

# A City Tailored to **Women**

The Role of Municipal  
Governments in Achieving  
Gender Equality

2004 EDITION



Federation  
of Canadian  
Municipalities



**Federation of Canadian Municipalities  
International Centre for Municipal Development**

24 Clarence Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1N 5P3

Brock Carlton  
Director  
International Centre for Municipal Development

Telephone: (613) 241-5221  
Fax: (613) 241-7117  
E-mail: [international@fcm.ca](mailto:international@fcm.ca)  
Web Site: [www.icmd-cidm.ca](http://www.icmd-cidm.ca)

**City of Montreal's *Femmes et ville*  
(*Women in the City*) Program**

Service du développement culturel  
et de la qualité du milieu de vie  
Direction du développement social  
800, boulevard de Maisonneuve Est  
Montreal, Quebec  
H2L 4L8

Anne Michaud  
Coordinator  
E-mail: [anmicho@ville.montreal.qc.ca](mailto:anmicho@ville.montreal.qc.ca)  
Web site: [www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville)

This publication is available online at:  
[www.icmd-cidm.ca/](http://www.icmd-cidm.ca/)  
[www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville)

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the City of Montreal (*Femmes et ville* Program) encourage the use, translation, adaptation and reproduction of this document for non-commercial purposes and if the source material is credited.

**A City Tailored to Women – The Role of Municipal Governments in Achieving Gender Equality**

Document protected by copyright law © Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the City of Montreal (*Femmes et ville* Program)

All rights reserved.

*La version originale en français est disponible sur demande.  
Version española disponible bajo pedido.*

FCM Liaison: Renée Giroux  
Concept and Coordination: Anne Michaud

Research (First Edition): Sophie Paquin  
Writer (First Edition): Danielle Stanton  
Collaboration: Joyce Brown, Francine Gagnon,  
Gloria Gallant

Research and Writing (2004 Edition): Anne Michaud

Research Assistants: Sophie Dupiech, Kim Cornellissen,  
Marie-Pierre Martinet  
English Translation: Sarah Binder  
English Editing: Susie Lamarche

June 2004 (Second Edition, revised and expanded)  
ISBN: 0-919080-69-3  
FCM Publication: 1030E

The Federation gratefully acknowledges the support of  
the Canadian International Development Agency for its  
publications and international programmes.

# An Invitation to Municipalities in Canada and Abroad

It has become increasingly clear that action to improve the daily lives of citizens is at its most effective at the local government (municipal) level.

But while both women and men are affected by the actions of municipal governments, they experience them differently. Women are not as actively involved in municipal politics, even though they are specifically affected by decisions that concern their socio-economic condition, including housing, the balance between work and family responsibilities, safety, transportation, health and education..

By ensuring the civic participation of women and by responding to their specific needs, municipal governments can play a leading role in helping to achieve the equality of men and women. This is the challenge we invite you to take up.

This publication is a cooperative effort between the City of Montreal's *Femmes et ville (Women in the City)* Program and the International Centre for Municipal Development of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The first edition, published in 1997, was widely distributed in both French and English and was well received throughout the world.

In the past seven years, and especially after the Istanbul Cities Summit (Habitat II), there has been a worldwide proliferation in gender-equality initiatives and in networks that facilitate the exchange of good practices and expertise relevant to municipalities and their residents.

The 2004 revised and expanded edition of this document provides references to organizations, events and publications that are available on the Internet. The electronic version of this document will be updated periodically with the help of an online questionnaire. We invite you to fill out this questionnaire and share your experience at [www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville)

We hope municipal governments will use this document to assess the impact of all their decisions on the quality of life of women, and adjust their actions accordingly. By sharing the ongoing international brainstorming on this issue and presenting actual achievements, we want to contribute to a social environment where women can participate fully in city life for the benefit of all our communities.



# Contents

AN INVITATION TO MUNICIPALITIES IN CANADA AND ABROAD .....	III
LIVING TOGETHER IN THE CITY .....	1
<b>A Local and Worldwide Issue</b> .....	2
<b>Networks for Sharing Information, Creating Awareness, Setting Examples and Providing Tools</b> .....	4
WOMEN TAKING THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE.....	7
<b>1. Elected Representatives and Managers: Women on an Equal Footing</b> .....	8
<b>2. Women as Full-Fledged Citizens</b> .....	13
<b>3. The “Ideal” Women-Friendly City</b> .....	17
Making a Commitment.....	17
Creating Helpful Structures and Mechanisms .....	18
<b>4. A Gender Perspective for the City:</b> .....	22
The Women-Friendly City .....	22
Four Steps Toward Better Understanding and More Effective Action .....	23
Methods and Tools for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Management .....	30
<b>5. Achievements</b> .....	33
<b>6. Questionnaire: How Women-Friendly Is Your City?</b> .....	50





# Living Together in the City

Cities are primarily environments for living. The architecture and design of our cities and neighbourhoods, as well as the various urban functions, reflect our culture, values, lifestyle and relationships – in short, our way of living together.

Cities belong to the women and men who live in them and citizenship begins primarily at the neighbourhood and city levels. The design of urban infrastructure and activities must permit both women and men to fully exercise their citizenship.

Long confined to domestic activities, women have gradually moved into the public arena. The urban setting must adapt to this cultural and social change, and cities must now deal with the realities of women.

In the mid-seventies, North American researchers began to examine the relationship between women and the urban environment. By the eighties and nineties, municipal action started to include this dimension thanks to the involvement of women's groups. Many cities responded to their requests by institutionalizing mechanisms such as the *Safe City Committee* in Toronto, the *Femmes et ville (Women in the City) Program* in Montreal, and the *Femmes et ville Commission* in Quebec City.

The implementation of regional and local development policies and the debate over municipal mergers have led to a new mobilization of women's and gender-equality groups. Montreal, Ottawa and Quebec City have ratified the *IULA Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government* among their strategies to solidify the commitment of the new municipal entities to gender equality. As well, *Femmes et ville* consultative bodies have been requested and created in a number of municipalities.

## A Local and Worldwide Issue

Improving the quality of life for women quickly became an international concern. In 1994, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) brought together for the first time delegations from 27 countries to examine the theme, *Women in the City: Housing, Services, and the Urban Environment*. This conference allowed participants to share experiences and practices and to compare national policies designed to bolster the participation of women in municipal development.

The *United Nations' Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)*, held in Istanbul in June 1996, marked an important watershed by giving a prominent place to women's concerns. Following closely after the *World Conference on Women* (Beijing, 1995), Habitat II prompted member states to make commitments to a common goal in the framework of its Habitat Agenda: achieving equality between men and women in the management of human institutions within cities and communities (see box).

The first *World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities*, a Habitat II side event that brought together over 500 mayors, issued a final declaration urging members of municipal associations to implement the Habitat Agenda at the local level; the signatories specifically resolved to “accord every opportunity for full access and participation by women in municipal decision-making by ensuring necessary provisions for an equitable distribution of power and authority.”

*Habitat II* also established the importance of partnerships and the sharing of experiences and resources, and called on governments, local authorities and their partners to carry out five-year plans.

In 1998, the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, passed its *Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government* calling on local authorities to echo the gender-equality commitments made by their respective governments.

By the time of the review meeting in New York in June 2001 (Istanbul+5), there was already a body of examples of progress towards gender equality, among other goals in human settlements, due to local partnerships between women's groups, civil society and local authorities.



## See

*The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development*

[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

*The Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government*

[www.cities-localgovernments.org](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org)

*Habitat Agenda – Gender Equality:*

Source: [www.un.org/ga/Istanbul+5/](http://www.un.org/ga/Istanbul+5/)

Paragraph 46 – “We commit ourselves to the goal of gender equality in human settlements development. We further commit ourselves to:

- Integrating gender perspectives in human settlements related legislation, policies, programs and projects through the application of gender-sensitive analysis;
- Developing conceptual and practical methodologies for incorporating gender perspectives in human settlements planning, development and evaluation, including the development of indicators;
- Collecting, analyzing and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information on human settlements issues, including statistical means that recognize and make visible the unremunerated work of women, for use in policy and program planning and implementation;

- Integrating a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable resource management mechanisms, production techniques and infrastructure development in rural and urban areas;
- Formulating and strengthening policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision-making.”

[www.unchs.org/unchs/english/hagenda/ch-3d.htm](http://www.unchs.org/unchs/english/hagenda/ch-3d.htm)



## Networks for Sharing Information, Creating Awareness, Setting Examples and Providing Tools

To move the gender equality issue forward and build up common reference points, numerous networks have sprung up in recent years in many parts of the world at the local, regional and national levels. These networks aim to connect local authorities, elected women, grassroots women's groups and researchers, as well as non-governmental organizations.

These mechanisms for the exchange of information and experience raise awareness among municipal authorities, so that they create the conditions needed for women to fully exercise their citizenship and thus contribute to ensuring that women and men inhabit the city together equally.

Many subsequent international conferences have encouraged the sharing of practices and produced strategic alliances between networks of grassroots women's organizations and networks of municipalities and national associations of local authorities. The launch of contests to recognize good practices in gender equality and women's participation in local decision-making, as well as the inclusion of these criteria in several other contests on good urban practices, have validated the actions and publicized them in other municipalities and communities.

The adoption of policies and perspectives that promote women's participation and gender equality by governments, international bodies, national associations of municipalities and local authorities has finally made clear their importance to good urban governance.

### Networks

The *Huairou Commission* is a coalition of networks of grassroots women's organizations throughout the world dedicated to following up the commitments undertaken at Habitat II through such campaigns as *Women and Local Governance*.

[www.huairou.org](http://www.huairou.org)

The Commission sponsors a contest on best practices and has organized several sessions of the *Grassroots Women's International Academy*. It works in close partnership with local authorities, the United Nations and many other organizations.

The *Women in Cities International* network held the First International Seminar on Women's Safety, Making the Links, in Montreal in 2002 and launched the Women's Safety Awards in 2004.

[www.femmesetvilles.org](http://www.femmesetvilles.org)

The *International Union of Local Authorities* (IULA), together with the national associations of its members, has played a key role through its *Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government*, its gender-equality committee and its implementation of a *Global Program on Women in Local Decision-Making*.

*United Cities and Local Governments*, the new international organization resulting from the fusion of IULA and UTO (United Towns Organization), is committed to carrying on this work as a priority and to becoming the main source of information on women's participation in local decision-making.

[www.cities-localgovernments.org/uclg/](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/uclg/)

The United Nations agency *UN-Habitat* published a policy document on women and urban governance in 2001 and has included the issue in its Global Campaign on Urban Governance.

[www.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/](http://www.unhabitat.org/campaigns/governance/)

*UN-Habitat* also has a policy on gender equality.

[www.unhabitat.org/pubs/genderpolicy/](http://www.unhabitat.org/pubs/genderpolicy/)

The periodical *Habitat Debate* published a special issue, *Towards Woman-Friendly Cities* (Vol. 8, No. 4, 2002).

[www.unhabitat.org/hd/hd.asp](http://www.unhabitat.org/hd/hd.asp)

*UNIFEM* (United Nations Development Fund for Women) has started working with projects regarding women's participation in local decision-making in regions of Latin America, including several Andean communities.

[www.unifem.undp.org](http://www.unifem.undp.org)



### Best Practices Contests

Contests were organized in 2003 and 2004 to recognize good practices in promoting gender equality and women's participation by cities and local governments in the Latin America/Caribbean region.

