



# **FOSTERING THE EQUIVERSE: GENDER INCLUSIVE URBAN SPACES REPORT**

6TH MARCH 2024

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**EQUIVERSE**

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## Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	4
<b>Section 1 - Background and context setting</b> .....	5
<b>Section 2 - Overview of Challenges, Initiatives and Recommendations</b> .....	6
I.    Urban Planning .....	6
II.   Funding and Budgeting .....	9
III.  Implementation of Plans and Projects .....	9
IV.  Staff Diversity .....	9
V.   Gender mainstreaming public infrastructure and services .....	10
<b>V.1 Public Spaces and Infrastructure</b> .....	10
Lighting .....	10
Accessibility of roads and public spaces .....	11
Public toilets .....	11
Eyes on the streets .....	11
<b>V.2 Services and Amenities</b> .....	12
Housing .....	12
Childcare .....	12
Healthcare .....	13
<b>V.3 Mobility and Transport</b> .....	13
Design of transport .....	14
Transportation Staff .....	15
Data collection .....	15
First and last-mile connectivity .....	16
Special incentives for female commuters .....	16
<i>Subsidised bus tickets</i> – .....	16
<i>Reservation of seats on buses</i> - .....	16
<b>V.4 Response to Gender-Based Violence</b> .....	17
Presence of Women in Law Enforcement .....	17
Infrastructure at courts .....	18
Access to justice .....	18
Helplines .....	19
Crisis centers and shelters .....	19
Data collection .....	20
<b>Section 3: Summary of Discussions and Action Plan</b> .....	20
<b>Annex 1 – List of Participants</b> .....	25

## Executive Summary

This report summarises the key takeaways and recommendations from the Roundtable on **“Fostering the Equiverse: Building Inclusive Urban Spaces”**, jointly organized by TalentNomics India and the Regional Economic Programme Asia (SOPAS) of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in Japan. The event was held in New Delhi on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024. It was a closed-door event that brought together inspirational leaders, entrepreneurs, transport and urban development specialists and practitioners, researchers and senior leaders from development and international organizations.

The event provided an opportunity to bridge the gap between intent and action in building gender-inclusive urban spaces and to foster collaborative initiatives by bringing together diverse perspectives and experiences. Emphasizing collaboration, the round table charted a course forward for urban planners, policymakers, enlightened private sector leaders, and citizens to pilot gender-inclusive cities in South Asia.

The roundtable discussions brought out several reasons and factors that have historically posed barriers to building inclusive urban spaces and cities that are amenable to women. Gender-blind planning and design greatly restrict the mobility and freedom of women, adding to existing restrictions due to socio-cultural norms.

One of the key messages that emerged from the roundtable was the need to mainstream gender into all stages and phases of urban planning and design. City masterplans must imbibe gender considerations and be articulated as integrated plans with gender as one component. Gender sensitisation of policymakers, many of whom are men, and increasing the proportion of women workers and leaders in urban planning and decision-making were highlighted as two steps that are vital for enabling the mainstreaming of gender into urban plans. Collection of gender-disaggregated data, implementation of universal design principles, practising participatory planning, setting up Gender Labs, institutionalizing gender planning, and greater enrolment of women in urban service delivery like transportation and safety were some of the other requirements that were highlighted in the discussions.

The roundtable participants also discussed specific elements of urban spaces and cities that currently pose a challenge for women. The first set of elements comprised of **infrastructure in public spaces** that can be made inclusive to enable women better access education, work, wealth, and well-being. This would include the provision of street lighting, walking paths, pavements and parks, adequate number of hygienic public toilets, and enough “eyes on the streets”.

Inclusive urban areas would also need to gender mainstream **public services and amenities**, by providing safe housing for single or working women, efficient childcare and eldercare services, and caregiving support facilities like lactation rooms and diaper changing stations.

**Inclusive public transport infrastructure and networks** are also critically important for women to have the same opportunities as men. This can be enabled by bringing in inclusive design considerations (like low-floor buses and reserved coaches), enabling safe first-mile-last-mile connectivity, increasing the diversity of transport staff and providers, better lighting and safety measures at metro/bus/train stations. Deploying user-generated data is essential to make transport systems more efficient for all users.

Cities can become safer for women with initiatives to **reduce gender-based violence**. In addition to safety measures for mobility and infrastructure, increasing the proportion of women in police services and improving working conditions for female police officers. Enhancing the capacity of forensic labs and improving judge-to-population ratio were highlighted as keys to ensuring quicker justice in rape trials to dissuade perpetrators. Building enabling infrastructure like efficient helplines and crisis centres would be vital components of inclusive urban spaces.

## Section 1 - Background and context setting

Gender equity remains a pressing challenge in South Asia and female participation in its workforce continues to be low across countries, ranging from around 23% in Pakistan and 28% in India to around 33-38% in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal in 2023 (World Bank). There are several reasons for the continuing gender disparities, which are entrenched in deep-rooted patriarchal norms in societies. One of these factors, influenced by social norms, is the inequity in urban spaces that often fail to provide women with equal access to opportunities and well-being. Given the current trend of migration of labour to cities, it is the cities that are becoming the hub for employment and growth. Consequently, if cities are unable to provide equal opportunities to women, who make up half the population, the economic and social progress will be impacted. Acknowledging the ongoing global shift towards smart cities, it is imperative to recognize that inclusivity now needs to be a fundamental aspect of urban development. While there are global success stories of inclusive cities like Zurich, a substantial gap remains in creating truly gender-inclusive cities, especially in South Asia.

It is with this background that TalentNomics India and the Regional Economic Programme Asia (SOPAS) of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) in Japan, jointly organised a **Roundtable on "Building Inclusive Urban Spaces for Women in South Asia", in New Delhi on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024**. The roundtable was the first in a series of thematic discussions, in pursuit of TalentNomics India's vision of building an "Equiviverse". The primary objective of this round table was to identify actionable and tangible solutions to the major roadblocks and challenges hindering women's equal and meaningful access to education, work, and well-being in urban spaces in South Asia. The aim was to collate ideas and solutions that can help create cities where women have equal access to work, wealth, well-being and welfare and every woman could lead a productive and fulfilling life. To that end, the event created a pivotal opportunity to bridge the gap between rhetoric and action in building gender-inclusive urban spaces and foster collaborative initiatives by bringing together diverse perspectives and experiences.

The roundtable discussions sought to discover specific policy interventions in the following key areas:

1. **Inclusive Urban Transportation and Mobility:** Assessing the availability, safety, accessibility, and cost of transportation services and their ability to facilitate equal access to education, work, and well-being for all women

2. **Inclusive Urban Public Infrastructure:** This would include

- **Safe Spaces for Women to Access Work and Recreation:** Examining the safety of streets, shopping centres, office premises, parks, and gyms for women, deterring unwanted male attention, harassment, and abuse.
- **High-Quality Facilities and Infrastructure:** Addressing the need for public bathrooms, creche/elder care facilities, safe shelters, lighting, housing, and access to emergency services.

