

Gender, Just Cities, and Development



Report of the Webinar
on
Gender, Just Cities, and Development

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Participants

Speakers

- Professor Caroline Moser, Emeritus Professor, The University of Manchester, UK; Honorary Professor, Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London.
- Dr. Attiya Inayatullah, Former Federal Minister for Women Development.

Moderator

- Mr. Amir Yaqub, Director, Operations & Collaboration, NIPS.

Discussants

- Dr. Raza Muhammad, President, Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI).
- Syed Habib Ahmed, Former Civil Servant.
- Dr. Salma Malik, Assistant Professor, Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Quaid-e-Azam University.
- Mr. Sajjad Ahmed, Director Directorate of Women Development (DWD), Government of Punjab.
- Mr. Ali Shah, Head of Research, NIPS.
- Dr. Adil Iqbal, Assistant Professor, NUST Business School (NBS).
- Dr. Farah Naz, Assistant Professor, Department of Government & Public Policy, School of Social Sciences & Humanities (S3H), NUST.
- Ms Rida Najam, Assistant Chief (SDG).
- Mr. Syed Tauseef ul Husnain, Advocate.
- Ms Anjum Riaz, UNESCO.
- NIPS Team Members.
- NUST Students.

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About the Speakers

Dr. Caroline Moser

Dr. Moser is an Honorary Professor at the Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London, and Emeritus Professor at the University of Manchester. As an urban social anthropologist/social policy specialist she has more than forty years' experience in urban development and social policy in



academic research and teaching, in training and evaluation, and as an international bureaucrat. She was a lecturer at the Development Planning Unit, UCL, where she developed gender planning, at the LSE, London, and at the New School, New York. Dr. Moser was Lead Specialist for Social Development in Latin America at the World Bank Washington DC where she researched the impact of structural adjustment on the urban poor.

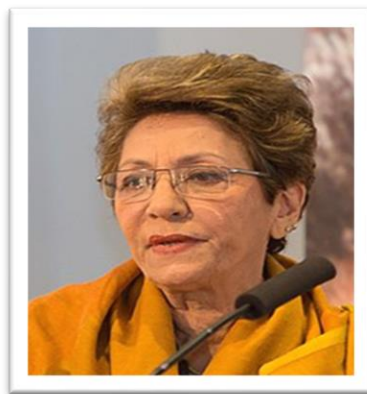
Dr. Moser also worked in policy think-tanks such as the Overseas Development Institute, London and Brookings Institution, Washington. From 2007-2012 She was Professor of Urban Development and Director of the Global Urban Research Centre at the University of Manchester. Her recent advisory work includes Comic Relief, ICRC, IDRC, Ford Foundation and Swedish Research Council. Dr. Moser's research work includes a 40-year longitudinal study of a Guayaquil, Ecuador human settlement, on inter-generational asset

accumulation and poverty reduction; three projects on climate change asset adaptation; and three on urban violence.

Dr. Attiya Inayatullah

Dr. Inayatullah is a distinguished former Member of Parliament in Pakistan. She has dedicated her career to championing human rights, women's development, and reproductive health.

With expertise in demographics and a longstanding association with the Family Planning Association of



Pakistan, she is internationally recognized for her contributions in population planning. Dr. Inayatullah has served on the Executive Board of UNESCO and played a leading role in the International Planned Parenthood Federation. In addition, she holds prestigious positions such as President of SPARC, a national human rights organization for children, Director of Pakistan's Centre of Philanthropy, and Chairperson of the Finance & Programme Committee of Kashf, a microfinance foundation established exclusively for women. Her leadership and legislative efforts have been instrumental in advancing women, children, and human rights both domestically and globally.

1. Executive Summary

The NUST Institute of Policy Studies (NIPS) organized the webinar on “Gender, Just Cities and Development” on Wednesday, July 12, 2023. The webinar was moderated by Mr. Amir Yaqub, Director, NIPS and was attended by academic experts, development practitioners, think tank specialists, researchers, and students.

The globally renowned academic and gender expert practitioner, Dr. Caroline Moser, Emeritus Professor, the University of Manchester and Honorary Professor, Bartlett Development Planning Unit (DPU), University College London, delivered the keynote address on gender planning, urban gender transformation, and just cities. In a distinguished career spanning more than forty years, Dr. Moser has taught and conducted research at leading British universities and undertaken training and advisory work with globally renowned organizations like the World Bank, DFID, Brookings Institution, Ford Foundation, Overseas Development Institute, International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC), International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and UNICEF.

Talking about her Gender Transformation Framework (GTF), Dr. Moser underscored that the framework was focused on creating multiple urban strategies of asset accumulation related to different types of assets, such as, physical (land and housing), financial (income generation), human (health and education), and social (involving household and community levels). Dr. Moser explained that it is aimed at reducing poverty through addressing practical gender needs, empowering individual women; and enabling gender transformation through successfully challenging power relations by means of

collective action and institutional partnerships. She added that the framework is especially helpful in charting a range of gendered transformative pathways to just and equitable cities through a dynamic configuration of positive and negative drivers, asset accumulation based on careful assortment of asset types, and the combined action of social, cultural, and institutional factors.

Dr. Moser shared that during her work with the U.K.'s Department for International Development (DFID) in 2016 on Infrastructure and Cities for Economic Development (ICED) facility (ICED) – before DFID's merger in September 2020 with Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to become Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) – Gender Transformation Framework became the basis for the Gender and Inclusion Framework (GIF), which, ICED, then, incorporated into several of its programs. Dr. Moser explained that GIF contains three different levels of impact and outcomes of infrastructure investments, namely: minimal compliance consisting of programs that address the basic needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalized groups; empowerment consisting of asset accumulation and capacity building programs for women; and structural transformation comprising program, that deal with unequal power relations by means of seeking legal and institutional change at the broader societal level.

Dr. Moser's lecture dissected two underlying concepts involved in her work as a feminist research and gender professional, namely, reflexivity and positionality. Reflexivity in feminist research entails a self-critical scrutiny of oneself as a researcher in the context of the feminist concern for objective research. Positionality, on the other hand, focuses on power relations in the research process and operates at the institutional and individual level.

Dr. Moser emphasized that empowerment and transformation differ in terms of their conceptualization and focus. Gender empowerment describes how individual women through their individual agency increase their bargaining power in public and private spheres to participate fully in political and economic spheres. Gender transformation emphasizes structural changes in gender power relations and collective efforts, struggle, and negotiation. Dr. Moser especially cautioned against conflating the individual agency of women and gender power relations.