[www.pgualc.org](http://www.pgualc.org) (Spanish only)

and in the Asia/Pacific region

[www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org](http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org)

A number of actions have been documented as a result (see Section 5). The good practices contests, through their questionnaires and entry forms, draw the attention of cities to municipal policies and structures they need to set up.

A questionnaire drawn up by the City of Montreal (available in French, English and Spanish) will help develop case studies of "women-friendly cities." Cities are invited to fill it out online at the site of the Femmes et ville program.

[www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville)

UN-Habitat's Best Practices contest includes *Gender Equality* and *Women's Empowerment* among its categories. Some 200 nominated case studies can be consulted in the database.

[www.bestpractices.org](http://www.bestpractices.org)



# Women Taking their Rightful Place

Gender equality has long been recognized as a basic principle by many societies. Now it is time to apply it to everyday life by responding to the different needs of women and men in the very organization of the urban environment.

Cities have long held the leading role in social life. They continue to play an increasingly important part in organizing and providing services to their citizens, both men and women, especially in the context of urbanization, decentralization and globalization. But women experience city life differently from men, because established norms and traditions have given them different roles and responsibilities.

Similar treatment, therefore, does not necessarily end up being equal treatment. The approach that “whatever is good for men is automatically good for women” must be dropped because its apparent neutrality is misleading: it conceals the specific needs of men and women and prevents us from detecting and rectifying persistent inequalities.

Women are experts in day-to-day living, a large majority of them having to juggle jobs and domestic duties. They have less time than men for political involvement or participation in consultations or decision-making. Thus, they have little say in the planning of municipal services, installations and design and are often poorly served as citizens: inadequate day-care services, rigid operating hours of municipal services, poorly adapted public transportation, unsafe public places, etc. The lack of access to services and resources also creates an obstacle to men’s equal sharing in household and family tasks.

Cities must now diversify, adapt to modern lifestyles, and support the changes needed to achieve gender equality at each stage of life. It is time for cities to give women a far bigger role and for women to take their rightful place as equal citizens.

## 1. Women Elected Representatives and Managers on an Equal Footing

Even though women make up more than 50 per cent of the population, they do not come close to making even half of the political and administrative decisions in cities.

There are many hurdles to women's participation in municipal government, the main one being the need to balance work and family responsibilities, particularly for women with young children. An organizational structure that perpetuates a division of labour based on gender is another hurdle. Thus, while women must be made aware of the importance of taking their rightful place, it is equally essential that men be educated, since they can – and must – be women's greatest allies in achieving gender equality.

Municipal governments have a role to play in helping women enter the decision-making process. Municipal decision-makers must understand the stakes and eliminate the systemic obstacles facing women.

Equal representation is certainly one way to ensure that the needs of men and women will be addressed in municipal planning and management. But aiming to strike a balance in the number of elected men and women will not be enough if the elected women remain pigeonholed in certain sectors. Transportation, financial management, highway maintenance and urban design also concern women. Equality also applies to management and throughout the municipal public service itself.

### ***Elected Representatives***

Local and international gender-equality actions have focused on raising the number of women elected to mayoralty and council posts. Despite these efforts, in 2004, women accounted for only 4.6 per cent of mayors (34 countries surveyed) and 15 per cent of councillors (52 countries.)<sup>1</sup>

With rare exceptions – such as in Sweden, where women make up 42 per cent of elected municipal councillors – progress in this area has been due mostly to national laws which impose quotas or parity. For example, in India, more than one million women gained access to municipal councils after a 1992 constitutional amendment assured them 30 per cent of seats in local administrations. France's law on parity pushed the proportion of women councillors from 21% to 47% in the 2001 election. It seems, then, that affirmative-action measures are the best way to counter systemic discrimination, the cause of the stagnation seen across the world.

Various additional measures can be taken, including a requirement by municipal political parties that at least 50 per cent of candidates for election be women – providing they are not made to run in districts where they stand little chance of being elected.

1. Worldwide Program on Women and Local Decision-Making [www.cities-localgovernments.org](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org)



When a political party comes to power, it can bolster equal representation on the executive committee by reserving a number of seats for women. The same applies to nominations on various municipal commissions or regional and internal committees. In fact, the goal of gender parity should guide every aspect of municipal politics.

Women’s access to power can be facilitated by conditions such as the commitment and support of political parties, the building of a local and countrywide network of elected women, a mentorship system, training, the promotion of leadership among girls and women and, of course, financial support by governments and municipalities.

National governments can play a part in this by passing gender-equality laws – including measures that help to end violence against women and to reconcile work and family life – and by financing programs that encourage women to take part in local decision-making.

While it is a prerequisite for gender equality, the equal representation of women in local administrations does not necessarily guarantee that the municipal management will take women’s specific needs into account. To achieve this end, women representatives must not be confined to traditionally “feminine” portfolios (i.e., social or cultural ones).

They must also become real advocates for gender equality among their colleagues and in the local administration. The development of training programs in gender perspective for women and men elected officials, as well as the building of partnerships with local women’s groups, are some of the strong trends noted worldwide.

In many regions of the world, the national and international associations of local authorities support the development of networks of local elected women. These networks make it easier to organize training workshops for women elected officials and political candidates, to research and draw up local policies with a gender perspective, to gather data, etc.

	Canada (2004)	
	F	M
<b>Mayors</b>	419	3,309
%	11.2%	88.8%
<b>Councillors</b>	4,534	16,314
%	21.7%	78.3%
<b>City Managers</b>	1,926	1,802
%	51.7%	48.3%

A breakdown by province is available at:  
[www.icmd-cidm.ca](http://www.icmd-cidm.ca)



## See

Updated figures on the proportion of women in local authorities by region and country are available on the Web site of the *United Cities and Local Governments* (“Women” or “Gender” sections) at: [www.cities-localgovernments.org](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org)

The *Summit of Women Mayors and Local Officials in Asia/Pacific* took place in June 2001 (24 participant countries) with the backing of the United Nations. For more on the situation of women in local urban governments in the region, see the UNESCAP study *Women in Local Government in Asia and the Pacific: A comparative analysis of thirteen countries* at: [www.unescap.org/publications/detail.asp?id=502](http://www.unescap.org/publications/detail.asp?id=502)

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the preferred mechanisms for the promotion and support of women politicians and for the advancement of gender equality have included the creation of the Federation of Elected Municipal Women (*Federación de Mujeres Municipalistas de América Latina y El Caribe*), the consolidation of national associations of elected women and the creation of “women” commissions within municipal associations. For more on this subject, see *Género y gobierno local (Gender and Local Government)* on the site of the Federation of Latin American Cities and Municipal Associations at: [www.iula.net/](http://www.iula.net/)

In Africa, the emphasis has been on devising strategies to achieve gender equality and on the creation of a women’s caucus within national associations of local authorities. The World Program of the *United Cities and Local Governments* supports such initiatives in four countries (Kenya, Namibia, Uganda and Zimbabwe) as well as the establishment of a

women’s caucus and platform within the *Africa Union of Local Authorities*.  
[www.locgovinfo.co.zw/](http://www.locgovinfo.co.zw/)

The study *Genre et gestion locale du changement dans sept pays de l’Union européenne* (Gender and the Local Management of Change), conducted between 2000 and 2003, set out to measure the impact elected women officials have made in Belgium, France, Greece, Finland, Italy, Portugal and Sweden. It also identifies the manner in which gender affects public policy in urbanism, city design, safety, and the care of dependent persons.  
[www.sh.se/genreetlocal](http://www.sh.se/genreetlocal)

In December 2003, the *Council of European Municipalities and Regions* and its *Committee of Women Elected Representatives of Local and Regional Authorities* launched the “*Is Your Municipality at the Vanguard of Equality?*” project, which aims to document good practices, publish case studies and draw up a “model egalitarian city” to inspire cities in Europe and elsewhere.  
[www.ccre.org/](http://www.ccre.org/)

The European Commission’s *Community Programme on Gender Equality* (2001-2005) funds these activities.  
[europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/equ\\_opp/fund\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equ_opp/fund_en.html)

In Canada, the creation by the *Federation of Canadian Municipalities* of the *Committee on Canadian Women in Municipal Government* led to the organization of activities of exchange and support among elected women and to the creation of the *Increasing Women’s Participation in Municipal Consultation Processes* project.  
[www.icmd-cidm.ca](http://www.icmd-cidm.ca)



CIDA – Patricio Baeza, Chile

### **Municipal Employees**

To participate more fully in municipal planning and management, women must take their rightful place within municipal services, where they have traditionally occupied mostly low-ranking positions. Municipalities can use various means to raise the number of women in management, including:

- Employment equity programs designed to increase the number of women managers, professionals and specialized workers. However, to maintain the gains achieved, municipal governments and trade unions must assess the impact of job cuts since, being the last in, women run a higher risk of being the first out. Similarly, since hiring is currently restricted, the rules governing appointments and promotions should be reassessed to favour the access of women to senior positions;
- Affirmative action for access to non-traditional trades through activities such as training, pairing of employees and mentoring female university students;
- Measures to help women and men balance work and family obligations, such as flexible or part-time working hours and workplace day-care;
- Measures to provide employees with a safe and non-discriminatory workplace, including policies against sexual harassment and a safety-oriented workplace design.

Government policies on equal access to jobs, wage equity, and attracting women to non-traditional trades provide an invaluable support for the implementation of such measures at the municipal level.

## **Breaking through the Glass Ceiling**

### *Rennes (France)*

In response to the very low proportion of women in the upper echelons of the municipal administration, Rennes carried out a study to identify the obstacles and blocks to women's careers and to shed light on the inequality between men and women in recruitment, job hierarchy and assigned responsibilities. Through interviews with women, the study found that their failure to advance professionally was due to their difficulty in adapting to a work schedule based on a male model of time use.

The study prompted the city administration to set up the *Group for Equal Opportunities for Men and Women* and, given the extent of the problems, to create in 1995 a position unique in France of "Equal Opportunities Delegate". The delegate was given the mandate to act as the interface between city employees and the executive. The delegate coordinates the group's work, synthesizes its recommendations and presents them to the executive. The group later split into four thematic subgroups: Professional Equality/Parity, Time Use, Health And Working Conditions and Communications. The Communications sub-group reports internally on the initiative and keep women's work on the agenda.

Rennes has also developed training programs to raise the qualifications and status of jobs traditionally held by women. It has committed to making working conditions more ergonomic. Training in injury-preventing working positions and movements has especially benefited women working with children and the elderly. Equipment and furniture have also been re-evaluated along those lines and replaced as needed.

The city has taken on the problem of work schedules and the difficult issue of balancing work and private life. This is the main cause of inequalities between working men and women, as women executives in the original study pointed out. More attention has also been paid to the problem of sexual and psychological harassment. Parallel to the administration's group, elected women representatives have set up their own task force, which, among other actions, has produced a white paper analyzing political practices (such as the time and duration of meetings, delayed transmission of files, an old guard of male colleagues monopolizing speaking turns) and recommending changes.

That was how the majority party's women elected representatives were able to create a common culture, build solidarity – for example, in how they handle dossiers in council – raise awareness of sexist behaviour and denounce stereotyping.

Making the top municipal administrators sensitive to gender equality has been a prerequisite throughout this effort. Networking was also a productive strategy and the *"Femmes dans la ville"* (*Women in the City*) consultative committee was a key element in linking the gender-responsive forces. Gender parity on council, and especially in the executive, contributes to eliminating sexist planning and gender stereotypes.

Source: Michelle Kergoat [www.ville-rennes.fr](http://www.ville-rennes.fr)  
(French only)



Photos.com

## 2. Full-Fledged Citizens

Directly affected by housing conditions, transportation, public services and the urban environment, women have always been very involved in community life.