For each identified focus area, discussions sought to explore the roles of government agencies, the private sector, and civil society. Emphasizing collaboration, the round table charted a course forward for urban planners, policymakers, enlightened private sector leaders, and citizens to pilot gender-inclusive cities in South Asia.

The closed-door, invite-only event brought together 32 industry stalwarts from five different countries as panellists and discussants. They included inspirational leaders, women entrepreneurs, transport and urban

development specialists and practitioners, researchers, academicians and senior leaders from development and international organizations. The list of participants is attached in Annex 1.

The following sections present the key points of discussions and the main outcomes of the roundtable.

## Section 2 - Key Elements of Building Inclusive Urban Spaces: Challenges and Recommendations

Women's interaction and journey within both public and private spaces are more varied and complex than men's, due to the diversity of their roles and responsibilities. However, urban planning, infrastructure, facilities, and services have, to date, been envisioned and designed by men without addressing the needs and requirements specific to women, girls, and people with disabilities.

Urban spaces, therefore, present many challenges for women of all ages, whether they are students, professionals or homemakers. The roundtable discussions brought out several reasons and factors that have historically posed barriers to building inclusive urban spaces and cities that are amenable to women. Gender-blind planning and design, mainly led by men, greatly restrict the mobility and freedom of women, adding to existing restrictions due to socio-cultural norms.

A survey carried out in urban cities in India, by TalentNomics India and KAS Japan, showed that the roadblocks most identified by women include public toilets, childcare facilities, eldercare, and men's attitudes on the streets.

Following were the key areas of planning and designing urban spaces, for which the roundtable participants shared their insights on challenges and recommendations for building inclusive cities in the future:

### I. Urban Planning

Historically, cities have not been designed with women's needs in mind. Women's specific requirements and concerns have been excluded during the planning of urban spaces and urban mobility systems; especially from the city master plans. The key reasons for this have been –

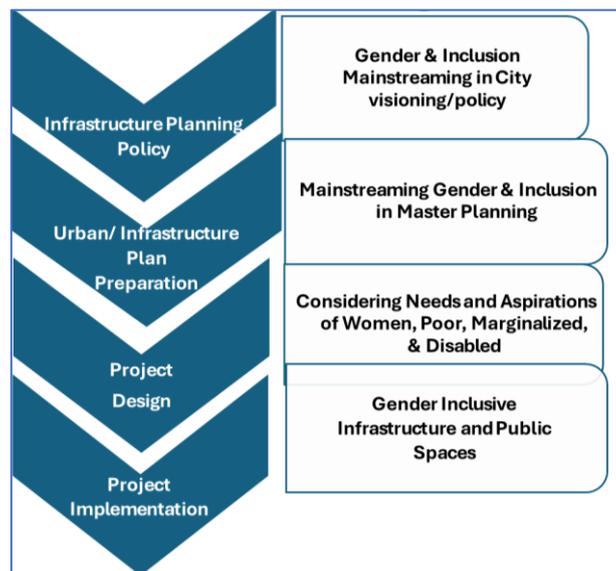
- 1) Women have not been part of planning and decision-making structures in cities;
- 2) Urban planners and policymakers, who are currently largely men, are not sensitized about including a gender angle in the planning and implementation of projects; and
- 3) Women as stakeholders and users are not consulted during the planning and implementation stages

#### Recommendations

- **Mainstream gender and inclusion in urban planning and infrastructure design-** Until now, plans have been "vendor-driven and not women-driven", but the planning and design of urban spaces and smart cities should mainstream gender as a core pillar. Gender should not be treated as a separate aspect but built into every step from discussion, plan, decision-making, methodologies, and implementation. Every stage of planning needs to integrate gender as one of the layers in the plan, and not as a separate gender action plan.

Gender should be mainstreamed into the entire master plans of cities (Figure 1), either as a separate chapter or incorporated within each chapter (as has been initiated in master plans for a redesign of cities like Mumbai, Delhi, and Chennai). In addition, a truly inclusive plan should ensure that it considers the needs and requirements of all women, including those residing in low-income and informal areas as well.

**Figure 1 – Mainstreaming Gender & Inclusion in Planning**



*Source: Presented by Farah Kabir, ActionAid*

- **Ensure equal participation of women in leadership levels of the planning ecosystem-** *“Women will think of women”* - women leaders in planning are needed to be the internal advocates within the system. This is why a conscious effort needs to be made to have more women in leadership in all urban planning bodies that make and implement decisions regarding urban mobility or public infrastructure. This will enable women to be a part of designing the vision of the kind of cities that people want and also have diversity at the table when all spaces and systems are being designed and planned. Diversity in the top-level perspective and vision will have a trickle-down effect on the implementation of projects. Therefore, women should have equal representation and equal voice at the leadership levels in urban planning institutions. They need to be a part of the development program preparation, design, and decision-making.
- **Conduct gender-sensitization training for male officials** – Since the majority of officials and policymakers involved in urban planning are currently male, it is extremely vital to impart gender sensitization training and build their capacity to include gender mainstreaming in all their planning and decision-making. The technical advisory, soft skills, and capacity building work need to be continuous and not a one-time endeavour, which would require a greater allocation of budgetary resources as well as more manpower resources to conduct the trainings. Government, civil society and private sector can effectively collaborate to conduct such training and capacity building. New e-learning modules that have been developed by the World Bank and National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), to be disseminated via the national urban learning platform, will be a significant step towards creating continuous training with limited resources.
- **Collect gender-disaggregated data** – The lack of gender-disaggregated data prevents the quantitative assessment of challenges faced by women, thereby preventing the inclusion of their concerns in the design and implementation of programs and projects. Therefore, government and state bodies must find innovative ways of collecting gender-disaggregated data at local and municipal levels for planning. Active civil societies working in this space and educational institutions doing research in the area can be approached for help. Such data would enable a better understanding of the mobility patterns and

needs of women, and thereby enable making the planning, design, and policy decisions more gender-inclusive.

- **Implement universal design principles to create or upgrade public infrastructure** – This would involve designing spaces, facilities, and services that are accessible and usable by people of all ages, abilities, and genders without the need for adaptation or specialized design.
- **Undertake participatory planning with gender feasibility studies** – Stakeholders should conduct gender feasibility studies to assess the specific needs and preferences of women in the community concerning any proposed infrastructure. The government should also leverage the wide expertise available in inclusive urban planning to create model smart cities and learn from the experience to enhance inclusion. This will ensure that infrastructure projects are tailored to address gender disparities and promote inclusivity.
- **Establish Gender Labs** - Gender labs can be set up by state governments to research, innovate, and implement gender-inclusive urban solutions. These labs can serve as hubs for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and pilot projects aimed at addressing gender disparities in urban mobility and infrastructure. Such labs have been initiated in a couple of cities like Chennai and Bangalore and can be piloted in more cities.
- **Institutionalize gender planning** – The planning of urban spaces should be institutionalised at the municipal level, as the most effective change can come from the government that is closest to the people and which is concerned about the local population. There is also a need to strengthen the mayoral system in our country, as it has been seen that cities with the most significant turnarounds in the world are where the mayor has the power to make the change.
- **Add a gender dimension in anticipatory planning** – Mass migration to cities or large-scale natural disasters caused by climate change tend to significantly roll back progress and push girls and women into even more vulnerable states. Therefore, the larger implications of these factors must also be considered while planning cities and must include concerns of migrant women and women impacted by climate change.