The second keynote speaker, Dr. Attiya Inayatullah, former Federal Minister for Population and Women's Development and President Emeritus Family Planning Association of Pakistan, talked about women's agency, social norms, and the right to human development in Pakistan. Dr. Inayatullah highlighted the toxic effects of patriarchy on the agenda of gender equality and sustainable development in Pakistan. She pointed out there existed an attitudinal and perceptual time warp that distorts policy approaches aimed at addressing gender inequality in the country. She remarked that the confluence of transmitted tradition and learned behavior reinforces structures of gender inequality and considerably constricts the agency of Pakistani women.

Dr. Inayatullah stressed the importance of local campaigns and agenda setting for gender equality to be informed by awareness and knowledge of diverse global experiences in the field. She emphasized that society could nurture women's agency and protect their right to development by ensuring collective efforts rather than a "men-versus-women" binary worldview. She said that there is a need to remove social and institutional barriers and have a participatory approach to establish inclusive contexts for gender equality.

The keynotes were followed by an extensive discussion session wherein attendees articulated relevant points regarding gender planning, urban gender transformation, inclusive development, gender collaboration, household, and community decision-making, and equitable gender-based asset accumulation strategies.

Recommendations derived from the webinar are given in Section 5 of the report.



2. Keynote Address

Gender Planning, Urban Gender Transformation, and Just Cities

Dr. Caroline Moser



Dr. Moser examined the progression of gender and urban development, with a specific emphasis on three key phases: gender planning, gender mainstreaming, and gender transformation. The objective of the keynote was to offer a deeper understanding of these concepts, with a particular focus on the significance of reflexivity and positionality in comprehending the role of gender in the context of urban development and resolving structural issues through gender transformation.

Gender Planning, Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Transformation

Gender mainstreaming is an approach and strategy that seeks to integrate a gender perspective into all policies, programs, and initiatives. It endeavors to address gender disparities and advance gender equality by considering the diverse needs, priorities, and experiences of both men and women. Gender mainstreaming

acknowledges that gender is a primary determinant of social and economic relationships and that it intersects with other social categories such as age, race, ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic status.

Dr. Moser acknowledged the importance of gender mainstreaming but noted that her contribution to the development of this concept had been limited. Consequently, she decided to steer the conversation towards the topics of gender planning and gender transformation, which were the main areas of her expertise and involvement.

Gender transformation is a significantly more progressive method for achieving gender equality compared to gender planning. Its objective is to modify the fundamental frameworks of gender disparity, rather than solely focusing on the manifestations of disparity. The process of gender transformation necessitates a comprehensive approach that encompasses various dimensions of gender inequality, such as the economic, political, and social aspects.

Reflexivity and Positionality

Reflexivity and positionality are fundamental concepts that had significant impacts on the work that Dr. Moser did. One of the most important aspects of feminist research is called reflexivity, and it emphasizes how important it is for researchers to conduct an in-depth analysis of their own worldviews and preconceptions. It emphasizes the significance of self-examination and introspection not only for the researcher but also for the process of conducting research in collaboration with others.

Positionality addresses the power dynamics that are inherently present in research. The individual and the institutional levels of analysis both are included in its scope. The significance of recognizing and

comprehending one's own position within the context of the research, as well as the influence of institutional positionality on the work that is done in policymaking.

The Gender Planning Framework (1980-90)

Dr. Moser delved into her early work, sharing insights from a time when she was positioned in an urban planning unit rather than an academic department or feminist NGO. During this phase, her colleagues were primarily engaged in transport planning, land use planning, and housing, with limited consideration for gender-related aspects. Recognizing the need to garner attention and integrate gender concerns effectively, she embarked on developing a gender planning framework.

The gender planning framework sought to provide a rational basis for incorporating gender considerations into urban planning practices. It introduced three methodological tools that were designed to be easily comprehensible for planners. The framework went beyond mere tokenistic efforts of adding women to development initiatives, instead focusing on establishing a comprehensive approach centered around gender perspectives.

Triple Gender Roles

Women are involved in various roles. These roles are commonly referred to as the triple role, which encompasses productive activities such as work or employment, reproductive responsibilities associated with childbirth and caregiving, and community management tasks involving contributions to and the management of community well-being. The triple gender role shows the wide range of important contributions made by women in different areas of life.

Gender Needs

It is crucial to acknowledge the significance of identifying gender needs and differentiating between practical gender needs, which refer to everyday necessities, and strategic gender needs, which involve addressing changes in gender relations.

Five Approaches to WID/GAD Policies

There are five policy approaches that center on the development of women and gender-related development. It is beneficial to classify these approaches into distinct categories: welfare, anti-poverty, equality, efficiency, and empowerment. These approaches encompass a variety of viewpoints and methods for tackling women's issues and advancing gender equality. It becomes evident during analysis that it is crucial to adopt a comprehensive and multifaceted approach towards the development of women and achieving gender equity.

Triple Gender Roles	Gender Needs	Five Approaches to WID/GAD policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Productive,•Reproductive,•Community management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Practical gender needs•Strategic gender needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Welfare•Anti-poverty•Equality•Efficiency•Empowerment

The Gender Planning Framework (1980-90)¹

The Gender Planning Framework was judged to be a success. It was seen as a non-threatening approach, frequently as “technical.” During the 1980s and 1990s, the Gender Planning Framework was critical in filling a gap in addressing gender-related issues. It was widely disseminated through training and planning techniques, with the help

¹ This table has been extracted from Dr. Moser's presentation during the webinar.

of bilateral agencies like DFID, SIDA, and NORAD, as well as international NGOs and experts from the Global South. Practitioners of gender equality and social development were enthusiastic about this paradigm.

The Beijing Conference on Women (1995) - A Milestone for Gender Equality

The Beijing Conference was held of considerable importance due to various factors. This marked the inaugural occurrence of a worldwide women's conference taking place in Asia. This event held great importance as it contributed to the promotion of awareness regarding the issue of gender equality in a region where it is frequently disregarded. Furthermore, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action received unanimous adoption from all 189 participating countries at the conference. This accomplishment was significant, as it demonstrated worldwide agreement regarding the imperative to tackle gender inequality.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action has played a crucial role in promoting gender equality on a global scale. Since its implementation, there has been notable advancement in reducing the disparity between genders in terms of education, health, and economic involvement. Nevertheless, there remains a significant amount of work that needs to be accomplished. Gender inequality continues to be a significant issue in numerous countries, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remains an important resource for advancing gender equality and empowering women.

