

# Pioneering Gender Inclusive Urban Development

## Application for the GIZ Gender Awards: C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF)

Application by **Hanna Maxine Müller & Freya Lenk**

In the dynamic realm of sustainable urban development, in which sustainable cities have emerged as pioneers for change, the C40 Cities Finance Facility (CFF) acts as a facilitator and transformative force supporting cities to break gender barriers and fostering inclusivity.

At the core of our mission lies the imperative to address the financial deadlock in urban development, all while ensuring that the benefits of urban revitalization reach marginalised populations. The CFF stands as a beacon, a project preparation facility dedicated to supporting cities in the global south. Our goal is not only to prepare sustainable projects for finance readiness, bridging the gap between ambitious city governments and the financial backing. But our engagement with city governments transcends mere project preparation; we meticulously craft projects to be investment-ready, ensuring they not only fulfil crucial climate impacts aligning with the Paris Agreement but also extend to wider environmental and societal co-benefits. Our approach is holistic, acknowledging that sustainable urban development is not a one-size-fits-all endeavour.

### Mainstreaming Equity & Inclusion: A Guiding Philosophy

Throughout our collaboration with cities, equity and inclusion aren't checkboxes but guiding principles etched into every step. We relentlessly address the needs of vulnerable groups, create co-benefits, and put a spotlight on gender aspects. It's not just about building infrastructure; it's about building a future where every individual has an equal stake. As cities apply with their projects, they allow us to support them address their self-defined needs and we help them, through community engagement, fortify the integration of the population's requirements.

## Gender: A Key Lens for Sustainable Urbanization

The urbanization of poverty in the global south paints a stark picture of inequality, and it is women who bear the disproportionate brunt. Despite a global increase in female employment, women are often relegated to the informal economy, burdened with unpaid care work and household responsibilities, hindering their active participation in public processes.

### Diverse Needs, Inclusive Solutions

Recognizing that women, girls, and individuals with diverse gender identities have unique needs in urban infrastructure, we see an opportunity to create cities that are equitable and sustainable for all. Unjust social norms perpetuate unequal power relations, resulting in differential participation and spatial exclusion. Historical urban planning has perpetuated gender-based segregation, relegating public spaces predominantly to men and private spaces to women. This exclusion persists in decision-making processes. Male-centric norms embedded in land use planning overlook the specific needs of women and marginalized groups. Urbanization, when approached right, becomes a gateway to equity. Closing the gender income gap, improving educational opportunities, and reducing socio-cultural constraints due to rigid gender norms become achievable outcomes. The implementation of the Paris Agreement emerges not just as an environmental imperative but as a unique opportunity to foster a more equitable urban society.

#### Implementing agencies



#### Funding partners



UK Government



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development



AFD  
AGENCE FRANÇAISE  
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT



USAID  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Integrating equity and inclusion considerations throughout all stages of the project preparation process can pose challenges for cities, particularly those contending with limited knowledge in the realm of equity and inclusion or constrained capacities within social departments. Crafting projects with an intersectoral perspective requires cross-departmental coordination and alignment, posing a hurdle for cities in initiating projects that comprehensively address the diverse needs of their populations.

The CFF supports cities to better understand where social outcomes can be strengthened and how to integrate the necessary considerations in the project preparation process. Our approach aims at empowering cities to navigate and bridge the gap between their unique challenges, finance readiness and social inclusion.

With our projects, we aim to improve access to basic services for vulnerable groups, particularly women in the short term. Our focus on gender equality contributes to better participation of women in public and economic spheres in urban areas in the medium-term and by aligning with the Paris Agreement and the SDGs, CFF supports the creation of sustainable urban societies with equal opportunities for all, marking a paradigm shift in urban development in the long-term.

## Pioneering Change in Bogotá, Columbia: A Paradigm Shift in Urban Mobility

Bogotá stands as a testament for our commitment to inclusive urban mobility. With CFF-support, the city implemented an extensive bike-sharing system, covering 27 square kilometres with 3,000 bikes and a cycling highway that transverses 25 km of the city from North to South. The impact of CFF's support extends beyond Bogotá and these technical details because it contributed to a paradigm shift in the city's mobility sector and influenced other Colombian cities, including Monteria, Bucaramanga and Cali, as part of CFF's first cluster project.

