CITIES BUILT BY WOMEN AND MEN

FINAL DOCUMENT

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SUMMARY

PRESENTATION: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE FOR THE BUILDING OF CITIES

At the beginning of 2003, the Dirección de Servicios de Relaciones Internacionales de la Diputació de Barcelona (International Relations Services Management of the Barcelona Provincial Council)[1] took on the co-ordination of the URB-AL n° 12 network, co-financed by the European Commission, with the official motto "Promotion of women at local decision-making level."

The network has managed to group together more than 350 local entities, the majority of which are city governments in Latin America and Europe, and several other prestigious organisations interested in the network's subject.

This document attempts to describe and compile a brief balance of the effort of reflection and debate that started much earlier and that has been at the centre of all our activity. It also raises some of the subjects that have remained open and that are worth looking at through the continuation of the network's work.

If we had to choose the fundamental points around which the network has reflected and debated, we would choose three:

• The exercise of women's full citizenship, which as well as being an undeniable right, is imperative to the democratic development of cities. To build a city is to build citizenship, based on living together, on participation in collective matters (in the defence of rights and taking on of obligations) and on the acceptance of each individual as a human being with full rights.
• Local equality policies which, supported by ideal structures and resources, have allowed significant advances in the protection of women's rights. Although acceptance of equality as a principle itself is not enough to ensure women's participation in local decision making, it is necessary to support it with active policies specifically targetting equality and, at the same time, encourage these policies across the board in all areas of government where there is the aim of such participation.
• The involvement of women in local politics has brought to light political problems that were not previously conceived as such, such as the balance between professional, political and private life; the invisibility of problems as serious as domestic violence; the enormous contribution made by women to the social well-being of the community: and the impossibility of making cities adaptable for living together if they are not planned and managed with a gender focus.

However, the network has not brought any debate to a close, but has left open numerous perspectives. It has opened new "general" subjects or subjects related to the organisation of society. Subjects as important as the indispensable contribution made by women to the consolidation of local democracy, the type of city we should build in order for it to be habitable for everyone, the need for inclusion policies and not segregation; and, in general everything that is implied by women's contribution to public life.

This document will only examine closely the following subjects, given that they have already been the object of a first debate:

• What the most effective policies are to ensure the presence of women in the various areas of local decision making
• How best to incorporate the most socially vulnerable and unprotected in decision-making and well-being of the city
• What a city, habitable by women and by men, should be like.

We are perhaps better prepared to deal with new questions than give clear answers to previous ones. This does not mean that they should be considered as closed topics; on the contrary they should act as stimulus for reflection and debate.

To this end, this document ends with an invitation to those member entities and individuals who wish to join this effort, in order to continue the work and reflection started by the Women and City Network. This continuity could itself, turn out to be one of the main results of the programme.

We have walked a very modest path so far if one considers what is left to be done in order for the cities of Europe or Latin America to become protective societies, habitable by everyone, where fear of not only physical aggression, but of marginalisation, poverty and abandonment, may disappear. Cities where each individual has a sense of belonging in an accepting community that acknowledges and respects the individual person. Cities where women share political power and public space. In conclusion, cities that use, and consequently value, the skills and enormous experience that women have in meeting human needs.

PART ONE: WHAT WAS KNOWN AS THE WOMAN'S NETWORK AND CITY

1. THE INITIAL COMMITMENT: PROMOTING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AT LOCAL DECISION-MAKING LEVEL

1.1. ORIGIN OF THE NETWORK

Network n° 12, Woman and City arose from the framework of the second phase of the European Commission's URB-AL programme, aimed at developing direct and lasting relationships between European and Latin American local institutions.

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1 The then International Relations Office.

In 2002, Barcelona Provincial Council, in keeping with its ample experience of municipal network support work in promoting equal opportunities and local international co-operation, decided to come together to act as co-ordinator of the subject network nº 12 on the "Promotion of Women at local decision-making level".

The Barcelona Provincial Council 's proposal was based on the following concepts:

- The equality of rights of women and men is an undeniable part of human rights
- Gender policies constitute a suitable instrument with which to promote equal opportunities
- Local policies fulfil an exceptional role in the strengthening of women's rights
- By working as a network, the cities of Europe and Latin America can become a privileged space in which to consolidate advances towards woman's full citizenship

1.2. WHO THE PROGRAMME WAS AIMED AT

The Barcelona Provincial Council's proposal was primarily aimed at:

- Those women with responsibilities within local politics
- Women with leadership skills within any local field
- Women who, due to economic, social or cultural circumstances find it particularly difficult to access full citizenship

1.3. THE STRATEGIC AIMS

Towards the end of 2002, a project put forward by the Barcelona Provincial Council was chosen and at the beginning of 2003 the preparative activities began in member entities with the launch of various working proposals and debates which were proposed as strategic aims:
- Development of women's active citizenship to allow them to participate in all areas and at all levels of local decision making, with the result of creating an egalitarian democracy within the framework of the city.
- To motivate women to participate in the drafting of the city's strategic plan so that, with their experience, cities become habitable for everyone and every group, integrated, free from violence and committed.
- To promote, in each member city, the even distribution of responsibilities between men and women at work, at home and in citizenship.
- To lead political training programmes for women candidates and those women elected to municipal positions, as well as for those women with leadership potential.

- To make evident women's contributions, not only to local politics but also in general, to the well-being, economy, culture and peaceful co-habitation of the city.

1.4. THE INITIAL DIAGNOSIS

At the beginning of 2003, the co-ordinators of the network ordered an initial diagnosis document to get to know the starting point and the context within which the Network's work should lie. It was not supposed to be a fieldwork study but an analysis of the presence of women in political decisions, in the economy and at work. This would also question a city's situation from a gender perspective. The result was a reliable document which in a few pages, managed to compile the majority of basic landmarks covered by women throughout the 20th century. Landmarks in the search of acknowledgement of their rights, in acknowledgement of the existence of the glass ceiling, which causes the exercise of these rights to be well below that recognised by law.

In the diagnosis, several clear fact and trends were detected which were used as a foundation for the debates and activities subsequent to the Network:

- The acknowledgement of women's rights is advancing irrevocably in all countries and is included in several basic international instruments as well as in the legislation and policies in nearly all European and Latin American countries.
- In general the presence of women in political decisions is inferior to that of men, particularly in local spheres, despite equality quota laws and the various political commitments to this cause.
- Presence in the workforce, access to employment and social protection, and participation in economic decisions are the main areas of discrimination against women in all countries.
- Women's contribution to the governing and well-being of cities continues to be largely invisible This is due to the social construction of gender which does not recognise women's capacity for action and decision in public life. The main problems of discrimination also go unseen by the community, particularly poverty, domestic violence and marginalisation. Studies and statistics have frequently contributed to this invisibility by not taking gender as an analytical variable.

This section can be concluded by confirming that the steps taken by the Network initiated an initial commitment by all member entities to jointly promote the presence of women in areas of local authority. This commitment is based on the very clear starting-point data showing the deficits in this area, as pointed out by the initial diagnosis, and aims that are, although ambitious, within reach.

2. THE DEBATES THAT AROSE BETWEEN MEMBER ENTITIES

The main debates arose in the annual seminars: the launch of the "Promotion of women at local decision-making level" in San Salvador (28th-30th April 2003); the Barcelona Seminar with the motto "Towards women's full citizenship" (21st-23rd April 2004) and the Montevideo Seminar (13th-15th April 2005) with the motto "Committed towns, towns of coexistence: scenarios of collective building between men and women".

The themes of the debates have constantly circled around common initial concepts which have spiralled out each year, going into more depth on some points or leaving the debates open. This section attempts to bring together the main subject of each seminar, taking as a guide the speakers' presentations, the comments of those present and of the conclusions.

2.1. SAN SALVADOR SEMINAR 2003: IS THERE A SPACE IN LOCAL POLITICS FOR WOMEN?

• The barriers to the presence of women in politics

This was the big debate of the meeting. Sandra Barrazo, co-ordinator of the El Salvador National Commission for Development, lamented the fact that "the weight of women in town halls has been lessening, thereby making it necessary to put forward an agenda on the city's action plan". This situation was evident to the participants of the meeting. Despite equality and quota laws, in some countries the presence of women in local life is scare and it is even reducing each year. What are the causes of this decline?

Dolors Renau, commissioned by the Presidency for International Programmes for Equality and Citizenship of the Diputació de Barcelona gave a response from within the concept of western democracy originating in Greece and from within the concept of gender, which only assigns political space to men. " Public life is specific to humankind and therefore occupies itself with general subjects. Private life only concerns the individual. The human being attached to this concept of public life is the free adult man and therefore not servants or women. The latter have not been considered as humans with full rights until recently when it has been acknowledged that man does not have exclusivity on humanity (…). Women have been absent from public affairs and therefore necessarily from purely human affairs. They have not participated in the building of the political world, which, in the meaning given to this phenomenon by Hannah Arendt, has been set up through the communication and dialogue between those who have had the power and the voice to do so.

Several participants insisted that daily experience, education and previous ways of life made women's participation in politics

very difficult, particularly if they are older. Ana Francis Góngora told us that, "you can't teach that which is not experienced in the home, in daily life. Gender is not a theory, it's a way of life which I have learned as a woman, daughter, mother and previously, activist".

Ruth Yolanda de Orellana, councillor of Panajachel (Guatemala) explained that, "since the signing of the peace accords of my country, I have been working with older people and I have come up against rigid ideas. It was a difficult experience because when these older women decided they wanted to work their husbands would not allow it. They were told " At work you'll learn to be spoiled and now you're going to want to leave the home" Later I tried to teach them a trade but when the subject of inclination for civic life emerged, the women were taken away from me. This is why I have opted to try and achieve social change through youth training".

According to Margarite Carranco, councillor from Quito (Ecuador), "In Ecuador we have legally approved quotas of 35%. The problem is that many women are not aware of their role. (..) The quota has been taken up by television presenters, politicians' wives and women of the entertainment world. This isn't an entirely bad thing because it is a first step towards the rights of equality. The challenge is for them to change and understand their role. (…) We should question whether we are contributing something real those who cannot in order to convert exclusion into inclusion.

Mª Carmen Viñas, president of the Mar del Plata Centre of Studies talked about another barrier: the lack of self-esteem to compete in politics with men, "We are undervalued by others. Men have been educated for competition and it is us that have the conflict as we have not been trained for it. (…) What is more, our political culture has bureaucratic parties, electoral machines, internal lines and rejects of discrepancy. Its strategy considers the best defence to be the best attack."