The conference had a significant impact on increasing international recognition of the need to tackle gender inequalities and advance the empowerment of women. Furthermore, it implemented a framework

of periodic evaluations spanning five years to uphold the prominence of gender equality within the agendas of governments and international entities. Efforts to empower women globally have led to progress in several areas, such as education, health, and economic participation. The lasting influence of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action continues to promote positive progress in the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women on a global level.

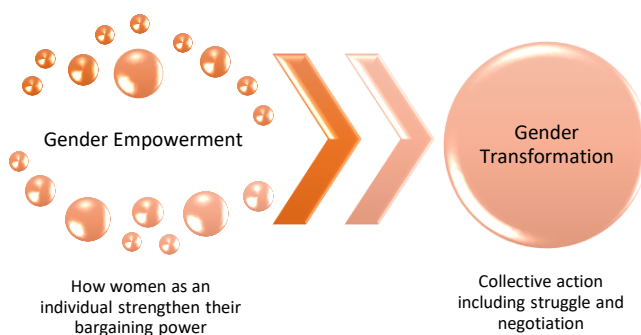
From Gender Mainstreaming to Gender Transformation: A Shift towards Lasting Change

Around 1995, the world had shifted towards gender mainstreaming, particularly influenced by the Beijing Women's Conference. As mentioned above, the dominant approach emerging from this conference aimed to achieve both equality and empowerment for women while integrating the concerns of both men and women. However, gender mainstreaming was criticized for not effecting a paradigm shift and being overly instrumental. Dr. Moser, focused on gender transformation as a new and fundamental paradigm shift in policy approach.

Empowerment or Transformation? Decoding Approaches to Achieve Gender Equality

Gender empowerment and gender transformation differ in their different focuses and goals. Gender empowerment has been defined as the process by which individual women increase their influence and decision-making authority in both the public and private spheres, allowing them to fully engage in the economic, social, and political elements of life. While gender empowerment is important, its primary focus is on empowering individual women.

Gender transformation, on the other hand, is considered as a more politically oriented approach, linked with the structural adjustments required to restructure gender power dynamics. Gender transformation necessitates collective action, struggle, and negotiation to effect comprehensive and systemic changes in society norms and power dynamics. The move from empowerment to transformation is conceivable, implying that the two concepts are interconnected and can help each other advance gender equality.



Gender Empowerment vs. Transformation²

An Inclusive Framework for Gender Transformation

Working as an independent advisor, Dr. Moser, collaborated with feminist professionals and networks such as the WEIGO Network, NGO Espaço Feminista, and Huairuoo Commission. The gender transformation framework was tested at global events aiming to envision a transformative framework for gender in urban development. Taking an example of Dr. Moser's work in Guayaquil,

² This figure has been extracted from Dr. Moser's presentation during the webinar.

Ecuador. The importance of linking gender transformation to assets and the accumulation of assets came under consideration.

Assets as Agents of Gender Transformation

Assets were viewed as agents of change, creating agency and empowering individuals and communities within existing social processes, structures, and power relations. Assets exist within social processes, structures, and power relations, and their accumulation plays a crucial role in empowering individuals and communities. Assets are more than just material possessions; they encompass financial, human, natural, and social resources.

Empowering Independence: The Link between Assets and Personal Agency

Asset accumulation has the potential to foster empowerment through various means. For instance, it has the potential to provide individuals with the necessary financial means to initiate their own entrepreneurial ventures, enhance their opportunities for education and healthcare, and elevate their societal standing. The process of accumulating assets can also result in transformation, as it has the potential to dismantle established power dynamics and generate fresh prospects for marginalized communities.

Capital Assets and Urban Asset Accumulation Strategies

The framework for gender transformation explored the relationship between urban strategies of asset accumulation and different capital assets. The capital assets encompassed physical assets such as land and housing, financial assets related to income-generating activities, human assets including health and education, and social assets at the household and community levels. Social capital emerged as a crucial element for gender transformation.



Capital Assets & Accumulation Strategies³

Dr. Moser examined how asset accumulation could reduce poverty and meet practical gender needs. When individuals possess adequate assets, it can lead to a decrease in poverty and the fulfillment of immediate needs. Additionally, the framework explored how asset accumulation could empower individual women through strategies aligned with their specific needs and interests.

Asset building can challenge power dynamics, empower individual women, and help to eliminate poverty.

Practical gender requirements

Building wealth can assist fight poverty by giving women the means to meet necessities like food, shelter, and clothing. This can enhance their quality of life and provide them more time to pursue other objectives.

Individual requirements and preferences

Having enough money and the ability to make decisions can empower individual women by enabling them to pursue their own objectives.

³ This figure has been extracted from Dr. Moser's presentation during the webinar.

This may entail undertaking their own ventures, putting their kids through school, or enhancing their physical well-being.

Transformative processes

By giving women a voice and a platform to fight for their rights, asset accumulation can also aid in challenging power dynamics. Laws, regulations, and societal conventions may change as a result, to the benefit of women.

Collective action

Asset building is frequently associated with collective action, as women band together to lobby for their shared interests and pool their resources.

Institutional collaborations

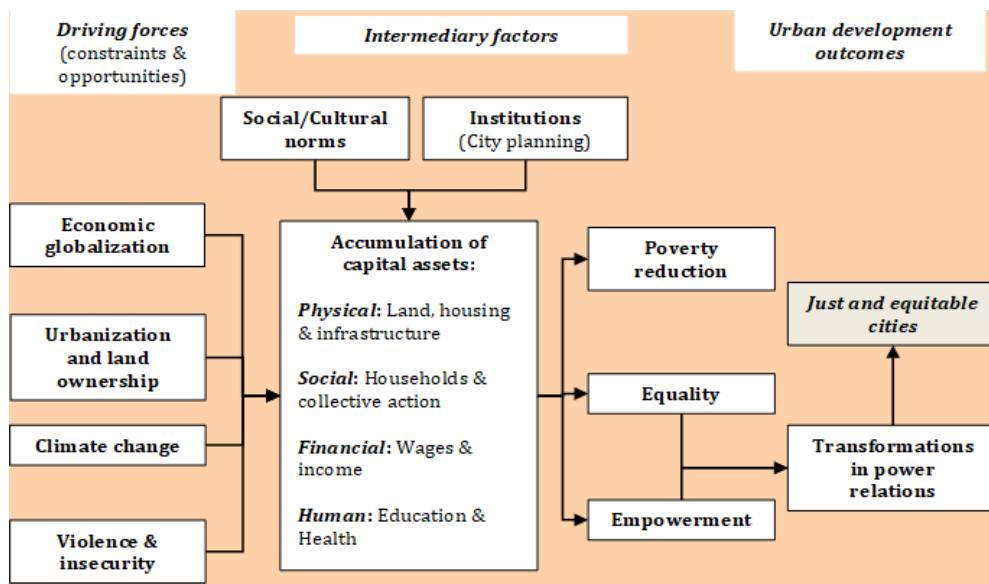
Institutional collaborations are crucial for promoting empowerment and asset accumulation. Governments, companies, and other groups can help women have access to resources, assistance, and training.

