

# Co-producing urban resilience and equality

Navigating the landscape of approaches that address gender power relations.

# 1 Introduction

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Sustainable Development Goal 11 aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (United Nations, 2023). The rationale behind this objective is that failure to foster equality<sup>1</sup>, into urban planning, legislation, finance and economic development hinders the inclusiveness of cities (UN-Habitat, 2018). In return, the exclusion of groups of city dwellers prevents planning processes to account for their needs, constraints and priorities, and this is detrimental for the effectiveness of policies and projects that aim to alleviate poverty, protect urban dwellers from environmental shocks and stresses and contribute, overall, to their resilience (IFRC, 2015; Le Masson & Lovell, 2017).

To challenge social exclusion in cities, marginalized people sometimes self-organise and create social movements to claim their rights and demand more recognition and more equality. In parallel to this approach *from the bottom*, inclusion can also be supported in governance processes, by revisiting whose knowledge count and to what end. For instance, in Fiji and across the Pacific, Talanoa is a process of inclusive, participatory, and transparent dialogue to make wise decisions for the collective good. These principles were adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to invite national governments, cities and other non-party stakeholders to co-create effective new mechanisms for climate policies and learn from each other (UNFCCC, 2018). Co-production approaches seek to support knowledge sharing between different actors and recognise multiple and diverse perspectives to look for creative solutions that address complex issues, such as climate change (Vincent et al., 2021), enhancing urban resilience (Barcena & Bahadur, 2023) and foster urban equality (Castan Broto et al., 2022). Co-production encompasses a myriad of approaches that brings together different institutions to collaborate. However, collaboration does not equal inclusion or equality. Who leads the process and how, can sometimes reinforce the very barriers to knowledge co-creation, equality and inclusion that co-production seeks to overcome in the first place. An explicit intention to flatten power hierarchies which shape how different forms of knowledge are valued, is necessary for co-production to be successful (Vincent et al., 2021), and this often requires to deal with social norms and related inequalities.

The promotion of gender equality (Sustainable Development Goal 5) provides one way to address power. In fact, co-production and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion-GESI approaches have several goals in common: they both aim to flatten power relations between stakeholders; they both question *whose knowledge counts, who decides and who benefits*; and they both have the potential to transform structures to reduce inequalities. However, the increasing number of GESI-related guidelines and tools to suit different sectors and types of organisations can be challenging to navigate. Is there only one approach to promote gender equality? Who should champion inclusion? What does a gender-responsive co-production process look like? And why does it matter for urban resilience?

This paper presents a state of the art of the expanding landscape of approaches that aim to foster equality in decision-making processes and the inclusion of stakeholders that are most often marginalised in urban environments. The objective is to inform practitioners aiming to implement co-production for urban resilience, with learnings from the GESI community of practice to ensure that the goal of equality and inclusion is not ignored or diluted. Section 2 identifies development outcomes towards which GESI approaches tend to contribute. This allows to emphasize the commonality of GESI-related end goals despite differences between

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. the right of different groups of people to be treated fairly and have the same opportunities (Definition of equality from the Cambridge Business English Dictionary, Cambridge University Press)

methods, sectors and contexts. Section 3 presents the principles and basics of gender analysis, the main tool that most GESI approaches rely on. Section 4 offers a typology of different GESI approaches to perhaps support stakeholders navigate the distinction between these approaches and key concepts often associated with them. Section 5 offers examples of methods or tools that have supported co-production processes for urban development and resilience building. Section 6 concludes by highlighting lessons for inclusive co-production processes, and recommendations for practitioners committed to seek transformation.

## 2 Typology of GESI outcomes

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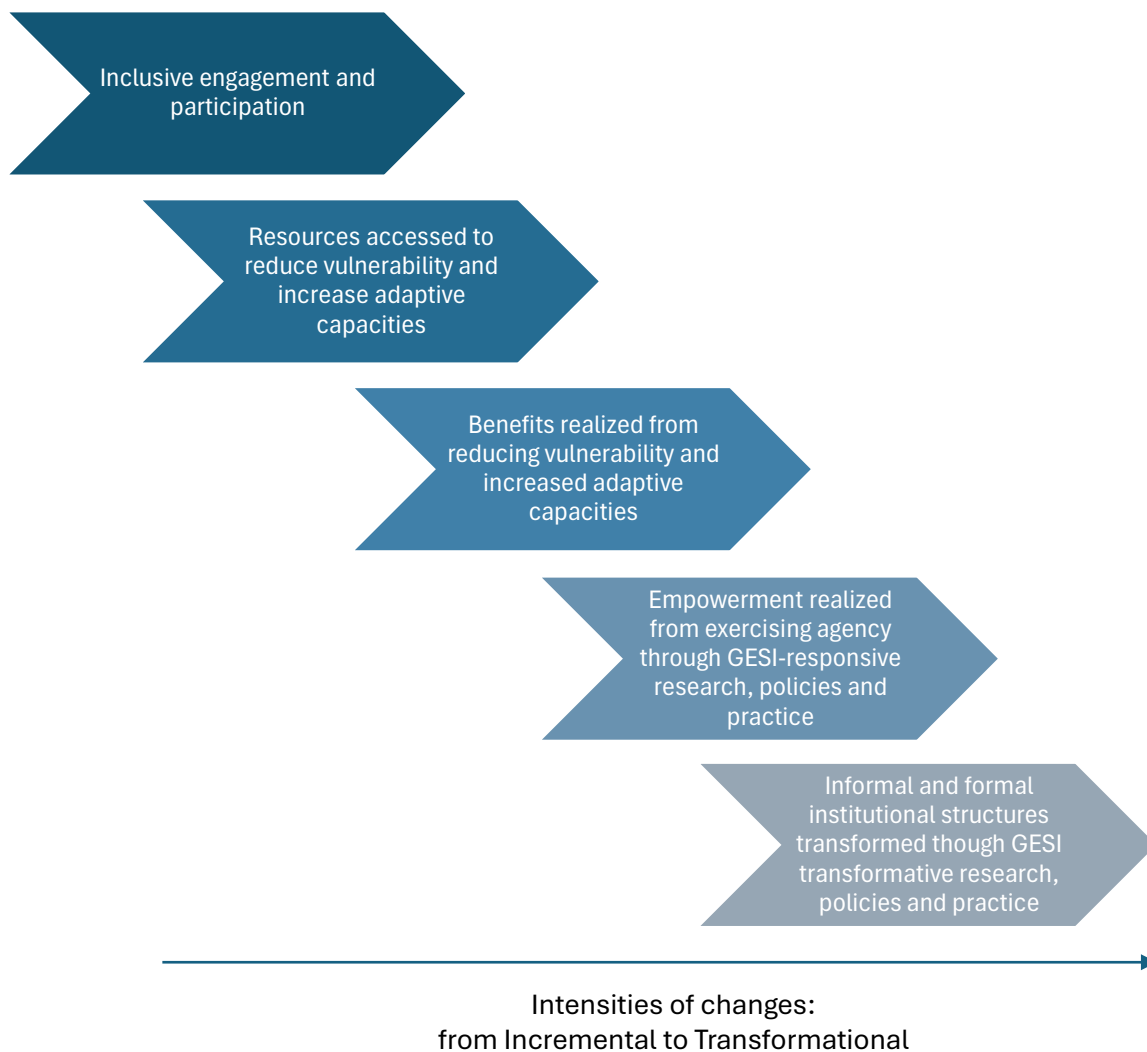
The promotion of GESI as a development goal, transcends all sectors: it matters as much for the advancement of human rights or economic prosperity as for building resilience to climate risks or ensuring that the energy transition benefits everyone. However, some domains (e.g. education or healthcare) have a longer history of having integrating gender considerations in practice than others, resulting in differences in levels of ambition, progress and experiences.

One way to navigate the scope of GESI approaches and to understand how they can complement each other, is to find commonalities between them: these are often the development outcomes that they seek to achieve, and this section will present five of them. Firstly, all GESI approaches seek to encourage more representative processes that do not keep certain people and voices<sup>2</sup> excluded. Secondly, most approaches also aim to help marginalized groups access more assets to improve their living conditions. Thirdly, some approaches will also support people to gain control over assets to secure and sustain benefits. Fourthly, empowerment-based approaches will encourage people to exercise their agency, claim their rights and change their social positions. Fifthly, many approaches will seek to challenge and transform the causes of inequalities and exclusion. This set of five outcomes draws on the GESI outcome framework developed by van Eerdewijk and colleagues (2021) (See Figure 1). Although this framework specifically refers to research and practice on climate change, it provides a useful overview of the ‘critical steppingstones to social and gender transformation’ that accompany the positive contributions of interventions to people’s well-being.

Figure 1. GESI outcomes (adapted from van Eerdewijk et al., 2021)

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<sup>2</sup> To avoid using too general categories such as ‘women’ or ‘the youth’, this paper will rely on the broad terms ‘marginalized people’ to designate all those who tend to be excluded or discriminated against because of their social identities, recognizing that factors of marginalization intersect and vary according to the context where they live.



## 2.1 Engagement and participation

Social inclusion starts with engaging with people who are typically excluded from decision-making processes to enable their participation in a project supposed to serve them. To draw a parallel with factors of vulnerability often flagged in the literature on disasters (see Wisner et al, 2012), these groups might be marginalized (i) geographically - they live in informal settlements, on the margin of cities or in areas prone to flooding; (ii) socially – they belong to ethnic minorities who are discriminated against, or their gender, cast, religion or class status prevent them from enjoying the same rights, visibility, safety and opportunities as that of more dominant groups; (iii) economically – they work in the informal sector, live in underserved low-income neighbourhood and often do not benefit from any formal social security, and (iv) politically – their voices are ignored by those in power or even silenced if the status quo is threatened. This emphasis on different and intersecting factors of marginalization enables to move beyond the focus on the same categories of people often deemed the most vulnerable as single entities. Hence, a GESI approach is concerned with identifying and engaging with particular social groups, not necessarily women and girls although they often constitute the most targeted groups. In other words, organisations and interventions can promote GESI by *reaching* people through the participation of often disadvantaged groups which is often assessed by counting participation in terms of numbers (Lau et al., (2021).