Yuri Virela, mayor of Independence, Lima (Peru) explained how often, women's real difficulty in becoming involved in politics was down to poverty and the need to dedicate all their time to surviving. "It is difficult to talk about political participation to women who are looking for help to feed their children, women whose principal worry is how to feed themselves as they have no livelihood."

• What are the tools needed in order to turn know-how and daily experience into politics?

The answers to this question were plenty and widely shared by all the seminar's participants. By bringing them together, a whole programme for the promotion of women in politics could be set up. The various speakers expressed this with great clarity.

Sandra de Barraza: "There are three fundamental aspects that motivate political participation: The existence of a personal project, which implies clear aims, better education and more avai-

lable information about the public agenda. Women need to be better informed about the national reality in order to demand more participation with specific aims."

Also, according to Sandra de Barraza: "In order to make policy, it is important that women have access to indicators that go beyond the public sphere such as productivity, improvement in quality of life, weighty local organisations, respect, credibility and influence on decisions that affect the direction of public and private resources in the construction of cities".

Dolors Renau believes that there are advancements thanks to three factors:

— The academic world, obviously together with the massive access women have to university and cultural life is creating an important body of study where cultural reality is beginning to be looked at through a gender lens.
— The strength of women's movements.
— Women's advances in the labour market.

Political education specifically aimed at women (..), which would bring about the confidence created by self-affirmation and the security of knowing the rules of the game, pacts with those political parties with whom an accord has been reached on minimal common participation and the attaining of agreements within the party with the male sector, with those men more aware of and sensitive to the female problem.

However, one should not feel satisfied in making policy in order for women to participate solely in the local decisions which most directly affect them.

Mª Carmen Viñas: "We need to stop making policy exclusively for women. On one hand, for a matter of strategy given that we do not make up a ghetto; and on the other hande because there are no problems exclusive to women and men, all relevant social problems converge on important matters which ought to concern both men and women."

In Mª Carmen Viñas' opinion; "The increasing depth of democracy ought to include a new social pact to take the place of the previous one and should be based on the division of roles from the point of gender. The new social pact has three essential objectives: the sharing of family responsibilities, sharing of work and sharing of power".

Getting involved in politics exclusively for women is also attached to a risk of defence, homogenisation and the risk of aligning ourselves to interests we don't share, as expressed by Mildrey Corrales, director of the ATI (Bogatá). "(…..)just as any group in society, we are mixed by age, ethno-cultural, economic and social variables that create tensions and contradiction. Therefore, we do not always have common interests and should separate."

Women should go into politics to defend a specific model of society. To quote Victoria Camps, " (…) female assertion is a destabilising element in society and its structures, not least because everything that women demand is aimed at a specific model of society". A society in which it is possible for women to have children in conditions that won't discriminate against them, where there are equal opportunities in the labour market, where women have the right to decide on abortion and where their role within the family is recognised.

Overall, the San Salvador Seminar clearly outlined women's rights to occupy a place in politics and, more specifically, in local politics. Barriers have been going up to stop women occupying these places. The right tools have to be chosen to ensure that the current reality changes because the laws of equality, by themselves, won't put an end to discrimination.

The presence of women in local politics
(Summary of debates of the San Salvador Seminar)

The barriers raised
— The construction of gender in traditional democracy: the human with rights to public life is the free male adult. Woman is not considered a human with full rights and her life is private life.
— Women's education has accentuated her area as being that of the family.
— A lack of self-esteem prevents women's entry into politics, which is a competitive world.
— Only famous or family members of politicians present themselves as candidates.
— Many women cannot participate in politics as poverty means that their only concern is survival
— The institutional factors that slow down the commitment, selection and election of women as candidate: the electoral system, ideology and the position of women in political parties, the process of candidate designation.

The tools to enable women to enter politics
— Increase in the level of education so that cultural reality can be analysed from a gender point of view
— Awareness-raising campaigns and communication which takes aspects of gender into account
— Specific political education: objectives, experiences and means
— Establishment of quotas in local politics
— Strengthening women's movements, together with demanding to be listened to in important local matters
— Advance in participation in the working world
— Establishment a new social pact and political parties: the sharing of family responsibilities, work and power
— Taking on politics as a personal project, with clear aims whilst being highly informed about social reality

- The presence of commissions and organisations for civic consultation
- The extension of social services to the care of non-independent people so that all the responsibility for care does not fall on women.

Why get involved in politics?
- To solve important problems shared by all citizens
- To build a model of society based on equality not discrimination, based on the right of the individual to decide, on quality of life for all and on acknowledgement of the contributions made by all members of society.

2.2. BARCELONA 2004 SEMINAR. HOW IS WOMEN'S FULL CITIZENSHIP DEFINED?

The year 2004 was a significant year for the creation of ideas and, between the member entities of the network the debate dealt with one main theme: "women's citizenship" or "women citizens".

The debate took what we understand as citizenship for women as a starting point. Two main sources were relied upon to answer this question: on one hand the initial document requested at the beginning of the co-ordination of the network, *Towards Women's Full Citizenship*, and on the other hand the material created and produced by the Barcelona Seminar thanks to the speakers and the workshops.

• **The Stage Document**

The document bases women's citizenship on three fundamental pillars:

- Acknowledgement of equal legal and economic status and women's capacity to act in public affairs as a democratic requirement.
- The existence of local policies that allow a life free from gender-based violence, that guarantees women's social protection, that acknowledges them to be key agents in local developments and that ensures that the differences they make are seen.
- The setting up of a series of strategies and tools by which to establish equal participation in local politics.

The acknowledgement of women's equal legal and economic status as an unequivicable right takes on two serious areas of discrimination, which largely affect women: poverty and gender violence.

Statistically speaking, women are poorer because they do not have equality and because gender inequality is a decisive factor in the creation of poverty. Violence towards women undermines their self-esteem: they are paralised by fear and so do not enjoy public life or participating in projects relevant to them.

Conflicts and a climate of violence increases women's vulnerability because, as explained by Amelia Calcárcel, "women, although not essentially pacific, they are not so an a hierarchic and patriarchal system because every woman uses her capacity for violence against those who are weaker, whether of their sex or not and because their atomised disposition means that they involuntarily support male violence. In an impartial society, women have nothing to gain by violence".[2]

The rights of women's citizenship imply active freedom to participate in politics, to vote and to be elected to public posts without any type of discrimination: so that women feel confident carrying out their responsibilities as citizens and as elected candidates. On the other hand, local policies on the strengthening of women's rights have been aimed towards clear objectives: zero tolerance, protection from and prevention of gender-based violence, support of women's sexual and reproductive rights through healthcare provision, social services to care for dependent people, increase in employment for women, maximisation of women's management qualities, enterprise and knowledge of what is necessary for local development. And, municipal statistics should reflect women's real social problems: poverty, gender-based violence, lack of appreciation of domestic work, economic dependence, the differences in resources and power in the household, whether they belong to migrant or displaced groups who have difficult enough access to social and cultural advantages, let alone political participation.

As far as **strategies** and **tolls** are concerned for participation in local politics, the most important are considered to be:

- Support and co-ordination with other local authorities to protect and guarantee the exercising of political, economic, social and cultural rights
- Accurate appraisal of the situation and the problematic differences faced by women
- To set up means of positive action: quotas for political participation, financing of equality, *etc.*
- To encourage networks and women's associations, to acknowledge their work and accept their participation in local consultation and participation
- To create and strengthen bodies for equality in local authorities
- To bring about lateral thinking in all of a city's policies, to include the variable of women's situation when planning and managing local areas

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2 VALCÁRCEL, A. "Qué es y qué retos plantea el feminismo". Didactic material from the course *Sí, tú puedes*. Diputación de Barcelona, 2001.

• The Barcelona Seminar

The ideas from the initial document were used as a starting point from which to open debate and lines of thought at the Barcelona Seminar. The motto and aims of the seminar were clearly defined by the president of the Diputació de Barcelona, Celestinao Corbacho. "For the Diputatió, the seminar's motto *Towards Women's Full Citizenship* represents more than anything else, a pledge for the future. Although we have been promoting equal opportunity programmes for quite a few years, women's full citizenship is a primary objective in the building of cities."

Celestino Corbacho added that to achieve this aim would imply the following:

— That women participate in the design of our neighbourhoods, in the defining of housing policy, in transport planning, in urban safety plans, in the creation of social services, in establishing the priorities of public spending and in the management of local development.

— That cities are a space in which to live in harmony, designed to be such, in which the municipal councils exercise a daily council between its women and men neighbours in the favour of tolerance, peace and against those stereotypes that bring about discrimination.

— That all local policies should take into account a gender perspective. To do so, we should start by getting to know women's differential needs and contributions in order to put an end to the statistical invisibility of the problems that cause discrimination: gender-based violence, unequal earnings and the lack of recognition of women's contributions to the community's improvement.

" And not to forget our main aims: to end poverty and gender-based violence. For this reason we are convinced that public action should help in shaping public opinion."

Women's full citizenship, in the words of the head representative of the co-ordinating unit of the Network, consists, overall, in women's participation in the design of a city's model, and in establishing the priorities for public spending where the city is mainly a space in which to live together harmoniously and where local policies take into account the gender perspective.

The speakers and the workshops went into further depth and reinforced this vision of full citizenship.

In her speech, Amelia Valcárcel, philosopher, tackled women's citizenship rights and she put forward a series of very clear postulations:

— **Women's freedom as a measure of society's freedom:** "Women's opportunities and freedom advance where freedom is assured and where the forward-thinking State guarantees a minimum." "Any kind of totalitarianism or fundamentalism (….) reinforces social control and, unfortunately, this means a regulatory control of the female collective."

— **Quotas as a means against co-option of power in function of gender:"** Quotas do not exist in order to put women where there are none, as that would be positive discrimination, but to slant co-option in function of gender. Quotas are useful to tie together two recurrent behaviours reproduced due to male privilege: the invisibility of achievements and elitist discrimination (….) However, the quota system, imperative at the moment in order to insure impartiality in the mechanisms of co-option, needs to be moderated internally in order to avoid misuse of such a system".