#### **Anticipatory Planning: Some Lessons from Bangladesh**

- Dhaka's masterplan initially was made by men but women were brought in later. The change was initiated by the increase in the number of women working in the Ready-Made Garments (RMG) sector which led to many women moving to the cities. This forced the attention on women. Caring for many women to live in cities was the driver for Bangladesh's economic success.
- In Bangladesh, there is large-scale rural-urban migration driven by the loss of livelihood caused by climate disasters like heat, floods, droughts, etc. Climate change is driving displacement and more people are coming into cities - so more women and children are exposed to violence and abuse. With large-scale migration into cities without adequate facilities, women's overall freedom is impacted.
- Larger implications of challenges imposed by climate change need to be taken into consideration; For example, there was an instance where building an embankment led to flooding in Dhaka. This consequently led to an increased incidence of Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) in women and girls, since they couldn't find toilets and would not be able to relieve themselves.

## II. Funding and Budgeting

Public funding of inclusive infrastructure and services has remained below par. In addition, the private sector has not invested enough either. For example, in Bangladesh, initially it was understood that 80% of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) would be funded by the private sector but a strong enough argument has not been made on the need for the private sector to invest and the returns that they can get.

### *Recommendations*

- **Mobilise greater funding under the gender budgets** – The proportion of gender budget allocations within central and state budgets needs to be increased, and a sound needs-based allocation of resources at the sectoral level must be enabled to fund gender-inclusive infrastructure projects. One vital requirement for this is to build a strong business case when seeking budgets from ministries, by indicating to them the source of such funds and the benefits of reallocating them to fund inclusive urban development.
- **Tap into private sector funding** – It is equally important to build a sound business case for the private sector to fund urban development initiatives and to garner their support at the industry level. Cost-benefit analysis needs to be made to show the private sector that if they invest in public infrastructure and services, they can also get high returns. In India, private sector funding can be mobilized by presenting companies with sound plans and budgetary requirements to solicit funds under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) buckets.

## III. Implementation of Plans and Projects

Implementation of existing policies and programs continues to be a problem, as flagged by many discussants. For instance, it was highlighted that ground-level implementation of schemes and programs often gets delayed because budgeted funds are disbursed several months later than necessary. Also, very often, it has been observed that sometimes even if the infrastructure and facility exist, there are additional challenges like lack of awareness and information, lack of maintenance, etc., due to which its usage is low, such as public toilets built in India under the Swachh Bharat initiative or homes for victims of domestic violence.

### *Recommendations*

- Focus on the implementation of existing schemes and policies by bringing together all stakeholders on a common platform and aligning their roles and timelines. The Dhaka Safe City project, for example, has involved multiple stakeholders, as it is tough for any one actor to address all challenges. It brought together the mayor, the transport sector, urban planners, architects, the Ministry of Women's Rights, the House Building Research Institute, etc.
- Promote information dissemination, capacity building, and continuous maintenance of infrastructure facilities within the planning and budgeting processes.

## IV. Staff Diversity

Currently, the proportion of women employed in the urban infrastructure sector (transportation, construction, public facilities, etc.) is minimal. The majority of the employees being men has also meant that there is a lack of gender sensitivity towards female users and customers.

### *Recommendations*

Conscious actions must be taken to increase the proportion of female staff in the departments that provide urban infrastructure and services, at all levels of employment. More women will enable greater engagement with female voices from the ground for the planning of more inclusive spaces. Innovative recruitment strategies and initiatives (such as diversity quotas, influencer campaigns, and sensitization of parents) must be devised to

encourage more women to be employed in urban spaces. Another way to increase the presence of women in the provision of services is to involve the private sector organisations headed by women.

## V. Public infrastructure and services

The roundtable participants also discussed specific elements of urban spaces and cities that currently pose a challenge for women and need to be made inclusive. These elements have been captured in The **SheRises Framework**<sup>1</sup> presented in the presentation by Dr Kalpana Viswanath, that has been developed Safetipin<sup>2</sup> and envisages making urban spaces responsive, inclusive, safe and equitable across the following four areas of urban development:

- **Public Space and Infrastructure** - including street lighting, walking paths and pavements, public toilets, and “eyes on the streets”
- **Services and Amenities** – including housing, childcare, education, and healthcare
- **Mobility and Transport** – including public transport networks, first-mile-last-mile connectivity, safety and staffing in the transport sector
- **Response to Gender Based Violence** – including laws and policies, helplines, crisis centres and shelters, gender mainstreaming

We use this framework, in the following sections, to present the challenges and recommendations for creating inclusive infrastructure and services, as discussed by the roundtable participants.

## Section 3: Gender mainstreaming public infrastructure and services

### I. Public Spaces and Infrastructure

Cities are often planned and designed from the perspective of an able-bodied male, which is why public spaces (like streets, parks, malls, community areas, toilets etc.) rarely cater to women’s safety concerns or caregiving roles.

The following is a summary of challenges and recommended solutions for building inclusive public spaces, which were brought up during the roundtable:

#### **Lighting**

Insufficient lighting on the roads, streets, and parks makes them inaccessible or unsafe for women after dark. This often prevents women from moving out unaccompanied at night.

Additionally, open skywalks and pedestrian subways are also not properly lit at all times, rendering them unsafe for women. Spaces under flyovers are also often dark and not safe for women.

#### **Recommendations**

Adequate, functional and well maintained lights should be made available on

- all roads, flyovers, bridges and highways, especially on the inner and more deserted roads.
- metro and railway stations as well as on bus stops
- Skywalks and pedestrian subway crossings.
- Spaces under flyovers

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<sup>1</sup> <https://safetipin.com/report/she-rises-a-framework-for-caring-cities/>

<sup>2</sup> Safetipin is a social organisation working with a wide range of urban stakeholders including governments to make public spaces safer and more inclusive

### ***Accessibility of roads and public spaces***

Many public spaces are inaccessible for people on wheelchairs or women carrying babies in prams. For example, pavements don't usually have slopes at either end or are too narrow, so the wheelchairs or prams need to be lifted on and off. Entrances to public parks have circular covers to keep cows out, which makes it difficult for wheelchairs or prams to enter. Railway stations that do not have escalators or elevators are difficult to navigate for women with children, pregnant women, old people and the disabled.