Creating inclusive terms of engagement includes adopting an approach that is flexible, tailored to specific cultural contexts, mindful of the different barriers faced by social groups (e.g. women responsible for childcare, migrants who do not speak the dominant language, so-called ‘low-cast’ groups who do not think they have the right to participate, etc.), sensitive to power dynamics, transparent to build trust and respectful of different worldviews. Institutions and programmes can enable marginalized people to access knowledge, and ideally be involved in co-producing initiatives if the terms of engagement target them and accommodate their needs and realities. In certain contexts where it is not deemed culturally acceptable for women to speak in public, it might be necessary to set up women-only discussions first to hear from their perspectives (see Green et al., 2020).

However, participation in discussions and meetings does not necessarily lead to any benefits for marginalized groups (Danielsen et al., 2018), and there is often a risk that their presence is used as a token of community impact. While engagement is often not enough, particularly when end-users are simply consulted or made aware of a new project, it nonetheless remains a necessary first step to enhance inclusivity. *“Truly inclusive stakeholder engagement helps all participants of co-production feel valued and safe, regardless of their social characteristics and identities, such as gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality and language. [...] This might involve being sensitive to historic privileges, prejudices and biases and doing things differently.”* (Vincent et al., 2021: 42)

## 2.2 Resources accessed to reduce vulnerability and increase capacity

For marginalized people to improve their conditions, they need access to a set of basic services that define decent standards of living – clean water, sanitation, food, shelter, energy, healthcare, education and protection. They also need access to income-generating opportunities and/or other financial assets that can support their access to these basic services. This is why the majority of humanitarian programmes with a GESI component will target groups who are the most deprived of these assets and initiatives often follow the gender division of labour to address different gender-related needs, e.g. water fountains are rehabilitated to alleviate the burden of water collection for women and girls; men are offered cash for work. Hence, a GESI perspective pays attention to the often distinct, but complementary, roles of social groups in different domains of life, which in turn influence their access to resources. Kabeer and Subrahmanian (1996) have summarised the means to achieve well-being in three set of resources: *material resources* such as land, equipment, finance and infrastructure, which remain the focus of mainstream planning; *human resources* including human labour, health status, skills, creativity and imagination; and *social resources* that people, and especially marginalized groups, create through their association with each other. In low-income settings where firewood and water need to be collected to prepare food, an increased access to energy-efficient stoves, connection to water pipes or the electricity grid, vouchers for fuel or the construction of water points located near habitations, all constitute material resources that can support reproductive activities. This is likely to benefit women as they remain primarily assigned to reproductive roles which include domestic chores, care for children and the elderly or subsistence agriculture which are all unpaid but allow the functioning of the household. An increased access to human resources such as knowledge and skills or health services can also help people diversify their sources of income, adopt more protective practices (e.g. hygiene, breast feeding, seeking help for mental health issues) and reduce out-of-pocket health expenditures. This can contribute to reduce people’s vulnerability to risks and augment the capacities of the whole household to adapt to environmental or economic shocks.

However, from a GESI perspective, the notion of ‘access’ is not enough as it does not necessarily questions, and if necessary, changes the way the most marginalized can sustain access of key resources on their terms and to fulfil their own needs (which might differ from that of their own family or community members). It can also reinforce gender roles where women’s productive roles (earning cash or a salary for their work) and community roles (that contributes to community affairs), and men’s reproductive roles, might be overlooked. In addition to access, ownership and control over resources have important implications on how people can secure their assets and build their resilience (see next section).

### 2.3 Benefits realized from access and control over resources

A sustained access over key resources is necessary for people to enjoy the benefits of having increased resource and to meet their practical interests. The latter are often immediate and gender specific (Molyneux, 2010). For these benefits to be equally enjoyed though, one needs to interrogate how resources are shared and negotiated, not just within households but at community level too, and this brings attention to gender relations and power. Who controls resources and who has a say in the rules that define resource allocation? To consider the root causes of gender inequalities in different places and sectors, requires, as van Eerdewijk et al, (2021) puts it “*approaching gender as relational*” (as opposed to only assessing women and men’s different roles and assets) and to ask “*how and why social norms, formal laws, regulations and institutions produce and sustain unequal social relations that drive inequality, social difference and exclusion*” (Ibid).

Several benefits referring to increased opportunities and/or abilities to use resources can be unpacked (adapted from Danielsen et al., 2018 and van Eerdewijk et al’s framework, 2021) bearing in mind their inter-connectedness:

- *Food and nutrition security*: increased access and control over means to produce or procure food help to secure the availability, access and utilization of food and augment health outcomes.
- *Secured income*: being able to decide to undertake income-generating activities, having the time to engage in productive activities, earning a salary, owning a bank account, all help secure income.
- *Secured assets*: owning land is conducive of longer-term planning and provide collateral to secure a loan; owning one’s house helps disaster survivors receive government compensation (Fordham et al., 2006).
- *Secured labour*: owning one’s business or being employed with a formal contract help secure income and can provide social security.
- *Improved natural resource base/ environmental security*: owning a water tap or a borewell to access clean water on demand contributes to food security, better health, and saves time.
- *Improved leisure time and/or reduced drudgery*: the implementation of different types of infrastructure in the water and energy sectors (e.g. piped water, improved stoves, access to electricity to provide cooling and preserve food and medicines, as well as mechanization to pump, grind and mill) help save time and manual labour (Mott MacDonald, 2012). This in turn, can create more time for rest, study, income-earning activities, and participation in community affairs and decision-making.
- *Better health*: financial dependency can restrict women from accessing healthcare whereas control over their income enable them and their children to access health services (Le Masson et al., 2019).
- *Social security*: being able to attend community gatherings, owning one’s mobile phone, or having the right to decide to reach social services can help people receiving social benefits.

- *Personal safety*: Free or affordable school transport options can reduce children's exposure to risks of violence and increase their attendance to school.
- *Better education prospects*: better access to safe toilets and hygiene for adolescent girls in school increase their school attendance.
- *Improved mobility*: affordable and safe transport options designed with the concerns of marginalised groups in mind, and that enable the use of prams and wheelchairs, enhance carers' mobility (C40, 2019).

To summarise, a key outcome of a GESI approach is whether it helps people *benefit* from a project (Lau et al., 2021) such as more control over resources, reduced vulnerability and increased capacities.

## 2.4 Empowerment realized from exercising agency

Control over accessed resources and attention to gender relations and drivers of exclusion go hand in hand with the empowerment of marginalized groups. For Ortiz Escalante & Gutierrez Valdivia (2015: 117), "*empowerment does not mean giving power to someone; but acknowledging the power that individuals and groups excluded from political action already have, and finding mechanisms that can enable the right to exercise their power*" (see also Kabeer and Subrahmanian, 1996 for a definition of empowerment). Empowerment approaches help to expand people's bargaining power to claim a shift in the distribution of resources and/or better control over resources (not just access). A women's empowerment approach typically seeks to strengthen women's capacities to make choices on their own and voice concerns that are listened to and acted on (Danielsen et al., 2018). The participation and leadership of women in otherwise patriarchal and male-dominated local institutions can help better address environmental changes or the impacts of migrations, through including women's insights in the design of systems to be more responsive to their needs, contributing to community resilience (International Development Research Centre, 2020). Other outcomes might include increased confidence and leadership, enhanced social status of women in roles as 'knowers' and decision makers (Ibid) and reinforced collective action (van Eerdewijk et al. 2021).

Gender studies often refer here to the realisation of **strategic gender interests** (not just practical interests) which as Molyneux (2010:22) explains, "*are derived [...] from the analysis of women's subordination and from the formulation of an alternative more satisfactory sets of arrangements to those which exist*". Demands may include the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and childcare (or a more equal share of domestic unpaid work), the removal of institutionalised forms of discrimination, the attainment of political equality, the establishment of freedom of choice over childbearing, family planning and reproductive health, and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence against women and girls. "*These strategic gender interests are the ones most frequently considered by feminist to be women's real interest [and] are termed "feminist", as is the level of consciousness required to struggle effectively for them*" (Molyneux, 2010:22).

## 2.5 Transforming informal and formal structures

Changes become transformational when gender norms that produce and reproduce inequalities and exclusion are challenged and this requires to consider the main institutions that maintain these norms in place. A gendered perspective helps to identify power inequalities which often shape risk drivers through underlying people's vulnerability to environmental shocks and stresses. Transforming them is therefore an essential part of an approach not just to achieve more equality but also to build resilience (Tacoli et al., 2014).

Power inequalities occur at different levels, i.e. at the individual, household, community and societal levels, and it is important to consider all four dimensions to understand the context of people's experiences and how norms produce and sustain inequalities. The manner to consider different and connected layers of personal, situational, and sociocultural factors is theorised in an ecological framework, applied for decades in the fields of child development and studies on interpersonal violence (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005). This model helps us understand the root causes of issues like violence and inequalities by taking into account the context in which people live. This context influences the condition (physical and mental health or access to basic services), the position (status and the social recognition granted) of an individual and their ability (or lack of) to reject social and gender norms.

