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Engendering Habitat III: Facing the Global Challenges in Cities

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Engendering Habitat III: Facing the Global Challenges in Cities

SPECIAL ISSUE

Sonia De Gregorio Hurtado and Inés Novella Abril coordinated this special issue with the editorial board

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Engendering Habitat III: Facing the Global Challenges in Cities

Inés Sánchez de Madariaga, Teresa Boccia

This special issue of TRIA includes a number of selected papers presented at the *Engendering Habitat III Conference* held in Madrid in October 2016. The conference was organized by the European COST network *genderSTE* and by the UNESCO Chair on Gender Equality Policies in Science, Technology and Innovation, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. Around two hundred participants from 40 countries and five continents engaged in its discussions, providing inputs from a wide diversity of academic disciplines. Representatives from different stakeholders from the public and also the private sectors contributed from their respective standpoints.

The International Conference *Engendering Habitat III* engaged with contemporary challenges to the urban environment, with specific reference to their gender dimensions and the promotion of gender equality. It contributed to the participatory processes leading up to the New Urban Agenda, to the urgent measures to reduce global warming as agreed in Paris in December 2015, and to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its goals, targets and indicators.

The conference aimed to:

- Contribute substantively to the knowledge needed to create Habitat III and identify priorities for the New Urban Agenda from a gender perspective;
- Identify the factors that combine to advance gender equality in city planning, ensure women's and girls' rights, and create an inclusive and equitable New Urban Agenda considering the post-2015 framework;
- Explore how strategies to meet the Paris Agreement reached at the UN Conference on Climate Change (COP 21) in December 2015 can be developed in parallel with achieving gender justice;
- Review experiences, solutions, achievements and challenges of both the Habitat Conferences Agenda, the Paris Agreement's implementation, and the Sustainable Development Goals including its indicators in terms of gender equality and the em-

powerment of women;

- Stimulate discussion on how to improve the economic, social, and political empowerment of women as well as to advance more inclusive and encompassing societal change in support of gender equality, stable development and sustainable urbanization;
- Identify policy priorities and critical issues specific to the promotion of structural change for the participation of women in environmental professions, including energy, transport, architecture and planning, and the removal of gender bias in these professional fields;

This conference was the result of four years of work of the COST Network genderSTE designed to:

- Enhance the implementation of policy measures geared towards structural change in Scientific and Technological institutions for a better integration of the gender dimension in career opportunities for women and men;
- Enhance the implementation of policy measures to promote a proper integration of sex and gender analysis in science and technology,
- Advance the development of a better understanding of the gender dimensions of the Grand Challenges identified in the European Research Framework Program Horizon 2020, particularly energy, climate, metropolitan transport, urban environments and industrial innovation.

The conference gave us the opportunity to reflect on achievements in these fields as well as on emerging challenges and future directions within the scope of the three important interrelated international agendas on cities, sustainable development and climate change. Particularly important in 2016 was the Habitat III conference in Quito which resulted into a New Urban Agenda addressing countries around the world. Ample participatory processes designed by Habitat III have effectively ensured wide participation, engaging partnerships, raising awareness and building consensus in order to ensure the participation of stakeholders. Over 200.000 individuals across the world participated in these processes.

However, in terms of gender, its regional and thematic meetings have not sufficiently addressed gender and women's empowerment as a main topic of concern. While the Gender Expert Group Meeting convened in October 2015 in New York by the Huairou Commission and UN-Habitat with the support of the Ford Foundation provided a significant step in the Habitat III process from the standpoint of gender, contributions from academia and the research world are needed in addition to the inputs from the grassroots organizations.

The International Conference *Engendering Habitat III* complemented the work developed both within the remit of the regional and thematic meetings of Habitat III and the work undertaken under the auspices of the Huairou Commission and the grassroots organizations, by providing perspectives from international experts, researchers and

academics in these fields from across the globe.

Engendering Habitat III provided sound, state of the art gender expert knowledge on city planning, transport, climate change, energy, building and management, from which to build substantive and robust recommendations and proposals to improve the gender inputs into these major international urban and environmental policies. It identified innovative multidisciplinary research and contributions to theory on gender and urban issues, providing a forum for discussion and reflection in which views and experiences worldwide were shared and analyzed in two days of enriching work in plenary and parallel sessions. The Conference was organized in a number of tracks covering the following topics:

What Would Gender Sensitive Urban Design & Architecture Be Like?
What distinguishes gender sensitive architecture and urban design from mainstream practice? Would it be substantially different, would it overlap, with feminist architectural practice and master planning? Are there conflicts with other areas of inequality, such as race, capability and age? What scope is there for feminist approaches to influence and create new transformative architectural and urban design practices? Under which conditions and circumstances has increased participation of women in planning and architecture had the capacity to substantially influence how buildings and cities are built, in ways that provide fully for everyday life and offer the potential for transformation? Has the recession in Europe stopped experimentation? Are there examples from outside Europe that could provide models? Contributions can be theoretical or based on case studies of contemporary or historical examples. The examples can be drawn from many scales – including large urban projects such as new towns, landscape interventions, neighbourhood plans and individual buildings. The emphasis in this track is on the design as built and lived, rather than institutional processes and procedures.

