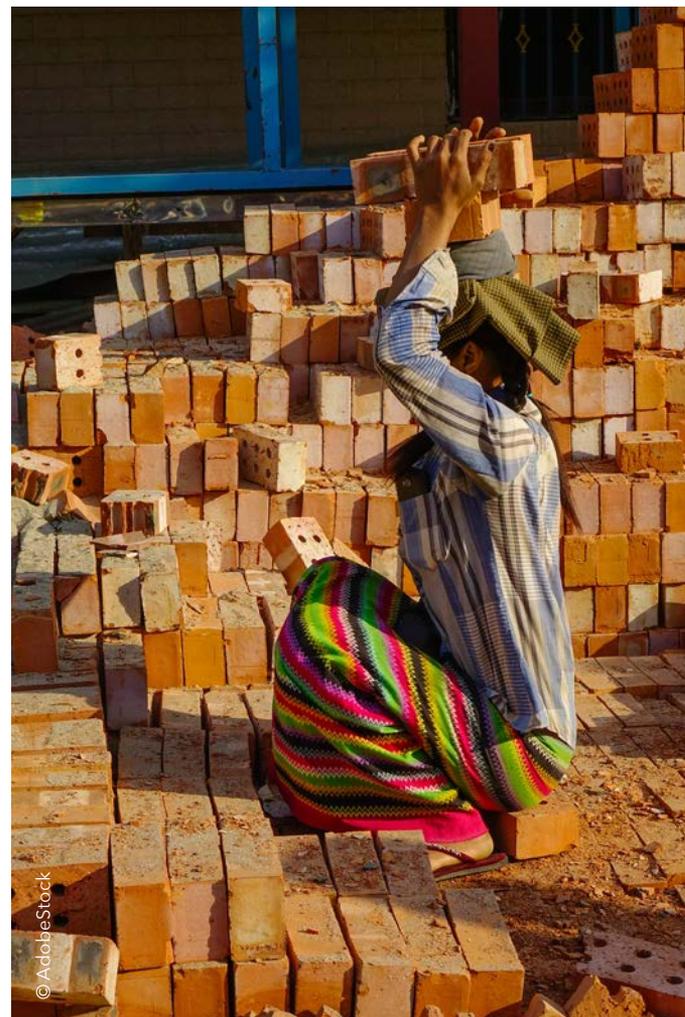
### Gender mainstreaming

"The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated."[1]

### Gender analysis

"The collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women both perform different roles. This leads to women and men having different experience, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men."[2]



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[1] ECOSOC, 1997: more info please or change to and/or UN Women, https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/gender-mainstreaming

[2] UNESCO (2003). UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework: Baseline definition of key concepts and terms. Available from: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/BSP/GENDER/PDF/1.%20Baseline%20Definitions%20of%20key%20gender-related%20concepts.pdf

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## Gender equality and gender equity

