

GENDER ISSUE GUIDE

GENDER RESPONSIVE URBAN LEGISLATION,
LAND AND GOVERNANCE



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GENDER ISSUE GUIDE

**GENDER RESPONSIVE URBAN LEGISLATION,
LAND AND GOVERNANCE**

UN  HABITAT

Gender Issue Guide: Gender Responsive Urban Legislation, Land and Governance

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A look at daily life on the streets of Kampala, Uganda on September 28, 2012. © Shutterstock



SECTION 1

Background

More than half of the World's population live in cities and that figure is expected to increase to almost 5 billion by 2030.¹ This increase in urban population and changing understandings around how people experience urban living, and thus how planning and governance arrangements must be operationalized, calls on urban policy makers to recognize and respond to the emerging and different needs, concerns and interests of urban women, men, boys and girls.

Urbanisation affects women and men in fundamentally different ways given the social differences or roles allotted to women and to men. Since these roles are not equally valued they further create inequities between women, girls, boys and men. For urban women and girls, these different experiences and ways of experiencing urban life give rise to consequences that undermine their capabilities and aspirations.

Recognising the gendered nature of urbanisation means that;

- Effective urban planning, management and governance require laws or regulatory frameworks that are gender sensitive and responsive.
- Authorities must recognize that securing land tenure and property rights for all are fundamental to housing and livelihoods and must work towards addressing gender discrimination faced by the society's poor and other vulnerable groups
- Urban authorities must be attentive to the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men with both equally valued so that the provision and proximity of urban services, or the planning of urban spaces does not give rise to different consequences that reinforce inequalities.
- Participatory and inclusive processes are important to understand experiences and enact change and, therefore, need to be developed and undertaken to help women, youth, and the poor engage in the development of appropriate governance, legislative and regulatory frameworks

1 UN-Habitat, 2013. *State of the World Cities 2012/2013*. UN-Habitat New York: Routledge



Life of local people Kibera slums in Nairobi, Kenya, the largest slum in Africa with about 270 thousand people, on February 6, 2014. © Shutterstock

- Urban safety must be recognised as a core part of progressive urban development. Authorities developing crime and violence prevention strategies must ensure that they are inclusive of women and men to improve the liveability and quality of urban life and health for women, girls, boys and men.

INTRODUCTION: THE CENTRALITY OF GENDER IN URBAN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

This issue guide focuses attention on **Urban Legislation, Land and Governance** in order to highlight the “where and how” of gender responsive interventions that strengthen gender equality and women’s empowerment in urban development.

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