- The individual level covers a person's personal history and biological characteristics that will influence their behaviour.
- The relationship level explores how social behaviours, attitudes and dynamics are influenced by other household or family members, as well as access to resources and levels of education. At this level, it is necessary to examine how interpersonal relationships, and prevailing social norms, influence the institutions of marriage, sexual behaviours that are tolerated (or not tolerated) and the opportunities for men and women to occupy different roles, to access information or to engage in income-generating activities (Marcus, 2014).
- At the community level, intermediary institutions (both formal and customary) can allow, or prevent - depending on the context - the implementation of services and channel funding towards tackling inequalities. Analysis at this level examines the existence and performance of protection, legal, judicial services or health services, and the influence of traditional institutions and religious norms, particularly in community-based conflict resolution (Samuels et al., 2017).
- Finally, at the societal level, the macroeconomic, historical, ideological and political legacies of the country or geographical region influence the governance in place, the ratification of international conventions on the rights of women, children or indigenous people, the existence of national policies that promote equality and the allocation of public funding or aid to the social sector.

Integrated analysis of these different levels makes it possible to understand the factors that perpetuate inequalities and possible areas for intervention to change discriminatory social norms (see also Cookson et al., 2023). Practically in urban contexts, feminist planning typically seeks to transform the gendered division of labour that confine many women in unpaid, low-paid and/or undervalued activities, to make visible women's activities, needs, and responsibilities associated with domestic and care work, address the subordinate role of care and its privatization, and tackle the barriers that prevent an independent life for women, the elderly and other dwellers (Huning, 2020). Gender-transformative urban planning also responds to the consequences of having a female body in public space (e.g. the need for adequate sanitation for dealing with menstruation) (Ortiz Escalante & Gutierrez Valdivia, 2015). This requires designing interventions that re-organise housing, workplaces, service delivery, infrastructure and transportation so that they better support care work, reconcile paid and unpaid work, collective self-organisation, or safe and convenient mobility options (Ibid). This inevitably leads to question dominant ways of thinking, operating and advocate for a re-distribution of resources (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996). A transformative outcome addresses power imbalance and the causes of social injustice to induce change in institutional structures (van Eerdewijk et al., 2021).

## 3 Understanding inequalities and their effects: gender analyses

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Section 2 introduced the GESI outcomes that underpin the objectives of many humanitarian and development interventions that seek to foster inclusion. To formulate these objectives at the design stage of programming, but also to understand the constraints that could prevent an intervention to reach GESI outcomes, any assessment of the context must include a gender and intersectional analysis. A gender analysis identifies key issues contributing to inequalities and exclusion of people of different genders, which often contribute to poor development outcomes (CARE, 2012). It forms the pillar of any GESI approaches and now a requirement of all major climate funds and donors financing resilience building programmes.

There are many ways to structure a gender analysis. The number of guidelines and toolkits to guide practitioners is flourishing and they increasingly encourage to assess how the intersection of social identities relating to age, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation and so on, shape differences and inequalities, not just between men and women as single groups. Before delving into some of the key components of gender analysis in the following sub-sections, there are two recurring principles across methodologies. Firstly, gender analyses all have in common that they seek and rely on the collection of data disaggregated for different groups and sensitive to gender concerns. They all gather secondary data, i.e. information that is already available in the academic literature, policy and programme documents, national census, Demographic and Health Surveys, humanitarian assessment reports, etc. When relevant, they also seek to collect primary data by relying on consultations with different social groups, surveys, interviews, community discussions, focus group discussions and storytelling. Both primary and secondary data are analysed to provide an overview of key issues affecting marginalised groups. Secondly, all gender analyses provide recommendations related to the focus and the modalities of the intervention in order to inform and shape it: should the initial objectives of the project be revisited? What activities should be implemented to best address the needs and interests identified in the analysis? How can marginalized groups be best included? All these questions are relevant for planning co-production processes. The first sub-section introduces the key components of a gender analysis; the second emphasises how this analysis must extend to the way an intervention is designed and the third section provides elements to consider when doing a gender analysis at the level of organisations.

### 3.1 Gender analysis : key components

The focus of gender analyses vary according to the scale of the intervention, the geographical setting, the sector, as well as the resources, expertise and time allocated to conduct the collection of data. Despite different methodologies, most gender analyses aiming at supporting contextual analysis, are structured around the following set of key recurring questions:

*Gender roles and responsibilities:* Who does what?

In this category, the analysis focuses on who performs what activities and whether these are productive, reproductive and social activities. When working at community level, or when data is available at city level, it is also useful to examine how much time is spent on these activities and how much income is realized through them.

*Access and control over resources:* Who has what?

The emphasis is placed on who has access (i.e. the opportunity to make use of resources), and control over (authority to make decisions about the use of resources and the products from them), material, human and social resources (section 2.2).

*Decision-making structures:* Who decides (at household and community level)?

This includes an analysis of participation in community and/or political affairs and the representation of women in elected bodies. Who is represented in electoral systems and are there spaces for citizen engagement? Who has the power to make and change rules? And what are the typical barriers and constraints to participation in decision-making processes?

*Knowledge and Information:* Who knows what?

Access to knowledge, and different types of knowledge, is highly gendered and so is the power to create and share it. What do indicators of education access and attainment reveal? Do governance structure recognise the experiences, aspirations and values of different social identities?

*Protection:* Who is at risk?

This area emphasizes the need to systematically document the risks of violence which are disproportionately faced by women and children in all geographical contexts and in all domains of life i.e. at home, in the workplace, in public spaces.

The above typology is not prescriptive and many gender analyses will adapt their focus according to the context it is applied to. Several tools developed in participatory research (e.g. activity profile, seasonal calendar, access and control profile) have also been developed to investigate each of the above category, particularly when working at the micro-level say when focusing on a neighbourhood (see Landuyt, 1998). At the city-level however, the organisation doing the gender analysis will rely more on secondary data collected by local authorities, civil society organisations and any available studies. The main challenge is that the collection and availability of gender-disaggregated data is more often the exception than the norm.

*Key resources:*

Landuyt, K. (1998) Gender Mainstreaming: a How-To Manual. International Labour Organization. [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-manila/documents/publication/wcms\\_761631.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-manila/documents/publication/wcms_761631.pdf)

United Nations, (2021) Intersectionality resource guide and toolkit. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/01/intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit>

Jost, C., Ferdous, N. & Spicer, T. D. (2014). Gender and Inclusion Toolbox: Participatory Research in Climate Change and Agriculture. CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), CARE International and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF). Copenhagen, Denmark. <https://cgspace.cgiar.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b98a51f0-b58c-4341-b19b-f332b9a0e686/content>

## 3.2 Project-focused gender analysis

When a gender analysis is conducted as part of a project, it is also necessary to investigate GESI-considerations throughout the stages of the project cycle management. UN-Habitat (2012) published guidelines to apply gender analysis tools to urban planning and development projects, policies, and institutions. These can help organisations understand and plan the resources needed to conduct the analysis and the key questions to address at the design phase, in relation to implementation mechanisms, and in monitoring and evaluation processes. The main objective is to analyse how an intervention is likely to affect different social groups, how it plans to support the most marginalized ones, how it integrates GESI-related considerations (i.e. different roles, needs, interests, constraints, risks and resulting inequalities) and what GESI-outcomes does it aim to achieve.

*Key resources:*

Dupar, M. and P. Velasco. (2021). Advancing gender equality and climate action: A practical guide to setting targets and monitoring progress. Cape Town: Climate and Development Knowledge Network. <https://cdkn.org/resource/genderequality>

Gumucio, T. & Schwager, S. (2019). [Checklist Gender Considerations for Climate Services and Safety Nets Safety Nets](#). CCAFS / CGIAR.

UN-Habitat, (2012). [Gender Issue Guide: Urban Planning and Design](#). United Nations Human Settlements Programme: Nairobi. Page 29-31.

### 3.3 Gender analysis of organizations

A gender analysis can, and should, also be conducted at the level of an organisation to better understand the attitudes and behaviours towards GESI of stakeholders involved in co-production. This necessarily involves a self-reflection on the part of the organisation leading co-production and promoting GESI which will be useful to assess existing capacities and any areas that need strengthening. Kabeer & Subrahmanian (1996) proposed a framework to analyse organizations through a set of generic constitutive components: rules, activities, resources, people and power (See Figure 2). This organizational and institutional perspective enables to understand the gendered outcomes of organizational practice: who gets what, who does what, who decides, who gains and who loses.