#### ***Recommendations***

- Ensure that public spaces and facilities are designed to accommodate the diverse needs of women of all ages and stages of life, including those with disabilities or mobility challenges.
- Prioritize accessibility in all infrastructure planning, including on walking paths, pavements, parks, transportation stations etc. All public spaces streets need to be made wheelchair-accessible and designed with tactile properties for assisting the visually-impaired.

### ***Public toilets***

The lack of adequate toilets in various public spaces poses several challenges for women and girls. There are no toilet facilities for women on the streets like beggars, municipal workers, gardeners and street vendors. Several workplaces like bus depots do not have women's toilets for their female staff.

Inadequate or unhygienic girls' toilets in schools in tier 2 and tier 3 cities and rural areas is a major factor that pushes girls to drop out of school.

#### ***Recommendations***

- An adequate number of accessible, hygienic, well-maintained, and well-lit toilets should be provided in all public spaces, schools, and workplaces.
- Toilets should be built for women irrespective of whether there are current users or not. They should be maintained and kept hygienic. It also needs to be ensured that public toilets are not used for antisocial or other activities that could prevent women from using them.

### ***Eyes on the streets***

Streets and roads are often perceived as unsafe by women because there are very few women whom they can see at most times on the streets.

#### ***Recommendations***

To increase female "eyes on the streets", participants recommended measures like

- Increase the representation of women in operation, maintenance, and upkeep roles for public infrastructure and roads. This not only provides employment opportunities for women but also contributes to the creation of safer and more inclusive environments. Kerala's Kudumbashree scheme<sup>3</sup> was cited as a good example to emulate in this case.
- Encourage and promote more female street vendors.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.kudumbashree.org/pages/171>

## II. Services and Amenities

The lack of inclusion of women's voices in designing and planning the provision of basic public services like housing, health and education, has meant that these services have not catered to the specific needs and requirements of all women. In addition, services to facilitate the burden of caregiving, which largely falls on women, have not been incorporated in urban spaces.

Following are some of the issues related to the provision of inclusive public services that were discussed at the Roundtable:

### **Housing**

In urban areas, housing facilities are largely built for families and not for single owners. Single women especially find it challenging to find accommodations. There is also a dearth of good quality and safe hostels for women who come to study or work in cities; or even for women who want to leave a bad marriage and live independently.

### **Recommendations**

- Address the specific housing needs of women, by including the requirements of single women, single mothers, and victims of domestic violence. Build high-quality 'safe houses' for shelter that women can access to avoid violence at home.
- Develop affordable housing options specifically tailored to meet the requirements of working women, ensuring safety, security, and access to essential services.

### **Childcare**

In India, women spend 84% of their day on unpaid activities and men spend 80% of theirs on paid work. In addition, only 26% of men reported doing any kind of housework (National Time Use Survey, 2020). A study<sup>4</sup> shows that the notional value of women's unpaid care work in India is 15-17% of GDP. Data from 64 countries representing two-thirds of the world's working-age population show that 16.4 billion hours per day are spent in unpaid care work. Worldwide 2.1 billion people needed care in 2015, including 1.9 billion children under 15 and 200 million older persons; and by 2030, this number is expected to reach 2.3 billion, driven by an additional 200 million older persons and children.

Caregiving work is a major burden that largely falls on women. Women from low-income neighbourhoods or other disadvantaged groups especially face a high burden of care. The provision of necessary services to reduce this burden is vital. However, the infrastructure and systems around the care economy are at a very nascent stage in most South Asian cities and a lot needs to be done in this regard. The lack of childcare facilities leads women to drop out of the workforce after having children. The situation is worse for mothers of special needs children.

### **Recommendations**

- Integrate the work of care and understand how to build the economy of care when designing cities.
- Find ways to strengthen and expand the Anganwadi system of childcare in India<sup>5</sup> to urban spaces and look at similar provisions for older children.
- Promote the concept of a national care economy to recognize and value unpaid care work.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2011689>

<sup>5</sup> Anganwadi is a type of rural child care centre in India, as part of an Integrated Child Development Services program to combat child hunger and malnutrition. A typical Anganwadi centre provides basic health care in a village, including contraceptive counselling and supply, nutrition education and supplementation, as well as pre-school activities

- Introduce a “National Care Policy” to institutionalise access to quality, community-based and affordable resources and professional caregiving support, and position care as everyone’s business and not just women’s domain. Bangladesh, for example, passed the Child Daycare Centre Act in 2021 in its 8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan to recognise unpaid care work and proposed implementation guidelines for creches. Budgets were allocated towards the implementation of this, and all government offices now have childcare facilities.
- Allocate funds to build caregiving infrastructure from the overall budget and not include it in the gender budget.
- Design neighbourhood- or worksite-based parks, creche, feeding and changing rooms, and other facilities for all working parents, not just mothers.
- Introduce/enforce implementation of creche facilities in all organizations and open them to all employees irrespective of gender.
- Think about initiatives to reduce the burden of domestic chores on women. An inspiration could be community kitchens in Singapore that have been initiated by the government to enable women to save the time they would spend cooking in their individual kitchens, so they can partake in paid work and contribute to the GDP.

### **Healthcare**

Public healthcare services do not cater enough to the specific needs of young and unmarried girls or the sexual and reproductive health needs of married women. While there has been an increase in awareness about menstruation, facilities for enabling women’s hygiene and comfort are lacking.

#### **Recommendations**

- Create dedicated services to cater to women’s reproductive healthcare needs.
- Put in place counselling services for women to advise them on their health, nutrition and family planning requirements.
- Provide better access to affordable menstrual hygiene products, for example via dispensing machines in public toilets.