— **Clear aims for equlity:** "The first thing to do is to dissolve the qualitative deficit" meaning improvement in the level of education and training among the female population because a feminine leadership failure, such as exists now, can only be the result of a purposeful desire for it to be like that.
The second thing to do is to bring to light the gynophobia in the labour market and to unable it. (….) It turns out that women have the worst situation in the market system, which is apparently indifferent yet offers less employment opportunities, worse jobs with tasks that are often below ability. (…) The current generation, which has the greatest achievements and best levels of education even known, are, at the moment, experiencing an authentic disaster.
The third is the need to forge a common resolution. "Women are already able to forge a relatively homogenous common resolution to achieve their general objectives: now to keep it as it is and move forward in terms of freedom."

Helle Degn, ex police commissioner, minister and Danish elected representative agreed with Amelia Valcárcel in that women's liberties advance where general freedom is assured. "The upkeep of a modern, participative and viable democracy requires more democratic institutions than currently foreseen. I can confirm this because I have been closely following the transitions in several countries and powers.(…..)The second thing I learnt was that for democracy to prosper, women citizens need to trust institutions such as courts of law, the police, social authorities and tax systems."

— **Motivated and self-assured citizens:** "Only if women citizens are very motivated and self-assured, with positive experience of local politics, will they have enough courage and confidence to demand the direct introduction of elements of democracy where they are most needed".

— **Collaboration network:** "So many years in politics teach you that a woman. On her own, will never be able to resolve a confrontation. Secondly, a woman has to take on board that every meeting is a fight for power. You have to prepare yourself mentally to participate in any meeting. (…) The enemy is always

prepared because they have brought together their allies and agreements; that is to say, they have established their network of collaboration. We women should do the same if we really want something and want to succeed in our efforts.

I have come to terms with one important experience, which I share with many women dedicated to politics, which is that the most difficult adversaries often come from within one's own party."

– **The citizenship ideal.** Alicia Mijares, professor at the University of Oviedo, sums up the four requirements for full citizenship: election, participation, distribution of wealth and acknowledgement. These features should be ascribed independently of a subject's sex, race or social class.

Election is linked to the idea of independence: "It is necessary to see change in institutions so that women's independence can be visualised. There are many spheres of life where women are still considered dependent on the male.

To actively participate in society also implies the opportunity to be elected to a position of responsibility. (…..) Women and men who share the ideal of equality cannot make this simply an issue of representation.

Distribution of wealth: In order to enjoy full citizenship it is necessary in the first instance to eradicate poverty. In the case with which we are concerned, to eradicate the feminisation of poverty. (…..).Poverty and work are related. Women's poverty lies principally in the fact that their work is "invisible". Women's hidden work means that they are not typified as part of the active population. In turn, the agents of redistribution of wealth or development programmes exclude them as direct beneficiaries of financial compensation to correct inequality."

Acknowledgement as a feature of citizenship implies the eradication of sexual rules and stereotypes. " If participation is not born of acknowledgement, the trend of explaining women's rights as concessions will remain."

"By full citizenship one understands all those civil rights derived from election and participation, those social rights derived from the distribution of wealth and sexual rights derived from acknowledgement."

– **Transversality or integrated gender focus on local politics as tools for full citizenship.** Carmen Martínez Ten, feminist and counsellor of the CSM, considers that politics directed specifically at women are generally the first stage of strategies for equal opportunities but that it is necessary to move towards an integrated gender focus or mainstreaming: " a systematic integration of the needs and priorities of men and women at all levels of politics, from the planning , studying, application, supervision and evaluation stages."

From a gender perspective, the planning stage should be able to rely on, from the start, the people to whom the project is aimed and especially on women in specific situations.

Transversality or mainstreaming of gender implies in-depth structural changes and making it necessary to overcome considerable difficulties and obstacles. For this reason we should work with scenarios in the medium term and it must be taken into account that advancement depends on there being women who defend equality in those centres where decisions are taken and where political power lies.

" According to the European Letter of the Woman in the City, the gender factor as a source of a new shared culture is included in the drafting of municipal policies, The gender factor, understood as a study of the social relationships developed between men and women, is an efficient medium through which to deconstruct stereotypes and through which to consider citizenship viewed by equals."

In conclusion, a gender-focused integration in local politics and in all areas becomes a basic tool for women's development to full citizenship.

Women's Full Citizenship
(Summary of the debates of the Barcelona Seminar)

The foundations
– The recognition of women's economic and legal equality as an undeniable right
– The existence of local policies to strengthen women's rights accompanied by the right means, strategies and tools
– Women's freedom as a measure of society's freedom

The aims for equality
– To remove the qualitative deficit (political education for women)
– To unmask and deactivate gynophobia in the labour market
– Forge a common resolution, with homogenous objectives and work in network to keep hold of what has been obtained so far and gain further liberties
– To motivate women and for them to become self-assured citizens
– To consolidate collaboration networks between women

The ideal of citizenship
– Participation: the opportunity to be elected to positions of public responsibility
– Wealth distribution: the eradication of the femalisation of poverty
– Acknowledgement of citizenship: to do away with sexual stereotypes which consider rights as concessions to women
– A gender focus to all local policies

2.3. MONTIVEDEO 2005 SEMINAR: WHAT ARE CITIES HABITABLE BY BOTH WOMEN AND MEN LIKE?

In Spring 2005 the third annual seminar of the Network took place in Montevideo. This brought to a close the planned cycle of meetings and collective reflection. The motto of this seminar was: *Cities for Solidarity, Cities for Living Together: Scenarios for Collective Construction between women and men.*

Cities are places where people live, a life space and a way of living as a whole which partly defines what we understand by citizenship. These increasingly large cities are where the majority of the world's population lives, which turns them into places of massive-scale construction with attending environmental, violence and marginalisation problems where it is difficult to offer services to everybody.

Cities are public spaces that are traditionally denied to women, or have been organised on the margen of their needs. Cities also attract those who are looking to better their opportunities in life.

The seminar reflected on a model of a city as a space for living together peacefully, a place in which people trust, where they can live in dignity, integrate social and cultural differences and where humans do not feel threatened by the uncertainty of the present and future.

Women who aspire to full citizenship and to occupy the public space traditionally barred to them also consider the values and foundations on which the city model, which deserves to be built by working together with men, is built.

• Cities to live in, to live together in and to feel safe in

Dolors Renau understands that in enormous cities and their metropolitan areas, as opposed to more classically designed towns, it is difficult to meet "the three social conditions needed to carry out a fully human life: live, live together and feel safe. Or better still, to trust and feel trusted, live and live together. Or to feel confident to live and live together".

Living together means a shared life in which each individual is a unique person. " Living together is based on a specific common task and a trust on other members of the community and in the shared spaces of the community,"

"To be able to live with reasonable trust in our surroundings is a basic right. Preserving physical integrity is a fundamental condition for acting humanely and freely."

However, big insecurities do not depend exclusively on aggression (…) but on uncertainty before an uncertain future." To live and feel trust, it is not only necessary to feel physically or economically safe for the future, but to enjoy ethical-symbolic security, which consists in knowing that public affairs are submitted to ethics and law.

Demoralisation, lack of trust, the break away from legality are direct attacks on symbolic security, which then become a reference for the individual and collective behaviours of citizens.

In conclusion, for Dolors Renau, (….) " those cities habitable by women and men are those that allow one to live and live together, that consider each individual as a unique person and protects them from fear of physical aggression, insecurity with regards to the future; they are cities ruled by respect for law and ethics".

• Women as agents of local development

"Sharing economic power and enjoying the same employment rights" was the title of the presentation by Cecilia Cortes, director of FUNPADEM (Costa Rica).

This presentation introduced debate on a new theme: Women's contribution to local development and social protection.

"As well as woman's dual role as reproducer and producer in society, she takes on a third role as builder of society (……..). There is already talk of women as active agents of development".

Women's associations can be, above all, a great ally in local development if they maintain their link to disadvantaged groups fighting to participate in the building of egalitarian and inclusive cities.

Local development should also include the ambitions of working women and the right to equal conditions in employment. Meaning not just the right to work but to be able to make a job, a family and a personal life compatible.

Any woman who wants to be happy seeks to find the balance between personal, professional and family life now that she forms part of the labour market and competes, shoulder to shoulder, with males for high-up positions within the company.

However, to find this balance it is imperative to acknowledge one job that society always leaves to women: social protection of dependent people. At the same time it is essential that *they* have the protection that they are due legally for their contribution to the well-being of the community.

At this point the reference to "the labout market's gynophobia" returns and is alluded to by Amelia Valcárcel. "Women don't ha-

ve the jobs for which they are skilled as they carry out a reproductive role and social worker role which is not acknowledged in the market."

Local development as considered from a gender perspective looks towards the equal division of work and ensures that social protection does not depend nearly exclusively on women. And in those cases where the dependency cannot be avoided, women's work in this area should at least be valued and acknowledged for the social protection and security for the future level is provided, at no charge: the widest network of social assistance possible in any territory or city.

• **The life of migrant or displaced women in cities**

This seminar also gave attention to municipal policies for integrating women who have particular difficulty in accessing social benefits, particularly migrant and displaced women, and not forgetting other groups such as women submitted to violence.

- Highly vulnerable situation

Gloria Camacho, director of CEPLAES (Ecuador) considers that migrant and displaced women live in highly vulnerable situations; particularly if one adds the condition of being an illegal immigrant.

These circumstances expose the women to situations of discrimination and exploitation, limits their access to educational, health and housing services and, in some cases, produce flagrant violations of human rights.

Another manifestation of this situation of vulnerability is that these women can end up being the victims of networks or mafias of sexual exploitation, or experience harassment and sexual violence from employers, house owners, police or immigration officers, or other people who may have power over them."

Cecilia Lipszyc, sociologist and president of ADEUEM (Argentina) sustains we're also dealing with a (...)situation of vulnerability because, due to its generic identity, more often affects women because being separated from their children can lead to a constant source of worry and strong sense of guilt because they are not fulfilling the socially accepted role

Although many women look to emigration to open new horizons of increased well-being, or in some cases increased independence and freedom from a patriarchal model, this model continues in the new community, particularly among the network of people from their own country.

In fact, many migrant women are assigned jobs that maintain their reproductive roles, such as those of looking after dependent people without it mattering very often what type of qualifications they possess. Domestic service, looking after children and the elderly are the most usual openings offered to them by the market.

Cecilia Lipszc explains the disadvantages of the situation. "Domestic work is a dead-end street. It does not offer the opportunity to gain new skills and therefore new jobs, and it rarely offers formal training. In can also include endless hours of work, abuse by the employer, instability due to illegal contracts which can become an obstacle for consolidation of their own family.