ORGANIZATION

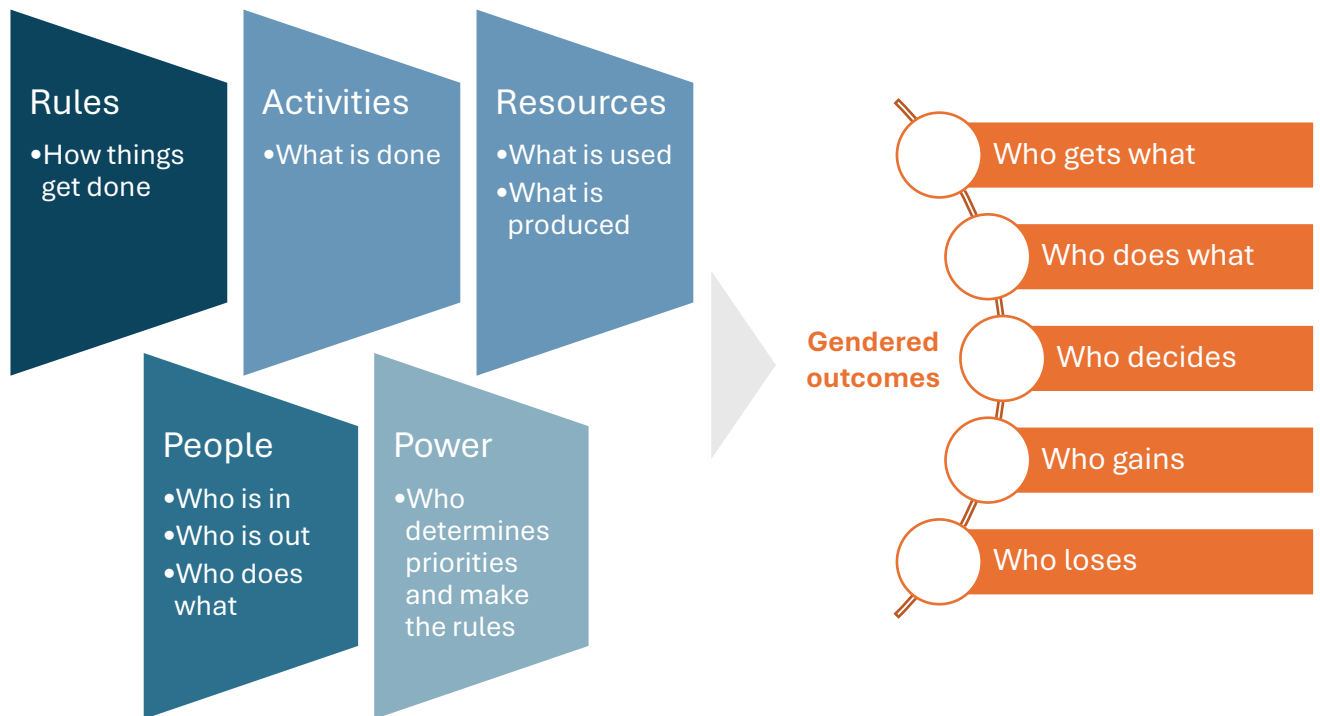


Figure 2. A framework to understand the institutional construction of gender inequalities, adapted from Kabeer & Subrahmanian 1996.

The authors emphasize that organizational practices not just from one organization but from different institutional sites that govern social life - the state, the market, the community and the domain of family/kinship, intersect to produce and sustain inequalities across society. The focus on a particular institution is useful to delve deeper into power issues, which can help uncover barriers to change and any risks of backlash against an attempt to change the status quo such as fostering more equality and inclusivity in governance and resource allocation. As explained by Kabeer & Subrahmanian (1996: 30), “*different organizational actors not only have differential capacity to define and interpret the rules - to 'set the agenda', but they also have a differential stake in defending them. [...] Those whose interests are best served by the prevailing configuration of rules and resources are not only most likely to resist, but also have the greatest capacity to resist, any attempt at redistribution or transformation.*”

*Key resource:*

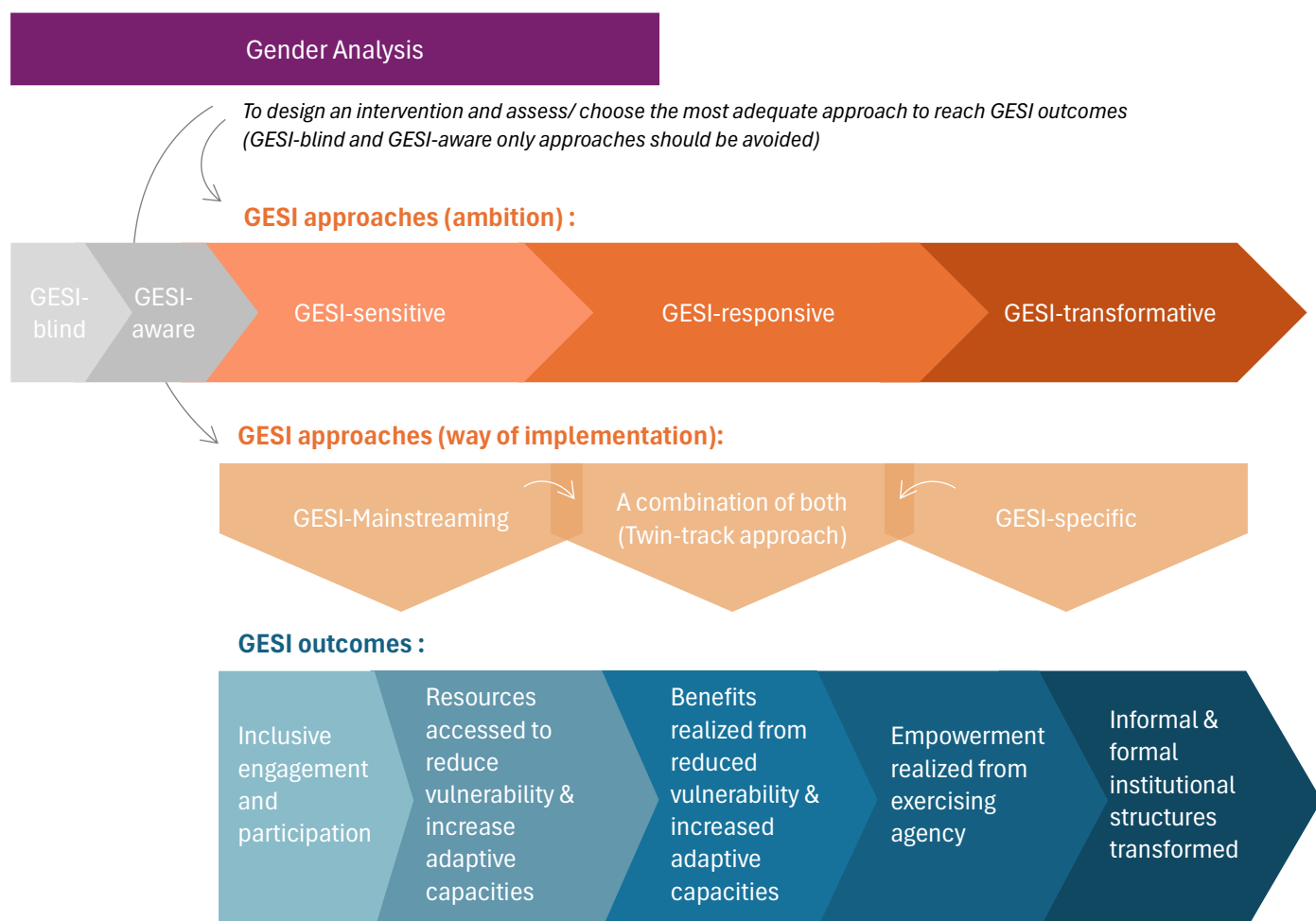
Kabeer, N., & Subrahmanian, R. (1996). *Institutions, relations and outcomes: Framework and tools for gender-aware planning* (Vol. 357). Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

In summary, a gender analysis will comprise both a compilation of information about the context (section 3.1), an analysis of the effects of GESI-considerations on the design and implementation of an intervention and vice versa (section 3.2), and where relevant, a gender analysis of the organization targeted by an intervention to influence a process and/or of the organizations implementing the intervention (section 3.3).

## 4 Typology of GESI approaches

A gender analysis is the departing point to decide what to do to tackle gender-based inequalities, how and at what scale. The GESI-related outcomes outlined in Chapter 2 can be achieved via different but often mutually-reinforcing approaches and the decision to follow one or the other will depend on lead organisations' level of ambition and related time and human resources to implement it (See Figure 3). This section aims to synthesise the most common concepts often used when promoting GESI to help organisations align the intention of their project with the most relevant GESI approach.

Figure 3: Differences between GESI-based approaches and how they support GESI-related outcomes



### 4.1 A continuum of ambitions

A very common way to compare how development policies and interventions address GESI issues is to look at their intention on a continuum: from being blind and unaware of gender considerations, to being progressively sensitive, responsive to inequalities and finally aiming to be transformative of the structures maintaining these inequalities (Mulinax et al., 2018). This 'ladder of ambitions' is also often used by donors to benchmark projects they fund against their minimum expectations (see Adaptation Fund, 2021). Several classifications have been conceptualized but below are the four most commonly used categories.

At the bottom of the ladder, **gender-blind** design and analyses implicitly rely on the perspectives, needs and interests of men or dominant groups, thereby privileging their access to resources and opportunities (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996). Co-production processes that are gender blind will typically ignore the roles, rights, entitlements and responsibilities assigned to different gender groups and the resulting inequalities. Some organisations also use the terms “**gender-aware**” to designate approaches that start to recognise these differences but will accommodate and work around existing norms (Adaptation Fund, 2021). The main risk is that interventions justify their lack of plans to promote GESI because they do not want to favour some groups or create divisions and claim to remain neutral. Yet, the so-called neutrality reinforce prevailing bias and inequalities that have benefitted dominant or more privileged groups.

Moving on, **gender-sensitive** approaches are those that will conduct a gender analysis at minima, to understand how differences between people of different gender, age, class and so on, might restrict their equal access to resources and opportunities and therefore lead to different needs and priorities. Co-production approaches that are more sensitive to gender inequalities typically create more inclusive stakeholder engagement: being sensitive that the timing, location, and activities of meetings do not reinforce barriers that restrict marginalised groups from participating (Vincent et al., 2021). They also ensure that processes and activities do not exacerbate inequalities and therefore call for the monitoring of GESI outcomes and the collection of GESI-disaggregated data.

**GESI responsive** approaches go further in the analysis of the barriers to gender equality in a specific context and will be attentive to power relations. They seek to respond to differential practical needs and some of the strategic interests of marginalized groups by recognizing the need for equity, i.e. potential differential treatment that is fair and addresses a bias or historical or social disadvantage or power imbalance. Equitable distribution of resources includes advocating for equal access to services, infrastructure and opportunities, as well as the allocation of resource production and regimes of rights (Castan Broto et al. 2022). The integration of GESI knowledge and action in National Adaptation Plan Processes for climate change by the NAP Global Network is an example of a gender-responsive approach to policy making (Dazé, 2020). These approaches tend to advocate for the equal distribution of benefits and channel resources to targeted groups, but efforts remain within the existing social framework without necessarily challenging it. In other words, GESI-responsive approaches aim to create changes but they address inequalities within the remit of existing norms and rules because they might not have the mandate or the resources to tackle the underlying structural factors that create inequalities.