Harnessing Gender-Transformative Pathways to Create Just Urban Cities

This comprehensive framework illustrates the various pathways that can lead to the achievement of gender transformation. The challenges to achieving gender equality can generally be categorized into four domains. Considering the driving factors that are economic globalization, urbanization and land ownership, climate change, and violence or security issues.

Socio-cultural norms and influential institutions are among the intermediary factors that contribute to gender differences. These

factors play a role in shaping and driving the causes of gender differences. The gathering of various types of assets, such as social, physical, financial, or human, can have a significant impact in addressing the factors that contribute to gender disparities.



Gendered Transformative Pathways to Just and Equitable Cities⁴

In this context, the process of acquiring assets has the potential to alleviate poverty and fulfill the practical needs related to gender. When individuals have sufficient resources, it can result in a reduction in poverty and the satisfaction of immediate necessities, which in turn contributes to the promotion of gender equality and empowerment. These tools play a significant role in altering power dynamics between individuals. This ultimately leads to the achievement of urban development outcomes that promote fairness and equality within cities.

⁴ This figure has been extracted from Dr. Moser's presentation during the webinar.

Urban Planning Interventions: Transforming Gender Relations

Examples of urban planning intervention aimed to transform gender relations and bring about structural changes.

Waste Picker Cooperatives and Informal Recycling

An example highlighted the work of WEIGO, a global network focusing on poor, especially women, in the informal economy, in collaboration with waste pickers in Bogota, Colombia. Waste pickers, primarily women, formed a cooperative and engaged in contestation and mediation with the city government. They aimed to prevent multinational waste companies from banning informal recycling, which would have led to job losses for many waste pickers. This intervention empowered individual women by protecting their livelihoods while also challenging the structural dynamics that often marginalize informal sector workers. It brought informal recycling into the realm of city planning, recognizing its significance as a source of employment and livelihood for women in the city.

Gender Transformation and Climate Change

Dr. Moser touched upon the connection between gender transformation interventions and climate change. Fieldwork conducted in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, explored the impact of climate change on marginalized communities. The findings highlighted that many of the interventions desired by local communities to address climate change were simple, straightforward, and relatively inexpensive. An example was the construction of used tire retaining walls to mitigate landslides during heavy rains. The research emphasized the importance of not only identifying gender-transformative interventions but also ensuring their effective implementation. The successful implementation of such interventions

contributes to building resilience within communities and addresses gender disparities exacerbated by climate change.

The examples presented during the webinar demonstrated that negotiations and contestations involved in gender-transformative interventions are often lengthy and complex. Political shifts and changing priorities pose challenges to sustaining and scaling up such interventions. The need for quick results can sometimes hinder the long-term efforts required for structural transformation. However, the examples showcased the importance of perseverance and collaborative efforts in bringing about meaningful changes in gender relations within urban contexts.

Gender Transformation Framework- The Foundation for the Gender and Inclusion Framework (GIF)

In 2016, Dr. Moser collaborated with the U.K.'s Department for International Development (DFID) on the Infrastructure and Cities for Economic Development (ICED) facility. This collaboration took place before DFID merged with Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in September 2020 to form the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO). Dr. Moser's work focused on the Gender Transformation Framework, which later served as the foundation for the Gender and Inclusion Framework (GIF). ICED subsequently integrated this framework into multiple programs.

Testing and Dissemination of the Framework

Dr. Moser emphasized the importance of testing the transformation framework in practical settings to ensure its efficacy. Transitioning from an institutional planning position to an independent researcher, she adopted a strategy to refine and disseminate the framework.

She engaged in workshops with feminist scholars and practitioners, tested and refined the conceptualizations of empowerment and transformation. These collaborative sessions allowed for a deeper understanding of the framework's practical implications and potential impact. The insights gained from these workshops were consolidated and published in an edited book, providing a resource for further exploration and application of the framework.



3. Keynote Address

Women's Agency, Social Norms and the Right to Human Development in Pakistan

Dr. Attiya Inayatullah



Dr. Inayatullah analyzed the setting of the twenty-first century, underlining global difficulties and uncertainties that countries face. The emphasis was on gender issues in Pakistan, where discriminatory social norms limit women's agency throughout their life cycle, jeopardizing their right to human development. In this regard, education and health were noted as crucial issues, with early marriage and limited mobility limiting women's access to education. The keynote stressed the critical need for radical change in Pakistan to empower women, ensure gender equality, and promote inclusive growth.

Gender Issues in Pakistan

Gender issues continue to persist in Pakistan throughout the 21st century. Despite the progress made in different fields, it still faces challenges in terms of attitudes that impede the advancement of

gender equality. The ongoing impact of gender norms on women's agency affects the ability to fully exercise the right to human development.

The influence of gender norms on women's agency in Pakistan is substantial, as these norms are deeply ingrained in society. During the various stages of lives, women encounter societal norms that impose restrictions on their autonomy and limit the opportunities available to them. The widespread discrimination that exists not only has negative economic consequences but also undermines women's entitlement to human development.

Pakistan's education, health, and economic issues hinder women's empowerment. Early marriage, mobility constraints, and high dropout rates reduce girls' educational possibilities. Insufficient healthcare, family planning, nutrition, and water and sanitation infrastructure contribute to high maternal death rates. Unpaid labor harms women and hinders their workforce engagement, perpetuating gender inequities and low female labor force participation. Sustainable growth and gender equality in Pakistan require overcoming these obstacles.

Thinking Globally and Acting Locally

To be compatible at the global stage, the importance of adopting a global perspective and implementing local initiatives to address the challenges encountered by women in Pakistan must be taken into account. When considering education, health, and the economy as significant areas of interest, it is important to recognize that Pakistan's position on international indices is relatively low. It is crucial to prioritize women's rights, regardless of the existing circumstances such as economic difficulties or the influence of powerful individuals.

Pakistan is required to adhere to international norms regarding the rights of women. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an important international agreement that establishes a thorough framework for promoting equality, preventing discrimination, and following the commitments set forth in the Beijing Plan of Action. Despite the passage of a considerable amount of time, the Beijing Plan of Action continues to hold significance, emphasizing the ongoing necessity for consistent attention and investment in the advancement of women's empowerment.