But primarily concentrated in traditionally female areas such as school committees and community groups, women did not go for political power and still today have few means of advocating for their issues and influencing public policy.

Yet women have developed a specific expertise, namely an alternative vision of city life, and their experience represents an added value for municipalities.

Women's contribution to urban life should be acknowledged for its true worth, so that they may finally assume an integral role in their community's political and administrative decision-making.

One way to bring this balance about is to favour and support the participation of women in public consultations and to help them take up key positions on consultative committees and councils where citizens sit.

*"Women do not have a linear and compartmentalized approach; instead, they tend to be universal and are used to devising solutions to complex problems. This approach may be useful to municipal partners, who must solve multifaceted and sectoral problems. Therefore, involving women in municipal partnership is more of a useful undertaking than a form of altruism."*<sup>2</sup>

Municipal governments can encourage the participation of women by making it easier for them to attend various public consultations: providing child-care or covering the cost of childcare to allow mothers to take part in consultation meetings, etc. Moreover, municipalities can reach women who are not mobile where they live (i.e., in low-cost housing or residences for the elderly) by creating travelling consultation units.

Finally, they must provide financial and technical support to women's groups who participate regularly in those activities. In all cases, municipal authorities should ensure that clear and accessible information is available. That is a premise and a basic requirement of democratic life.

## Increasing Women's Participation in Municipal Consultation Processes

*Increasing Women's Participation in Municipal Consultation Processes* is an FCM project sponsored by Status of Women Canada. The purpose of the one-year project, started in 2003, is to contribute to changing municipal consultation practices and policies so that the full diversity of Canadian women have a meaningful voice in the decisions that affect their daily lives.

### **Objectives**

- To equip municipal governments with information, tools and strategies that will assist them to develop and implement public participation processes that involve the diversity of women in their communities.
- To make recommendations to FCM, and to participating local municipalities, for action to strengthen women's involvement in public participation processes.
- To develop national and local partnerships that will strengthen the capacity of municipal governments to involve women, and the capacity of women's organizations to participate in municipal consultation and decision-making processes.

A report will be produced, documenting to what extent current participation processes reflect the full diversity of women and identifying the factors that inhibit or facilitate their participation. There will also be a toolkit of gender-inclusive participation tools and strategies for municipal governments and women's and community groups.

### **Methodology**

The project will use five main strategies:

- Building and strengthening partnerships
- Surveying gender-inclusive participatory practices at a municipal level
- Participatory action research in local communities
- Developing action plans
- Creating tools

Building and strengthening partnerships will be a key strategy at all stages of this project. Building partnerships involves identifying and strengthening existing networks, as well as developing new connections.

Research into the gender-inclusive public participation processes in Canadian municipalities will provide the context for local projects and the final report. A survey will be undertaken to assess where Canadian municipalities stand in relation to how they involve the public in a meaningful way, use participatory practices that facilitate public involvement, and provide access to these processes for diverse groups of women. This will help to develop research strategies for local projects, inform and substantiate a national action plan and suggest the type of tools needed to support municipalities to effectively involve diverse women.

Six municipalities have been selected to participate in participatory action research: Cowichan Valley (British Columbia), Halifax (Nova Scotia), Iqaluit (Nunavut), Montreal (Quebec), Saskatoon (Saskatchewan) and Thunder Bay (Ontario).

Although the local projects are based on a national framework, each local community tailors the research approach to its circumstances and priorities.

Local women, women's organizations and municipal representatives take part in adapting the research strategy, implementing the activities, analyzing the findings and developing a local action plan. The research includes activities to reach and involve diverse groups of women who are generally not involved in that municipality's participation processes due to various factors (Aboriginal status, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, refugee or immigrant status, age, language or geographical isolation).

The findings of the survey of public participation processes in Canadian municipalities and the local projects will be applied to create a toolkit of public participation methods that can effectively involve diverse women in municipal processes and decisions. The toolkit will be useful for non-governmental organizations and community organizations as well as municipal governments.

The project's results will be available on the Web site of FCM's International Centre for Municipal Development at:

[www.icmd-cidm.ca](http://www.icmd-cidm.ca)





## Norway

### **A Woman's Perspective in Municipal Planning**

The Norwegian government, in cooperation with municipal authorities, has carried out a pilot project designed to improve the integration of women into municipal life by including their point of view in such areas as urban planning and design. Although general guidelines were provided, the implementation varied according to participating municipalities. The project dealt with the design or re-evaluation of the municipal master plan.

First, a Steering Committee was created, comprising 6 to 8 members: the Mayor and heads of municipal services, a municipal staff representative, preferably an urban planner or designer, and representatives from interest groups. A balance in the number of male and female members was sought. The Steering Committee oversaw various task forces, at least half of whose members were women.

The draft of an urban plan was prepared and submitted for consultation. From the outset, additional activities were organized to encourage the participation of women: information about urban planning, promotion of women's participation in municipal consultation, training on how to develop an urban plan and on municipal life in general. Municipal governments recognized that use of gender-disaggregated data was important in carrying out the operation. Guides were also published, including *A Cookbook for Grassroots Planning*.

The project produced a number of changes, such as the acceptance by municipalities of the active participation of women's groups and the implementation of a "bottom-up process" that led to a better understanding of women's specific needs and, consequently, to more project funding.

See: Norway in the 1996 database at:

[www.bestpractices.org](http://www.bestpractices.org)



Photos.com



### 3. The “Ideal” Women-Friendly City

#### ***Making a Commitment***

The first step often taken by municipalities is to make a formal commitment to gender equality through the adoption of a declaration or charter in council. Since 1999, a number of cities around the world have done this by using IULA’s *Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government*. A municipality ratifying the declaration commits itself to, among other things:

- Strengthening efforts to make equal the number of women and men in decision-making bodies at all levels and in all policy areas;
- Applying the mainstreaming principle by integrating a gender perspective into all policies, programs and service-delivery activities in individual local governments and their representative associations at national, regional and international levels, and to developing methods for monitoring and measuring this mainstreaming work;
- Strengthening international and national cooperation among territorial groupings in order to further the exchange of experiences, as well as to devise and develop methods, policies and strategies that help offset barriers to women’s participation in local decision-making.

Having a common platform facilitates the monitoring of commitments and the exchange of good practices among municipalities at the national and international level.

See *Declaration*:

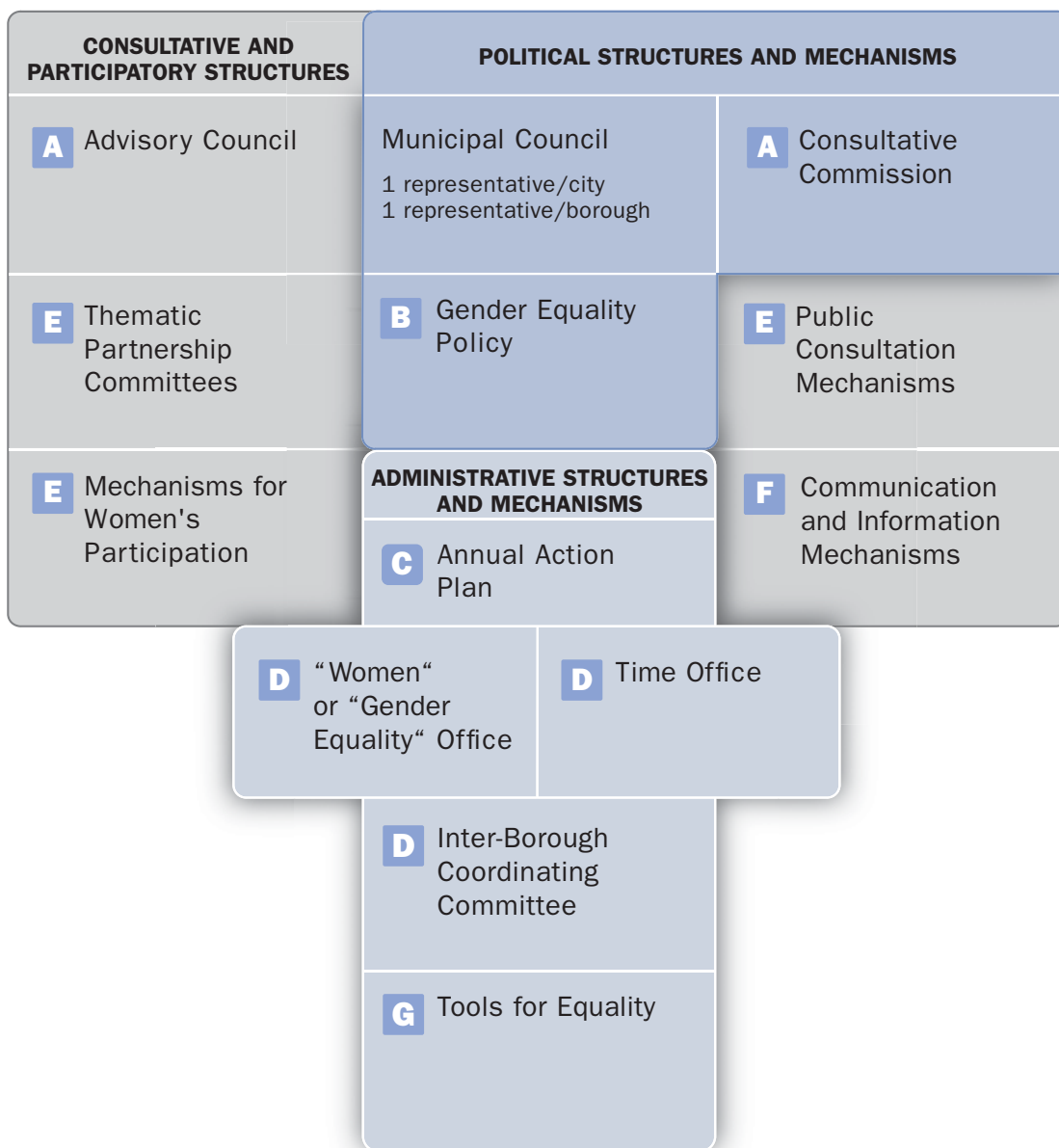
[www.cities-localgovernments.org/uclg](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/uclg)



CIDA – Pat Morrow, Nepal

## Creating Helpful Structures and Mechanisms

To carry out gender equality commitments, new structures and mechanisms, together with adequate staffing and funding, are required. These make up an overall system within which the various components interact. The “ideal” women-friendly and gender-equal municipality ensures that all the elements of this system are put into place.



## **A** A CONSULTATIVE STRUCTURE

### **The Women's/Gender Equality Commission or Advisory Council**

Some cities set up a commission made up of elected women representatives that is mandated to consult women's and citizen groups and make recommendations to council. Others establish an all-women advisory council comprising elected representatives, delegates from women's groups, public servants and citizens to encourage dialogue between citizens and the municipal apparatus. These commissions or councils are a useful tool for determining the priorities of a gender policy and carrying out an annual action plan. They report either to the municipal council or to the mayor. Within council, a woman councillor is given political responsibility for the gender issue. At the borough level, the portfolio is also handled by a member of the borough council.

## **B** A MUNICIPAL GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

A commitment to the principle of gender equality is followed by the development, adoption and implementation of a **Municipal Policy on Gender Equality**. This policy sets out the goals, means and resources needed, as well as the municipal structure that will be responsible for carrying out an annual gender equality action plan. The policy is cross-sectoral by definition and will apply to all areas of municipal activity, including the urban plan, housing, transportation and public safety. It may include specific

targets such as fighting poverty, violence against women, women's safety, access to housing and homeownership, or access to recreation. Since the municipality is also an employer, the policy will provide for equal access to jobs and salaries, as well as measures for work-family reconciliation to promote gender equality among municipal employees.