**Gender equality:** The concept that women and men, girls and boys have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realizing their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is, therefore, the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in the home, community, and society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men and girls and boys are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups and that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes and prejudices about gender roles. Gender equality is a matter of human rights and is considered a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.
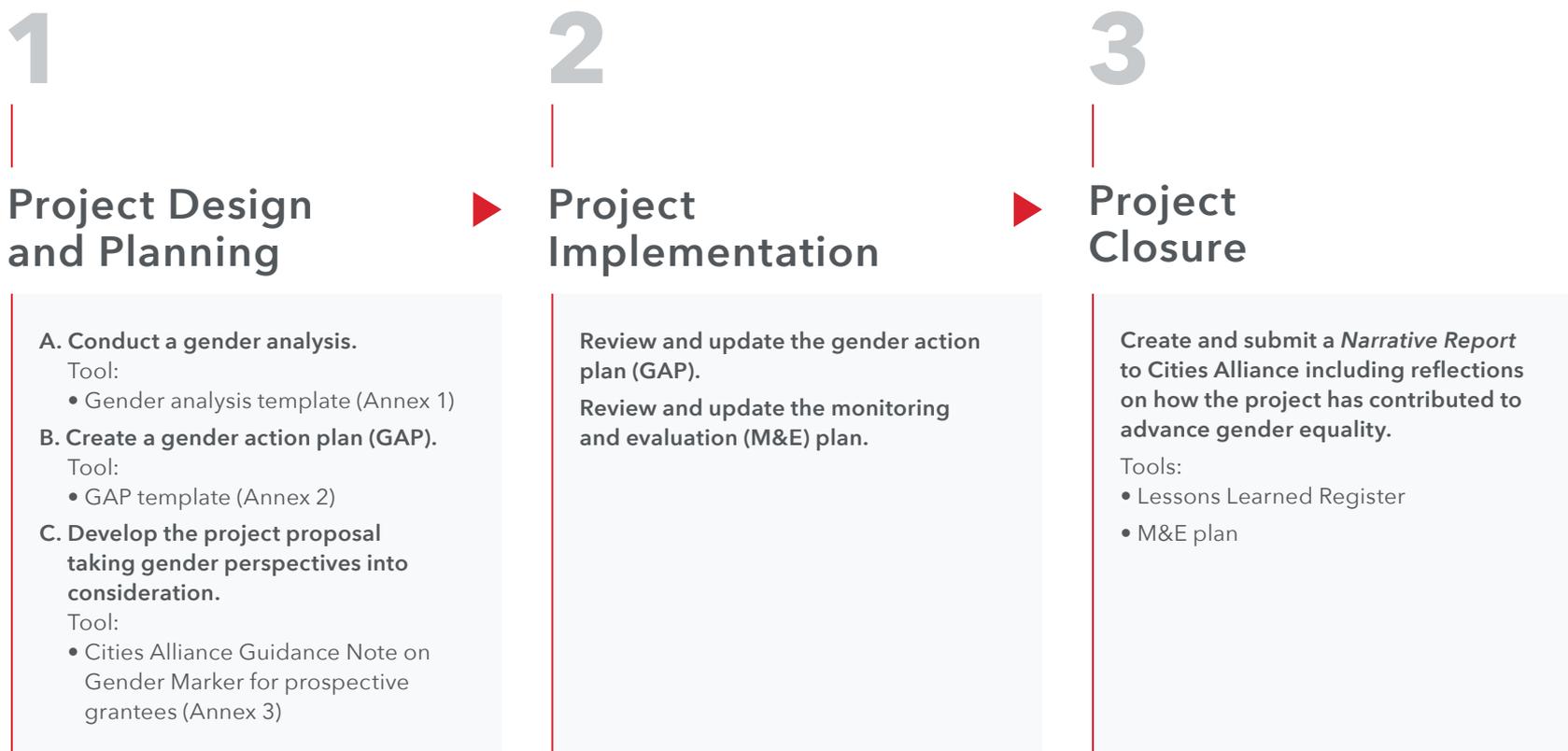
**Gender equity:** The process of being fair to men and women, boys and girls, and importantly the equality of outcomes and results. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. It refers to differential treatment that is fair and positively addresses a bias or disadvantage that is due to gender roles or norms or differences between the sexes. Equity ensures that women and men, and girls and boys have an equal chance, not only at the starting point, but also when reaching the finishing line. It is about the fair and just treatment of both sexes that takes into account the different needs of the men and women, cultural barriers and (past) discrimination of the specific group.[3]

[3] UNICEF (2017). Gender Equality: Glossary of Terms and Concepts. UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Kathmandu, Nepal, page 3. Available from: https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file/Gender%20glossary%20of%20terms%20and%20concepts%20.pdf

There is a simple sequence of steps can be followed to mainstream gender in a project, as well as some of the tools available to use in each step of the process.

## Steps and tools for gender mainstreaming in a proposed project

**1**

## Project Design and Planning

▶

**2**

## Project Implementation

▶

**3**

## Project Closure

**A. Conduct a gender analysis.**
Tool:
• Gender analysis template (Annex 1)

**B. Create a gender action plan (GAP).**
Tool:
• GAP template (Annex 2)

**C. Develop the project proposal taking gender perspectives into consideration.**
Tool:
• Cities Alliance Guidance Note on Gender Marker for prospective grantees (Annex 3)

**Review and update the gender action plan (GAP).**

**Review and update the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan.**

**Create and submit a *Narrative Report* to Cities Alliance including reflections on how the project has contributed to advance gender equality.**

Tools:
• Lessons Learned Register

• M&E plan

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# 1  Project Design and Planning

During the design and planning of a project, gender considerations can be effectively mainstreamed into different aspects of the proposal. The following questions can serve as a useful review during the design of a proposed project to help ensure gender mainstreaming.
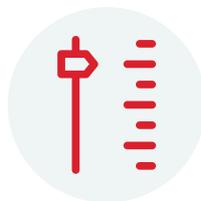
## OUTCOMES

- Will the outcome contribute to improving gender equality and women's empowerment?
- Are the potential benefits and possible negative impacts of the project intervention identified for women and men?

## ACTIVITIES

- Do activities reflect gender roles and differences in access and control over resources?
- Are sufficient financial resources committed for gender mainstreaming?
- Will both women and men be involved in similar capacities during planning, implementation and following up?