Finally, **transformative** approaches seek to challenge existing gender norms towards more equality. They rely on a deep understanding of power relations that produce inequalities and aim to change structures that maintain exclusion and oppression. Given pervasive inequalities, this strategy entails the redistribution of resources and responsibilities (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996). Transformative approaches aim to reshape discriminatory systems at large. The alteration of prevailing configuration of rules and resources are likely to be met with resistance by stakeholders who traditionally or historically benefited from them (Ibid). In co-production processes, “*dealing with power issues, whether they be related to knowledge types, work or cultural norms, gender or historic oppression, might require uncomfortable conversations and careful facilitation*” (Vincent et al., 2021). However, co-production enables to shift asymmetries of power through collaborative processes (Osuteye et al., 2019).

## 4.2 GESI-specific and GESI mainstreaming

The goal to enhance gender equality is in itself a development objective (e.g. Sustainable Development Goal 5) and warrants the adoption of strategies that focus efforts and funding on achieving it. But the same is true within development programmes focused on building resilience and which have identified the promotion of GESI as a distinct and essential pillar to reach the programme's objectives. **GESI-specific** policies, projects or activities (or GESI-targeted approaches) target specific social groups after a gender analysis revealed the issues that affect them. They are often designed and implemented in sectors traditionally (and wrongly) perceived as women's domains such as primary and reproductive health or water, sanitation and hygiene, but also to tackle an issue where evidence already points out the injustice faced by women's and gender minorities (e.g. gender-based violence, lack of parity in politics). The advantage of adopting a GESI-specific goal is the possibility to dedicate human and financial resources towards activities that promote equity and which may not benefit from the same level of investment otherwise. This can be effectively driven by donors as illustrated in the 2022 call for proposals for the Climate Adaptation and Resilience-CLARE research programme funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Gender equality and inclusion was identified as one of the four core dimensions of the CLARE initiative to build resilience, and applicants were requested to demonstrate how they would promote and integrate GESI using an intersectional approach, in the design and implementation of the proposed research and how their team's composition and capacities would reflect their intention (IDRC/FCDO, 2022). The main disadvantage of a GESI-specific approach is that it maintains GESI-related issues isolated from other development activities and/or engagement with say women's groups is used as a token indicator of GESI efforts without any commitment to integrate GESI issues in resilience building (Landuyt, 1998).

In parallel (rather than in contrast), **gender-mainstreaming** aims to integrate GESI considerations within policy-making and programme-designing. From its initial definition, "*Mainstreaming a gender perspective is 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. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality* (UN, 1997: 1). After the Fourth World Conference on Women of the United Nations in Beijing (1995), gender mainstreaming as a policy strategy, was widely adopted by multilateral development agencies, donors, governments and NGOs, but was also progressively criticized for its technocratization and depoliticization which failed to transform institutions (van Eerdewijk & Davids, 2013). Feminist critics of gender mainstreaming stress the dilution of its transformative ambition in practice (Derbyshire et al., 2013). This is often due to limited dedicated resources and power for staff assigned to gender mainstreaming within organisations as well as the reliance on standards tools, prescriptive guidelines and trainings to *be applied by* local organizations, to the detriment of locally-led strategies that create space for women's voices and political demands (see van Eerdewijk & Davids, 2013 for a detailed review).

Despite the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming, its implementation in practice often remains superficial particularly when interventions adopt what Kabeer & Subrahmanian (1996: 23) called an '*integrationist version of mainstreaming*', one that highlights GESI dimensions within predetermined agendas and current policy preoccupations of institutions. For instance, to conduct a gender analysis separately from a contextual analysis and which

does not necessarily inform the design and planning of an initiative, is not going to help revise initial assumptions of what is needed, by whom and where.

This does not mean that gender mainstreaming should not be supported, but practitioners concerned with its transformative potential should use this approach to encourage doing things in different ways and rethinking institutional rules or the allocation of resources to foster more equity. In fact, it is established in development practice that a twin-track approach, one that combines gender-specific interventions for targeted social groups, with the mainstreaming of GESI across organisations, domains of action and processes, is the most effective (Derbyshire et al., 2013; van Eerdewijk et al., 2021).

In summary, the promotion of GESI can have different ambitions (sensitive, responsive, transformative) and rely on different ways of implementation (gender-specific and gender mainstreaming approaches, or the twin-track approach) in order to achieve distinct but often interlinked GESI outcomes, all of which are context-specific. Similarly, co-production is characterised by very diverse co-production practices and forms of organization (Castan Broto et al., 2022). Therefore, there is no (and cannot be) one approach to integrate GESI considerations in co-production processes for urban resilience. It all depends on the level of ambition of the lead-organisation which equally depends on its resources, capacities and expertise.

## 5 Tools for co-production processes that foster GESI and urban resilience

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To help organizations interested in promoting GESI in co-production of urban resilience navigate the landscape of concepts and approaches, it is important that they keep in mind two requirements. Firstly, they must conduct and rely on a gender analysis of the context where they operate, the GESI-considerations of their interventions and an analysis of the organisations involved in co-production including themselves. Secondly, the recommendations of this gender analysis must inform the GESI-related outcomes that they seek to achieve. Organisations should ensure that they implement a gender-sensitive approach at minima, but they can choose to be more ambitious depending on their capacities, or the possibility collaborate with other relevant organisations, and the timeframe of the project. Clarity on their ambition and GESI-related objectives will help set realistic goals and avoid ‘gender washing’ and meaningless engagement.

The following section presents a selection of tools and broader frameworks that have been implemented to integrate GESI in co-production processes for urban development. These tools can, and have been used, to support different GESI-outcomes and they all have *the potential* to be transformative. Again, the *actual* outcomes depend on the organisation(s) leading the process. These tools are presented against the five domains of urban resilience action as conceptualised in Barcena and Bahadur (2023) and which include: 1. Community: assets & services, 2. Knowledge: information & awareness, 3. Governance: planning & capacity building, 4. Infrastructure: grey & green, 5. Finance: existing & innovative sources. For each domain, guiding questions are proposed to inform a gender analysis which again, should be the starting point of any interventions promoting GESI. Additionally, examples of approaches and tools are presented with related GESI outcomes. Most tools presented below are likely to overlap these domains and could serve to achieve several GESI outcomes depending on whether they are

used as part of a one-off, short-term projects or a sustained co-production strategy and/or in conjunction with other initiatives.

## 5.1 Community: assets & services

### **GESI analysis**

In this domain, resilience-building initiatives typically focus on improving access of urban communities to basic services and securing their assets, from food security, to safe housing, to healthcare, education and income generation. A gender analysis is therefore interested in examining which marginalised groups might be further deprived from basic services, why, and how the co-production process and the resulting intervention will be equitable i.e. that it will enable marginalised groups to access and benefit community assets just as much as more dominant groups. Furthermore, a gender analysis will document the extent of unpaid care work undertaken by women and girls, which allow cities to function or develop (UN-Habitat, 2012). Using the typology presented earlier, a gender analysis must look at the following aspects:

*Gender roles and responsibilities:* Who participate in unpaid care work and what role(s) and responsibilities do they have? Are these roles barriers to accessing livelihood opportunities? What skills do different social groups possess — or need to develop — and how do they match available market opportunities?

*Access and control over resources:* What social, economic, and development opportunities and services not accessible for marginalized groups? Are key assets exclusively accessed and controlled by one social category? Do women have the legal and customary rights to own a house or land?

*Decision-making structures:* What do local norms say about who decides at household and community level? If an intervention provides women with loans, will they be the one deciding how to use the money?

*Knowledge and Information:* How do differences and inequalities in roles, responsibilities, access and control over resources shape the opportunities of different groups to access information? Is knowledge of a particular issue related to community services informed by the experiences of end-users?

*Protection:* What risks do diverse women, girls, men and boys face when engaging in their current livelihood activities? If some categories of people do not have access to certain assets such as safe sanitation as is often the case in low-income settlements, are they more at risk of violence?

Often, the process of resilience building that focuses on community assets takes place in a post-disaster context where services have been partially, or totally altered, or in low-income communities that face ‘everyday emergencies’ due to the lack of basic services. Crises can further decrease people’s access to livelihood opportunities but also result in women or children taking on more unpaid care work. In these contexts, gender analyses will also focus on (i) the impacts of a crisis on marginalised groups to compare the state of gender issues before and after and (ii) flag any assumptions that might favour the restoration of a particular asset or sector dominated by one group to the detriment of less visible or vocal groups (IASC, 2018). For NGOs and civil society organisations implementing sectoral interventions, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee-IASC (2018) provides detailed lists of questions to guide gender analyses by sector, for instance if an intervention intends to focus on Shelter or on Cash-based projects.

### **GESI-outcomes**

Effectively integrating GESI into interventions that improve access of urban communities assets means providing marginalized groups with equal access to and control over material, human and/or social resources. The Her City initiative promotes girls' and women's participation in urban planning and design processes, so that cities can work better for everyone. This joint initiative by UN-Habitat and Global Utmaning (2022) developed the digital **HerCity toolbox** which is used by academics, civil society organisations, and representatives of both the public and private sectors to facilitate a dialogue between professionals (project team), girls and women, and other stakeholders who are critical for the implementation of urban development from a girl's perspective. Thirteen projects have been implemented in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Asia and Europe since 2021, but many more initiatives have used the toolbox independently, adapting the process to meets local needs and specificities. The toolbox (see UN-Habitat, 2023) has the advantage to be very practical with clear guidance of co-production processes and activities to implement, by whom and for how long.