## **C** AN ANNUAL GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

The gender policy is concretized in an annual action plan adopted by council or the municipality's executive structures. The plan lays out actions and goals, budgets and resources to be allocated, partners involved, a timetable and the expected results. It is executed by the municipal administrative structure in charge of gender equality, in conjunction with women's groups, local community and public organizations, and women citizens. A mechanism that coordinates the various services, boroughs or districts ensures coherence in the work throughout the territory and encourages the flow of information and the sharing of good practices. A regular review of the actions helps determine new priorities and any needed adjustments.

## **D** AN ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

### **The Women in the City or Gender Equality Office**

This permanent structure is placed under the jurisdiction of the municipality's City Manager to ensure that it makes a real impact on all municipal services. A team of professionals, assisted by a secretariat, is responsible for carrying out the annual action plan. It coordinates a committee of representatives from the various departments, boroughs or districts. Every department and borough appoints a Gender Officer. The action plan is drawn up in close consultation with women's groups and with community and public partners. Various task forces are created to carry out projects. The annual budget covers recurring operating expenses such as salaries (including those of the secretariat), funding for research, evaluations, training and awareness programs, as well as a funding program for initiatives by women's groups and community organizations that are focused on women's empowerment. The allocation of adequate human and financial resources is a *sine qua non* condition for bringing to life the commitments made by the municipal council.

The Gender Equality Office is connected to an office called the **Bureau des temps**, or the Time Office. This Office has been created to ensure that the business hours of public and private municipal services dovetail with the population's various life schedules, such as work, travel, recreation, family activities, studies and shopping. The interconnectedness of the two offices improves service delivery by recognizing the differences in time use by women and men. This reduces gender inequality and enhances the quality of life of both groups.

## **E** PARTICIPATORY STRUCTURES

### **Partnership Committees**

Thematic task forces may be set up to ensure the involvement of women's groups, community organizations and other public and private institutions (such as government agencies, researchers, trade unions and businesses) in common-interest initiatives. The task forces, which receive financial and technical support from the municipality, can tackle such issues as women's safety, housing or transportation. These structures open an ongoing dialogue between the municipality and women's groups and lead to a better understanding of the realities and needs of women citizens.

### **Mechanisms for Public Consultation and the Promotion of Women's Participation in Municipal Life**

Mechanisms for citizen consultation and participation lie at the core of the basic principles of good urban governance. However, for these mechanisms to be truly accessible, hurdles to women's participation must be removed. To ensure that women attend public consultations and that their voices are heard, the municipality takes specific measures related to the schedule of hearings, their location (i.e., access by public transit and safety) and complementary services such as child care. An understanding of women's realities and needs calls for the use of other means to solicit their views, including qualitative research, focus groups, surveys and walking safety audits.

## **F** COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION MECHANISMS

The municipality makes sure that women receive distributed information about municipal services and urban development projects that have an impact on the quality of life in neighbourhoods and throughout the city. Women's groups and local partners can help reach women, especially those who are isolated by illiteracy, language or handicaps.

## **G** TOOLS FOR EQUALITY

### **A Gender Perspective in Municipal Management, or Gender Mainstreaming**

Applying a gender perspective to municipal management, or gender mainstreaming, ensures that the different realities and needs of women and men are taken into account with a view to reducing inequalities and optimizing services to the population. Activities that raise awareness and training in gender perspective are therefore regularly offered to employees of municipal services and boroughs, as well as to all elected representatives and the municipality's partners. Gender-disaggregated data is used systematically to identify citizens' needs and to evaluate the delivery of services. This approach is central to the gender equality policy. It must be applied during the preparation of the municipal budget to ensure that spending and investments contribute to the reduction of inequalities while at the same time facilitating women's ability to improve their living conditions (such as access to housing, transportation, employment, safety and leisure).



CIDA – David Barbour, Zimbabwe

## 4. A Gender Perspective

### The Women-Friendly City

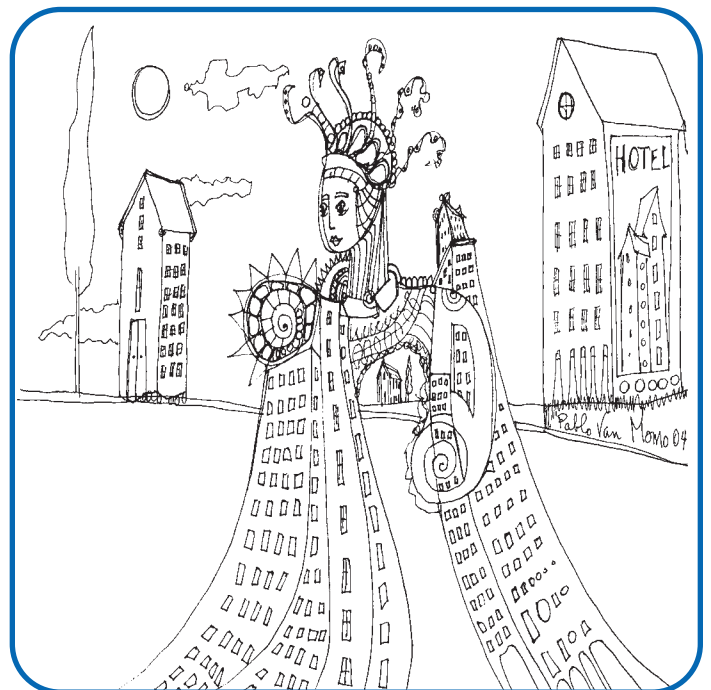
*“Equality does not mean treating all groups the same way: policies and programs must often treat different people and groups differently. However, the goal and effect of a policy should be gender equality.”<sup>3</sup>*

The experiences of men and women differ socially, politically and economically. These differences must be recognized to achieve genuine equality. With this in mind, several countries have recently agreed to use a common measuring instrument: the gender-based analysis, also called gender perspective or gender mainstreaming.

Taking a perspective on reality that breaks with the traditional, supposedly gender neutral, one allows for the gathering and interpretation of comparative quantitative and qualitative data concerning the distinct realities and needs of women and men. This approach provides an accurate picture of a situation. The goal of the gender perspective is clear: identifying and eliminating the causes and manifestations of inequality between men and women.

Municipal governments and their partners stand to benefit from integrating a gender perspective into the planning and execution of their activities. On the one hand, the diagnostic tool allows them to fine-tune their activities to the particular needs of men and women; on the other, they can ensure that each of their decisions has a positive effect on the life of every citizen.

In that way, the gender perspective guarantees a more effective management of overall human and financial resources because it provides for a targeted response to specific needs of the population. An even more accurate response to a diverse population can be achieved by adding indicators such as age, origin, family situation or income level.



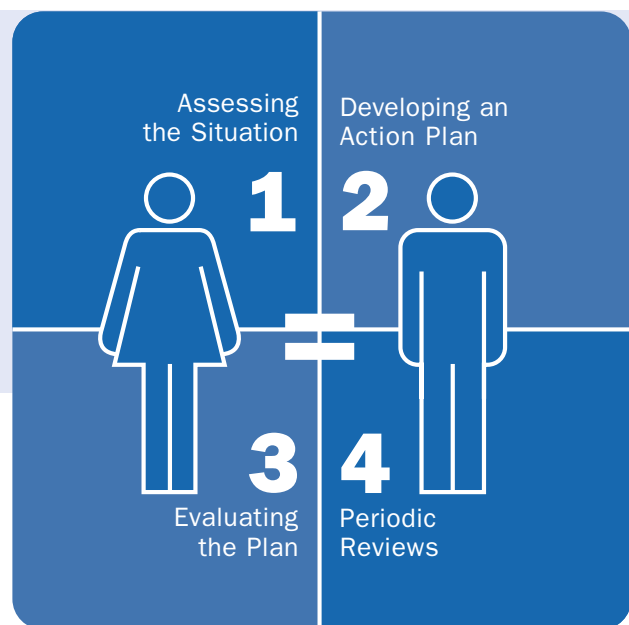
**Athéna Polias** (The City-Dweller)  
Pablo Van Momo, April 2004

3. Gender-based Analysis: A Guide for policy making, Status of Women Canada (1996), Ottawa.

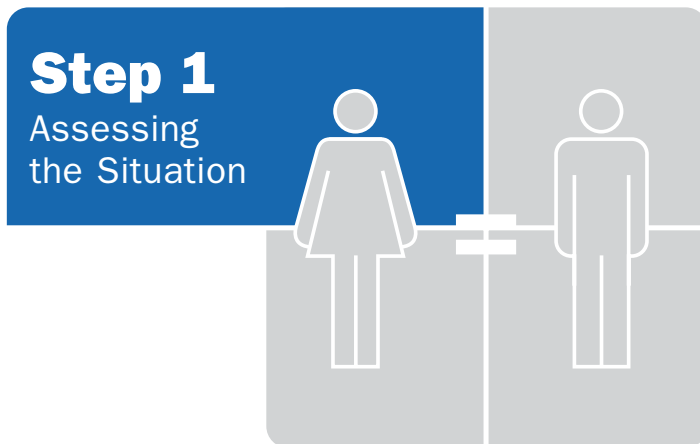
## Four Steps to Better Understanding and More Effective Action

- What are the *specific needs of women and men in various areas of activity* ?
- How many women and men head single-parent families within the boundaries of the municipality?
- How many women own houses, rent apartments or live in subsidized housing?
- What percentage of men and women use municipal services (such as public transit and recreational activities)?
- What proportion of women and men feel unsafe?

Gender-based analysis helps to answer such questions. It provides municipal governments with a more precise picture of the situation. Municipal governments must take the time to ask the right questions. A simple four-step method has been devised to guide the process.







To carry out effective work, a clear picture of the situation is required. It should be possible to make an evaluation by sorting quantitative and qualitative data by gender. This method of gathering and analyzing information can reveal the gaps between men and women for a given situation.

The municipality must first determine whether relevant studies or surveys are available, or whether new information should be gathered. In other words, the most efficient means of collecting relevant information must be assessed in each case. If nothing is available, the municipal government can gather information in various ways, including requests for data from statistics agencies, research, task forces, public consultation and interviews.

In some cases, it might also consider using internal tools, for example, enquiring about the number of men and women who participate in recreational activities. Whether the data is to be gathered or already exists, one thing should be kept in mind: the information must cover all aspects of the issue.

Municipal governments must have specific information that sets out the different realities of men and women, since this is the only way of tailoring programs and measures to the specific needs of each group. The use of gender-disaggregated data ensures, among other things, that inaccurate interpretations are avoided. When taken out of context, figures can be misleading. For example, an equal number of women and men may work in a particular sector; but if the women are restricted to low-level positions then they have minor roles in decision-making and cannot fully engage in genuine leadership. For this reason, the assessment should go beyond the simply quantitative and examine the place of women in leadership and decision-making positions.

When gathering the facts, the municipal government may involve partners, such as the research sector, community groups or the police service, as these partnerships may prove useful in obtaining a more complete picture of the situation. However, there is one partnership that is absolutely essential. Municipalities must ensure that the main participants concerned are involved; women themselves. Their various responsibilities provide them with an excellent ground level understanding of all dimensions of the city (environmental, functional, economic and social.) Women must be involved from the outset. Effective and smooth-running consultation mechanisms, as well as an alliance with women's groups and local organizations, will allow municipal governments to reach the greatest possible number of women. This new way of putting women's expertise to work may require some adjustments, but is well worth the effort!