Ensuring Inclusion

The overarching objective of not excluding anyone requires collective endeavors to empower disadvantaged and susceptible populations, with a particular focus on women. The utilization of digital platforms and technologies has the potential to enhance the voices of women, facilitating increased involvement and representation.⁵ Pakistan has the opportunity of enhancing its dedication to promoting women's empowerment and adhering to the principles outlined in the Beijing Plan of Action by utilizing the worldwide momentum.

Assessing Pakistan's Position on the Global Gender Index

Pakistan has made some progress in the Global Gender Gap Report 2023, released by the World Economic Forum (WEF). It has moved up

⁵ Cummings, Clare, and Tam O'Neil. "Do digital information and communications technologies increase the voice and influence of women and girls." A rapid review of the evidence. Overseas Development Institute, 2015. <https://odi.org/en/publications/do-digital-information-and-communications-technologies-increase-the-voice-and-influence-of-women-and-girls/> (accessed, July 14, 2023).

three positions and now ranks 142nd out of 146 countries. This puts Pakistan slightly ahead of Iran, Algeria, Chad, and Afghanistan.⁶

There is still a significant amount of work to be done in addressing gender inequality as last year, Pakistan's position on global gender index revealed a concerning reality. In the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index for 2022, Pakistan ranks exceptionally low, occupying the 145th position out of 146 countries.

This is a distressing statistic that highlights the severe gender disparities prevalent in the country.

Additionally, according to the United Nations Human Development Report for 2022, Pakistan's ranking is equally disheartening, standing at 161 out of the total number of countries considered.⁷ Based on the most recent UN Human Development Report, Pakistan has experienced a decline of seven positions in the Human Development Index (HDI) ranking for the period of 2021-2022.

This follows a previous drop of two positions in 2020, which categorized Pakistan under the low human development category due to inadequate indicators in education, health, and income.

When examining specific indexes, Pakistan's performance remains alarmingly low. In terms of economic opportunity, the country ranks 145 out of 146, indicating significant gender gaps in economic

⁶ "Pakistan Slightly Ups Its Gender Equality Slot." The Express Tribune, 24 Feb. 2023, www.tribune.com.pk/story/2422993/pakistan-slightly-ups-its-gender-equality-slot; "Pakistan's Depressing State of Human Development." The Express Tribune, 23 Jan. 2023, www.tribune.com.pk/story/2400318/pakistans-depressing-state-of-human-development (accessed, July 14, 2023)

⁷ "Pakistan's Depressing State of Human Development." The Express Tribune, 23 Jan. 2023, www.tribune.com.pk/story/2400318/pakistans-depressing-state-of-human-development (accessed, July 14, 2023).

participation and empowerment. In terms of health, Pakistan ranks 143 out of 146, highlighting challenges in providing accessible and quality healthcare to women.⁸

Pakistan's ranking on global gender indices paints a grim picture of the existing gender disparities within the country. The low positions in economic opportunity, health, education, and the overall human development index underscore the urgent need for comprehensive measures to address gender inequalities.

Women's Leadership and Existing Frameworks

Pakistan has witnessed women's leadership at the highest levels, including the Prime Minister, Speaker of the National Assembly, Governors, and Federal Ministers. This representation signifies progress and serves as a source of motivation for women across the country.

It is important to recognize and credit the dedicated efforts of the numerous women and men who have worked tirelessly to improve the situation and move beyond the challenging figures mentioned earlier.⁹ Their commitment and perseverance have been instrumental in advancing gender equality in Pakistan.

⁸ United Nations Development Programme. Gender Equality in Pakistan: Climate, Politico-Economic Stressors. United Nations Development Programme, New York, 2023, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-01/genderequality_in_pakistan-climate_politico-economic_stressors.pdf (accessed, July 14, 2023).

⁹ Imran, Muhammad, Muhammad Afzaal, D. M. I. Chishti, and D. S. Ahmad. "Political pathways: Factors of successful women leadership in Pakistan." *Al-Qalam* 25, no. 1 (2020): 244-268. Accessed July 18, 2023. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Muhammad-Afzaal6/publication/343485250_POLITICAL_PATHWAYS_FACTORS_OF_SUCCESSFUL_WOMEN_LEADERSHIP_IN_PAKISTAN/links/5f2c4d2e458515b7290ac4f1

Government Policies and Constitutional Rights

The government has formulated policies, plans, and strategies that specifically target women and girls, demonstrating a dedication to promoting gender equality. Moreover, the constitution of Pakistan incorporates provisions that ensure specific rights for women, including the constitutional entitlement to mandatory education. The inclusion of an affirmative action provision enables the implementation of specific strategies to address gender inequalities as necessary.

Constitution of Pakistan Promotes and Ensures Gender Equality

The Constitution of Pakistan provides various fundamental rights to women, ensuring their equality and protection as per the law. Article 25 underscores the principle of legal equality, ensuring that women are afforded the same rights and protections as men. Article 25 strictly prohibits any form of gender-based discrimination in various domains, including education, employment, and healthcare. In addition, Article 25A guarantees the universal right to education for children between the ages of five and sixteen, irrespective of their gender. Article 23 serves as a protective measure for women's property rights, guaranteeing that they cannot be unjustly deprived of their possessions without legal justification. The constitutional provisions of Pakistan demonstrate the country's dedication to promoting gender equality and empowering women in various aspects of society.¹⁰

[/POLITICAL-PATHWAYS-FACTORS-OF-SUCCESSFUL-WOMEN-LEADERSHIP-IN-PAKISTAN.pdf](#) (accessed, July 14, 2023).

¹⁰ National Assembly of Pakistan. "Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan." National Assembly of Pakistan, https://na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1333523681_951.pdf (accessed July 14, 2023).

National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW)

The establishment of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) in July 2000 is a result of the Government of Pakistan's commitment to national and international obligations, such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, and the National Plan of Action (NPA) for Women in 1998. The NCSW has been assigned various functions, including the examination of government policies, programs, and measures for women's development and gender equality. It also reviews laws, rules, and regulations that impact the status of women, monitors mechanisms for addressing violations of women's rights and individual grievances, promotes research on women and gender issues, facilitates engagement with NGOs, experts, and individuals at national, regional, and international levels, and carries out any additional tasks entrusted by the Federal Government.