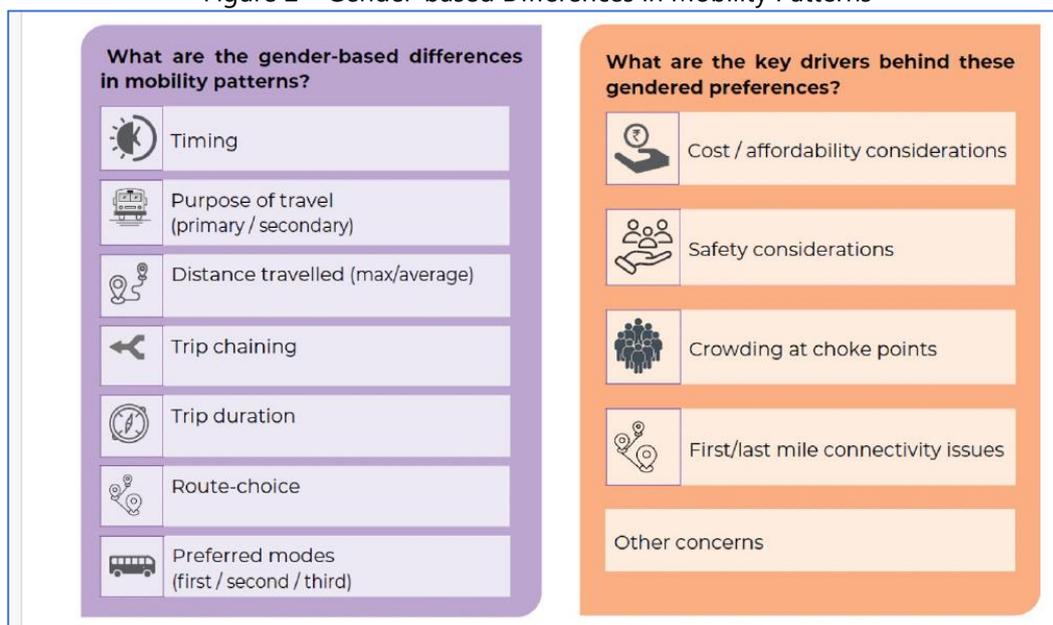
### **III. Mobility and Transport**

Women’s travel patterns and mobility concerns are different from men’s (Figure 2). For instance, in the Delhi-NCR region, women travel 6 km every day, while men travel about 13-14 kilometres, indicating that the radius of women’s journeys is very limited<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Statistic quoted by Mitali Nikore

Figure 2 – Gender-based Differences in Mobility Patterns



Source: Presentation by Mitali Nikore

Historically, public transport systems designed by men and for men have failed to take into account women's unique requirements. This has resulted in public transport hurting women's mobility, increasing the risk of gender-based violence, imposing difficulties in carrying out daily activities, affecting women's freedom and reducing women's contribution to the national economy.

Public transport being perceived as inaccessible and unsafe by women has impacted their ability to access opportunities for education, work, and leisure. For instance, a participant quoted that research<sup>7</sup> has found that women spend US\$ 290 per year on safer modes of transport like ride-sharing. They also compromise the quality of educational institutions they go to by choosing those that are closer to home, which influences their career prospects as well. Further, professional women's choices of where they can work are also limited. In non-metro cities with few buses, the mobility of women is even more limited.

Therefore, we need solutions that make women's and girls' lives easier so that they can travel further and start building risk-taking abilities to not just access opportunities closer to home.

Following were some elements of transport infrastructure and services for which challenges and recommendations for gender mainstreaming were brought out during the roundtable:

### **Design of modes of public transport**

Women and girls in wheelchairs face sexual harassment when seeking help from men to get on and off buses since the law requires only 10% of buses to be low floor. Additionally, the support handles hanging from the ceiling of buses are usually too high for women. Another design issue flagged was that the design of train bogies is not wide enough to accommodate a stretcher to be taken through it.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted by Ntasha Bhardwaj

<https://wagner.nyu.edu/rudincenter/2018/11/pink-tax-transportation-womens-challenges-mobility>

### Recommendations

- All public buses in all cities need to be low-floored to be inclusive.
- The design of buses, including support handles and panic buttons, must consider women's requirements and proportions as well.
- Guidelines should be published for making public trains enabled for persons with disabilities or special needs.

### Employment of Transportation Staff

In India, less than 12% of staff in the transportation sector are women (as compared to 20% globally)<sup>8</sup>. The majority of drivers, conductors, security personnel, and maintenance staff in public transport are male, and they are not sensitised about women's concerns and discomforts.

### Recommendations

- Gender sensitization training must be conducted for all staff, including drivers, conductors, and security personnel. This training would equip them with the knowledge and skills to address the specific needs and concerns of women passengers and ensure a respectful and safe environment.
- The number of women in all roles in the transport sector must be increased. This can be achieved by increasing the visibility of women in non-traditional transportation roles, such as auto drivers, bus conductors, and taxi drivers. This may require sensitizing families and communities to encourage and support women's participation in these fields, breaking gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality.
- Gender diversity in leadership positions within transport planning agencies must be promoted as there are not many women who lead state transport departments. Having more women in decision-making roles can lead to the development of policies and initiatives that prioritize the needs of women and promote gender-inclusive urban mobility.

### Data collection

Ensuring that the same transit system can accommodate different gender aspects requires an in-depth study of the commuters. Gender disaggregated data collection is, therefore, important and would help *"treat humans in a human way rather than as a number and in a binary way"*. This in turn would enable the planning of transit systems for all humans and to make them inclusive for women who make up the other 50% of the population as well. The challenge is that such data is very difficult to obtain and it is tough to get gendered data on the usage of public transport, as compared to ride-hailing apps that can fully know their passenger and their travel needs.

Research in different countries using data collected from mobile phones, as highlighted in the roundtable discussion, could be one of the innovative solutions for this matter<sup>9</sup>. These allow for granular analysis of time-based and day-based analysis of usage of public transport, profile by age, gender and other demographics. This allowed for more detailed transport planning and profound replanning of existing capacity. This included the introduction of point-to-point high-speed buses with no stops, different calendars of buses on weekends and holidays (non-work based), and different for the afternoon (for older people). However, such data can only be used if the government gives permission and agrees to release the data.

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<sup>8</sup> Statistic quoted by Dr Kalpana Viswanath

<sup>9</sup> Quoted by Suparno Banerjee

### ***First and last-mile connectivity***

The lack of a good and safe walking infrastructure on the streets and roads that connect either the first or last halves of the journey impacts women's mobility.

#### ***Recommendations***

- Improve last-mile connectivity to ensure end-to-end transportation options that are safe and accessible for women. This includes enhancing pedestrian infrastructure and providing safe cycling lanes.
- To increase safer and more efficient transitions between different transportation systems, Integrated Transport Cards could be introduced to enable seamless and affordable access to multiple modes of transportation. This initiative simplifies the commuting experience for women, making urban mobility more convenient and user-friendly.

### ***Special incentives for female commuters***

Some state governments and city municipalities have introduced special incentives for female commuters, in a bid to address various mobility challenges faced by women. The efficacy and model of delivery of such incentives are often a subject of debate, as there is a lack of consensus on whether such initiatives serve the purpose of enabling women or not. Following are two such incentive schemes that were discussed at the roundtable:

#### ***Subsidised bus tickets –***

Some cities like Delhi and Bangalore have recently introduced schemes for free bus travel for women. While the exact impact of such schemes has not yet been studied, there is a debate about the efficacy of such schemes as weighed against the benefits. For one, it was noted that these schemes have been linked to an increase in women's disposable income, which may increase the tax collection, thereby circulating in the economy back to the government.

Another argument against the schemes was that women are propelled to choose an unsafe mode of travel because it is free. As quoted by the participants, the share of women in buses of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) have not increased from the earlier 21% even after the travel was made free for women. Besides, women continued to report feeling unsafe on the bus and at bus stops, also being disadvantaged by buses not stopping at many stops or the low connectivity after 7 PM.

#### ***Recommendations***

- While free transport is a good enabler for women's mobility, it is important to first make transport safe and accessible.
- The model of delivery of the subsidy can be reworked to give it directly to the consumer and not burden the operator (as then he may not be able to upgrade the quantity or quality of their fleet). The subsidy can be given via digital channels like smart cards or bank accounts. This can be similar to a subsidy for senior citizens that is currently in place.