Once the municipal government has an accurate picture of the situation, it can interpret the data to understand the causes underlying the gaps and move to remedy them. However, solutions do not always lie within municipal jurisdiction. In such cases, the relevant authority must be identified and urged to implement strategies that improve the living conditions of women in the city. For example, while the effects of poverty are visible at the neighbourhood level, solutions must emanate from all orders of government and from public policies in effect.

The gender perspective dispels a number of myths and prejudices about women and men and may run counter to the opinions of those collecting the data. The main prejudice, which might become a major obstacle, lies in thinking that services are equitable and accessible to women because they are delivered to all citizens without distinction. This assumption masks the reality of systemic discrimination against women.

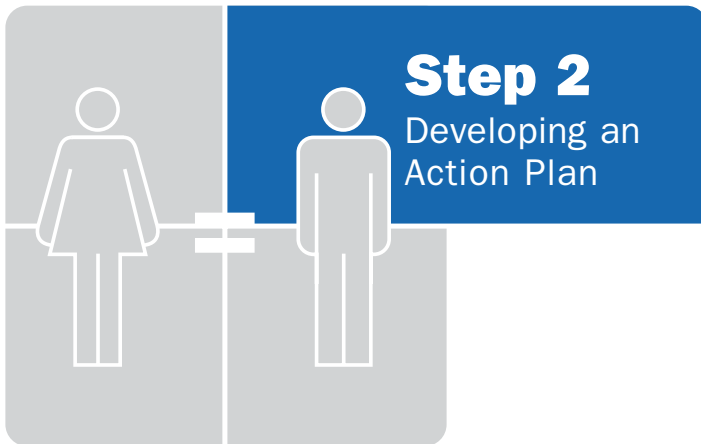
Training and awareness-raising programs are needed so that municipal employees support the approach and use it as a management tool to improve the quality of services delivered to the population. Ongoing consultation with partners (including women in various roles such as citizens, employees or elected representatives) and women's groups is an asset in raising the awareness of city employees, both women and men, and in analyzing the causes of gender gaps.

### Summary

- *Obtain gender-disaggregated data*
- *Using the information obtained, prepare an assessment of the situation as it applies to men and women*
- *Identify the gaps between men and women*
- *Pinpoint the causes of these gaps to be able to remedy them*

### Who should be consulted?

*Women, women's groups, community and institutional partners (such as central government departments and agencies, universities)*



Once properly informed, municipal authorities set broad objectives that are then broken down into more specific goals. At this stage, it is important to identify any positive or negative factors that may affect the exercise.

For example, a municipal government decides to encourage women's access to non-traditional jobs by hiring them in its Public Works department. The municipality can readily identify sexual harassment as an element that may undermine the success of the operation. Not only can sexual harassment affect women in their job, it can also drive them out of a given employment sector and back into one that causes less commotion in their life. If the municipal government does not take adequate measures from the start to prevent sexual harassment, the entire operation could be jeopardized. In other words, the sooner any positive and negative influences on the process are identified, the better.

The desired results and the indicators needed to measure them must also be defined as accurately as possible at this stage. Authorities then plan the concrete steps that need to be taken in consultation with women and the different partners involved. The action will be tailored to the target clientele and takes into consideration not only gender specificity but also the specific needs of the various subgroups (including seniors, the disabled and women from ethnic minorities). If needed, indicators that are specific to gender and subgroup membership may be used.

The financial and human resources required to complete the project must also be allocated and responsibilities and degrees of accountability assigned to each participant (e.g., municipal services and support networks). The municipal government must also establish a timetable, ensure that the action plan is implemented within its scope, and coordinate actions to be taken with its partners.

Remember: putting together an action plan requires the full and complete participation of women and groups representing them. Municipal governments have everything to gain by working with women. It will help them properly understand women's life situations, expectations and needs, and consequently better target their actions.

## Summary

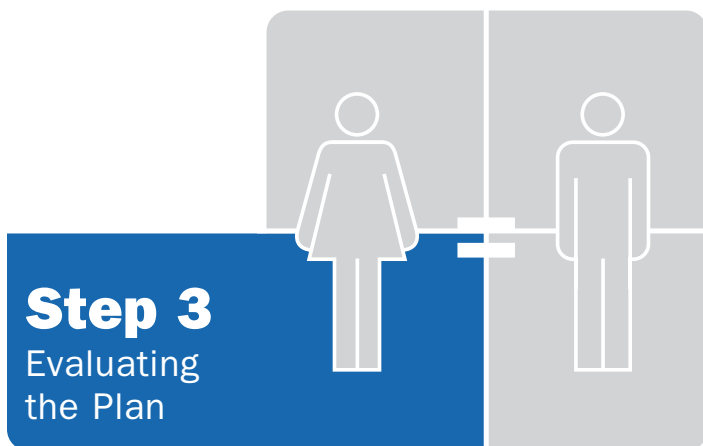
- *Formulate an overall objective to achieve gender equality*
- *Identify specific goals*
- *Specify the results expected*
- *Define the indicators for measuring results*
- *List the actions to be taken*
- *Determine human and financial resources*
- *Assign responsibilities to each intervening party*
- *Agree on a timetable*
- *Ensure the coordination of activities*

## Who should be consulted?

*Women, women's groups, institutional partners (e.g., central government departments and agencies, universities, etc.), community partners, national and local Women in the City networks*



Photo : Anne Michaud



How did the process unfold? Were the objectives met? At this stage, the city and its partners assess the results and analyze why some steps were not completed. This evaluation must be as precise as possible, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. It will help determine whether to maintain, slightly modify or completely overhaul future objectives and actions in order to reach the overall objective.

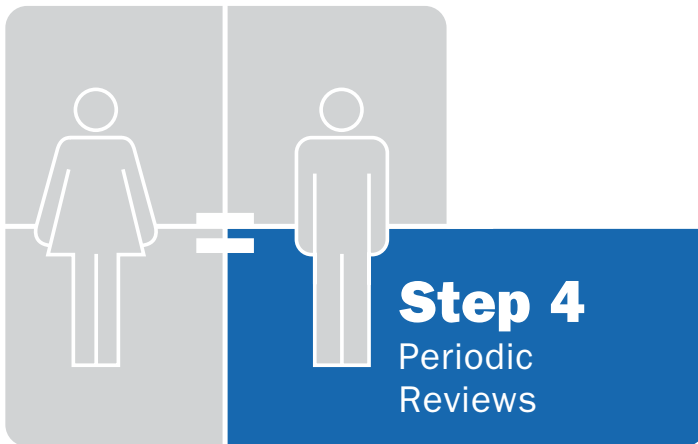
Consultation with women and various partners remains very important at the evaluation stage; everyone provides a different perspective and this will help guide the municipal government towards more effective decision-making.

### *Summary:*

- *Analyze the progress of actions taken and follow up on the timetable*
- *List the steps completed in relation to the specific objectives, using indicators*
- *Assess any modifications that were made along the way*
- *Maintain or re-evaluate specific objectives in accordance with the overall assessment*

### *Who should be consulted?*

*All partners involved at the planning stage*



The municipal government re-evaluates the operation at predetermined intervals to ensure it is still on track, recognizing that in some cases it might take years to bring about the desired changes and tangible results.

### *Summary*

- *Periodically reassess the situation by using gender-disaggregated data*
- *Periodically review specific goals and actions to ensure they still correspond to the original needs and overall objective, (i.e., gender equality within municipal boundaries)*

### *Who should be consulted?*

*Women, women's groups, and other partners as needed*

## Methods and Tools to Implement Gender Mainstreaming

In recent years, a variety of methods have been developed to apply the gender perspective to municipal management and urban planning. Used as diagnostic, awareness-raising and training tools for municipal staff, these methods are the subject of growing interest in exchanges among networks and at international conferences.

### Methods

**In Montreal** in 1999, the *Femmes et développement régional* (Women in Regional Development) committee published a guide for municipalities and regional structures that allows local authorities to test themselves on a grid of the following criteria:

- **Social participation:** Do traditional social roles mean that women and men hold different jobs that might influence their ability to participate in a development program or project?
- **Access to resources and benefits of development:** Do women and men enjoy the same access to resources and do they draw equal economic, social and cultural benefits from a development program or project?

- **Decision-making, power, control:** Do women and men exert equal influence on the development of policies, programs and projects?

Source: *Pour un développement égalitaire sur l'île de Montréal : l'analyse différenciée selon les sexes.*

[www.femmesdemontreal.org/publications](http://www.femmesdemontreal.org/publications)  
(French only)

### The 3 R Method

In 2000, the City of **Gothenburg**, in conjunction with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities, began a gender-training program for its municipal staff. The *Process Management Training Programme in Gender Mainstreaming* is based on the 3 R Method, which stands for:

- Equality and parity in **Representation**;
- The allocation and division of **Resources**;
- **Realia** (analysis of the norms and values behind policies and the delivery of municipal services).

[www.arcidonna.it/mainstreaming/mainstreamgb.htm](http://www.arcidonna.it/mainstreaming/mainstreamgb.htm)



**In Seville**, in October 2003, the *International Seminar of the Equality and Gender Unit (Las Jornadas Internacionales de l'Unidad de Igualdad de género)* presented the principles of various methodologies and their practical applications. Methodologies available online include:

- **SMART** (*Simplified Method to Assess the Relevance of Politics to Gender*)  
[www.unidadgenero.com/en/default.cfm](http://www.unidadgenero.com/en/default.cfm)
- **GEM** (*Gender Evaluation Methodology*), applicable to systems of management and to new technologies.  
[www.apcwomen.org/gem/index.htm](http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/index.htm)

## Tools

Following the first *International Conference on Women in Local and Regional Development* in 1998, EuroFEM published a toolkit to encourage women's entry into local and regional development.  
[www.eurofem.net/ToolkitNet/toolk.html](http://www.eurofem.net/ToolkitNet/toolk.html)

**In Britain**, a major study was undertaken into *Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Auditing* in local planning. Five case studies and several pilot projects were carried out with the aim of building a toolkit to integrate those perspectives into urban planning and design. The absence of gender-disaggregated data and weak political support from local elected representatives were identified as the main problems to

overcome locally. Training and awareness-raising sessions for municipal staff were strongly recommended to counter the persistent stereotyping that hinders progress at the district, borough and local service level.

See: *The Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit*  
[www.rtpi.org.uk/resources/panels/equal-w/toolkit.html](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/resources/panels/equal-w/toolkit.html)

**In Gatineau (Quebec)**, The *Observatoire sur le développement régional et l'analyse différenciée selon les sexes* (OREGAND) has created and regularly updates a Web site on activities and resources:  
[www.oregand.ca](http://www.oregand.ca) (French only).

**In Brussels (Belgium)**, Amazone, a national resource centre for equality, has developed a Database of Instruments for Gender Mainstreaming (DIGMA) and in 2003 helped organize seminars on *Municipal Equality Policies* for men and women elected representatives, public servants and women's groups in the Brussels region.

Info desk section: [www.amazone.be](http://www.amazone.be)

**In Madrid (Spain)**, *Generourban*, a Spanish language Web site and discussion forum has been set up on the subject of women in the city, gender and urban planning:  
[www.generourban.org/](http://www.generourban.org/)



## Making a Commitment

### *Montreal (Quebec, Canada)*

The new City of Montreal was created in January 2002 by the merger of the 28 municipalities on the Island of Montreal. On February 26, 2002, the new municipal council unanimously adopted the IULA *Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government* and made a commitment to build on the accomplishments of the *Femmes et ville (Women in the City)* Program of the former City of Montreal.