## INDICATORS

- Will the project yield sex-disaggregated results and achievements?
- Is the baseline gender-sensitive? Are sex-disaggregated beneficiary data and relevant measures of gender equality integrated into the project baselines?
- Have gender-related indicators been developed for outputs and outcomes?

## RISK MANAGEMENT

- What are the anticipated risks for gender-equitable results?
- Will the project have any adverse impact on women, men, boys or girls? If so, what mitigation measures will be implemented?

## PROPOSAL FINALIZATION

- Have the project proposal, reports, and documents been checked to ensure that no sexist language has been used?
- Is the language also gender-sensitive and inclusive?

**FOR REFLECTION**

How does the project contribute to promoting gender equality and/or women's empowerment?

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To help the proposed project take gender perspectives into consideration during the planning process, **gender analysis, gender action plan (GAP) and gender marker** can be used.

## A. GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender analysis is a tool to systematically analyse the gender roles, activities, needs, and existing opportunities and constraints for men and women of the concerned project area. It can be conducted **at any stage**, but it is most effective if included from the beginning of the project design.

The process includes the following steps:

**1. Collect Quantitative Data**

- Analyse the political, economic, social, technological and legal context through sex-disaggregated statistics and indicators.

**2. Collect Qualitative Data**

- Access the qualitative data collected through desk research, as well as participatory assessments with the community.

**3. Develop Gender Profiles**

- The access and control profile over resources and benefits outlines who has access and who has control over resources and decision making.
- The activity and income profile answers questions over who does what and whether they get paid.

See Annex 1 for more information.

## B. GENDER ACTION PLAN

A gender action plan (GAP) is based on the findings of the gender analysis. These findings should be used to design the GAP, or the project strategy and gender-responsive activities that will be used to overcome constraints and utilize opportunities.

The GAP should have the following characteristics:

- Include **specific gender-related activities**, outputs and outcomes.
- Use a **participatory approach and evidence-based rationale** for gender mainstreaming activities linked to project objectives.
- Formulate Specific, Measurable, Actionable, **Realistic**, Time-bound (SMART) gender-related indicators.

See Annex 2 for a GAP template.

## C. GENDER MARKER

The City Alliance Gender Marker is a tool that should be used by prospective grantees for tracking the degree to which a project addresses gender equality and/or the empowerment of women and girls.

The gender marker should be applied:

- At the **planning stage**, when activities are designed and budget allocated,
- **At the implementation stage** for revisiting and improving gender mainstreaming during the implementation phase,
- At the **implementation stage**, when coding should be based on results to date,
- **At the completion of the intervention** in order to assess whether the main results related to gender equality have been or will be achieved.

See Annexes 3 for more information.

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# 2 Project Implementation

Gender mainstreaming during the implementation of a project is also essential. Implementation involves reviewing and updating the gender action plan, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

## A. UPDATING THE GENDER ACTION PLAN (GAP)

The following are recommended actions at this stage for reviewing and updating the GAP:

- Since the GAP is a roadmap for gender mainstreaming and a live document, during project implementation it should be re-adjusted to incorporate new pieces of information or changes in context.

- The GAP must be thoroughly discussed at team meetings, and those responsible for the GAP activities must update and report on them.

## B. IMPLEMENTING A MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) PLAN

The M&E uses indicators that are tailored to the objectives that the project is trying to achieve (see Annex 2, section 2.1). For example, indicators that may help guide M&E efforts could include the proportion of urban poor women and other vulnerable groups participating in training, employment and other project activities; the satisfaction of women and men with the use of public space; or the number of women with land tenure. The following are recommended actions for the M&E implementation stage:

- Use gender-responsive data collection methods whenever possible (e.g., male and female data collectors).

- Measure the impacts of project components on women and men.

- Ensure data collected is used to learn and adjust projects and activities that are not achieving the expected gender-related results.

- Capture lessons learned throughout project implementation and report on contributions made to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

### FOR REFLECTION
How does the project contribute to promoting gender equality and/or women's empowerment?

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The following are recommendations for the project closure stage:

- It is vital to **capture and disseminate gender-related lessons** that have been learned during the implementation of a project.

- Look for the **benefits of mainstreaming gender for the sustainability of the project** outcomes and impact.

- In addition to lessons learned, **note potential room for improvement**, which is also of great value for any new projects.



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# Summary of Gender Mainstreaming in Projects

Conduct a gender analysis to **identify gender-based constraints and needs**.

Make sure that the **team understands the implications of gender inequalities** and how the project can have positive impacts on this.

**Use a participatory approach**: ensure that both women and men have effective participation in the implementation and decision making of community infrastructure and services.

Generate employment opportunities for women in the project and **be aware of traditional beliefs and customs** for this.

Make sure **everybody on the team knows the GAP** and is responsible for implementing it.

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