### ***Reservation of seats on buses -***

In many countries and cities, there is a provision for reserving seats for female passengers in public transport. In Nepal, for example, it was observed that a few women passengers sit on the limited reserved seats but the rest of the women are standing or dealing with the discomfort of crowded buses.

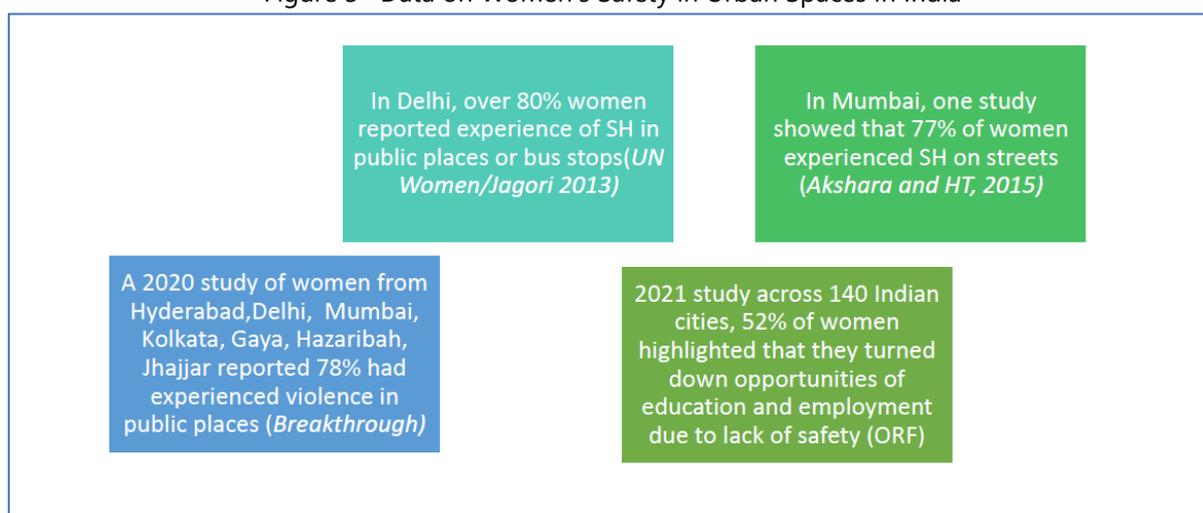
#### ***Recommendation***

- Continuous assessment is required to understand the appropriate solution and what works – like starting separate buses for women or increasing the quantum of reserved seats depending on the mobility of women on certain routes.

#### IV. Response to Gender-Based Violence

Various studies have shown that urban spaces are not safe for women in different South Asian cities. Figure 3 notes certain data on women's safety in urban spaces in India. Even in Bangladesh, a 2017 ActionAid study<sup>10</sup> of cities in 7 countries ranked Bangladesh 6<sup>th</sup> of the worst countries for women's safety in urban spaces due to a lack of gender-responsive urban planning and transport system - 49% of women surveyed reported feeling unsafe on the street or when using public transport. 48% of women said they felt unsafe trying to access public service.

Figure 3– Data on Women's Safety in Urban Spaces in India



Source: Presentation by Kalpana Viswanath, Safetipin

It is well acknowledged that if we make the city safe for women, we make it safe for everyone. Spaces should be made devoid of sexual violence, harassment and stalking. If we look at the experiences of cities, it is not just the act of violence alone that is the problem but it is also the fear that becomes the determining factor in women's lives. Women don't face violence every day but whenever using public spaces or public transport, they are fearful that they or any women with them may face violence. This fear often dictates where they study, where they work or what they do, thereby impacting their well-being and ability to leverage their potential to become productive members of the economy.

Following are some areas enabling women's safety, that were discussed at the roundtable:

##### **Presence of Women in Law Enforcement**

Women's safety continues to be compromised due to a shortage of female police officers. Today women make up less than 12% of the police force. In Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, the situation is similar, varying between 8%-12%.

Apart from fewer women joining the police force, policewomen themselves face discrimination and difficulties within the police settings. They often lack basic infrastructure like toilets in the police stations. In 2016, a study<sup>11</sup> of women in Maharashtra police (constables up to sub-inspectors working only in police stations) showed that 50% of the policewomen said that neither they find work conditions in police stations gender friendly nor do

<sup>10</sup> Study quoted by Farah Kabir

<sup>11</sup> Study by the Centre for Police Research, Pune with help of the Psychology Department of Pune University

they get cooperation from male counterparts. A large number of respondents flagged the issue of sexual harassment in police stations.

In terms of women in leadership levels in the police services, there has been some progress from the 1980s when there were hardly any women in the Indian Police Services (IPS). Earlier, female IPS officers were not encouraged to become District Police Chiefs or Superintendents. However, now the number of women IPS officers has increased and most women IPS officers are getting to head districts without having to fight for it.

Although now we have more women in police and more women in leadership, attitudes have not changed to an extent that will make them feel safe and comfortable as there continues to be discrimination within the departments and while dealing with citizens.

### **Recommendations**

- Increase the presence of women in police uniforms, especially in urban hotspots and public transportation hubs. Women police officers can enhance safety and provide a sense of security for women commuters.
- Improve the working conditions of female police officers by providing access to basic amenities like hygienic toilets and lactation rooms in police stations.
- Undertake gender sensitisation training for male police officers and implement zero tolerance for sexual harassment also within the police force.

### **Infrastructure at courts**

It has been observed that lockups in courts are completely deprived of the basic requirements of women. Delhi Courts, for example, do not have proper facilities in women's toilets or spaces for lactating mothers. Jammu District Court does not even have a separate lockup room for women who have to wait for hours in a police jeep.

### **Recommendation**

- When designing inclusive urban spaces, include the needs and requirements of all women. Even women who are under trials in courts or police custody must also be provided with basic facilities like separate spaces, hygienic toilets, and spaces for childcare and lactation.

### **Access to justice**

A stark reality is that even today, women don't tend to report the majority of the harassment cases they face. They are unable to complain against harassment because either the family doesn't want them to go public, the police refuse to register the case, or the police harass the women by blaming them for their predicament. In addition, women often lack information about their rights and entitlements, like their options for legal recourse to sexual harassment.

The slow pace of the judicial system is another problem that prevents women from accessing justice. As mentioned during the roundtable, 90% of rape cases (1, 74,485) are currently pending in courts, with only 27% convictions of rape cases<sup>12</sup>. The majority of cases of rape do not conclude for several years. One of the main causes is the shortage of forensic labs to provide medical certification - for example, in Delhi, a forensic science report is taking more than 3 years to come because there is only one laboratory to furnish all the records. These

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<sup>12</sup> Statistics quoted by Ms. Meeran Borwankar

delays are accentuated by delays in the legal system, especially in India, as India has the worst judge-population ratio anywhere in the world and the number of cases to be tried every day is overwhelming.