- How full citizenship of migrant and displaced women can be supported

Gloria Camacho and Cecilia Lipszyc offer a large catalogue of proposals. For Gloria Camacho, we should, " (...) incorporate the gender dimension in all emigration policies, support family regroupings in emigration regulations, control and sanction mafia networks at origin and destination, implement controlled emigration programmes which include follow-up once at destination and special attention to women to ensure they don't end up ensnared in exploitation networks. In refuge cases, the opinion not only of the boss but also of the women should be heard and mechanisms should be created to demand a food pension for the daughters of migrants who remain in the country of origin."

Promote the organisation of migrant and displaced women and create support services.

"Make the police sensitive to and skilled to deal with emigrant persons and service providers"

Cecilia Lipszyc tells us that in order to "(..) avoid vulnerability and discrimination, without making cultural ethical and national homogeneity a prerequisite. (...)The forging of representative and self-help groups within the emigrant community. (..) The facilitation of family reunions. (...)To put and end to invisibility, which exacerbates vulnerability...".

What cities habitable by women and men are like
(Summary of the Montevideo Seminar)

The values that govern themn
– They consider every person as unique and accept their differences
– They protect citizens against physical, economical and social insecurity
– They are ruled by respect of the law and ethics
– They promote the successful combination of work, family and personal life for everybody
– The promote living together based on a common resolution, trusting in other citizens and common spaces

> **How local development is understood**
> − It considers the specific problems of citizenship
> − It integrates women as active agents of development in areas of decision and consultation
> − It evenly distributes work and social protection
> − It values the work of social worker carried out by women, giving this work a market value and guaranteeing social protections for carers
>
> **The city and migrant and displaced women**
> − Defence of their human rights
> − Make visible their vulnerability and protect them from exploitation, being abandoned and marginalisation
> − Promote their organisations, give them a right to speak up within the city and respect their culture
> − Integrate them into full citizenship, ending their invisibility, facilitating their access to the community's services and guaranteeing them an active role in economic, cultural and political development.

3. ACTIVITIES CARRIES OUT BY THE NETWORK

Within the framework of Network nº 12, several activities have been carried out whose detailed description would significantly lengthen this document. For information purposes we can group them together in five main categories: forging communication between member entities; contact with other initiatives, networks or programmes with similar aims; a resource center; publications and support of common projects.

3.1. FORGING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MEMBER ENTITIES

Given that the exchange of ideas and experiences is one of the priority aims of the network, the co-ordination unit of the programme has maintained constant communication with the member entities and at the same time has encouraged communication among them without having to pass through the co-ordinating unit. The most important instruments of this exchange have been:
- The design of a corporate image for the network with the motto *Network nº 12 Woman and City* by which to identify it visually and easily.
- The creation of a website which has become the main medium of information and communication: information about member entities, co-ordination activities, publications, seminars, common projects, resource centre, news *etc*. The address is www.diba.es/urbal12.

- Periodic electronic newsletters where the co-ordination office has given information about the concerns of the member entities, useful information and any other information of general interest which could help to make the network dynamic.

3.2. CONTACTS WITH OTHER INITIATIVES, NETWORKS, PROGRAMMES AND ORGANISATIONS WITH SIMILAR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

In some cases, the contacts have had the aim of promoting the network, such as the participation in the annual sessions of the Local Development Conference of Central America (CONDEFELCA) or the meetings of the Latin Arch Group for Equal Opportunities. The promotion of the network has also been brought about through presentations by town hall representatives from Spain and Brazil, within the framework of the Forum of Cultures in Barcelona in May 2004, the CONDEFELCA in Panama in October 2005 and the Commission for Equal Gender Opportunities in Cities and Local Governments in Washington in February 2006. Representatives of the co-ordination office of the Network also participated in the Conference on Local Partnership between the European Union and Latin America, which took place in Valparaíso in March of 2005, the training course organised by the Documentation Centre of the URB-AL programme in Málaga in March 2006 and in the First Annual Conference of Decentralised Local Co-operation between the European Union and Latin America in Montevideo in March 2006.

The contact established with other co-ordination unit of networks of similar themes to the URB-AL programme have also been important, through participation in seminars organised by the latter and above all because of co-ordinators meetings. Through these contacts it has been possible to share the lessons learned and to make productive use of them.

On other occasions the Network has kept in contact with organisms and institutions of similar aims in order to consolidate mutual support links: PGU-ALC (UNHABITAT/PNUD) for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Thematic Unity for Gender and Local Authorities in the Network of Mercotowns, Olimpia de Gouges (Promotional Network for Women's Rights), Union for Gender Equality in Development and Programme for Leadership Support and Women's Representation (PROLEAD) from the Intra-American Bank for Development.

As from 2005, many of the contacts have been consolidated with the aim of providing continuity to Network nº 12's work and with a view to identifying activities for the future. Such is the case of the contract of collaboration signed with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in November 2005, on which the foundations to permit future consolidation and activities of the network lie.

Apart from these contacts, many informal contact have materialised with a great many organisations, mainly with women's or-

ganisations in different European and Latin American countries. A constant contact with those responsible for the URB-AL programme in the European Commission has also been maintained.

3.3. RESOURCE CENTRE

Network 12's Resource Centre is a multimedia and document space which has been used for the compilation, systematising and dissemination of information, education and knowledge exchange between the member entities.

It covers the following topic areas which have been determined by the aims and issues for debate within the network:

- Egalitarian democracy
- City planning
- New social contract
- Education
- Legislation

Use has mainly been made of the electronic material through dissemination of documents via internet which had previously been put together by the co-ordinating office following proposals made by the member entities. The Resource Centre represents an excellent wayof exchange documentation, and its update and consolidation will form part of Network 12's continuity.

In cataloguing, the Network has been supported by documentalists from the Centro Francesca Bonnemaison at the Diputació de Barcelona.

3.4 PUBLICATIONS

- Plan of Operations: which includes the planning foreseen for Network 12
- Initial Diagnosis (as previously mentioned)
- The Interim document (as previously mentioned)
- The final document
- The Magazine *Woman and City* which includes in-depth articles, interviews, reports and a central notebook with information on the activities and results of the Network, agenda and news, *etc*.
- Good Practice Catalogue: after an identification and selection process, a proposal to disseminate a code of good practice as created by joint projects. Given that at the end of European Commission financing the majority of the projects will continue, this good practice code is a document which will be developed further as theses projects come to a close.

The publications bring together the main systemisation of ideas and experiences produced by the Network. They are all of high quality and can be consulted on the programme's website by everybody.

3.5. JOINT PROJECTS ORIGINATING FROM THE FRAMEWORK OF THE NETWORK

Joint projects represent a significant part of the Network's activities and a large number of the member entities have been actively integrated in them. To this extent, the joint projects have occupied a central position in the annual seminars and they are giving rise to an important volume of initiatives and experiences of working together, not to mention the establishing of links between many local institutions across Europe and Latin America.

3.5.1. Member entities interest in working together

The set-up of joint projects between different member entities has been one of the URB-AL Programmes priorities. When organising each of the annual seminars, a large importance has been given to workshops, which have had the aim of creating and presenting common proposals. The speeches and debates which were generated (as explained in chapter 2 of this document) and the different topics of the workshops have been used to inspire the themes and focus for joint project proposals.

The task of promoting joint projects has sparked the interest of a good part of the member entities to such an extent that nearly all of the participants at the annual seminars have participated in the creation of a proposal. This interest has been consistent and has resulted, in the majority of cases, in the presentation of a project in the following convocations opened by the European Commission.

The percentage of projects approved by the European Commission is also quite high. The April 2006 convocation is still to be decided for type B projects. This percentage is not only significant in absolute terms, but also in relation to the sum of approved projects with other URB-AL networks. These data could indicate the appeal that Network 12 has had for member entities, not to mention its willingness to put forward joint action in the areas of fieldwork investigation, awareness building and education. This willingness has been carried through to type B projects, which include intervention activities and responses to specific problems some member entities have encountered with respect to promoting women in local decision-making arenas.

Table I: Proposals, projects and participatin by member entities

| Year | Proposals submitted | | Approved Projects | | | |
| | Nº of proposals | Nº of participating social entities | Nº of projects | Nº of member entities that participated | | |
				Total	EU	Latin America
2003 • October convocation	14	53	3	22	7	15
2004 • April Convocation • October convocation	5 10	35 70	3 6	21 45	6 21	15 24
2005 • April Convocation • October convocation	4 16	30 83	1 4	10 20	4 7	6 13
Total	**47 (*)**	**164 (**)**	**17**	**90 (**)**	**38 (**)**	**52 (**)**

(*) The total number of submitted proposals is less than the sum of proposals presented in different convocations given that some proposals were submitted to more than one convocation.

(**) The totals are not the sum of proposals per convocation given that member entities that have submittied more than once have been discounted for either submission or approval.

3.5.2. The topics of the projects

By analysing the proposals of joint projects that came up, whether in the seminar or as a periphery activity of the network and those that were approved as shown in Table II, we can see the areas of priority interest:

- Women's political education. This is the topic found most often under various foci: political education, female leadership, exchanges of experiences of education and the promotion of resource centres. Ten of the proposals include political education as an objective and four of the proposals were approved. It is worth mentioning that one of the approved type B projects, "Centre for Women's Political Education and the City was coordinated by the Diputació de Barcelona. These data seem to indicate therefore, that women's political education is considered to be an indispensable tool for the promotion of women at local decision-making level.
- Economic participation. Employment was the second topic which aroused interest although from various angles: employment, the balance of professional and private life, access to employment and economic independence. Six projects included it as a main objective (and four approved projects), which also seems to indicate that women's political participation cannot easily be separated from her economic independence and her opportunities to access employment.

Therefore, employment and education have been the preferred topics for joint projects.

On a secondary level, yet not without being important, there are the other topics:

- Participation, empowerment and women's organisations. These themes appear in seven proposals and four approved projects. Among these one should note the type B project coordinated by the Quito Metropolitan District Municipality, *Women transform cities: municipal services for women*.
- The woman as an immigrant or belonging to minority groups. These themes are the object of three proposals and one approved project.
- Methodology of equality and mainstreaming in public policies. Also a topic that stands out with three proposals and two approved projects.
- The city as a habitable space that has to be organised taking into account a womna's point of view. Another topic in which interest was shown and object of three proposals but no approved project.
- International watchdogs as forums and instruments with which to analyse gender issues: local employment policies for women, rights and opportunities for single women who are heads of family.
- The gender budget. This is a topic which has gained in strength in the last phase of the Network. In fact, both of the

proposals submitted to the October 2005 convocation were approved.