An early review of initiatives that used the Her City toolbox, compiled the priorities of girls emerging across geographical contexts (see UN-Habitat & Global Utmaning, 2022). It shows similar interests in terms of greening the city and making it more accessible (see next section) but also a call for development projects that will increase their access to community assets: from basic services (e.g. water drinking taps, public toilets, free women's clinics, interactive lights), to knowledge and culture (e.g. libraries), leisure (e.g. recreational areas and playgrounds), economic opportunities (e.g. paces for vendors, food kiosks) and digital connection and communication (e.g. free WIFI charging areas and community phones) (Ibid). The fact that the co-production process brings girls together with professionals was praised by several implementing organisations for fostering community dialogue, increasing girls' knowledge and skills in urban planning and increasing professional's awareness of girls' concerns and priorities. These outcomes entail at minima a GESI-responsive co-production approach whereby lead organisations rely on, or collaborate with civil society organisations led by representatives of marginalized groups, or whom represent their interests.

*Key resources:*

IASC (2018). IASC, (2018). Guideline. [THE GENDER HANDBOOK FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION](#). IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action.

UN-Habitat, (2023). [Her City. A guide for cities to sustainable and inclusive urban planning and design together with girls](#). United Nations Human Settlements Programme & GShared City Foundation.

UN-Habitat, & Global Utmaning, (2022). [Cities for Girls Cities for All. Report from the Vinnova Innovation for Gender Equality Project](#). United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

## 5.2 Knowledge: information & awareness

### **GESI Analysis**

Initiatives in this resilience domain might primarily aim at enhancing knowledge of low-income communities for instance via disseminating information on disaster risks (Barcena & Bahadur, 2023). However, projects could also choose to target power holders and raise their awareness about the challenges faced by marginalized groups. A gender analysis will help challenge

assumptions around who knows what and whose knowledge count. Key questions to address include:

*Gender roles and responsibilities:* is the labour market (both formal and informal) heavily segregated along gender and ethnic lines? As a result, what knowledge do different social groups possess — or need to develop, with regards to the particular focus of the intervention? For instance, if an intervention aims to address the impacts of heatwaves, who are the people living and/or working in industries heavily exposed or urban islands most prone to heat and what do they know about health-related risks or how do they cope in times of heatwaves?

*Access and control over resources:* Are key resources exclusively controlled by one social category within the household which will favour their access to information (e.g. radio, phone, internet)? Do social norms discouraged certain groups from accessing public spaces like the streets or the market, preventing them from exchanging information? Are there community assets that can be enjoyed by everyone (e.g. public libraries, media centres) and if not, why not?

*Decision-making structures:* Does urban planning on a particular domain rely on knowledge from the main end-users? How is this knowledge sought, collected and accounted for, by whom and how often? Who share or translate the knowledge of the most marginalized groups and are they likely to represent their interests?

*Knowledge and Information :* What are the main information channels for low-income communities? And do people access these channels equally within these communities? Does it vary according to the topic or domain (e.g. health care, weather forecast, etc.)

*Protection:* Women are much more at risk of being assaulted in public space in general and public transport in particular (Allen, 2018). Are there other risk factors in the targeted city context (e.g. specific neighbourhoods? Particular ethnic groups?) Who else is more at risk of violence? Where do they feel unsafe and why?

### **GESI-outcomes**

Organisations who support information dissemination targeting vulnerable communities tend to include academics, NGOs but also local authorities, particularly when they mobilise technical knowledge and/or aim to support people accessing new services. In contrast, awareness raising of people's rights is often supported by civil society organisations and community-led groups themselves. When it comes to raise awareness of decision-makers, a whole range of organisations can lead the process providing they have the mandate or the necessary contacts to reach them. A powerful tool often used to share knowledge from the bottom-up is the Safety Audit or Walk Audit, “a process which brings individuals together to walk through a physical environment, evaluate how safe it feels to them, identify ways to make the space safer and organize to bring about those changes” (WISE, 2005:9). Many city actors have adopted this tool to co-produce gender-responsive recommendations for urban and transport policy and planning (Women in Cities International, 2008; C40Cities, 2019). Often called ‘Women’s Safety Audits’, the tool has been predominantly used by cities to improve the built environment so that it can ultimately reduce opportunities for crime and make public places like parks, bus stops and streets safer. However, this tool can also be used to understand how different people experience their environments, or to collect inhabitants’ knowledge on the impacts of natural hazards or on basic services that are lacking. Hence, some initiatives have re-labelled the tool as ‘Neighbourhood Recognition Walks’ to be more encompassing of different perspectives (Women in Cities International, 2008).

Lessons from safety audits implemented in the past two decades have yielded outcomes in the domains of infrastructure and governance (Women in Cities International, 2008). One of the most common physical changes is the improvement of lighting, followed by the destruction or rerouting of unsafe paths, the improvement of public signage and accessibility, the provision of

public water and toilet facilities or the installation of transparent bus shelters. In terms of policy changes, one example is the collaboration between Metropolitan Toronto Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children – METRAC, with the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) to implement policies and procedures addressing harassment on public transit, as well as general safety standards (Ibid). Evidence of the GESI outcomes of safety audits is often anecdotal and project-based i.e. it entirely depends on the ambition and resources of the lead organisation. In a review conducted for UN-Habitat, several organizations claim that the process had been empowering for women’s associations taking part, through making their concerns visible and creating partnerships with city officials. Another important outcome is the increased awareness of other participants of safety audits of women’s security concerns, particularly community members, as well as city officials and civil servants when they join the process (Women in Cities International, 2008).

There is a risk that an intervention remains superficial from a GESI perspective if it merely supports information dissemination directed at vulnerable groups even via co-production. This is often the case when projects are short-term, have limited resources and are led by organisations removed from the experiences and interests of the most marginalised groups. To overcome this risk, and be more-GESI responsive, initiatives must be clear regarding whose interest they aim to serve and rely on a gender analysis to involve the most relevant people and organisations in the co-production process. The safety audit mentioned above is a good way to support mutual knowledge sharing between marginalized people and power-holders and encourage accountability.

Safety walks are also used in the approach towards gender-transformative urban planning implemented extensively in Spain by Ortiz Escalante and Gutierrez Valdivia (2015). Their methodology relies on three strategies. The first one aims to support empowerment, which they define as a “*process of reaffirmation of women’s capacities, as well as the appropriation of spaces to perform these capacities*” (Ibid: 118) and that they address via the facilitation of awareness workshops with women’s organisations to analyse individually and collectively everyday life as the base of urban planning. The second strategy co-produces an urban diagnosis, i.e. an assessment of the built environment from a gender perspective to analyse how it responds to the needs of everyday life. The third consists of women participating in the actual transformation of a space through building a proposal submitted to city officials. This methodology is well-documented and can be used and adapted by lead organisations in different contexts to inform planning processes of the specific gender needs of city dwellers. The main caveat, however is that the buy-in of local authorities is not guaranteed and the transformative goals might not be attainable.

*Key resources:*

Ortiz Escalante, S., & Gutiérrez Valdivia, B. (2015). Planning from below: using feminist participatory methods to increase women's participation in urban planning. *Gender & Development*, 23(1), 113-126.

Women’s Initiatives for Safer Environments (2005). [WOMEN’S COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT GUIDE](#).

World bank (2020) Walk Audit, in [Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning Design](#) (page 79).

## 5.3 Governance: planning & capacity building

### Gender analysis

Interventions in this domain focus on decision-making in institutions and planning processes, sometimes aiming at transforming existing structures or developing people's capacities and leadership for urban resilience (Barcena & Bahadur, 2023). Gender analyses of governance processes are paramount to examine parity (or lack of) in electoral systems and in institutions that govern the city and what space there is for citizen engagement. Key questions to address include:

*Gender roles and responsibilities:* How are family structures, parental roles, and domestic responsibilities typically defined in the targeted city? And how does this impact women's and men's, and people of different ethnicities' access to the labour market and to political affairs?

*Access and control over resources:* What laws and practices exist with regard to land ownership, inheritance, access to land and education? Do these discriminate against women or men and affect their respective social positions?

*Decision-making structures:* what is the current representation and participation of women in local government? What are the gender dynamics in public institutions e.g. do women mostly occupy service functions while men dominate leadership positions? Who tend to speak on behalf of the most marginalized groups and are they likely to represent their interests?

*Knowledge and Information:* do decision-makers know the GESI implications of new urban planning initiatives? Are certain citizens not aware and informed about who governs different aspects of city life? If so, why? Do people know how to access information regarding their rights or opportunities? Do they know who they can contact for any request of support or complaint?

*Protection:* Women are more at risk of being assaulted in the workplace. Is this documented or acknowledged in the local government? Who else is more at risk of violence, including harassment that could restrict their equal opportunities to take part in decision-making processes or aspire to lead institutions? Are there protective policies in place?