The commitment to gender equality was reiterated at the June 2002 Montreal Summit that established the new city's priorities according to proposals brought by the various local stakeholders. Those brought by the "women's" delegation were approved by all the partners and led to several specific commitments by the city:

- To create an advisory council on gender equality, the *Conseil des Montréalaises*;
- To create a *Femmes et ville Office*;
- To draw up and implement a municipal gender equality policy;
- To apply gender mainstreaming;
- To draw up and implement a policy on safety planning.

A committee made up of representatives of women's groups and women municipal public servants ensures that these commitments are honoured. On December 12, 2003, the Montreal Women Working

for Gender Equality forum (*Montréalaises en action pour l'égalité femmes/hommes*) was held to review the status of the work and to maintain the mobilization of women's groups and other partners. The advisory council on gender equality, the *Conseil des Montréalaises*, is to be set up in 2004.

Source: Sommet de Montréal section on the City of Montreal's Web site:

[www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/portail\\_VME/accusoma.shtm](http://www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/portail_VME/accusoma.shtm)

and on the site of the City of Montreal's *Femmes et ville* Program:

[www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville)



Photo : Anne Michaud

### *The Montreal Declaration on Women's Safety*

Municipal councils may also make commitments by ratifying declarations on specific subjects, such as women's safety.

The Montreal Declaration on Women's Safety makes specific appeals to cities and municipalities to:

- *Put in place local safety policy, planning, and practices that integrate a gender approach, and which support women's safety initiatives;*
- *Provide greater opportunities for women's involvement (for example, safety audits), including formal mechanisms to ensure adequate resources to respond to recommendations and sustain initiatives;*
- *Create formal mechanisms to increase the participation of women in decision-making in local governance (elected officials, managers and citizens);*
- *Allocate municipal funds to gender equality, community development and poverty reduction programs;*
- *Ensure transparency and accountability in municipal administration;*
- *Develop international cooperation at the municipal level including the exchange of good practices and experiences.*

Following the first International Seminar of Women's Safety, Making the Links, held in Montreal in May 2002, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities called on its members to ratify and implement the Declaration.

The Declaration is available in English, French and Spanish on the *Women in Cities International* site: [www.femmesetvilles.org](http://www.femmesetvilles.org)

### *Liège (Belgium)*

The City of Liège has adopted a **Charter on Gender Equality** following its work in partnership with the Liège Coalition for the World March of Women. The Charter commits the city to drawing up a gender equality plan of action:

*"The Communal Council, holding the principle of equality between women and men*

- *Considers that a balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process is achieved through equal parity in representation in all sectors;*
- *Commits itself to integrating a gender perspective into all policies, from concept to completion;*
- *Commits itself to eliminating all forms of discrimination by using appropriate structures and instruments and by adopting a global and integrated strategy to promote the equal participation of women and men;*
- *Commits itself to raising public awareness by disseminating images of women and men that break with discriminatory stereotypes;*
- *Commits itself to drawing up a communal plan of action for the equality of women and men residents of Liège."*

In 2004, Liège established a *Femmes et ville* Commission.

[www.liege.be](http://www.liege.be)

## Consultative Structures

### *Barcelona (Spain)*

The City of Barcelona has set up a citywide **Council of Women** under the jurisdiction of the Social Development Commission, as well as “women” councils in city districts.

These consultative structures are meant to ensure the involvement of women’s groups in the implementation of the *Municipal Program for Women*, the *women* component of the municipal action plan, and the action plan to fight violence against women.

Their main goals are:

- To integrate women into all the activities of urban life, taking their diversity into account;
- To adapt the city to the needs of citizens’ daily life, recognizing and promoting the contributions and wishes of women’s groups;
- To reduce the incidence of gender violence and promote a non-violent city;
- To take women’s specific needs into account in all municipal policies.

[www.cird.bcn.es/catala/cbcndon/cbcndon1.htm](http://www.cird.bcn.es/catala/cbcndon/cbcndon1.htm)  
(Spanish only)

### *Amadora – Greater Lisbon (Portugal)*

#### **Council Standing Committee on Equal Opportunities**

This consultative committee includes representatives of women’s groups, NGOs and local councillor-advisors and makes recommendations to the municipal council. It assesses equal opportunities programs and women’s rights policies and watches local government action regarding women’s issues.

The city has set up a network of equal opportunities councillor-advisors in every department and conducted studies into women’s specific needs in public services.

The mayors and councillors in the municipalities of Greater Lisbon have taken part in various projects, including the publication of a Guide to Women’s Participation in Local Power, based on a Luxemburg initiative and setting out “12 Objectives for a Municipal Policy on Equal Opportunities.”

Source: *Guide to the Women’s Participation in Local Power* (in French, English and Portuguese):

[www.noticiasdaamadora.com.pt/nad/dossieraut.php?codaut=GPLocal](http://www.noticiasdaamadora.com.pt/nad/dossieraut.php?codaut=GPLocal)



## Gender Equality Policy

### *San Salvador (El Salvador)*

The City of San Salvador's **Gender Equality Policy** integrates a gender perspective into all the plans, programs and projects of its Master Plan for Local Development.

In 1998, a council motion created the **Gender Equality Task Force** and made public a *Proposed Plan for Equality*. The task force, with a woman councillor as coordinator, was supported operationally by the Human Development Directorate. One of the most interesting results of the process set in motion by the task force was its own transformation into a Consultative Commission on Gender Equality, allowing it to organize district forums under the theme *Building Citizenship with Women*. The forums were planned as a way of involving women in an assessment of women's needs in San Salvador, which then served as the basis for the *Municipal Policy on Gender Equality* adopted in 1999. The policy recognizes the underpinnings of inequality in gender relations, and states:

*"Gender roles have been socially defined and evaluated according to the activity of each sex in human reproduction. The role of reproduction encompasses all the responsibilities and tasks related to the gestation and education of children as well as all those associated with the maintenance and reproduction of current and future labour power. This role, directly identified with women and confined to the private or domestic space, is hierarchically lower than the role of production and is not recognized as having any 'value'."*

These are the main aims of the *Policy*:

- To raise the level of knowledge and awareness of gender relations among City Hall management and other staff;
- To reform municipal bylaws so as to promote equal access to all the services and benefits of municipal management;
- To strengthen the influence of the municipality of San Salvador on the promotion of a democratic and egalitarian "*municipalism*";
- To improve the condition of women by promoting their right to property and to access the municipality's productive and communal resources;
- To set up educational and cultural processes that will raise women's self-esteem and promote women's leadership along with egalitarian values and non-discriminatory attitudes as basic standards for coexistence in families, neighbourhoods and communities;
- To strengthen the role of the municipality and institutional interaction in citizen safety by prioritizing the fight against sexual and domestic violence.



CIDA : Peter Bennett, El Salvador

The municipality has a number of institutional strategies at its disposal to concretize these goals, including:

- Pinpointing gender constraints that prevent or threaten women's equal opportunities to enter or be promoted to leadership positions at City Hall;
- Sensitizing and training City Hall staff in gender mainstreaming and in the specific methodology required for an effective, cross-sectoral implementation of the *Gender Equality Policy*;
- Assigning qualified human resources to key positions in the institutional structure to ensure the city's action on gender equality is effective and efficient;
- Systematically monitoring the implementation of the *Policy*;
- Establishing partnership with central government authorities and NGOs so as to mobilize institutional, human and material resources for the promotion of gender equality in the municipality;
- Encouraging targeted personnel to generate a multiplier effect in advocating for the values of equality and for changes in gender attitudes;
- Encouraging women's participation and leadership in City Hall responsibilities – undertaking analyses of women's needs, prioritizing those needs according to City Hall's powers – as well as in the policies, plans and execution of programs, projects and actions;

- Making City Hall's official communications, internal and external, a catalyst for gender equality in the municipality.

The *Gender Equality Policy* is based on seven areas of action:

- Citizen participation
- Education and culture
- Work
- Health promotion
- Safety
- Infrastructures
- Municipal public services

Each area of action has its own strategic goal and series of specific actions.

The *Gender Equality Policy* is executed by the *Gender Unit*, under the jurisdiction of the Human Development Directorate. The *Unit* works closely with members of the Gender Equality Consultative Commission, including several women elected representatives and district gender officers, women and men. Women's centres have also been set up in the districts to monitor activities intended to encourage the mobilization and participation of women citizens. [www.amss.gob.sv/pages/index.html](http://www.amss.gob.sv/pages/index.html) (Spanish only)



## Gender Equality Action Plans

### *Buenos Aires (Argentina)*

#### **Women's Right to Live in the City**

The General Directorate for Women is a municipal structure in the Secretariat for Social Promotion, falling under the General Directorate. Its action plan, *El derecho de las Mujeres a vivir en la ciudad*, aims to:

- Ensure cohesion and coherence in the various programs created by previous municipal administrations;
- Identify new concerns of Buenos Aires women;
- Adapt and increase services for women by adding a gender perspective to them;
- Advance the integration of an equal opportunities plan into all areas of action by the City's governance, including:
  - Reforms to several laws to benefit women;
  - Fighting domestic violence (telephone help line service against domestic violence, two 24-hour telephone hotlines, shelters and centres for women victims of violence);
  - Promotion of women's health;
  - Programs for women's rights;
  - Training programs;
  - Research and studies into women's life situations.

The results have been tangible and reflect a clear improvement in the quality of life of the women of Buenos Aires.

[www.pgualc.org](http://www.pgualc.org) (Spanish only)

### *Berlin (Germany)*

The City of Berlin has adopted a specific program within the framework of equal gender rights to eliminate discrimination against women in all social domains. The **Bureau for the Economy, Work and Women** monitors its implementation. Among its accomplishments:

- Availability of childcare;
- Advancement of women in municipal public services;
- Higher status for women's traditional professions;
- Education subsidies for women and girls;
- Prevention of violence and assistance to women victims;
- Improved social conditions for immigrant women;
- Improved job opportunities and training for girls;
- Assistance to women and girls with handicaps.

The Bureau's responsibilities are reviewed annually during revision of the action plan.

[www.berlin.de/SenWiArbFrau/frauen/index.html](http://www.berlin.de/SenWiArbFrau/frauen/index.html)  
(German only)

### *Santo Andre, Sao Paulo Metropolitan Region (Brazil)*

As a result of an economic crisis that shook this formerly industrial city, a **Citizenship and Gender Program** was launched by the municipality of Santo Andre in partnership with the Centre for Studies in Health (CES). The program, aimed at encouraging women's participation in the city's decision-making processes, drew more than 6,000 participants through its more than 112 discussion groups, awareness-raising courses on gender problems and campaigns to fight violence against women.

[bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html](http://bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html)

## An Administrative Structure

### *Paris (France)*

The **Observatoire de l'égalité femmes/hommes**, created in 2001, falls under the authority of the City of Paris's Secretary General and within the purview of Anne Hidalgo, first assistant to the Mayor of Paris in charge of gender equality and the *Bureau des temps* (Time Office). The Observatoire implements the gender policy, taking stock of the needs of women citizens and monitoring equality in employment within the city administration.

A team of eight people handles the responsibilities with the help of a network of some 20 gender officers in the boroughs. It also maintains relations with all the administrative authorities and builds partnerships with civil society and institutional stakeholders to carry out projects.