The Women's Empowerment Desk in the Prime Minister's Office

The necessity of providing equal opportunities for women in Pakistan was recently emphasized by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shehbaz Sharif. During the inauguration of the Prime Minister's Initiative for Women Empowerment, the significance of women's societal contributions the imperative of safeguarding their rights and ensuring equal opportunities were discussed. The allocation of financial and practical resources across different domains were also ensured to promote meaningful engagement.¹¹

The creation of the Status of Women Commission and The Women's Empowerment Desk in the Prime Minister's Office exemplifies the

¹¹ The Nation. "PM Shehbaz Unveils Women Empowerment Initiative." The Nation. <https://www.nation.com.pk/11-Jul-2023/pm-shehbaz-unveils-women-empowerment-initiative> (accessed July 14, 2023).

government's dedication to addressing matters concerning women and promoting their empowerment. Moreover, Pakistan has enacted a range of laws and legal measures to safeguard the rights of women.

These include the establishment of family courts, crisis centers, and the appointment of women ombudspersons. These frameworks offer assistance and safeguard for women encountering difficulties and advance the principle of gender parity.

Issues in the Implementation of Public Sector Services

Despite the presence of current frameworks and initiatives, there are notable obstacles that impede the successful execution of policies and programs designed to promote the empowerment of women. A significant issue exists within the public sector delivery system, and it is crucial to address this to achieve concrete advancements.

The Significance of an Inclusive Methodology

The key issue is that human development is most effectively achieved when it is not solely directed towards individuals, but actively involves their participation. This recognition has resulted in the promotion of a participatory approach, wherein women and other individuals with a vested interest are actively engaged in the processes of decision-making, policy development, and program execution. The adoption of a participatory approach can promote a sense of ownership, inclusion, and empowerment. This approach ensures that policies and initiatives are aligned with the needs and aspirations of the communities they intend to benefit.

One significant issue observed in public sector delivery is the insufficient engagement of stakeholders and communities, particularly at the local level. It is of utmost importance to tackle this matter

through the implementation of a participatory approach that encompasses the viewpoints and opinions of all individuals involved, with a particular emphasis on women.

The second fault line pertains to the toxic patriarchal mindset, which encompasses a set of relationships, beliefs, and values that are deeply ingrained within political, social, and economic systems. The presence of a toxic patriarchal mindset contributes to the continuation of inequality, limits opportunities, and undermines the rights and autonomy of women.

To refrain from making broad generalizations, it is crucial to acknowledge that the influence of this perspective differs across different segments of society. The society of Pakistan exhibits diversity, characterized by a division between urban and rural areas, as well as variations in family structures, including nuclear and joint families. Moreover, the existence of a middle-class standard further enhances the intricacy of social dynamics. The influence of the patriarchal mindset may vary in diverse contexts and communities.

While recognizing the potential existence of distinct gender roles, it is imperative to underscore the unacceptability of patriarchy as a source of stress in the lives of women and girls. For example, the exercise of men's authority over women's bodies and their exertion of control and dominance represents infringements upon women's rights that necessitate confrontation.

Stark Facts of the Pakistani Situation

The grim facts that flow from this situation in Pakistan are deeply concerning and highlight the urgent need for action. The situation faced by women and girls in Pakistan is characterized by a multitude of difficulties and infringements upon their rights. Regrettably, a

significant proportion of women in the country, approximately 80 percent, experience domestic violence, a highly alarming figure. Honor killings, which are believed to occur around 1,000 times each year, are a significant infringement upon the rights of women and require a comprehensive approach to address them effectively.

Surprisingly, research indicates that approximately 33% of girls aged four to 16 encounter various forms of abuse, underscoring the susceptibility and inadequate safeguarding measures for this demographic. The extent of domestic violence becomes apparent when considering the substantial number of 13,478 calls that were received by the Punjab Safe City Authority within a span of only five months in 2020.¹² This emphasizes the urgent requirement for prompt intervention and assistance.

The report about violent crimes says that more than 5,551 women were kidnapped in the first four months of 2023, which is about two women every hour. The study says that from January to April, this year, there were 10,000 violent crimes against women in Punjab and 1,768 violent crimes against children. Nearly 1,111 women were raped, and 858 children were the victims of sexual crimes. Every day, almost seven children were sexually abused.¹³

Addressing these critical social issues is paramount for building the status and gender rights of women in Pakistan. These issues require

¹² Times of Islamabad. "PSCA Receives 13,478 Calls of Domestic Violence During Last Five Months." Times of Islamabad. June 6, 2020. <https://timesofislamabad.com/06-Jun-2020/pzca-receives-13-478-calls-of-domestic-violence-during-last-five-months> (accessed July 14, 2023).

¹³ Dunya News. 'Rape and Kidnapping Cases in Punjab Soar Shockingly.' Dunya News. <https://dunyaNews.tv/en/Crime/739098-Rape-and-kidnapping-cases-in-Punjab-soar-shockingly> (accessed July 14, 2023).

serious attention and effective measures to ensure the safety, well-being, and empowerment of women and girls.

Patriarchal Norms and Discrimination

It is important to recognize that gender bias and discrimination are not inherent in the male DNA. Social norms, beliefs, and traditions shape and govern behavior, both within and between generations. By understanding the underlying dynamics of social behavior, we can work towards challenging harmful norms and promoting positive change.

Tackling the pervasive issues of gender-based violence, discrimination, and social norms is essential for fostering gender equality and ensuring the rights and well-being of women and girls in Pakistan.

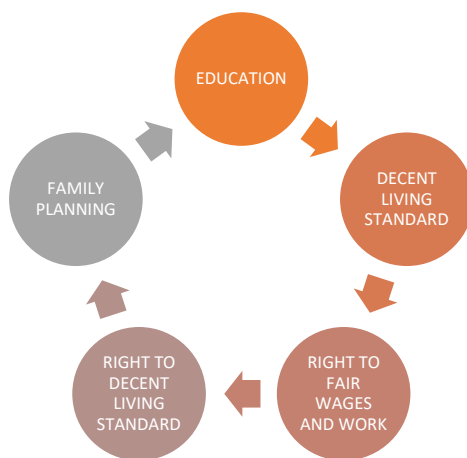
Community-Based First-Tier Human Development for the Right to Human Development and Actual Gender Transformation

It aims to research and manage a pilot trial of a community-based first tier human development project that focuses on fulfilling the rights of women to human development. The project will be implemented through a participatory approach, with women and girls taking an active role in partnership with the district government, as outlined in SDG17: Public-Private Partnership (PPP). The pilot project will address key areas of women's development, including education, family planning, access to potable water and sanitation, a decent living standard, and fair wages and work.