Security and Safety: Building and Managing Urban Spaces Free of Violence against Women (VAW)

The gendered aspects of both human security as defined by the UN, and of urban safety, are a crucial but still largely neglected area of attention. There is a strong need for gendered knowledge and policy analysis. In the context of pervasive violence against women (VAW) in urban space –and by romantic partners- in many parts of the world, of increased displacements of people, rising economic and social insecurity, and austerity policies, what do security and safety mean for urban populations and for different groups of people? How to define security and safety understandings, perceptions and needs from a gender sensitive perspective? What are the security/safety measures to be implemented in urban planning and design, and how do planning and design measures interact with and complement measures from other fields of public policy, including economic and social policy, public education campaigns, the judiciary, and the police? How to reduce vulnerability of women in urban environments? How to provide urban spaces free of Violence against Women? What sort of housing solutions and support ser-

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vices should be provided for women victims of gender violence? What are the implications of men being perceived as potential perpetrators of violence, particularly for those of certain ethnic and racial groups? Contributions are expected to demonstrate problem areas at different scales in urban areas together with some solutions. Good practices are also expected to create opportunities for discussions on the issues. Methods and tools to be employed for solving safety and security problems in specific cases are welcomed.

Gender as a Key Component to Ensure ‘Access for All’ to Housing, Transportation, ICT and Employment

Access to housing, transport, and employment, and to basic facilities and services, including ICT, is a key issue in ensuring a decent quality of everyday life for everyone, irrespective of gender and of other potential discriminatory traits, including age, race, socioeconomic status and so on. Accessibility is crucial for reducing inequalities that occur in its absence. How physical and economic ‘accessibility for all’ can be achieved in urban areas, considering gender as a key analytical component, including its intersections with other traits such as race, ethnicity, age, economic status? What are the relevant approaches to theory, practical solutions and policy making across scales? How do we ensure gender needs are integrated and implemented in housing, transportation, facilities, ICT, and employment planning? Does equal access mean access for all? What are the ways of conceptualising gender equality and intersectionality in terms of accessibility to housing, transport, urban services and facilities, and employment? What are the roles of technology and innovative solutions in reducing the need to travel, finding jobs and participating in society? How should gender be integrated as a relevant category within data mining and Smart Cities approaches? What are the gender implications of specific urban needs of young and elderly people? What are the gender dimensions of phenomena such as gentrification, gated communities, homelessness, or first access to housing?

Contemporary North-South Divides and European Semi-Peripheries: Migration and Environmental Challenges

The notion of semi-periphery provides a framing for the multiple social, economic and political differences between and within European countries and in relation to their neighbours. This notion provides a particularly useful framework in the current context of economic and refugee crisis. This track is focusing on the intersection of gender, migration and urban environments in the (re)production of inequalities related to current urban developments in different European societies. It is important to identify challenges, resistances and coping strategies of both old and new urban populations, and the points of their intersection and common ground. Some indicative questions could be the following. How the processes of migration influence the quality of life in different parts of Europe? How to promote gender and class sensitive indicators which would address the social change resulting from intense migration flows, negative economic developments, and austerity measures? What are the characteristics of reverse migration

flows, from the cities to rural areas? How environmental concerns in big cities influence those processes? How are the big cities at the semi-periphery, in comparison to other parts of Europe, being restructured along the lines of age, gender, and class? What is happening to a growing section of the population in many countries whose precarious living conditions could be defined as of an “underclass”? What are positive examples of citizen’s initiatives and urban movements supporting quality of life in the cities of the semi-periphery and other parts of Europe?

Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning and Gendered Research Methodologies: Process, Tools and Techniques

Gender Mainstreaming (GM) emerged in the 1990s as a major global strategy for promoting gender equality. Since then, a number of practical applications of this approach in the specific field of urban planning and policies, and the thinking encoded in theoretical contributions, provide a sufficient basis from which to reflect on the concept, its weaknesses and strengths. In this track we aim to explore this from a theoretical and empirical perspective. This track also aims to explore gender sensitive methodologies and tools in urban and planning research. How does Gender Mainstreaming in urban planning and urban development contribute to fairer and more sustainable urban futures? What are its strengths and limitations? To what extent Gender Mainstreaming is relying or not on gender sensitive research methods, including e.g. contextualization, practical knowledge, systematic use of sex disaggregated data and gender indicators, or challenging gender implicit assumptions? How far and in what ways is urban governance in European cities integrating gender considerations? Could a critical review of the concept of GM lead to innovations leading to improved implementation processes and substantive outcomes? Can gender mainstreaming become a positive approach useful to cope with current global urban challenges, such as rapid urbanization, climate change, migration, demographic changes? Contributions reviewing the concept and trans-disciplinary approaches are welcomed alongside studies on initiatives in specific geographical contexts.