To fulfil its mandate, the Observatoire has set these goals:

- Conduct studies and analyses to determine the main areas of inequality;
- Suggest ways and means of reducing these inequalities;
- Evaluate the actions undertaken.

An early study turned up major work-related disparities (such as salaries, working conditions and unemployment) and prompted an action plan for this area. A plan for professional equality is also in the works following a gender analysis of the division of jobs within the city administration. Other priority areas include violence against women, prostitution and new forms of slavery. A fund set up to provide financial assistance to community groups working for women's rights and equality also helps carry out projects in the field.

[www.paris.fr/fr/citoyennete/observatoire\\_egalite](http://www.paris.fr/fr/citoyennete/observatoire_egalite) (French only)



Photo: Anne Michaud

### Time Offices (Bureaux des temps):

The Paris **Observatoire** works with the **Time Office**, which falls under the same political and administrative jurisdiction. Studies and analyses have shown that the women of Paris do not have the same rhythms, constraints or needs in their use of time as the men. The Office has the task of improving the way people's lifestyles, work and family schedules fit together, with the aim of reducing inequalities between women and men as well as among the various demographic groups (such as children, teens and the elderly).

The **Time Office** concentrates on:

- Improving access to installations;
  - Providing easier access to public services and to help with administrative procedures;
  - Integrating the time perspective into urban projects;
  - Encouraging businesses to adapt their hours to the schedules of their clientele, women and men.
- [www.paris.fr/fr/citoyennete/bureau\\_des\\_temps/](http://www.paris.fr/fr/citoyennete/bureau_des_temps/)  
(French only)

Cities must be careful to ensure that time-related initiatives integrate the gender perspective so that they do not end up actually reinforcing gender roles and related inequalities.

Ministère de la Ville/Dossier temps des villes  
(French only):  
[www.ville.gouv.fr/infos/dossiers/index.html](http://www.ville.gouv.fr/infos/dossiers/index.html)

French Economic and Social Council, Reconciling Time Management and City Life, by JP Bailly  
(French only):  
[www.conseil-economique-et-social.fr](http://www.conseil-economique-et-social.fr)

DATAR – Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale (French only):  
[www.datar.gouv.fr/Datar\\_Site/DATAR\\_Temps.nsf/wSommaire?openview](http://www.datar.gouv.fr/Datar_Site/DATAR_Temps.nsf/wSommaire?openview)

Maison du temps et de la mobilité de Belfort  
(French only):  
[www.maisondutemps.asso.fr/plugin.htm](http://www.maisondutemps.asso.fr/plugin.htm)

Groupe Chronos, Observatoire de la chronomobilité  
(French only):  
[www.groupechronos.org](http://www.groupechronos.org) and  
[www.groupechronos.org/chronomobilite.php](http://www.groupechronos.org/chronomobilite.php)

City on the Move (*Institut pour la ville en mouvement*):  
[www.ville-en-mouvement.com](http://www.ville-en-mouvement.com)

*Femmes et enfants : au coeur des nouveaux rythmes.*  
Women and children were the first subjects of joint studies carried out by the City of Rennes' **Time Office** because they are the most affected by new work schedules. (French only).  
[www.rennes.fr/index.php?rub=598](http://www.rennes.fr/index.php?rub=598)

### Prato (Italy)

The **Time Laboratory**, which is part of the municipal EQUAL project that promotes gender equality, aims to integrate time organization, service management and the division of work and family tasks to allow women to enter and progress in the job market. The municipality of Prato, the Women's Cooperative (*Cooperativa delle Donne*), the University of Florence and the Conser-Macrolotto Association are partners in the Laboratory, which seeks to involve women in the project.  
[www.laboratoriodeltempo.org/laboratorio/](http://www.laboratoriodeltempo.org/laboratorio/)  
(Italian only)



Photo: Anne Michaud

## Participation and Partnership Structures

### Local-to-Local Dialogues

*Local-to-Local Dialogues* were set up in many countries with help from the *Huairou Commission* to establish ongoing dialogues between grassroots women's organizations and their local authorities on significant local issues. They aim to:

- Build the capacity of grassroots women groups to advocate for themselves;
- Build the capacity of other organizations and institutions to work effectively with grassroots women's groups;
- Create the best possible models for grassroots women's long-term participation in community decision-making;
- Strengthen the quality of local communities through more inclusive democratic practices.

Because each local group operates in a particular community, *Local-to-Local Dialogues* differ in content and process according to their country and particular situation. Each experience provides another experiment in governance and can be used for comparison, analysis, and sharing.

The first round of dialogues was completed in December 2002. The second set will be organized around subject instead of process.

### Examples of Local Dialogues:

#### *Cosquin (Cordoba Metropolitan Region, Argentina)*

The project aimed to initiate a dialogue that would lead to a partnership between civil society groups and municipal authorities. Specifically, it aimed to include recommendations brought by women's and social groups into the urban master plan.

#### *Prague (Czech Republic)*

The project was designed to encourage the setting up of structures where local and municipal authorities could work with the network of Czech Mother Centres.

The dialogue deals with issues such as:

- Family policies;
- Equal opportunities;
- Part-time work;
- Urban safety, in conjunction with crime-prevention organizations;
- Unemployment;
- Community cooperation;
- Participation in public life.

#### *Saratov (Russian Federation)*

With a view to local self-governance, the project promoted local dialogue and a process of citizen consultation on safety, social problems, unemployment, poverty and women's housing. The dialogue is a partnership of local women's organizations, municipal politicians, the Information Centre of the Independent Women's Forum and self-governance committees.

Achievements... Achievements... Achievements... Achievements... Achievements...

### *Stuttgart (Germany)*

The project set out to promote local exchanges (partnerships, associations and conferences) among women and men residents, community groups and local authorities. It aimed to create a process of participation in municipal decision-making in such areas as architecture and urban planning, as well as services to children, mothers, professional women, single parents, the elderly and immigrant women.

Source: *Campaigns – local-to-local dialogues* at: [www.huairou.org](http://www.huairou.org)



### Mechanisms for Public Consultation and Women's Participation in Municipal Affairs

#### *Quetzaltenango (Guatemala)*

#### **Strengthening Women's Participation in Local Authority to Achieve Gender Equality**

Historically kept out of power, women came in for special attention under the current municipal government, which has set up the *Municipal Women's Committee* to encourage and strengthen women's networks within local groups and in the many activities in which they are involved. To enhance women's participation in municipal development, a space has been created for women-led actions. This plays a role in various areas, such as:

- Training and education strategies in local political participation;
- Integrating a gender perspective into municipal governance;
- Literacy campaigns;
- Reproductive health;
- Promoting self-governance;
- A documentation centre.

Among other outcomes, the steady involvement of municipal structures gave much credibility to the different women leaders in their dealings with various partners and with the entire community.

[www.pgualc.org](http://www.pgualc.org) (Spanish only)

Photos.com

## Projects to Adapt Municipal Services to Women's Needs

### **PUBLIC TRANSIT:**

#### **“Between Two Stops” Bus Drop-off**

Many women rely on public transit to get around the city and any decision to change or reduce service must take this essential fact into account.

Several gender-responsive municipalities have moved to increase women's safety and their feeling of safety. Fear is one of the main obstacles to women's free circulation in the city. In fact, statistics show that women use public transit much less frequently at night.

In 1989, the Toronto Transit Authority conducted a massive study of safety from the point of view of women at 65 subway and bus stops. The findings led it to set up an evening drop-off service between bus stops that brings women closer to their destination. Other transit authorities in Canada have followed suit. In Montreal, where women make up 60 per cent of transit passengers, the service was brought in on a six-month experimental basis at the demand of women's groups. Following a very positive evaluation, the Montreal Urban Community Transit Commission (MUCTC) and its partner members from a women's urban safety group, CAFSU (*Comité d'action femmes et sécurité urbaine*), announced in December 1996 that the service would become permanent. The City of Laval instituted the service in 1999 and the City of Lévis in 2003. Quebec City's *Femmes et ville* Commission has studied the possibility of introducing the service in 2004.

The partnership process between women's groups and local Montreal authorities that resulted in the *Between Two Stops* service was chosen as one of the *Habitat Best Practices* for the year 2000.

Source: *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Public Transit, Montreal*.

[www.bestpractices.org](http://www.bestpractices.org)

#### **Bangkok (Thailand)**

##### **Buses for Women Only**

In May 2000, the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority (BMTA) began running a service for women only. The Lady Bus was introduced in response to numerous complaints by women about safety, particularly during rush hours. Only women and accompanying sons under the age of 15 can use the service. Bus drivers and fare collectors are male because the BMTA wants them to protect passengers, women and boys, in case of emergencies. The Lady Bus runs as every third bus on ten routes on the 30th, 31st and 1st of each month, between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m., namely the evening hours on pay days. The service may be expanded if the project works.

*Japan Economic Newswire; Kyodo News Service, 30 May 2001 (Global Report on Human Settlement 2001):*

[bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html](http://bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html)



## WOMEN'S SAFETY

### *Montreal (Quebec, Canada)*

#### **For the Safety of Montreal Women**

Since the right to a safe city is a key corollary of equality between women and men, it is no wonder that gender mainstreaming is most often currently applied to urban safety.

During the 1988 public hearings on the master plan for Montreal's Central District, women's groups highlighted the need for a safe city. They also underlined the need for better housing, day-care and accessibility, and called for urban planning that was more attentive to the problems of balancing work and family responsibilities.

The City of Montreal responded by creating the *Femmes et ville* (Women in the City) Program in 1990. The safety of women quickly became a priority. The city began by taking stock of the situation. Important differences were found: four times as many women (60%) as men (15%) admitted to being scared of walking alone in their neighbourhoods at night. In 1992, the *J'accuse la peur* (I accuse fear) conference brought together women's groups, public institutions, professional men and women and provided a context to this gap and women's feeling of fear in the city. As a result, the city made commitments to improve women's safety on its territory. An action plan was devised, inspired among other things by the Toronto experience (METRAC, Safe City Committee).

Several goals were set, including:

- Improving safety for women in city installations;
- Devising tools to increase the safety of women and their feeling of safety;
- Developing criteria to ensure a safety-conscious design of public spaces and buildings;
- Facilitating cooperation between municipal organizations and women's groups.

Various actions followed:

- Production of a women's safety audit guide (*Guide d'enquête sur la sécurité des femmes en ville*) to identify the corrective actions needed to increase women's feeling of safety within the urban environment;
- Organizing safety audits in certain recreational installations (sports and community centres) with women: citizens, city employees, elected officials, urban planners and journalists;
- Publication of three guidebooks on safety-conscious design and planning: for parking lots, for residential units and for different types of urban sites;
- Broadening the mandate of the Tandem Urban Safety Program to include a section on women's safety;
- Carrying out an information campaign aimed at men;



- Taking part in setting up a women's urban safety group, the *Comité d'action femmes et sécurité urbaine* (CAFSU), which brings together women's groups, community organizations and public institutions such as the police service, the transit authority, and health services;
- Helping the CAFSU carry out its annual action plan.

Since 1992, the City-CAFSU partnership has undertaken many actions, including:

- Information campaigns
- Forums
- Creation of a Women's Safety Award promoting local and regional initiatives
- Introduction of the MUCTC's *Between Two Stops* bus drop-off service
- Development of institutional policies
- Production of an activities guide
- Evaluation of self-defence courses
- Development of training programs and reference tools such as the *Toolkit for Women's Safety: from Dependence to Autonomy*

Worldwide interest in Montreal's initiatives has been growing since the 1990s, and thanks to information-sharing and knowledge-transfer activities, the Montreal strategies have been adapted to municipalities in Europe, Africa and South America.