### **Recommendations**

- Increase the capacity of forensic labs and improve the judge-to-citizen ratio, to ensure that criminal cases (especially of sexual harassment of women) can be tried within 18 months, which would send out a strong message to potential perpetrators.
- Improve information access and awareness in women about their rights and entitlements, as well as the process and technicalities of availing justice.
- Build trust in the police and law enforcement services by undertaking gender sensitization training of police officers to remove their biased opinions and to ensure that they do not harass the women who file complaints against harassment.

### **Helplines**

Helpline numbers and apps have been put in place, by the government, police as well as various NGOs, for women to call in times of distress, but they suffer from several challenges. For one, there is a lack of information and awareness about these helplines as a resource for women. Multiple helpline numbers lead to confusion (for example, in Delhi itself there are 17 helplines). Additionally, cases of helpline attendants being biased and harassing the callers have been reported, wherein they tend to pass judgemental remarks or question the women reporting harassment.

### **Recommendations**

- There should be a single helpline number for the entire country (like 911 in the USA) where women can call or message to report any kind of violence and harassment.
- The helpline attendants should be sensitised to be non-judgemental and provide timely support rather than question the women's situation.
- These helplines should be prepared to receive distress calls, even though the majority could be false calls.
- All calls must be audio-recorded.

### **Crisis centres and shelters**

There is a scarcity of shelters and refuges for women who fall victim to violence. The lack of "crisis housing" is a form of hidden homelessness. Even the few crisis centres that have been started under the Ministry of Women and Child Development's (MWCD) Shakti Niwas Schemes, are not being used much due to a lack of information and awareness. It is, however, expected that the MWCD's new dashboard tracking its schemes would enable the creation of information and awareness.

### **Recommendation**

- Build, maintain and spread awareness about safe and quality crisis centres for women who are victims of domestic violence and other forms of abuse.

## **Data collection**

While there are research and non-profit organisations that have started collecting data and statistics about women's safety and cases of sexual harassment in public spaces, there are no official statistics that are collated by the government to enable state-level action.

## **Recommendation**

- The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) should include questions on sexual harassment in public spaces to enable the creation of official datasets for the government to take action.

## **Section 4: Summary of Discussions and Action Plan**

The roundtable discussions deep-dived into various aspects of making urban spaces and cities truly inclusive and enabling for all citizens. It was evident that the challenges faced by women living in urban areas and their implications on women's economic empowerment have begun to be acknowledged by all players in the ecosystem. It was also heartening to note that a lot of initiatives and measures have already been taken towards making cities inclusive, with evidence being cited from India, Bangladesh, and Nepal. However, it was also clear that it is now time to consolidate all the progress and seek much more to ensure that the infrastructure, services, and the entire system respond to the needs of different sets of women and girls.

### **Our Vision of Inclusive Urban Infrastructure in Future**

- Equal gender representation and equal voice in decision-making relating to urban spaces
- Equal hiring and employment of women in all urban public service bodies (transportation, construction, police, judiciary, parks and parking lots etc.)
- Gender budgeting for city planning and development
- Seamless integration of women and girls' needs in all urban planning and in implementation of urban projects,
- Safe streets, parks and public spaces; free of fear for women and girls at any time of the day or night
- Adequate complementary infrastructures that can make a difference in solving gender issues (e.g., forensic labs, community kitchens, creches, eldercare centres, safe houses, working women's hostels etc. )
- Deep collaboration among the private sector, government and civil society to provide necessary resources for inclusive smart cities, leveraging the best available technology
- Expanding the inclusive smart cities concept to a network of smaller cities in surrounding areas of large cities
- Robust collection of gender-disaggregated data on a regular basis to aid decisions for inclusive city planning and gender budgeting

Achieving this vision and building inclusive urban spaces will require a multi-pronged approach and coordinated actions by all players in the ecosystem. The following table summarises the recommendations from the roundtable into an Action Plan that can be presented to and implemented by various stakeholders.

## Action Plan for Building Gender Inclusive Urban Spaces

Action	Key Stakeholders
<b>Urban Planning and Design</b>	
Mainstream gender in <b>Urban planning and design</b> process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate gender and inclusion into city masterplans</li> <li>• Implement universal design principles</li> <li>• Undertake participatory planning with gender feasibility studies</li> <li>• Add a gender dimension in anticipatory planning to include the impact of large-scale migration into cities, climate-related disasters, etc.</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>• Smart Cities Mission</li> </ul> Urban Planning Institutions Municipal corporations and City Mayors
Collect <b>gender-disaggregated data</b>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>• Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation</li> </ul> Urban Planning Institutions Municipal corporations and City Mayors State Transport Units (STUs) NGOs Service providers Research organisations
Promote more <b>women to leadership levels</b>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> </ul> Urban Planning Institutions Municipal corporations and City Mayors State Transport Units (STUs) Professional Education Institutions Development Banks Women’s Leadership Development organisations
Conduct <b>gender-sensitization training</b> and capacity building for male officials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure adequate funding and budget for continuous capacity building</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>• Ministries of Finance</li> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> </ul> Municipal corporations and City Mayors State Transport Units (STUs) NGOs
Pilot <b>Gender Labs</b> in cities.	Central and State Government Departments Municipal corporations and City Mayors State Transport Units (STUs) Development Banks
Mobilise greater funding under the <b>gender budgets</b> .	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>• Ministries of Finance</li> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> </ul>
Encourage <b>investment from the private sector</b> (CSR funds) to fund urban development initiatives.	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>• Ministry of Corporate Affairs</li> </ul>

Action	Key Stakeholders
<p><b>Increase the proportion of female staff</b> in municipal corporations, departments of transport and other urban services.</p>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> </ul> <p>Urban Planning Institutions Municipal corporations and City Mayors State Transport Units (STUs) Professional Education Institutions Development Banks Women’s Leadership Development organisations</p>
<b>Public Spaces and Infrastructure</b>	
<p><b>Make access inclusive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all roads, walking paths, pavements; flyovers, skywalks, pedestrian subway crossings; parks and other recreational spaces; and bus stops; have adequate and functional lights, and wheelchair accessibility.</li> <li>• Ensure that <b>metro stations and railway stations</b> have adequate and functional lights, wheelchair accessibility, and escalators or elevators</li> </ul>	<p>Municipal corporations State Transport Units (STUs)</p> <p>Ministry of Railways Metro Rail Corporations</p>
<p><b>Provide inclusive amenities and facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure an adequate number of accessible, hygienic, well-maintained, and well-lit toilets in all public spaces, schools, and workplaces.</li> <li>• Provide sanitary napkin dispensing machines in public toilets.</li> </ul>	<p>Swachh Bharat Mission Municipal corporations Smart Cities Mission</p>
<p><b>Put Eyes on the streets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and promote more female street vendors to be “eyes on the streets”.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of MSMEs</li> </ul> <p>NGOs Municipal Corporations</p>
<b>Public Services and Amenities for Women</b>	
<p><b>Enable housing for women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop affordable housing options and working women’s hostels specifically tailored to meet the requirements of women, especially single women, ensuring safety, security, and access to essential services.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> </ul> <p>Municipal corporations NGOs</p>
<p><b>Provide childcare services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen and expand the Anganwadi system of childcare to urban spaces and look at older children.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> </ul> <p>Municipal corporations</p>
<p><b>Implement a “National Care Policy”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce policies to institutionalise access to quality, community-based and affordable resources and professional caregiving support.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> <li>• Ministries of Finance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Develop care infrastructure in public spaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design neighbourhood- or worksite-based parks, creche, feeding and changing rooms, and other facilities for all working parents, not just mothers.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> </ul> <p>Municipal corporations, Private Sector</p>
<p><b>Provide healthcare services for women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create dedicated services to cater to women’s reproductive healthcare and counselling requirements.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> <li>• Ministry of Health and Family Welfare</li> </ul> <p>Municipal corporations, Private Sector</p>