The preferred topics for joint projects are coherent, naturally, with the debates discussed at the seminars and to a certain extent pinpoint some aspects that remain open or that haven't been developed.

A large part of the joint projects have started and it is yet to be seen whether they have been able to develop good practices, at least for those still in the first stage. This analysis, both on results and impact, as well as the implied potential to transfer and replicate, will be the object of a new document once the projects have finished.

For the moment it is enough in this section to merely comment that the joint projects make up an important part of the network's activity and the fact that nearly one hundred member entities are working together on projects supported by local organisation and the European Commission, is therefore in itself a positive result.

Table II: Approved projects by topic

Year	Topic	Coordinator
2003 October Call of Proposals	Promotion of gender equality in local management	Municipio de Quito (Equador)
	International observation of employment policies for women	Ayuntamiento de Irún (Spain)
	Autodetermination for women through employment	Municipalidad de Independencia Lima (Peru)
2004 April Call of Proposals	Participative strategies with gender perspective on social and employment access for women	Municipalidad de Rosario (Argentina)
	Women's *empowerment* processes and citizenship participation	Mancomunidad Tajo Salor Extremadura (Spain)
	Political education and skills for women	Ayuntamiento de Sant Boi de Llobregat, Barcelona (Spain)
October Call of Proposals	PRO-IGUAL (Promoción de la igualdad de género en el ámbito local, *Promotion for gender equality in local areas*)	Diputación de Córdoba (Spain)
	LIDERAL (Promover liderazgo de las mujeres en el ámbito local, *Promotion of women leaders in local areas*)	Diputación de Málaga (Spain)
	Consejo local/internacional de Mujeres Jóvenes (Formación política de mujeres jóvenes) *Local/international council for young women (political training)*	Municipalidad de Graz (Austria)
	Methodologies for microcredits as instruments to proment economic emancipation and women's social inclusion	Prefectura Municipal de Guarulhos (Brazil)
	The immigrant women or women who come from ethnic minorities, equality, participation and leadership in the local arena	Consell Comarcal de l'Alt Empordà (Spain)
	Strategies for mainstreaming the gender perspective in public policy	Gobierno de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (Argentina)
2005 April Call of Proposals	International watchdog for women's rights and opportunities for single women who are heads of families	Commune di Latina (Italy)
October Call of Proposals	Participative budget as a way to strengthen women's presence in decision making	Prefectura de Recife (Brazil)
	Gender budgeting. The gender vision in public spending programming	Provincia de Pescara (Italy)
	Women transforming cities: municipal services for women	Municipio del Distrito Metropolitano de Quito (Equador)
	Training Centre, "Woman and City"	Diputación de Barcelona (Spain)

PART TWO: OPEN PERSPECTIVES WITH THE NETWORK

This part of the document intends to present an open look on the future, going on from what has been done in the Women and City Network. Three main topics will be examined in order to do this: the lines of debate and action that remain open and proposals for continuing network work.

For the chapter "Lines of debate and action that remain open, three topics have been chosen:

• The democracy of equality in cities
• The incorporation of migrant or displaced women in decision making and local well-being
• Cities habitable by both women and men

Each of these topics is closely related to the previously described debates which took place within the network. This chapter does not attempt to close them but to systemise the main points of each topic and to indicate those that have already received a consensus from a technical or political point of view as well as to put forward the topics on which work should continue because they are still open or because they haven't received enough consensus or operative consolidation.

The chapter on continuation of network work has no other value but that of making suggestions for the future given that the interest shown by member entities in continuing to work together with organisations of similar aims and objectives have remained clear throughout the life of the Network.

4. LINES OF DEBATE AND ACTION THAT REMAIN OPEN

4.1. THE DEMOCRACY OF EQUALITY IN CITIES

• **The axioms of democracy**

Victoria Camps says that, "(…) the 21st century will belong to women. No-one will be able to stop the movement that has been the biggest revolution of the century that is now ending".[3]

From the fight for the right to vote to the demand to evenly distribute work, familial responsibility and power, the path travelled so far by women towards equality is one of the lights that illuminate a twentieth century identified by its contradictions. On one hand, globalisation and the fantastic advances in science and technology and on the other, war, totalitarianism, the persistence of poverty and maginalisation.

On the road towards equality various stages have been built and consolidated and are now a valuable heritage with which to face the future.

Examples of this road are found in the following axioms:

– Women's autonomy and gender equality are fundamental to development, the fight against poverty, disease and the degrading of the world's environment.
– Gender equality is an aim for the whole of society. Policies designed exclusively for women are not enough and by themselves will not achieve a change in the structural social conditions on which inequality lies. To be efficient, all policies should include a gender perspective.
– A democracy that does not achieve 50% active citizen participation is not a real democracy. The persistent exclusion of women in political terrain and in decision making equals a conceptual and practical failure in representative democracy.

From these postulations come concepts such as mainstreaming, the integration of gender perspectives in general politics, egalitarian democracy compared with deficit democracy or the new social contract between men and women for the sharing and balance of paid work and family responsibilities and decision making. They are concepts that constitute important handles in the progress towards better and more equality.

• **International landmarks in the road towards equality in recent decades**

Although in the last few decades of the 20th century there were many landmarks on this road towards equality, it is worth pointing out a few particularly important ones:

– The International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
  This convention brought together women's main rights and means to fight against discrimination in different areas.
  It is well known yet not applied in many situations although it was ratified by the countries.
  - Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1979. The year 2005 was the 25th anniversary
  - Currently there are only 15 countries that still have not ratified it.
– Athens 1992 Declaration

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3 Victoria Camps. *El siglo de las mujeres*. Colección Feminismos, Ediciones Cátedra, Madrid, 1998.

The Athens declaration was important because it demonstrated that official equality didn't reflect real equality and because it took on the democratic deficit brought about by the exclusion of women from decision making. Thirteen years on and throughout the world there are many more women in positions of responsibility although there is still a enormous under-representation in the organisations of legislative decisions, in government in public administrations, in economic and judicial power and the media.

— Fourth World Conference on Women 1995 and Beijing +10
The achieving of the aims of the Platform for Actions was evaluated ten years after the Beijing conference in 2005. Women's movement are aware that during the last 10 years certain forces have appeared that are likely to cause a backward step. Despite all the difficulties and obstacles, it's essential that this step isn't taken. Women in countries of conflict, in situations of marginalisation and poverty are the most vulnerable. International commitment is key at this time.

— The growth of urbanisation as a new opportunity for democracy. Istanbul and Vancouver conferences.
The twentieth century is also the century of urbanisation. In 2007, half of the world's population will live in cities which have been transforming at a vertiginous rate in recent decades. The Vancouver and Istanbul conferences showed the enormous changes that have taken place in our cities over relatively little time.

Cities have transformed at the rate of globalisation which has produced the polarisation of some social groups and has increased urban poverty and marginalisation. In Latin America, at the same time, a new profile of local municipalities has emerged as a consequence of decentralisation and the strengthening of government al local level which opens new processes for participation and strengthening of democracy.

However, this new growth in the urban population, although it constitutes a new opportunity for democracy, does not necessarily imply it because the new points of urban poverty and marginalisation are a potential hot bed of insecurity, conflict and uprooting of many people. The phenomenon of increasing urbanisation puts forward enormous challenges for egalitarian democracy because many women drag their history of discrimination from rural areas to the cities, without the new territory often taking into account their differential needs.

• **The difficulty of becoming mayoress in Latin America**

As pointed out by Network UR-AL nº12's initial diagnosis[4], women's participation in local government is inferior to that of parliaments and national or regional governments. Only 5.3% are directed by a mayoress, Although women participate to a great extent in informal structures, the proximity of the government is not a factor that increases the equality of gender in decision making. This is a phenomenon that can also be seen in Europe and whose causes were analysed in the interim document and in the Barcelona 2004 Seminar.

The data for 16 Latin American countries can be consulted in ILPES/CEPAL, 1988. [5]

Alejandra Massolo[6] upholds that positive action such as quota laws do not appear to significantly promote women to the leadership of municipal power, although it does seem to have achieved an improvement in the percentage of women councillors in Latin American countries.

• **The lack of parity in municipal government and in the rest of the world**

This situation in Latin America is similar in Europe and other regions.[7] The number of women councillors depending on the country, waves between 12 and 35 % and for mayoresses between 3 and 15%. In this difference between councillors and mayoresses there is an isolated eye-catching example: Costa Rica has 73% councillors but only 9 % mayoresses.

The difficulty that women have in reaching leadership of municipal government, even though it seems the most accessible and strategic, can be accounted for by several reasons. One possible explanation is women have less opportunity in majority electoral systems where there is one candidate per electoral

4 URB-AL Red Nº 12 Programme. "Promoción de las mujeres en las instancias y decisiones locales", en *Mujeres ciudadanas. Diagnóstico inicial.* Diputación de Barcelona, 2003.

5 www.cepal.org

6 Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres. "La participación de las mujeres en los gobiernos locales de América Latina", in the *Memoria del primer encuentro nacional de presidentes municipales.* México, 2003.

7 See data at www.cities-localgovernments.org

conscription as opposed to proportional electoral systems. In majority systems, parties seem to opt for a male candidate rather than a female one as happens in municipal leadership.[8]

• Women's networks, instruments for egalitariang democracy

One interesting phenomenon of recent years has been the constitution of women's networks that have participated in local government. At the same time, international organisations and discussion forums have increased their interest in local management and urban problems. The gender perspective has been put on the agenda of these debates and women's networks that have been constitutionalised are very active in these areas. The powerful communication tools brought about by new technologies have made the exchange of information and experiences between different networks and institutions possible.[9]

The constitution of networks as a traditional strategy of feminist movements is fundamental. Although in any case the spaces for participation are also spaces for political persuasion, it is

necessary build up the gender perspective in all areas. The possibility of using new technologies to facilitate the support and exchange of experiences among women means, as we have pointed out, a really useful tool which opens new opportunities day after day.

• The three pillars of women's participation in local decision making

Worldwide globalisation and the results of neoliberal politics in Latin America due to consensus from Washington, among other factors, have produced, if one reads the situation critically, the inability on the part of state governments to face the generalisation of services such as education, health, housing or programmes for economic and social development. These services, which up until very recently were the responsibility of central administrations are, in many countries, becoming the responsibility of regional or local governments who now have to take on the obligation of dealing with the problems that affect citizens' daily life.