Objectives

The primary objective of this pilot project is to develop an integrated module that breaks the deprivation trap faced by women and provides

a replicable and sustainable framework for delivering comprehensive human development. The specific objectives are as follows:



Objectives of the Pilto Project¹⁴

To ensure access to education beyond the primary level for women and girls, providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge for personal and professional growth.

To enable women to exercise their right to make informed decisions about family planning, including when and how many children to have, empowering them to plan their lives.

To improve access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, promoting health and hygiene practices that enhance the well-being of women and their communities.

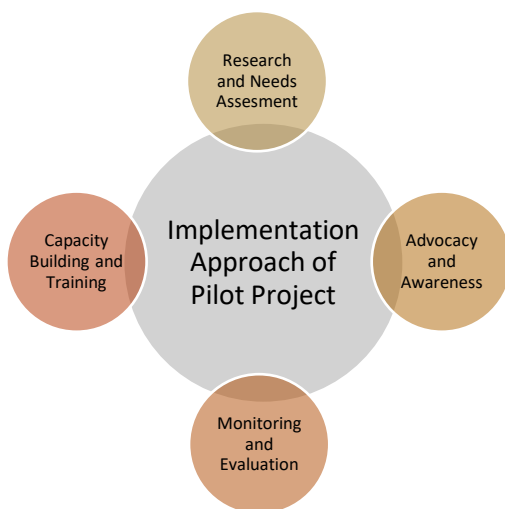
To address the socio-economic barriers faced by women, aiming to improve their living conditions, access to housing, nutrition, and other essential resources necessary for a decent standard of living.

¹⁴ This figure has been extracted from Dr. Inayatullah's presentation during the webinar.

To advocate for fair wages and improved working conditions for women, ensuring equal opportunities for employment, economic empowerment, and protection against exploitation and discrimination.

Implementation Approach of Pilot Project

The pilot project will utilize a participatory approach, involving women and girls as active participants in the decision-making and implementation procedures. Engaging in collaboration with the district government will enhance partnerships and utilize current resources and expertise. The primary tasks will involve:



The Implementation Approach¹⁵

Conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the requirements and difficulties encountered by women in the designated community to guide project development and formulation. The creation of an integrated module is proposed, which aims to address various identified needs such as education, family planning, access to clean

¹⁵ This figure has been extracted from Dr. Inayatullah’s presentation during the webinar.

water and sanitation, improved living conditions, and equitable wages and employment opportunities.

Offering training and capacity-building programs to empower women and girls by improving their skills, knowledge, and leadership capabilities. This will enable them to actively engage in project implementation and decision-making processes. Engaging in advocacy campaigns and fostering community awareness to advance gender equality, uphold women's rights, and underscore the significance of human development. Developing a strong monitoring and evaluation framework to evaluate the project's effects, identify opportunities for enhancement, and guarantee the long-term viability and adaptability of the module.

Promoting Gender Equality

The traditional gender norms must be examined that uphold male dominance and contribute to the continued subordination of women. The objective is to change societal attitudes and behaviors that contribute to violence against women by questioning these norms and advocating for gender equality. The focus should be on addressing harmful social norms that support and sustain violence against women. By implementing awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, and community engagement, we aim to cultivate favorable social norms that uphold the rights of women and encourage the achievement of gender equality.

Poverty frequently serves as a catalyst for domestic violence and abuse. Our objective is to decrease the susceptibility of women and foster conditions that support equality and well-being by implementing focused interventions, economic empowerment initiatives, and social safety nets to tackle poverty.

This cultural belief system, which regards women as property and contributes to gender disparities, will be subject to scrutiny and critique. These attitudes must change and foster a society where women are regarded and treated as equal individuals, achieved through advocacy, education, and cultural awareness.

Ancillary Features Components of the Pilot Project for Addressing the Root Causes

The dismantling of barriers that separate women and restrict their involvement in public spaces and decision-making processes is of utmost importance. The objective is to eradicate social exclusion and advance equality by implementing inclusive policies, eliminating both physical and social barriers, and fostering the active participation of women across all spheres of society.

The focus will be on addressing harmful customs and practices that contribute to the subordination of women and perpetuate gender inequalities. The objective is to challenge and alter these detrimental practices by implementing legal reforms, conducting awareness campaigns, and fostering community dialogue.

Enhancing Legislation and Enforcement is crucial to have strong legal structures and efficient methods of enforcing them to address domestic violence and abuse effectively. Enhancing legislation, aiding individuals who have experienced harm, and guaranteeing prompt and equitable legal processes are crucial elements of this endeavor.

Ensuring equal educational opportunities for both boys and girls is of utmost importance. Education plays a crucial role in challenging detrimental family norms, disrupting the cycle of violence across generations, and promoting gender equality.

4. Discussion



A vibrant and thorough discussion followed the keynotes, with meaningful contributions from participants and speakers.

One of the participants stressed the existence of patriarchy and its negative impacts, which exploits cultural norms and religious beliefs. Drawing audience's attention to Islamic history, the historical presence of women was highlighted in various roles, such as businesswomen, nurses, and participants in war. Hence, the importance of increasing women's presence in society and decision-making roles was underlined.

It was acknowledged that while progress has been made, there is still a considerable gender disparity, particularly in work possibilities and earnings in Pakistan and other countries. The participant stressed the importance of including gender concerns in urban development and planning agendas, implying that existing cities may need to be rebuilt or redesigned, while keeping these factors in mind. The importance of

reskilling and skill development, particularly for Pakistan's youth and women, was underscored.

During this discussion, a participant asked a question, based on their lifelong exposure, to the idea of gender mainstreaming without fully comprehending its practical ramifications. This question was related to the practical implications of gender mainstreaming. Another question was posed regarding the progress made in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Moreover, the participant mentioned their previous experience in Geneva during the adoption of the SDGs and expressed a desire to understand the status of the SDGs in practical terms.

In response to the question regarding gender mainstreaming, one of the speakers acknowledged its importance and traced its origins to the Beijing Platform for Action which brought countries from around the world together in 1995 to sign a comprehensive plan of action. However, it was pointed out that, despite several years of work, the entire implementation of gender mainstreaming is still a work in progress. The speaker expressed a desire to move beyond the current stage and investigate methods to address the multidimensional barriers to gender equality.

It was also pointed out that gender mainstreaming is conceived as a dual strategy that entails two essential components. Its initial objective is to integrate women's and men's concerns into all policies and programs, with the ultimate objective of attaining greater equality. Secondly, it includes empowering women-focused activities.