Action	Key Stakeholders
<b>Transportation and Mobility Services</b>	
<b>Make buses women friendly</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make the design of buses, including support handles, panic buttons and low floors suitable to the requirements and proportions of diverse passengers, including women, the disabled and the elderly.</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>Smart Cities Mission</li> </ul> State Transport Units (STUs) Municipal Corporations, Private Sector
<b>Train male staff</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct gender sensitization training for all staff, including drivers, conductors, and security personnel.</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>Smart Cities Mission</li> </ul> State Transport Units (STUs) Municipal Corporations Development Banks NGOs, Private Sector
<b>Build gender diversity in the transport sector</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of women in non-traditional transportation roles, such as auto drivers, bus conductors, and taxi drivers.</li> <li>Promote gender diversity in leadership positions and decision-making roles within transport planning agencies.</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> </ul> Urban Planning Institutions Municipal corporations State Transport Units (STUs) Professional Education Institutions Development Banks Women’s Leadership Development organisations, Private Sector
<b>Improve first and last-mile connectivity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance pedestrian infrastructure and provide safe cycling lanes,</li> <li>Introduce integrated Transport Cards to enable seamless and affordable access to multiple modes of transportation.</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>Ministry of Railways</li> </ul> Metro Rail Corporations Smart Cities Mission Municipal Corporations
<b>Redesign subsidised (free) travel for women</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rework the model of delivery of the subsidy, to give it directly to the consumer and not burden the operator (via smart cards or bank accounts).</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</li> <li>Smart Cities Mission</li> </ul> State Transport Units (STUs) Municipal Corporations
<b>Prevention of Gender-Based Violence</b>	
<b>Enable the women in law enforcement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the working conditions of female police officers by providing access to basic amenities like hygienic toilets and lactation rooms in police stations.</li> <li>Implement zero tolerance for sexual harassment by male police officers.</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Law and Justice</li> <li>Ministry of Home Affairs</li> </ul> Police Services Media
<b>Sensitise male police officers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake gender sensitisation training of male police officers to remove their biased opinions and to ensure that they do not harass the women who file complaints against harassment.</li> </ul>	Central and State Government Departments– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ministry of Law and Justice</li> <li>Ministry of Home Affairs</li> </ul> Police Services Private Sector
<b>Engender infrastructure at courts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide all courts with basic facilities like separate spaces hygienic toilets for women, and spaces for childcare and lactation.</li> </ul>	Bar Association of India Municipal corporations

<b>Action</b>	<b>Key Stakeholders</b>
<p><b>Provide forensic labs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the capacity of forensic labs and build more forensic labs.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Finance</li> <li>• Ministry of law and justice</li> </ul> <p>Police Services Municipal Corporations Private Sector</p>
<p><b>Enable access to information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve information access and awareness in women about their rights and entitlement.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Women and Child Development</li> </ul> <p>Educational institutions Media</p>
<p><b>Collect gender – disaggregated data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include questions on sexual harassment in public spaces in the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), to enable the creation of official datasets for the government to take actions.</li> </ul>	<p>Central and State Government Departments–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation</li> </ul>

## Annex 1 – List of Participants

### Guests of Honour

- **Justice Gita Mittal**, Retd. Judge, Former Chief Justice, J&K HC
- **Dr. Meeran Borwanker**, Director General of Police (Retd.)
- **Suparno Banerjee**, Expert in Digital, Infrastructure and Smart Cities

### Speakers & Presenters

- **Christian Echle**, Head-Asia Pacific, KAS
- **Ipsita Kathuria**, Founder & CEO, TalentNomics India
- **Mitali Nikore**, Founder, Nikore Associates
- **Laghu Parashar**, Senior Transport Specialist, The World Bank
- **Ashish Gajurel**, Transportation Development Expert, Nepal
- **Farah Kabir**, Country Director, ActionAid, Bangladesh
- **Dr. Kalpana Viswanath**, Co-Founder & CEO, Safetipin
- **Sarika Chakravarty**, Team Lead, UrbanShift Country Project, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)

### Discussants

- **Aishwarya Agarwal**, Lead, Centre for Inclusive Mobility, OMI
- **Dr. Geeta Kumar**, Wellbeing Advocate, DE&I and OD Consultant
- **Dr. K. Vijaya Lakshmi**, Vice President, Development Alternatives
- **ElsaMaria D’Silva**, Founder, Red Dot Foundation (India), President, Red Dot Foundation Global (USA)
- **Harshita Jamba**, Program Manager, World Resources Institute
- **Krishna Desai**, Technical Expert, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- **Madhureeta Anand**, Entrepreneur, Film Director, Writer
- **Manisha Bhartia**, BDP India Head & Chair of WLI, ULI India; Urbanism Director at BDP
- **Namrata Dhamankar**, Founder Director, Sustain and Save
- **Nikita Singla**, International Trade, Logistics & Inclusion Specialist, Consultant, World Bank
- **Ntasha Bhardwaj**, Ending Violence Against Women, Government of Goa, UN Women
- **Poulomi Pal**, Programme Specialist, Ending Violence Against Women, UN Women
- **Prachi Merchant**, Architect, Urban Planner
- **Dr. Rajat Kathuria**, Dean & Professor, Shiv Nadar University
- **Sakuya Iwakawa**, Project Assistant, KAS Japan
- **Shravani Prakash**, Founder, elleNomics
- **Snehal Velkar**, Program Lead for Safe & Inclusive Cities, Akshara Centre
- **Soumyaa Hariharan**, Project Manager, Red Dot Foundation
- **Sonal Shah**, Executive Director, Centre of Sustainable and Equitable Cities
- **Sumitra Mishra**, Executive Director, Mobile Creches
- **Vandana Vasudevan**, Ph.D, Researcher on Mobility, Gender and Transport

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