### GESI-outcomes

Lead organisations focusing on use of governance and decision making as an entry point for enhancing urban resilience often have established contacts within institutions who holds power or may be themselves powerful actors (i.e. donors) who can exercise influence, and this can support the integration of GESI-considerations. For instance, the Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality - KNOW research project (2017-2024), which aims to use knowledge co-production to address the challenge of urban equality in cities in the global South<sup>3</sup>, relies on partnerships between a higher education institution and community groups (Castan-Broto et al., 2022). The collaboration between academics (often regarded as experts) and civil society can be an efficient way to find entry points to engage and influence governing institutions and bring marginalized voices to their attention. In the KNOW project, an analysis of six city case studies highlights that all co-production processes are concerned with addressing epistemic injustices (i.e. forms of oppression and discrimination related to the production and acceptance of knowledge (Fricker, 2007, cited in Castan Broto et al., 2022)) faced by people living in informal settlements or vulnerable neighbourhoods (Ibid). Resulting interventions vary in their scope though: some adopt pluralizing strategies which consists in democratizing action and expand voices involved in urban governance to gain more parity political participation. Others also rely on appropriating strategies by repurposing community assets to foster equitable distribution, or

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.urban-know.com>

Barranquilla, Havana, Lima and San José in Latin America; Da Nang, Jaipur, Nakhon Sawan, Yangon and Yogyakarta in Asia; and Dar es Salaam, Kampala and Freetown in Africa

uncovering strategies that make visible existing urban conditions to advance equality. Not many of the six projects choose to challenge exclusions directly through reclaiming underutilized assets for instance or contesting their unequal allocation (Castan Broto et al., 2022). Hence, the KNOW-funded interventions span several GESI-related ambitions all the way to being responsive to the interests of vulnerable neighbourhoods. However, transformative outcomes may materialize later.

Interventions can choose to focus on women collective action and women's leadership to support their advocacy efforts at the city level. But capacity-building could also target the police force, urban planners, service providers, and infrastructure ministries to raise their awareness of exclusionary processes or find solutions to prevent discrimination and hold local authorities accountable for making cities safer, more inclusive and more gender-responsive.

The Cities Alliance developed a **Cities for Women Framework** (see Cities Alliance, 2020), which aims to guide local stakeholders in implementing a gender-sensitive approach to urban governance, i.e. an approach that increases women's participation in human settlements development and fosters gender-awareness and competence amongst both women and men in the political arena and planning practice. Applied in the context of Tunis (Tunisia), the approach included a participatory assessment using the methodology of Women's Engagement in Cities (WEC) Profile, and co-creation workshops with more than 120 women across 4 districts to co-design spatial interventions responding to challenges facing women in the city (Cities Alliance, 2021). The learning report (Cities Alliance, 2022) of the Femmedina project presents the methodology that was followed and generated outcomes.

Women participants called for initiatives that improve their access to services (e.g. extending opening hours of cultural centres and public libraries in the Medina so that they could use them in the afternoon and on weekends) but that also ease the burden of their assigned reproductive responsibilities (e.g. mainstreaming municipal kindergartens that offer reduced rates and on-site childcare services for employees), or support them in exercising their rights (e.g. establishing a legal facility and support services for women to identify, document, and report discrimination in employment and workplace harassment). To respond to some of the needs and interests identified by women, the assessment report and co-creation workshops informed the design of interventions to reconfigure and design, select and procure more inclusive public spaces in coordination with the municipality which led to the implementation for instance of market stalls for women and playground facilities for their kids and a capacity building centre for artisanal and entrepreneurial women (Cities Alliance, 2021). But the project also sought to foster institutional change within the municipality of Tunis through mainstreaming gender in urban planning. It delivered for instance two capacity-building workshops on gender-sensitive budgeting (see section 5.5) and participatory project management for municipal members and administrative staff with reported changes in participants' skills in negotiations and findings innovative solutions to problems but also changes in attitudes towards advocating for women's needs (Cities Alliance, 2022).

*Key resources:*

Cities Alliance, (2020). [Cities For Women: Urban Assessment Framework Through a Gender Lens](#).

Cities Alliance, (2021). FEMMEDINA: inclusive city programme in Tunis. [An assessment of women's participation in the Medina of Tunis](#).

Cities Alliance, (2022) Inclusive city programme in Tunis: Rapid learning appraisal. [Learning report](#).

## 5.4 Infrastructure: grey & green

### **Gender analysis**

People's work in the care, formal, and informal economies determine how they live in cities. Since work is often segregated along gender and social characteristics, it influences what services and infrastructural systems people of different gender, age, ethnicity and so on, use and when; how often they navigate their neighbourhood or city and by what modes of transportation. Due to the multiple responsibilities assigned to women in terms of care work, their mobility requirements are typically more varied and complex than men's (UN-Habitat, 2012). Yet, the construction of the built environment prioritises the work undertaken for pay which goes on in the public sphere over unpaid activities often performed at home (Ortiz Escalante & Gutierrez Valdivia, 2015). Hence, a gender analysis will typically make visible reproductive activities and their essential role in the functioning of the city and be attentive to the availability of social infrastructure (creches, schools, health centres) versus productive hubs (markets, commercial centres; industries). Attention to GESI considerations are equally crucial in interventions focused on 'green infrastructures' and the energy transition as the workforce and decision) makers in these sectors are heavily male-dominated, resulting in conscious and unconscious biases that can reinforce inequalities.

*Gender roles and responsibilities:* What is the gender-division of labour in the targeted city and how does it affect the spatial distribution of different social categories as well as their mobility patterns? Who participate in unpaid care work and what role(s) and responsibilities do they have? Are these roles barriers to accessing livelihood opportunities?

*Access and control over resources:* What types of transport do different city groups use, how frequently and at what times of the day or night? Do physical infrastructure (e.g. water networks, electricity, transport options) match the specific gender needs of women and men? Does urban design discourage certain groups from accessing certain services or public spaces such as accessible pavements, walkable routes, cycling lanes, wheelchair-friendly bus stops or metro stations)? Is affordability a constraint for certain dwellers to use public transport?

*Decision-making structures:* what is the current representation and participation of women in local government? Does transport planning integrate women's and girl's safety considerations in transit? Does urban planning consider cultural norms and community practices for daily chores, privacy requirements, and potential risks and threats? Does it create and sustain childcare facilities? Is there a history of corrupt practices affecting city planning and infrastructure services?

*Knowledge and Information:* Do all city dwellers have opportunities to take part in public consultations when a major urban development project is planned?

*Protection:* Do physical infrastructure reinforce violence risks for certain groups (e.g. lack of lighting)? How does the lack of safety and protection services inhibit women's and girls' mobility?

The scale of the intervention will very much influence who is included in co-production of infrastructure development. However, interventions focused on changes in the built environment are likely to involve engineers, planners, or builders, as well as the private sector, and this is a good opportunity to focus the gender analysis on targeted organizations to see how the intervention can help them address GESI considerations in their practice.

### **GESI-outcomes**

Most tools designed to engage marginalised groups in co-producing urban planning tend to generate interventions that aim to change the built environment and re-think the way infrastructure are designed and for what purpose. In the Her City programme described above,

girls involved in co-design solutions across geographical contexts primarily asked for allowing more nature in the urban space (e.g. more trees, flowers and parks, ponds, fountains, greenhouses, urban agriculture, beehives). They also stressed the need for physical changes that increase security and mobility (e.g. traffic lights, zebra crossings, public transport stops and waiting areas, pedestrian streets and cycle paths, street lighting and signage) (UN-Habitat & Global Utmaning, 2022).

Immediate physical change in the built environment is the primary goal of **tactical urbanism**, a short-term, low-cost trial of scalable interventions that can provide information for inclusive long-term planning, and which relies on (often informal action) of empowered urban citizens (Ciudad Emergente, 2013). It is an approach that helps: (i) increase the understanding of city user's needs, challenges and constraints, (ii) pilot ideas before committing large financial Investments, (iii) address problems related to users' experience in public space through cost-effective interventions and, (iv) encourage residents, non-profits, local businesses, and government agencies to work together (GIZ, 2020).

The tactical urbanism pilot 'Me Muevo Segura' implemented in Bogota (Colombia) aimed to improve the perception of the safety of specific urban spaces in Bogota and public transport for women and girls at night (TUMI & CAF, 2020). The project implemented tactical urbanism interventions, planned, designed and executed jointly with citizens and the city's agents. After an initial diagnosis that listed 25 areas categorized as unsafe, especially at night, four intervention sites were selected among the most dangerous spaces. Participatory workshops were held with neighbourhood residents, social organizations, cycling and artist collectives in each locality, with the support of the District Secretariat for Women to develop proposals for short-term, easy-to implement actions, as well as recommendations for longer-term action which were submitted to relevant public and private entities. Short-term interventions were completed within one week and included deep cleaning, fencing along water channels, recycling residual materials from construction site to demarcate trails, planting trees and flower beds, and painting colourful art murals and children's games on the ground. The methodology also documents changes in inhabitants' perceptions before and after the intervention, which is an important aspect to monitor potential GESI outcomes. For instance, while people perceived improvements in the lighting and openness of spaces and in the physical condition of pathways, or an increase in the flow of people, they did not perceive any change in terms of security or gender diversity. While these outcomes reflect some, but limited, benefits realized from improved access to public space, subsequent monitoring revealed that inhabitants appropriated some of the spaces to organize collective activities to serve their own interests e.g. weekly outdoor cinema and aerobic classes, or to play and learn with their families, and plant community gardens (see TUMI & CAF, 2020).

*Key resources:*

Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative – TUMI, Banco de desarrollo de America Latina - CAF, (2020). [Replicability Manual. TACTICAL URBANISM PILOT.](#)

## 5.5 Finance: existing & innovative sources

### **Gender analysis**

There is a whole sector dedicated to mainstream GESI considerations into public finance for climate change and resilience building, because adequate funding is the backbone of gender-

responsive approaches. A gender analysis will support the identification of areas where the gender-specific needs and priorities of certain city groups are under-funded and the barriers preventing marginalized groups from benefiting from financial resources. Some key questions include:

*Gender roles and responsibilities:* What is the gender-division of labour in the targeted city and how does it affect remuneration patterns? Who participate in unpaid care work and what role(s) and responsibilities do they have? Are these roles barriers to accessing funding opportunities?