Ensuring Gender Equality vis-à-vis Environmental Challenges within the International Agendas for Sustainable Development and Climate Change

The UNFCCC Paris Conference in December 2015 made it clear that governments at last recognize the seriousness and urgency of achieving major cuts in greenhouse emissions. Meanwhile, the UNFCCC claims that it is committed to greater gender sensitivity in climate change related policy, and to gender balance in negotiating teams. It is unlikely that achieving carbon savings can be achieved without greater gender sensitivity. On the other hand, there is a risk that when gender equality and environmental issues come into conflict, as might be the case for instance in transportation, gender concerns are sidelined and environmental objectives are promoted at the expense of increased gender inequality. This conference theme welcomes papers which explore issues of gender in climate change, and in sustainable development policy making at all levels, and

in the framing and undertaking of climate change, and other environmental, research. We particularly invite papers which investigate gender relations and masculinities as well as femininities in relation to each other and to environmental decision making; and papers which explore intersectional identities. The theme addresses all scales, and welcomes papers which present research from all global regions.

Promoting Structural Change in Science and Research Institutions

In the last years promoting the structural change of institutions has emerged as the main approach to promote gender equality in STEM and technological fields, substituting for earlier approaches which used to put the focus solely on women. This change was started by the US National Foundation through the ADVANCE Program, and followed up by the European Commission, as stated in the “Structural Change Report” of 2011 and the subsequent call for projects to support structural change of organizations. This implies recognizing the multiple dimensions of the problem of gender inequality in technological professions, of which gender bias appears to be a key element. This track aims at addressing how far we have advanced in promoting structural change for greater gender equality in STEM, and what can be done to improve this approach. What have achieved institutions funded under the European Commission Structural Change Call, and under the US ADVANCE Program? What have been successes and challenges to structural change programs and plans? Have public policies addressing structural change in STEM and RTD, at national and international levels, achieved their stated objectives? How can these be improved? Should structural change approaches be complemented with measures specifically addressing women? Both theoretical and empirically based contributions are welcome.

Recognition Without Bias in Architecture and Planning: Challenging Gate-Keeping and Canon-Building Practices

Important prizes, professional journals, juries at competitions, publishers, etc., play a key role as “gate keepers” of architectural careers. Empirical evidence on gender differences in career awards and publications shows a very significant gender bias in evaluation starting at the very early stages of careers. This happens even in countries in which architectural education is feminized and much before children and family become an issue. How can gender bias in awards, publications, competitions, and in other gate-keeping mechanisms be overcome? How do definitions of the “canon” contribute to the exclusion of women? How the historical contribution of women to the profession in different roles as architects, planners, clients, and advocates can be better recognized and integrated in mainstream approaches to architectural history? How architectural history should be approached from a gender and/or feminist perspective? Monographic books about architects are often of a literary style that could be qualified as akin to the hagiography, more than academic scholarship or criticism. What role can publishers play in creating an editorial environment fairer and less gender biased? How mainstream mechanisms for recognition of architectural work can be challenged, so that

alternative, more people-centred approaches to architecture can be valued? What can professional associations in architecture and planning (RIBA, RTP, AIA, COAM, CS-CAE, UIA, etc) do to reduce gender bias in architectural and planning careers?

This special issue

The papers selected for this special issue convey a wide range of relevant substantive areas of action with examples and experiences coming from various continents.

A first contribution by Boccia explains the main outcomes of the NUA process from a gender perspective. Sánchez de Madariaga looks at how research and existing networks on gender and planning can contribute to the follow-up and implementation of the NUA, offering an overview of the Position Paper on adopted in October 2016 by the European network genderSTE. Novella addresses the participation of women in the technical professions of the built environment, and how recognition plays an important role, both as we reexamine the history of architecture recovering the work of forgotten women, and as we strive for real equality today in the workplace. A contribution by Aurrekoetxea explores methodological approaches to better describe the interrelationships between gender, quality of life, urban dynamics, and vulnerability, with Bilbao as an example. Biancheri & Landi and Müller & Parra look at gender and healthcare architecture, analyzing medical processes and relating women's needs to physical spaces. Sánchez Bernal study specific architectural typologies –housing– from the perspective of women's needs and use. Burbano and Tumini, Cartes & Arriagada look at the processes for promoting women's empowerment and participation in local planning in very specific –and difficult– contexts, ie, the post-conflict scenario in Colombia and the reconstruction after the tsunami in the Biobío region in Chile. Queirós et al. and Savoldi use new information technologies to provide new insights into everyday mobilities and space-time relationships in Portugal, and to explore capacities and limitations for improving women's safety in urban space. Ciocolleto presents the methodological contributions of an Urban Quality Audit with a gender perspective as an urban evaluation tool. Mateo, Rubio-Garrido and Serrano-Lanzarote explore from an institutional viewpoint the contexts and possibilities for gender mainstreaming planning and housing legislation in the region of Valencia. Finally, De Gregorio Hurtado analyzes how gender is and is not present at the European Urban Agenda and particularly its programmatic framework, the Pact of Amsterdam, exploring the potentials for better future mainstreaming.

