

## Recommendations by Women's Groups

to

**Hon'ble Minister Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs,**

**Government of India**

**31<sup>st</sup> August 2018**

Representatives from 11 states attended the National Consultation “Feminist Urban Futures: Cities for Women and Girls” co-convened by Jagori and Safetipin, with support from UN Women, UNICEF and Oak Foundation on 30-31 August, 2018 in New Delhi, and submitted the following key recommendations on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018.

1. The “**right to the city**” movement in the New Urban Agenda advocates for the participation of diverse women, girls and transpersons in creating and co-creating the city, emphasizing the notion of *gender equality as a human right*. Women and girls should experience equal rights and freedoms, in moving about the city *without the threat of any form of discrimination and fear of violence*. They need to be recognized as citizens in their own right with equal access to financial, housing and other securities. Importantly, we advocate for measures that do not advance surveillance systems and moral policing infrastructure, that are driven by patriarchal social norms, but rather demand that urban design of infrastructure be liberating, creative, inclusive and so they enjoy lives with dignity. When policies are drafted, the needs of the last woman, girl and transperson, be addressed. Given social barriers of accessibility for women, especially from Dalit, Tribal, trans, differently abled and minority communities, there is need to address discrimination and exclusion. National urban policies should respond to all these issues as well as respond to key targets of the New Urban Agenda and SDG's relating to gender inclusive cities.
2. There is need to engage women and transpersons in the planning and design of all cities including smart cities and housing and infrastructure projects. Planning of urban policies and schemes need to become gender inclusive. This will strengthen the intersectional agendas of SDG 11 and SDG 5.
3. **Data:** All data need to be gender disaggregated so that gender outcomes can be mapped. It would be useful to map and audit cities, especially the peripheries where the marginalised communities live to ensure the adequacy of infrastructure (public toilets, access to transport, water and health facilities, education, livelihoods, etc.).

4. Experiences of women and transpersons by applying a strong gender lens to the liveability Index's parameters - such as governance, education, health, safety and security, affordable housing and inclusiveness, public open spaces, transportation and mobility, waste water management, solid waste management and reducing pollution, climate action plans, etc.
5. There is need to invest in innovations with regard to gender-centric technology, so it enhances access of women, girls and transpersons of E- Governance platforms.
6. Tracking and monitoring of all urban policies and schemes should ensure women and transpersons are benefitting equally from the investments in infrastructure. Partnerships with women's groups is key to strengthening gender policies at all stages - design, planning and implementation outcomes - in the implementation of urban and gender policies.
7. While the government has promised to ensure all new housing projects will be in the name of women, it is important to ensure that the housing design is gender responsive, the housing projects should be located in places where an ecosystem of services (public transport, water, sanitation, etc.) is assured.
8. There are large transient populations accessing the cities for work, it is crucial to ensure their access to adequate, affordable accommodation and basic services, and legislate laws against housing discrimination on the basis of gender, caste, class, sexuality, minority status, disability, employment status, etc.
9. As women work in the informal sector as domestic workers, street vendors, sex workers, home based workers, waste collectors, construction workers, etc. they should be provided with safe access to public spaces and services.
10. Lack of adequate housing for women, the high rents/cost of housing in cities, poor child care facilities, (including for single mothers) makes it difficult for women to participate in the workforce. Childcare institutions such as crèches, pediatric and maternity hospitals must find special place in city plans so that children from low income communities can have easier access to services.
11. Planning policies should design for polycentric city, with mixed land use for diverse populations - including affordable housing for students, working women hostels/accommodation especially for single women and those with children, from marginalised communities, differently abled people, senior citizens' homes, shelters for homeless, 'emergency homes' offering short stays for women experiencing violence, and recreational spaces.

12. Safety audits have shown that many of our cities have inadequate vending spaces, lack of public facilities and inadequate transport. Women share that they feel safer with provisions of better lighting, more people on the street, ‘eyes on the street’, better walk paths, facilities for children nearby, and so on. Provisions for the above must be made.
13. It is useful to build and/ or upgrade safe and affordable public spaces that are accessible to women, girls, and transpersons such as parks, waterfronts, monuments, etc. It is crucial to design public spaces with adequate signage, cycle paths, walk paths, with clear display of helpline numbers and availability of visible police assistance, that are also differently abled friendly, and that women and transpersons can access easily.
14. There is need to bring about improvements in governance, fiscal and budgetary processes to strengthen interventions that have a bearing on women’s safety in all infrastructure programmes. The Ministry can develop institutional gender transformative policies and strategies that are meaningfully implemented, and monitored on the ground, tracking gender equality from an intersectional perspective. There is need to involve women through consultation, participation and decision-making processes, and address the impacts of infrastructure projects on their lives and livelihoods. There is need for gender disaggregated data collection, synergies between inter departmental ministries convergence across all data points, effective monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes to assess how gender mainstreaming is progressing.
15. The Ministry must create Gender Working Groups, so that Women’s Groups and gender policy experts can be part of the process to bridge the gender divide in policy and execution of urban policies.

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