### Shaping Inclusive Mobility



What sets Bogotá's bike-sharing program apart – in addition to its innovative financing scheme that needed to overcome challenging legal hurdles – is its strong emphasis on equity and inclusion, particularly regarding women and cycling. CFF, among many other activities, conducted a comprehensive gender analysis, engaging women, children, and people with disabilities in the process. The outcome was remarkable, yielding over 100 gender-sensitive recommendations that addressed diverse technical aspects, including bicycle design and specifications. Moreover, Bogotá has set an ambitious goal of achieving a 50/50 gender parity in bicycle usage (currently at 70/30), showcasing its commitment to inclusivity. While the city acknowledges and actively works to overcome technical challenges, there is also a dedicated focus on addressing security concerns along the cycling routes in the years ahead. Overall, the outcome was not just a transportation system but a model of inclusivity, catering to diverse needs.

**Bogotá's success isn't just about bikes on the streets; it's about breaking gender norms and fostering a more inclusive urban environment.**

Going beyond a mere gender analysis and technical recommendations, the mainstreaming of the gender perspective sparked a profound transformation in the city's approach to inclusive cycling projects. Extensive community engagement and data collection initiatives not only provided insights into gender-specific needs but also delved into the reasons why women might not engage in cycling as much and how to encourage and increase

their participation. To explore further details about the various activities that were conducted, you can refer to [this link](#).

The holistic approach led to tangible changes in Bogotá's bike-share system, with the incorporation of features such as baskets, child seats, and cargo bikes, demonstrating a clear commitment to addressing the needs associated with care-related journeys for women. Furthermore, the inclusion of handbikes emerged as a direct outcome of the city's overall commitment to an inclusive approach.



## Breaking Ground in Curitiba, Brazil: Beyond Infrastructure

While Bogotá demonstrates gender-sensitive project design, Curitiba has emerged as an example of how gender-inclusive project preparation has been mainstreamed within the city administration and led to transformative impacts by shifting away from traditional approaches to infrastructure preparation. The project itself involved the installation of an 8 MW photovoltaic system on a decommissioned landfill. More than just an energy initiative, it illustrates how CFF empowers cities to leverage the project preparation process as a catalyst for broader positive change. This includes capacity development, mainstreaming innovative approaches, and reshaping institutional practices.

### Unleashing Untapped Potential

Initially met with some scepticism from project partners regarding its relevance in the energy sector, the comprehensive gender-inclusive approach for the project underwent a notable transformation. The analysis, coupled with a training in gender-inclusive language in Portuguese, inspired the city to such an extent that it became a catalyst, propelling a national survey in collaboration with ABSOLAR and a network of women in the Brazilian solar industry. The study wasn't confined to project boundaries; it resonated in regional policies and the national solar association, showcasing the ripple effect of gender-focused initiatives.

**The gender training received paved the way to create protocols for photovoltaic projects that incorporate environmental, social, and gender elements.**

(Josiana Saquelli Koch, Municipal Secretary for the Environment of the City of Curitiba)

## A Collective Vision: Crafting Tomorrow, Together Today

As we contemplate our transformative journey, CFF emerges not merely as a financial entity but as a collaborator, a catalyst, and a fervent advocate for inclusive urban futures. Our involvements transcend mere transactions; they embody a collective vision of sculpting cities where every individual finds their place, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Our joint endeavours extend beyond the ambitious goal of reducing or avoiding 7.5 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050; they strive to shape urban landscapes that stand as paragons of sustainability and inclusivity. Our gender-focused work on Equity and Inclusion cultivated partnerships between city governments, collaborators, and communities which transcend the bureaucratic realm; they symbolize a synergy of shared aspirations. Be it gender-inclusive project design in Bogotá or pioneering gender-inclusion city-wide through project preparation, in Curitiba, our projects serve as living proof of the remarkable achievements possible when diverse stakeholders unite for a common purpose.

Our dedication to feminist core principles, finally, is more than a mere checklist; it is a tangible reality woven into the fabric of our actions. From championing human rights-based approaches to systematically dismantling the root causes of inequality, our projects embody a steadfast commitment to fostering a more just and equitable world.

In a world where urbanization and climate action intersect, CFF's gender-focused initiatives are not just addressing a need; they are transforming urban development. The success stories of Bogotá and Curitiba underscore the transformative impact of integrating gender considerations into every facet of urban development. As we present our initiatives to the GIZ Gender Competition, we stand confident in our contribution to advancing gender equality, leaving no one behind in the pursuit of sustainable urban futures.