*Access and control over resources:* what do social norms say about decision-making processes regarding finance at household level? Do women need consent from their husband to open a bank account or access a loan? Do women have collateral to enable them to access finance?

*Decision-making structures:* what is the current representation and participation of women in local government? Who decides the city budget and the allocation of funding towards social infrastructure? Is there a history of corrupt practices within institutions that govern the city and channel public funding? Are there budgetary allocation to services for women and girls dealing with violence? At the level of financial institutions, are there provisions to adapt the size of loans, terms of repayment, interest rates to meet the needs and barriers faced by women and other marginalized groups?

*Knowledge and Information:* Are there existing schemes that provide local financing to urban communities, and if so, how are they advertised/communicated? What barriers do women-led grassroots face to access public funding?

*Protection:* are there risks of violence associated with handling money for instance in the case of neighbourhood associations receiving and managing cash from membership fees or funding? Are there accessible financial services that rely on mobile transfers to reduce exposure to violence?

## **GESI-outcomes**

Lead organisations may choose to target community groups and support them in accessing financial resources or work with local governments to influence the allocation of funding towards social infrastructure or projects that directly respond to gender-specific interests. In both cases, the approach is likely to rely on mainstreaming GESI considerations within the existing policy, financial and institutional framework. One essential tool to help with this process is gender budgeting which enables policymakers to consider the gendered impacts of public spending, and work towards a more equitable collection and allocation of public resources (C4CITIES, 2019). Gendered outcomes of gender budgeting include increased participation in the planning and budgeting process (at national, city, or programme levels), increased accountability and transparency in fiscal planning and enhanced equality (EIGE, 2019). Initiatives tend to follow gender mainstreaming approaches “through incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality” (Council of Europe, 2005: 10).

The city of Vienna (Austria) is one of the early implementers of gender budgeting, since 2006 as part of its broader approach to gender mainstreaming in urban governance. It has led to investments in redesigning parks to become more user-friendly for women by adding lighting and shared spaces for caretakers, wider pavements, and more pedestrian paths (EBRD, 2020). At the governance level, all municipal departments must assess who benefits from the public funds and services they deliver, and the impacts on inequalities (C40, 2019). In Berlin (Germany), the gender analysis of the federal policy that finances professional training of skilled workers showed that it mainly benefited people in so-called "male professions", in contrast to workers in women-dominated care professions, such as in education, nursing and care for the elderly (Senatsverwaltung für Finanzen, n.d.). Similarly, the Berlin gender budgeting process

examined how public space dedicated to playgrounds could be distributed more fairly as sport facilities privileged by girls (e.g. ribars, trampoline) were limited compared to those more visited by boys (e.g. football pitches, BMX and skater courses). Even the allocation of funding to publicly sponsored sports mainly served men and boys, while sports often chosen by women and girls, such as dance and fitness usually had to be paid for privately (Ibid). Hence, gender budgeting can foster the (re) allocation of finance to better respond to the practical and strategic interests of marginalised groups, and can also be transformative in changing formal institutional structures that govern the use of finance and often maintain inequalities. These examples show however, that the transformative potential of gender budgeting is enabled by the commitment of stakeholders (i.e. urban authorities) who already exercise power over governance processes.

*Key resources:*

Council of Europe, (2005). Gender budgeting. Directorate General of Human Rights : Strasbourg. <https://rm.coe.int/1680596143>

Chauhan, D. (2021). Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change resilience. Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok: the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) and UN Women regional office for Asia and the Pacific. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/06/training-manual-on-gender-and-climate-resilience>

## 6 Learning for co-production to advance GESI outcomes

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The tools presented previously aim to operationalise the integration of GESI in co-production, either in specific activities like the Safety audit or Gender Budgeting, or throughout the process of co-production via a guiding framework. While these tools and approaches are prescriptive to support efficiency, it should be reminded that co-production as a process can take many forms and be applied in multiple ways. Principles for effective co-production have been proposed (e.g. Vincent et al., 2021). This section however, focuses on learning from the GESI community of practice to offer elements of guidance for co-production to integrate and advance equality and inclusion.

### 6.1 Interventions need to be specific about their GESI-end goal and approach

How can co-production avoid exclusion and actively contribute to challenge inequalities? A starting point is for those involved in co-production to clarify if they intent to promote GESI, to what extent and how. The previous sections have shown that there are varying levels of ambitions and different ways of implementation to achieve distinct but complementary GESI outcomes. Being clear on the intention is necessary to then choose and adapt strategies and tools that are appropriate. It can also help practitioners to adopt an ambitious, yet realistic strategy, and see if the resources they aim or can mobilise are adequate. To encourage buy-in from power-holders and city-level decision-makers, it is also useful to remind them that applying a GESI perspective benefit not only women and girls, but also other groups who are generally marginalised from planning processes (Ortiz Escalante & Gutierrez Valdivia, 2015).

## 6.2 The role of intermediaries

There are often trade-offs between the practicalities and affordability of certain approaches on the one hand, and on the other hand, the level of nuance that is needed to best support the inclusion of different groups of interest. Lessons from applying a gender and generation focused planning tool by IIED to identify climate resilience building priorities in Tanzania, emphasizes the crucial role of local community-based organisations to navigate some of these trade-offs. The tool recommends first the separation of participants along their gender and age characteristics to create ‘safe spaces’ for them to share their opinions and overcome the informal rules that usually govern public discourse — such as women or young people remaining silent, before allowing moments of collective discussions to share each group’s perspectives (Greene et al., 2020). However, in one setting in Zanzibar, local practitioners advised to anonymise the perspectives of different groups to create a neutral space to be more conducive of collective decision-making (Ibid). Intermediaries can bridge divides between authorities or powerful actors and marginalised groups; they can help to ‘translate’ the unspoken power relations that participants bring with them from their experience at household or village level, and overall facilitate interactions based on context-relevant understanding and sensitivity of social norms (Ibid). However, intermediaries must also be mindful of their own power over the co-production process.

## 6.3 Equitable co-production requires remunerating time invested in taking part

Co-production requires time and time is a resource that marginalized people might not have. One of the tools presented above, the HerCity digital toolbox, poses an important question in the planning phase: will participants be remunerated or rewarded for their participation and how? The tool recommends at minima that the facilitating team produce participants with a letter of recommendation and provide refreshments and transport during the activities. This might be perceived as ‘enough’ with adolescent girls as the main target group and in contexts where they go to school. However, when engagement activities request the time of young people and adults who would be busy working otherwise (including in performing unpaid domestic chores), their remuneration becomes necessary, particularly if engagement is sustained over time and involves several-hour workshops and commute. A gender-responsive approach is necessary to avoid perpetuating unequal access to resources and opportunities and challenge assumptions. For instance, the HerCity toolbox stresses the importance to procure a local contractor to undertake the spatial interventions, assuming they will get paid for their work (and they will certainly ask for payment). They are also likely to be men given the gender-division of labour in the construction sector in most countries. However, the tool’s guidelines do not equally stress the importance to procure and remunerate women’s time and knowledge as participants in co-production activities. In fact, it is common to see participatory workshops, facilitated by (paid) professionals, engaging with (unpaid) community members. One of the projects that implemented the HerCity toolbox in Kampala (Uganda) stressed the success story of a 25-year-old entrepreneur who established a juice bar in her community, using the initial funds received from participating in Her City activities, as her start-up capital (UN-Habitat, 2023). This shows that the question of fair compensation for people’s involvement is not just a condition to encourage the participation of the most marginalised groups, who often have the least financial capacities to take time-off work, but it also contributes to GESI outcomes through providing the means for people to engage in community life and decision-making and acquire new assets. Since working with women or other community grassroots is imperative in the co-production of urban development, their time spent on the intervention participating in workshops and providing feedback, should be remunerated and this needs to be factored in budgets.

## 6.4 Co-production does not guarantee inclusiveness or equality

The absence of a gender analysis and a lack of attention to power relations and their effects on inequalities can lead co-production to inadvertently exclude certain groups. This is likely to reinforce inequality and produce information that is not usable (Vincent et al., 2021).

Meaningful engagement is one important aspect of effective co-production, but it is also not enough if the end goal is to support GESI outcomes, and notably to tackle some of the barriers faced by marginalised groups to meet their everyday needs and enhance their resilience. Even after co-produced action plans have been created and even if the human and financial resources are in place to implement them, interventions can still face the same hurdles that many marginalised people cope with on a daily basis: lack of access to resources, lack of voice, power and visibility, resistance to changes and backlash. For instance, in the same HerCity project in Kampala, one urban designer involved in the action plan pointed out the difficulties to secure a space to build the infrastructure envisioned in the project, and that access to land had been taken for granted (Kronsted, 2023). Hence, most co-production processes would not fixate on a single outcome but recognize how various outcomes interact and reinforce each other, and could support actions led by social movements to achieve transformation (Castan Broto et al., 2022).

## 6.5 The transformation potential of co-production might only become clear over the long term

A repeated lesson from development interventions seeking to achieve transformative GESI outcomes is that they tend to operate within funders' relatively short timeframes that restrict long-term planning and limit the scale of change required to tackle social norms. This does not mean that interventions should necessarily revise their ambitions down when they operate against a set deadline. It does imply though that co-production processes must, again, be clear on their GESI-related objectives and on the manner to which their activities aim to contribute to these goals, even if the transformative potential might realise after the project cycle is over. For instance, an intervention can support small incremental changes by training city planners to integrate different users' perspective in their work. The main outcomes of the project might be that it fosters a more inclusive engagement that leads to gender-responsive planning, but actual changes within institutions in the way they govern this process might only be observable years later and in ways that were not initially anticipated. Monitoring and evaluation plans can factor this in through maintaining feedback processes for several years and this is certainly aided when co-production is implemented by actors committed in following through the process over the long-term.

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