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8 Carmen Martínez Ten y Purificación Gutiérrez López. *Hacia la representación paritaria en el voto de las mujeres*. Editorial Complutense, Madrid, 2004.

9 Web addresses of institutions and networks that deal with the gender perspective in local government:

http://www.generourban.org

http://www.eurofem.net

http://www.un-instraw.org/en/index.html

http://www.unifem.org/

http://www.huairou.org

http://www.cities-localgovernments.org

http://www.unhabitat.org

http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org

http://www.ville-montreal.qc.ca

http://www.bestpractices.org

http://www.europarl.eu.int/committees/femm_home.htm (Commission for Women's Rghts and Equal Opportunities (FEMM) of the European Parliament).

http://www.eclac.org/ (CEPAL ECLAC Unidad Mujer y Desarrollo en América Latina)

http://www.redmujer.org (Red Mujer y Hábitat de América Latina)

http://www.iula.net/

http://www.pgualc.org (PNUD-UN / Hábitat)

http://www.femmesetvilles.org/ (Femmes et Villes internacional)

http://www.mujeresenred.net (Foro de Mujeres en Red)

http://www.iula.net/femum/ (Federación de Mujeres Municipalistas de América Latina y El Caribe)

http://www.genreetlocal.free.fr

http://www.ccre.org

http://www.fcm.ca

http://www.unescap.org/publications

Unfortunately, not all of the women's associations and networks have a website and there is a lack of knowledge and information on this topic. In the article quoted by Alejandra Massolo there are some Latin American municipal networks mentioned:

• Asociación de Concejalas de Bolivia (ACOBOL)

• Asociación de Mujeres Municipalistas de Ecuador (AMUME)

• Asociación Nacional de Regidoras, Síndicas y Alcaldesas Salvadoreñas (Andrisas)

• Alianza Nacional de Mujeres Municipalistas de Honduras (ANAMMH)

• Unidad Temática "Género y Municipio" de la Red Mercociudades

If one makes a positive reading of the political process of de-centralisation and local autonomy which has been accompanied by legal restructuring and a redefinition of some institutions, we can see there is hope on the horizon in the sense that there is a higher participation on behalf of society in the defining and carrying out local policies, which are those that affect the solving of people's daily problems.

The process of decentralisation makes the creation of new spaces for participation: local councils, neighbourhood associations and committee etc possible. In these spaces women can participate, although they often do so representing the needs of other people who depend on them (such as children, family members) but not their own.

With this horizon of decentralisation and local autonomy comes the very rational expectation of women's participation in the process, with three decisive pillars:

– The presence of women in the various areas of decision making and political power of local governments and in the spaces for representation and participation in municipalities.
– Inclusion of gender equality as a topic on the agenda in local politics
– The application of the gender perspective to general city policies.

As far as the first pillar is concerned and taking into account the data recently analysed, it is indubitable that positive action such as obligatory quotas have resulted in an increase in the percentage of local councillors where they have been applied, whether in Europe or Latin America.

The example set by Northern European countries show that it is necessary to have a critical mass of women in order to create new qualitative advances for change for women in this situation of being unable to attain high positions in hierarchical government, as much at national as at local level. This critical mass is also important to ensure a real incorporation of the equality agenda in the development of local policies.

The other important pillars quoted, the inclusion of gender equality topics on the politcal agenda and the application of the gender perspective to general politics are dealt with in detail in the interim document, presented at the Barcelona 2004 Seminar.[10]

In the section on tools to develop gender equality policies in the local arena of the above-mentioned document, different strategies are dealt with: from women's offices, via equality plans to units for gender analysis. In chapter four of that same publication the potential dangers noticed in each of these tools were also put forward, particularly those in the so-called plans for equality as policies specifically destined for women. Among these dangers were mentioned the use of these measures for political marketing without there being any real resolution behind them for change or budgeted resources or staff to develop them further. Another significant risk is that , managed with sufficient ambiguity these strategies contribute to the perpetuation, albeit hidden, of situations of inequality and domination between men and women.

4.1.1. INSTRUMENTS FOR DEVELOPING POLICIES ON GENDER EQUALITY IN THE LOCAL ARENA

In order to take up this subject, we will use an extract from chapter 4 of the mentioned interim document as it adequately summarises those instruments available to local politics.

• **General political instruments**

– National laws on women's rights and equality between women and men
– National laws that establish percentages or parity of men and women at national and local levels
– Programmes of positive action in municipal political parties
– Existence of women's organisations and associations

• **Administrative institutions: structures, mechanisms and resources**

– Delegation, council or office of Equality between women and men, equipped with human resources and adequate budgets, situated at the same hierarchic level as other municipal political fields and just as responsible for the development of policies aimed at equality as for the follow-up of mainstreaming in general policies.
– A set-up plan for equality policies with concise objectives, indicators and budget.
– Political willingness to integrate a gender focus in municipal politics with the appointment of people responsible for this in all councils or areas. Each person should outline objectives in terms of equality and ensure the design, set-up, follow-up and evaluation of these objectives. These people should also receive training in gender mainstreaming.
– Creation of a co-ordinating body for mainstreaming politics that could work in collaboration with the council, local authority or equality office.
– Access or creation of statistical data separated by gender for all municipal activities

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10 Programa URB-AL Red Nº 12. "Promoción de las mujeres en las instancias y decisiones locales", en *Hacia la plena ciudadanía de las mujeres. Documento etapa*. Diputación de Barcelona, marzo, 2004.

– Impact evaluation of policies, municipal programmes and services as a function of gender analysis.
– Training on the application of the gender focus in local management (offered to both staff and technicians). Awareness-raising among politicians.
– Programme for equality on contracting staff, with specific objectives for the various categories of staff.
– Information services at district, neighbourhood and community level.
– Code of practice for follow-up of requests, needs and roles of male and female citizens

• **Participating institutions**

– Women's councils, commissions and committees related to the municipal council with the mandate of making proposals and following-up on the fulfilment of male-female political equality
– Permanent collaborative committee for specific topics (security, transport, housing, conflict resolution, environment, *etc*) which bring together women's groups with community organisations or similar agents.
– Mechanisms for consultation and incentivation for female citizen participation.

All together these instruments are only a proposal, a possible guide. Every city, municipality or town hall has its own idiosyncrasies and priorities. These instruments should therefore be adapted to specific situations. The final aim is that all policies bear women in mind so that finally, the city responds to both men and women's needs.

• **Decentralisation, local democracy and women's participation in decision making.**

In recent years, an important number of congresses, seminars and all types of meetings which have emphasised the importance of the link between women's participation/egalitarian democracy and processes of decentralisation/democratisation. The conclusions of these projects confirm how right it is to invest efforts in this directions, despite the difficulties.

With the aim of providing an example, there are below extracts from some points of the Final Declaration of the Founding Congress of the Cities and Local Governments United Network (Paris, 5th May 2004)[11] and the Letter of Women's Rights to the City[12] presented in the World Women's Forum in Barcelona 2004, two important events which dealt with this topic.

4.1.2. CITIES AND UNITED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

• **Women and local decision making**

Statements

– The involvement of women in political life introduces new areas of debate to the public sphere (domestic violence, the balance between working and private life, *etc*) which were not before considered as political issues.
– The principle of equality is not enough to ensure women's participation is effective or guaranteed
– In local government women are under-represented
– Governing is only successful if women participate fully
– Women are not a social category. They represent half of humanity

Proposals

– Women should be associated to overall decision-making mechanisms and not only be consulted on gender issues
– Bridges should be established between elected representatives and the grass roots movement, particularly women's movements
– Women should not only work among women but they should affiliate themselves to political parties and change them from the inside
– It is necessary to develop exchange networks for women's practices in political life
– Local authorities should establish watchdog bodies to assess parity issues between men and women (for example, the Equality Observatory, Paris).

• **Letter of Women's Rights to the City**

Legal equality is not sufficient. Democracy does not exist without women and men's paritative participation in spheres of local representation and decision making.
In order to make it effective, we women make a call to action and state that the following is necessary:

– Affirmative legislation, quota laws that guarantee women's participation on local government in maximum decision-making spheres
– Formal acknowledgement of women's and feminist organisation as interlocutors of the city's local government

11 Ciudades y Gobiernos Locales Unidos. Declaración final del Congreso Fundador "Ciudades, gobiernos locales: el futuro del desarrollo". París, 5th May 2004. www.it4all-regions.org/documents
12 FÓRUM. *Carta por el derecho de las mujeres a la ciudad*. Barcelona, 2004. www.barcelona2004.org/esp/banco_del_conocimiento/docs/

- Institutionalisation in local government structures, areas for women to make their own agenda, that guarantees gender mainstreaming in areas of municipal business and public policy, programmes and government plans
- The development of actions that guarantee conditions for effective female participation in decisions about the city, the environment and local development
- The implementation of public policies that help in the transformation of the division of labour in private life and to modify the dichotomy between public and private activities and the cultural changes necessary
- The creation of participatory proposals, sensitive to gender, which guarantee women's participation and that of their organisations in the definition of priorities in the allocation of public spending and investment
- The incorporation to official statistics of surveys showing how time is spent in order to make women's economic contribution visible

4.1.3. WHAT ASPECTS REMAIN OPEN WITH REGARDS TO EGALITARIAN DEMOCRACY

As has been said previously, it is obvious that important advances have taken place in the field of egalitarian democracy, in particular a consensus on many points; a consensus which will continue to push forward, not without the need for pressure, the reality of this pathway. However, there are many important aspects that remain open which should become the object of work on the next few years as there remains a lot to be done. Below are some of these aspects:

- Promote basic accords in all political parties that include, at least, the following aspects:

  - Inclusion in the electoral committee or in the selection of candidates at least one woman to defend parity issues.
  - Guarantee an equal number of male and female candidates on electoral lists where they have the possibility to be elected.
  - Support the presence of women candidates for their political skills independently of their link to party leaders
  - Equally support male and female candidacy campaigns
  - Once elected to positions in local government, ensure that women are equally present in fields relevant to the Municipality.
  - Commit oneself, and other parties to support measures that foster the presence of female candidates on electoral lists: legal measures to guarantee their return to the same position of work when the elections are over, obligatory leave to participate in campaigns, *etc*.