These exchanges culminated in the first International Seminar on Women's Safety, *Making the Links*, held in Montreal in May 2002. The new

City of Montreal used the occasion to launch its Guide for planning a safe urban environment, the *Guide d'aménagement pour un environnement urbain sécuritaire*. It also committed itself to honouring the former city's initiatives by continuing to improve the safety of women citizens and to implement a safety planning policy throughout the new territory.

[www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville) and [www.femmesetvilles.org](http://www.femmesetvilles.org)

#### HOUSING:

##### *Vienna (Austria)*

#### **A Housing Project By and For Women in Vienna (Frauen-Werk-Stadt)**

To meet the everyday needs of women, a section of the city was designed by women architects and planners as part of Vienna's urban expansion program. The project, started in 1993, was a first step in integrating the requirements of women into the development of the city. Since then, the city has worked hard at integrating the gender perspective into municipal governance, guided by the Women's Office and the Department of Everyday and Women-Friendly Planning and Building.

[bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html](http://bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html) and [www.wien.gv.at/english/](http://www.wien.gv.at/english/)

## Quebec initiatives

A number of initiatives have been launched in the province of Quebec in recent years to increase women's participation in local and municipal structures.

### ***Le Réseau des élues municipales de la Montérégie (RÉMM)***

A network of Montérégie elected women representatives, the *Réseau des élues municipales de la Montérégie* or RÉMM, was founded in 2000 as a result of an action plan by the Montérégie Committee on the Status of Women in Regional Development (*Comité condition féminine en développement régional de la Montérégie*). It is the only network in the province that brings together all the women mayors and councillors of an administrative region.

RÉMM's many actions include:

- Strategic and legal training for women candidates and women interested in municipal politics (in partnership with the provincial ministry for municipal affairs, sports and leisure);
- Strategic support for elected women representatives;
- Working with associations of municipalities to raise the number of women in municipal politics and support those already there;
- Advocating for issues of collective interest such as reimbursement of the child care costs of representatives who are parents, and women's representation on the administrative boards of municipal associations;

- Organizing colloquiums and training sessions;
- Support for the creation of *Femmes et ville* (Women in the City) committees;
- Writing guides to reform municipal structures;
- Statistical analysis of women's presence in municipal politics in Montérégie;
- Awareness-raising and training;
- Networking abroad (France, Sweden).

[www.eluesmonteregie.qc.ca](http://www.eluesmonteregie.qc.ca) (French only)

### **The Equal Access to Decision-making Funding Program**

This program, administered by the provincial government's Status of Women Office (*Secrétariat à la condition féminine*), has a budget allocation of \$1 million a year for five years and funds projects that prepare women to play a bigger role in local decision-making, including municipal councils. A list of tools created by local and regional women's groups and other community organizations is available online at:

[www.scf.gouv.qc.ca/index\\_an.asp](http://www.scf.gouv.qc.ca/index_an.asp)

One of these tools is the **Women's Summer School**, which is for women who want to stand for municipal election in 2005. This initiative of the *Femmes, politique et démocratie* group, in conjunction with l'École nationale d'administration publique and a private foundation, aims at mentoring 45 potential candidates.

[www.femmes-politique-et-democratie.com/](http://www.femmes-politique-et-democratie.com/)  
(French only)

### ***Femmes et ville (Women in the City) Commissions and Committees***

In 1993, Quebec City became the first municipality in the province to set up a *Femmes et ville* Commission. In 2002, the new Quebec City that resulted from municipal mergers also created a similar Commission that works on:

- Public housing;
- Summertime childcare
- Safety (including a reissue of the guide to Walking Safety Audits);
- Communication between the city administration and citizens;
- A “between stops” bus drop-off service on request after 8 p.m.

The City of Rouyn-Noranda created a *Femmes et ville* Commission in June 2003 and the City of Lévis in February 2004. The Lévis commission is made up solely of elected representatives, women and men,



Getty Images

while in other cities citizens and community representatives are also members. Sorel-Tracy and Salaberry-de-Valleyfield have set up *Femmes et ville* committees.

### **Best Practices Contests**

*Best Practices Contests* are among the most effective strategies for publicizing various efforts by cities to improve gender equality and women’s participation in urban governance. Such contests for women-friendly cities have been taking place in the Latin America/Caribbean and the Asia/Pacific regions.

The idea for the contests emerged from a UN-Habitat international gender expert meeting that also promoted sharing of expertise and the development of a prospective for this area of municipal action.

### **The First Contest of Gender Responsive Local Governments Asia-Pacific (2004)**

The contest was designed to assess the performance of cities along these criteria:

- Legislative commitments towards gender equality (such as Municipal Codes and Acts);
- Institutionalization of mechanisms which integrate women’s views into the urban governance system and contribute to policy recommendations towards women-friendly cities;
- Systems for promoting affirmative actions for equal representation;
- Specific budgetary allocations and gender perspective budgets;

- Training of city staff in gender mainstreaming;
- Partnership with various stakeholders;
- Participation of women, especially the poor;
- Project innovation, sustainability, and replicability;
- Monitoring and evaluation methods.

The awards to the three women-friendly winning cities were presented on March 8, 2004 at a ceremony in Fukuoka, Japan.

#### *Cebu (Philippines)*

Cebu City's **Support for Community Initiatives to Respond to Domestic Violence Program** demonstrated the importance of partnership and women's involvement in resolving this problem. The city's role in mobilizing partners, developing training programs and promoting cooperation was a key factor in the success of the program, which has been replicated in 70 other Philippines municipalities and has helped more than 15,000 women. Cebu won also because of its *Institutionalizing Gender in City Governance Program*. The city earmarks five per cent of its total budget to gender-related issues and runs a funding Program for local women's groups.

UN-Habitat Fukuoka Office:

[www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org](http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org) and  
[bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html](http://bestpractices.org/bpbriefs/women.html)

#### *Visakhapatnam (India)*

Visakhapatnam was selected for its program that encouraged illiterate women to take part in a literacy program. The program demonstrated the important

coordinating role local governments play in supporting women's efforts to attain their goals. In 2002, 11,000 women from 208 slums enrolled in the program with a 90 per cent success rate.

UN-HABITAT

Fukuoka Office:

[www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org](http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org)

#### *Naga (Philippines)*

Naga showed the importance of legislative action with its **Women's Development Code**, a collaborative initiative between the city government and various women's groups aimed at creating an environment that allows women the fullest opportunity to realize their potential. Measures include earmarking budget headings for gender concerns, allocating seats for elected women representatives and the creation of a task force to implement the Code. The initiative has led to greater awareness of the important role women play in the development of the community and given women a greater voice in the local decision-making process.

UN-HABITAT Fukuoka Office:

[www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org](http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org)



Photo: SOPA R

Achievements... Achievements... Achievements... Achievements... Achievements...



### **Contest on Affirmative Actions Promoting Women's Participation in Local Governance – Latin America and the Caribbean**

Contests were held in 1998, 1999 and 2003 in Latin America and the Caribbean. Organized within the framework of the Global Campaigns of the United Nations for the Human Rights of Women and Girls and for Good Urban Governance, they are supported by UNIFEM, the Urban Management Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (UMP-LAC), and the Latin American and Caribbean Federation of Women in Local Government (FEMUM-LAC). The winners' projects are available, in Spanish, online at the UMP-LAC site.

[www.pgualc.org](http://www.pgualc.org) (Spanish only)

### **Women's Safety Awards 2004**

*Women and Cities International* launched the *Women's Safety Awards* following the first International Seminar on Women's Safety, *Making the Links*, held in Montreal in May 2002. They are designed to promote good practices and municipal policies on women's safety and the improvement of women's sense of safety. They focus on institutional change at the municipal level by showcasing good practices and policies and disseminating information on "what works".

Specifically, the Awards objectives are to:

- Elicit and disseminate information on practices relating to women's safety and municipal gender-based policies in crime prevention;
- Promote local initiatives that include significant elements relating to women's safety and the improvement of women's sense of safety;
- Build capacity of local groups to develop projects and practices relating to women's safety and the improvement of women's sense of safety.

Two Canadian and two international initiatives will be awarded in each of the following categories:

- Advocacy, networking and community mobilization;
- Capacity-building and training;
- Educational programs and public awareness;
- Safety planning and design for public spaces;
- Municipal gender-based policies in crime prevention and community safety.

The contest drew around 94 applications. Winning initiatives, announced in May 2004, will be presented at various Canadian and international conferences and documented in a publication. They will also be available online in September 2004 at [www.femmesetvilles.org](http://www.femmesetvilles.org).

The proceedings of the seminar (in French, English and Spanish) as well as the *Montreal Declaration on Women's Safety* are also available on this site.



## How Women-Friendly Is Your City?



How advanced is your city in terms of gender equality?

What remains to be done to achieve women's full and equal participation and their access to services and resources?

Judge your city's performance – and what you still need to do.

To how many of the following items can you check YES?

**Do a self-evaluation!**

In \_\_\_\_\_  
(your city's name)

<b>Political Structures, Mechanisms and Resources</b>		
	YES	NO
National laws on women's rights and gender equality		
National laws on gender quotas or parity at the municipal level		
Affirmative action policies in municipal political parties		
Parity in committees, commissions and para-municipal enterprises		
Network of elected women representatives		
Council-adopted policy on gender equality (developed through public consultation and carried out via annual municipal plan of action)		
Public consultation policies with mechanisms to encourage women's participation		
Policies and commitments to fight violence against women and increase their safety		
Gender perspective in all programs (including annual municipal budget and sectoral budgets)		
Support of national and international municipal associations (training, networking, etc.)		
<b>Administrative Structures, Mechanisms and Resources</b>		
	YES	NO
Gender Equality/Women's Office (with adequate human resources and budget), within central administration, in charge of gender mainstreaming		
Annual gender equality action plan (with specific goals, indicators, budget)		
Training in gender mainstreaming (for elected officials and staff, men and women)		
Access to gender-disaggregated data on all urban issues		
Gender impact assessment of urban policies, programs and service delivery		
Equal opportunity program for hiring (with specific targets for different types of jobs)		
Information service in boroughs, neighbourhoods or districts		
Process to handle citizen requests and complaints from women and men		



Participation and Partnership Structures and Mechanisms		
	YES	NO
Women's advisory council, commission or committee within council to monitor implementation of gender equality policy		
Thematic council commissions (with public hearings)		
Public consultation process in boroughs, neighbourhoods or districts		
Public consultation process with specific mechanisms to encourage women's participation		
"Women" advisory councils in the boroughs, neighbourhoods or districts		
City-wide civic education campaigns		
Projects and activities improving women's access to services and resources (e.g., walking safety audits, Local-to-Local Dialogues between men and women elected officials and women's groups)		
Permanent partnership committees on specific issues (safety, transportation, housing) bringing together women's groups, community organizations and other public stakeholders, men and women		
Regular city-wide public assemblies, as well as at the borough, neighbourhood and district level		
Total		

### Results of Your City's Evaluation

How many of these **27** optimal gender-equality and good-governance measures are already in place in your municipality?

If you checked YES to between **0** and **7** items, you need to get cracking and study what other cities are doing.

You're on the right road if YES was your answer to between **8** and **16** items. Keep up the good work.

YES was your answer to between **17** and **27** items? Congratulations! But please don't rest on your laurels.

If you think your city would make a good case study, please fill out the online questionnaire at the City of Montreal's *Femmes et ville* site (in French, English or Spanish) at:

[www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/femmesetville)

Thanks for your input!