In this regard, one of the concerns raised by a participant during the discussion revolved around the challenges associated with implementing inclusive and feminist principles in the context of

sustainable urban planning. The participant observed that throughout history, cities have primarily been planned and influenced by men, frequently reflecting conventional gender roles and divisions of work. The participant further stressed the need to address this issue and ensure that urban planning incorporates an inclusive approach that considers the varied needs and perspectives of all individuals. Thus, the question sought ways to overcome these challenges and make urban planning and facilities accessible and advantageous to all genders.

One of the speakers responded by emphasizing the significance of training in addressing these issues. Sharing her experience of conducting extensive training sessions in the past, the speaker mentioned that even participants who were initially skeptical ultimately gained valuable insights. The speaker stressed that some knowledge can be acquired through diffusion from the media and daily conversations, but specific skills and techniques in urban planning and gender planning demand specialized training to be gender inclusive.

A participant asked one of the speakers if, during her extensive fieldwork in many places, she had noticed any gender-based differences in how different people and communities prioritize different types of assets. In this context, the participant wanted to find out how such differences affected gender transformation and urban asset accumulation strategies.

In response to the participant's question, based on her extensive fieldwork and speaking from her own forty-year empirical study of a slum neighborhood, the speaker pointed out the need of housing and education as essential resources. The speaker highlighted that women frequently give education a priority because they understand its power

to transform not only their own individual and social status but also families across generations.

The speaker further underlined that some of the consequences of this prioritization of education in the urban slums of Latin America could be related to the effects of what Ronald Dore termed the “diploma disease” in his 1976 book of the same name, and his own reevaluation of the concept in the 1980 bulletin of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) – effects that consisted of what he called “educated unemployment” or the “overproduction of job-seekers” stemming from the need to have progressively higher levels of schooling, qualifications, and certifications which are not linked in any meaningful way to the real acquisition of learning and skills required to do any given job.

Another participant brought attention to the pervasive influence that patriarchal norms, practices, and traditions have on limiting the roles that women play in society. The problem is not exclusive to Pakistan but is rather a global problem that can even be found in industrialized countries. Attention was drawn to the historical underrepresentation of women in top leadership positions across advanced economies. It was emphasized there was an urgent need for the commitment to confront and alter institutions that marginalize women anywhere.

In response to the participant’s comment, one of the speakers agreed that it was important to break the glass ceiling and make sure that men and women were treated equally at the top. The speaker stressed that it was essential to deal with problems at the local level. The speaker pointed out that change happens over time and is linked to economic growth, especially the growth of the middle class. Domestic abuse and violence are global problems in need of both local and global solutions, solidarities, and mobilizations.

One participant highlighted the tendency to reify and objectify women, treating them as near-inanimate assets leading to women's loss of control over their life decisions and resources. The participant noted that this objectification is evident in the family decisions related to matrimony, property, and inheritance in South Asia.

Another participant inquired about the transformational potential of digital technologies diffused worldwide in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic for local, regional, and global mobilizations and coalition formation for gender equality, as they may allow women, especially in disadvantaged conditions, to work together. They inquired about its transformational potential. Finally, the participant raised the issue of women's rights in nations where traditional norms severely limit human, not just women's rights.

One of the speakers highlighted that different levels and platforms for gender collaboration and mobilization had to be ensured. The speaker cited the example of South Africa where there was gender discrimination in the housing sector and where women faced unequal access to housing. The need to learn from other complex and local contexts that had faced comparable challenges was highlighted. The speaker acknowledged that a situation where human rights were curtailed could ipso facto be a situation where women's rights were undermined.

The speaker stressed that the process of self-discovery serves as a fundamental basis for initiating transformation. The speaker encouraged women to recognize and own their potential and role as agents of change. Moreover, concern was expressed regarding the notion of women being considered as assets. The South Asian patriarchal practice of the matrimonial transfer of assets from the girl's family to the family of the groom was strongly criticized. It was

proposed that the enactment of laws criminalizing this behavior on a national scale would help curb this practice.

In sum, the speaker emphasized the significance of intergenerational change so that both local households and culture would perceive women as equal and fully autonomous human beings. It was considered that enhancing educational and employment opportunities for women has the potential to positively influence societal perspectives on women's empowerment and gender transformation.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been derived from the deliberations of the webinar.

1. Translate the outcomes of research into practical and applicable solutions. Also utilize the already existing research findings to effectively tackle gender disparities and implement practical strategies for promoting change.
2. Advocate for the advancement of education and economic prospects. Precedence must be given to allocating resources towards education and establish avenues for economic growth, aiming to empower women and dismantle the perpetuation of gender-based inequalities.
3. Promote intergenerational collaboration by encouraging experienced and senior individuals to serve as mentors and guides for younger generations in their pursuit of gender equality. This collaboration would involve the sharing of valuable knowledge and experiences.
4. Enhance the sense of unity, solidarity, and support among women. Highlight the significance of collective action, support networks, and collaboration among women as crucial aspects of facilitating substantial societal transformation.
5. Encourage and educate men to actively support and advocate for gender equality. Efforts should be made to question conventional gender norms and actively engage men in conversations and initiatives aimed at advancing gender equality. It is important to

acknowledge the significant role that men play in dismantling patriarchal systems.

6. Promote the inclusion of women's rights in policymaking processes. It is crucial to prioritize women's rights and empowerment when developing public policies, and to ensure that these policies are effectively put into practice.
7. Propose the establishment of efficient family courts by enhancing and reinforcing family courts to safeguard women's rights and facilitate prompt and equitable resolution of disputes pertaining to gender issues.
8. Seek to challenge and transform long-standing gender norms and expectations to promote a society that is more inclusive and fairer.
9. Promote the engagement of multiple stakeholders in collaborative efforts. The establishment of alliances and cooperation between governmental bodies, civil society entities, and individuals to collectively tackle the issue of gender inequality.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the conversation on gender mainstreaming, urban planning, and women's empowerment gave a complete and nuanced understanding of the problems and opportunities that must be tackled to achieve gender equality. The speakers agreed that even if there has been some forward movement, patriarchal standards, cultural traditions, and societal disparities continue to be barriers to women's rights and access to resources in the global South.

Consequently, there was a general agreement among participants that tackling these concerns should involve considering a variety of perspectives. The speakers stressed the importance of research, bringing attention to the necessity of translating the findings of research into practical solutions that can bring about significant change. In addition, the importance of recognizing the role that education and economic opportunities play in empowering women and breaking the cycle of gender discrimination rested on focusing on gender transformation in practical terms.

Moreover, to achieve gender equality, persistent efforts need to be made by a variety of stakeholders, including governments, civil society organizations, and individuals. It is feasible to establish a society that is inclusive and just for all people.



Gender, Just Cities, and Development

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