- Develop systems of municipal consultation so that women's representative organisations are heard on important issues with reference to the city:

- Strategic plans and organisation of territory
- Project to organise social services
- Immigration committees
- Housing committees
- Investment proposals
- Safety committees
- Transport committees
- Environmental plans
- Pacification committees and in general conflict mediation and post-conflict reconstruction committees

All of the important issues on city planning and the distribution of resources, which form part of a woman's life, should be the object of institutionalised consultancy. There are some very positive experiences of this as consulting not only helps to improve plans and make them closer to meeting citizen's needs, but it is also becoming an excellent instrument for women's democratic participation and training.

- **Methodological and active consolidation of the gender mainstreaming focus of local policies**

The gender mainstreaming focus of all local policies does not have a long tradition and it is more of an aspiration than a reality in most municipalities.

The difficulties in mainstreaming gender policies are many: on one hand, there is a tendency towards a lack of co-ordination and protagonism on the part the many managers of each area who, although claim to have the same common objectives as the rest of the corporation or local council, in fact prioritise the individual actions of their department and image profitability in the short term. A body that believes itself to be responsible for the co-ordination of mainstreaming can be of great help.

In second place, many municipalities still lack an equality body or office with the resources and experiences to promote equal opportunities programmes and that can, at the same time, work as an engine for mainstreaming action.

Finally, there is, in the majority of municipalities, scarce experience of mainstreaming work on gender policies, and for this reason it is necessary to collect and analyse the lessons learned in successful experiences and to try and systematise an effective methodology for mainstream working which is far from having been achieved. In this sense, it is important to make a serious effort in planning methodology, follow-up and evaluation of these policies.

- **Implementation of political training programmes for women**

Although this is considered a priority aim in any egalitarian democracy, there remains a lot to be done. In order to achieve it the following is fundamental:

- Direct sufficient funds towards training programmes in women leadership, in political parties, in organisations for equality and private institutions, *etc.*
- Define the key contents in leadership, communication, negotiation, human management, knowledge of specific policies and methods of political action, *etc.*
- Create traditional and multimedia didactic material
- Use the new technologies of information and communication to facilitate access to training for women who otherwise would not have this opportunity

- **Raise awareness of the values implied by egalitarian democracy**

This should be a permanent concern because the laws that acknowledge equality (but not discrimination) in the access to citizenship help but do not put an end to stereotypes and prejudices.

The educational system and the media have to accept responsibility in the promotion of values such as:

- Equality of social and political rights for everybody
- Full acceptance of women in public affairs and in community decision making
- Importance of learning about participation from girlhood in the management of centres and education centres, cultural events and didactic programmes, *etc.*
- Respect for different family organisations and the new roles that each member carries out
- Knowledge of the value women bring to the community's well-being
- Support of the political image of women who wish to attain political responsibilities
- The diffusion of biographies of those women who have stood out in economical, political or cultural spheres, *etc.*

4.2. THE INCORPORATION OF MIGRANT OR DISPLACED WOMEN INTO THE CITY'S DECISION MAKING AND WELL-BEING

Migrant and displaced women are two human groups that have particular problems with participation and inclusion in a city's decisions and in the enjoyment of a common well-being. Furthermore, the are an increasingly numerous group which makes it necessary to give them special attention from the network's point of view.

The groups of displaced women, in situations of particular vulnerability and risk are to be found in countries in conflict or neighbouring conflict. Their particular treatment would need a separate study and has been widely looked at by organisations such as the UN, ACNUR, UNIFEM, UNICEF and the WHO.

The topic of migrant women is part of a massive current and the increase in emigration from the south to the north and from the country to the city. In this document we will concentrate on this group of women given their enormous importance in the flow of emigration between Latin America and Europe.

Taking on the incorporation of this group in decision making and the well-being of cities is a challenge that can no longer be put off.

- **International and urban migration in the 20th Century**

The State of Cairo's Population Report 2004 demonstrated how migration within a country and between countries has increased in the last ten years. The displacement can be found on all five continents and has meant intensification of migratory flows towards cities in all countries. According to the United Nations Division for Population, in the year 2000 there were 175 million international migrants worldwide. Nearly 50% were women and 10,000,400 were refugees. In 1960, this figure barely reached 79 million.

It is foreseen that in the year 2007, and for the first time in the history of humanity, over half of the world's inhabitants will be living in cities as a result of the continuos displacement leading to the growth of urban zones in developing countries over the last decade.

The progressive globalisation of the economy offers employment opportunities and favours unprecedented migratory flows. We are able to observe the existence of a growing number of women with plans to migrate and at the same time the number of people being displaced by natural disasters, armed conflict, social disturbances or economic or political crises is also increasing.

International migratory movements have important economic, socio-cultural and demographic effects on the zones of origin, transit and destination.

If to migrate is a personal fact, the fact of migration is a social act. It is people and families who undertake the journey, but the decisions are made and mature in a wider context.

Antonio Izquierdo, 2000

Emigration should not be considered solely as an individual project but as part of a wider social and global phenomena whose consequences will economically, socially and culturally impact the whole world.

- **Gender perspective and immigration at international conferences**

Migrant and displaced women are institutionally invisible social collectives, more often than not defined by their triple discriminated condition as they are women, immigrants and illegal.

This triple discrimination becomes triple violence in countries where there is a conflict situation.

"Women suffer, or are exposed to tripled violence: that arising from Plan Colombia, economic insecurity and interfamilial violence".[13]

In every convention and every action plan of the last decade migration has been discussed, the situation of vulnerability of women who migrate or who are displaced has been emphasised as has the need to integrate the gender perspective in all migratory policies and programmes.

In the Action Programme of the Durban Conference in the Worldwide Conference against Racism and Xenophobia (Durban, South Africa 2001), the States were told: " In view of the increasing proportion of migrant women, it is necessary to pay special attention to gender issues, particularly sexual discrimination and the many obstacles which women immigrants come up against."

It was insisted on that in reports and treaties that the economic contribution made by immigrant women both to the country of origin and arrival be included.

In the Beijing Platform for Actions the situation of the migrant woman was analysed and the States were called upon to acknowledge their vulnerability in the face of violence and other mistreatment. It was demanded of the governments that they, " (…..) establish culturally accessible linguistic services for women and girl migrants, including working immigrants who are victims of their gender."

The UN Human Rights Commission has put forward the need to arbitrate mechanisms for protection, while reminding the States to pay attention to illegal immigrants, particularly the least protected collectives such as women, boys and girls.

In the last few years the European Parliament has been breaking away from the tendency to neutralise gender in immigration policies. Several reports from this organisation have mentioned the particular situation of immigrant women.

In the European Council of Lisbon, which took place in March 2000, it was proposed that one of the aims of the Lisbon agenda should be the increase of the employment rate among infra-represented groups in the labour market. The objectives included an increase in the employment rate of adult women and a serious reduction, by 2010, of the employment differences for disadvantaged people, such as those with a handicap, ethnic and religious minorities and migrants.

The Green Book *Equality and not Discrimination in the European Union*, published in 2004 confirms that European policies have maximised projects with the aim of fighting discrimination.

However, despite the efforts made by certain international forums to visualise the particular situation of the immigrant woman, little progress has been made. The work carried out in national and international forums for the achievement of equality between men and women does not always take into account the special situation of the migrant woman with regard to social policies, equal treatment at work or equal earnings or treatment by social security.[14]

The creation of equality strategies and policies for migrant women in cities should necessarily be dealt with from the gender perspective. This analysis will be essential for the struggle not only against discrimination but will also be a key factor in the definition of intercultural citizenship where women carry out the basic roles for mediation, socialisation and integration. The visibility of women's migratory situation has to be carried out taking into account the various variables which are important for understanding the complexity of their cultural, economic and relationship reality, as well as be able to develop management programmes based on respect for diversity that adapts to their real needs.

The same can be said with regards to the visibility of situation of refugee women. As recommended by ACNUR, it is absolutely necessary that the information is separated by sex and include other variables such as age, ethnic group, number of children, so that is it possible to obtain a more complete profile of the female refugee population.[15]

• Causes of women's emigration

To talk about selection processes in women's migration, processes focused on the gender perspective, leads us to consider to what extent discrimination and inequality in the patriarchal societies of origin have influenced a woman's personal choice to migrate. The mere capacity to undertake the journey can be an indicator of a privileged social status. It is known that people who emigrate are healthy and can take on the high personal and economic costs of the migratory process. In women's cases, one would also have to add the moral costs that arise from this migratory project away from family pressures and strategies.

The reasons for this decision to emigrate differ greatly. There are multiple variables, biography, family, politics and life projects all come together at the time of making so important a decision. Reading material on women's motives for emigrating

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13 Ventura Xiomara. "Mujeres en riesgo frente al Plan Colombia Cap. II. CONAMU, Quito, 2000. Quoted by: CAMACHO, GLORIA . "Mujeres al borde: refugiadas colombianas en Ecuador". UNIFEM, Quito, 2005.

14 Helma Lutz. "Inmigración y racismo en la Unión Europea", en *Globalización y género*. Editora Paloma de Villota. Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 1999.

15 ACNUR. *Guía para la protección de mujeres refugiadas*. Ginebra, 1991.

should take into account the cultural and social context of the country they leave behind. However, we can confirm that the country of arrival plays a specific role in the way it gives expectations of employment, even though this employment is, in the beginning, illegal and in ill-defined sectors such as domestic or service work or sexual exploitation.

Behind the even distribution in terms of gender of migrants there lie several significant differences. The causes that lead some women to immigrate from one continent to another basically have to do with cultural and social reasons but also with the type of job offers and the contingent policies of governments and the preference of some employers for a specific collective. It is necessary here to speak about the acceptance factors of the population and the criteria in the selection of specific immigrants as imposed by a government.

In any case, emigration represents, as affirmed by Aicha Belarbu when speaking about the Moroccan woman, a symbol of social triumph.

Taking into account that the woman is the axle of family stability, her decision to emigrate, often encouraged by her family will have repercussions on following generations who are born in the new country and who, in many cases will identify themselves with the expectations and aspirations of their progenitors in the attempt to occupy a better position in the new social context.

In the first instance one has to talk about immigration as a channel of survival for the family that remains in the country of origin. Frequently the money that immigrant women send home will be the main source of income for an extensive family.

With regard to single women who are determined to abandon their country, it must be pointed out that their motivation for leaving is to improve their personal life which could be compatible with helping the family economically. For many young women with a medium or high level education, the opportunity to emigrate means breaking away from the space traditionally given to them in their country, sometimes escaping from arranged marriages, and taking control in designing their own itinerary in the new society.

Within this collective, and despite the fact that family grouping continues to be an important factor in feminine migration, we can increasingly observe women who undertake a personal migratory project.

Lastly, we should mention the young people who arrive in cities through family grouping processes. In this case, they haven't chosen to emigrate. This drastic change in their lives, particularly as adolescents, the rupture from their social surroundings and in many cases emotional surroundings as they adapt to the new society means they often build up a new identity.

• Specificity of the immigrant women

Migrant women are an enormously heterogeneous group, conditioned by many different variable among which are: academic,

social cultural and ethnic surroundings. In the analysis of their situation and in the design of policies and programmes for cities, the following should be taken into account:

– Origin or country of departure
– Arrival destination
– Legal situation
– The reasons for migration
– The situation these women occupy in the labour market

Lastly, a migrant women's reality will be determined by family relationships and links with the migrant community and culture of origin.

The three conditions that can turn them into an extremely vulnerable social group, if the conditions coincide, is that of being female, immigrants and without legal documents in the country of arrival.

For vulnerability we understand the lack of protection which faces immigrant women in the face of potential risks to their health of or the threat of not being able to satisfy their basic needs and the threat to their human rights given their reduced economic, social and legal resources.

Other variables that affect their situation of vulnerability are insecurity of their personal situation, the reproduction of conditions of discrimination as a role allocated to them being both women and immigrants, the lack of legal assistance, cultural barriers and lack of information on the institutions of the country of arrival, not to mention the lack of means for social and citizen participation.

• Characteristics that define the immigrant woman's situation

– *Situations of multiple discrimination*
The vulnerability of an immigrant woman is determined by her social role, supported in by the dual logic of two different societies (that of precedence and that of arrival). It falls to those women who emigrate, rather than those who remain to economically support and care for the family. Woman's economic responsibility for family survival is one of the determining factors for international immigration.
To the double working days, other functions have to be added that make up the migration process such as the maintaining of family networks and cultural mediation with the new society. The immigrant women is the family who has to maintain " (…) the continuity and the behaviour of the group within the norms and traditional values of the culture of origin. (..) On the other hand, women are also the ones responsible for establishing relationships and networks with the institutions and people of the new country, whether it be the formulation of strategies directed towards irreversibility, with the aim of guaranteeing a long-term place for future generations, particularly daughters,

and the opportunity for taking root in the country of arrival".[16]
More often than not it is they who seek social services, who go to education and health centres despite the cultural or linguistic barriers and they are the who respond most easily to intercultural mediation programmes developed by some local administrations, NGOs or associations that work with immigrants.

These women's children play an fundamental role in incorporating their mothers into social life, language learning, different intercultural activities at school are often an open door between native and immigrant mothers.

The "invisible" work carried out by the immigrant mother as the person responsible for the family project are untied with other factors of discrimination such as increasing racism and classism caused by the unequal social and legal conditions in which they are obliged to live.

— *Insecurity and legal defencelessness*

The situation of illegal and unstable employment and residence produce a constant feeling of tension. For women, subordination to their civil status in cases where migration originated through marriage or family grouping, the lack of legal advice and the little interest shown by administrations in matters where they have difficulty exacerbate their unstable and invisible situations that consequently locate them in zones of marginalisation and exclusion.

The invisibility to which thousands of people are condemned to is especially cruel in immigrant women, who become a sector extremely vulnerable to labour and sexual exploitation and mistreatment.

— *Situation in the labour market*

The migration trend from southern countries to the north is marked by a significant number of women who immigrate for employment of family grouping motives. Countries who receive immigration recruit women from developing countries for sectors that they consider to be "ethnified" such as the services sector, domestic work, domestic help (with children, the ill and the elderly) or prostitution.

A large percentage of illegal immigrant women do domestic work. And the fact is that that female migration is slowing down because of the new gender relationships in the country of destination. Women from the north who have jobs outside of the home find they have a double working day which is difficult to keep up. The increasingly elderly population, the retraction or absence of social policies and the slow process of making people aware of the importance of men not doing their

share are some factors that have caused the huge demand for female foreign workers. As a consequence, behind a woman who goes out to work, there is another one doing her domestic chores. This phenomena is known in North America as "the governess' door". Immigrant women take the place left by native working women substituting the lack of care facilities.

Because they often work illegally, they are exclusively dependent on their employers. The job precarity and the impossibility of accessing employment contracts frequently obliges them to accept extensive working days. Only a few employers pay their social security contributions which means that many women are heavily dependent on the compassion and willingness of their employers.

Legal deficiencies, based on a masculine perception of migration or simply lack of knowledge on the real circumstances linked to feminine emigration in many cases leads to it being almost impossible for immigrant women to obtain residency permits. This confines them to illegal conditions, making them more vulnerable to harassment or violence because of fear of being expelled from the country, they never report these situations.

The trend for countries to acknowledge the right to family grouping is in itself a paradigm of the harming of the woman immigrant's right. For example, in some countries, they are given a residency permit if they are the wife of a legal immigrant. This residency permit does not automatically include a work permit and renovation of the residency permit depends on the wife being legally bound to the husband.

In the case of the creation of small businesses, one should also underline the role of the woman in the family economy. The traditional role as the wife of a freelance worker is that of supporting the husband with the business. In many instances it is she who works ion the business without earning any salary as her contribution is automatically considered to be for the family economy. No salary, no social security, so no right to unemployment benefit. Obviously, as in the previous case, her stay in the destination country is in the hands of the head of the family, traditionally a male member of the family.

If to this situation we add the inexsistence of financial help for childcare then we can appreciate that leave from work is means, yet again, her dependence of a legally recognised partner and the loss of her social benefits.

— *Education system*

The Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, put forward the importance of education in achieving equality between men and women. In the case of women and girls in immi-

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16 Alberto Tarozzi. "Globalización, migraciones y redes sociales, las mujeres como intermediarias culturales", en *Globalización y género*. Editora Paloma de Villota, Editorial Síntesis, Madrid, 1999.

grant origin, the importance of education is multiplied because it constitutes a valuable element for personal development and active participation in the new society.

The relationship between the adult immigrant woman and the education system can be seen as channelled in several ways.

a. As a student on adult education programmes or professional training qualifications

In countries that receive a lot of immigration the adult education system is transforming with the aim of meeting the needs of the growing collective of immigrant women not only with regard to language learning but the obtaining of qualifications to help them access employment opportunities. However, the importance of adult education lies also in its academic value, in it capacity to establish connections and communication with a group, which no doubt facilitates the relationship with the new country.

Training, in these situations represents and important space for development and personal independence.

b. Immigrant women carry and important cultural baggage which enriches living together from the point of view of diversity and Human Rights.

Numerous immigrant women's association work towards preserving the traditions and cultural feature of the society of origin. Empowerment via recognition and dialogue of the society of origin with the new society is important and establishes a base form which to fight against intolerance and racism.

c. Educational institutions basically relate to immigrant women in charge of following up their child's schooling

This is positive for them but the use of educational services become complicated when the family is not legally registered. What is more, not knowing the language or the school and administrative structures puts up a wall of misinformation which prevents full participation of these women in the school dynamic.

– *Health*
All studies indicate that in more than four out of five cases women take the active role in the area of health within the family and the care of people dependent on them.

Independently of their level of education women spend more hours per week on the care of children, the elderly and the ill. In the case of immigrant women, attention to health has new obstacles, not to mention difficulties in accesses public healthcare. Access to health is proportionally related to employment, housing and residential stability, and once it is attained they can find a realm of symbolic barriers in the doctor-patient relationship.

Certain particularities distinguish immigrants, such as language and religious and cultural practices and these can impede links to healthcare. It is necessary to bear in mind cultural backgrounds when planning health programmes in order to avoid rejection of the system by immigrant women, as well as incorporating positive healthcare practices from their minorities. Particular mention should be made of gynaecological health, family planning, vaccination and nutrition.

– *Difficulties arising from not knowing the language*
Language is a vehicle and a link. The word is power. In the double discrimination against women immigrants, not knowing the language is a fundamental obstacle to future integration.
On the other hand, the mechanism by which educational activities are developed means they do not always reach some women whose isolation, obligations or cultural impediments provide no small obstacle for their attending training centre of whose very existence they are often unaware.

– *Situations of mourning and emotional rupture from the culture of origin.*
The woman who emigrates has to re-establish the links she left behind which are in fact her emotional and affective references as well as the markers of her personality. She will also have to undertake a new path and start a new life for herself. Creating new contacts with people in the new country. This "mourning" process requires a certain time to overcome pain and to take on board the new circumstances, although it is an entirely natural process: we are leaving behind the experiences we have lived which will help us live new ones.
This process is also to be found, and perhaps more markedly , in the case of displaced women. The Regional Foundation for Assessment on Human Rights (RFAHR) says of Colombian women displaced to Ecuador (quoted by Camacho, Gloria, 2005): "The first matter is economic and the security of providing food and the second element is that of affection and the daily relationship with other people". From the female migration perspective, the hope of more equal conditions in the new country, despite hard employment conditions largely helps towards living through this mourning. The motives for female migration are not exclusively based on the complementation of male emigration; an increasing number of women start their own migration project with the aim of achieving more independence and escaping rules that they are submitted to in their countries of origin, such as arranged marriages, gender-based violence or moral or religious rules that inhibit her in her life plan.

• **Local policies to guarantee the rights of immigrant women**

– *Women's participation in associative fabric of cities*
The presence of women should mean a reconsideration of the

parameters of action in the promotion and development of full participation:

— *Creation of a culture of co-responsibility*
  - Immigrant women are facilitators of integration. Their proximity to and knowledge of urban infrastructures makes them valuable mediators making it possible to bring associations and institutions closer together.
  - Promotion of associations for immigrant women on their own and general terms to open doors to participation and knowledge of their cultural ideas in order to benefit harmonious living in cities and neighbourhoods.
  - Maximisation of representation by immigrant women's associations where a municipality grants them statutory rights as women and immigrants.

— *The fight against racism, xenophobia and stereotypes*
  It is not possible to talk of one group of women in general and in the case of immigrant women it is necessary to look for diversity and away from stereotypes. Being an immigrant woman does not mean that one is bound to traditional practices, mislabelled as cultural practices. The migratory stories of these women are linked to their personal or family plans.
  Municipal institutions can and should act to eradicate these prejudices from society, through specific measures such as:

  - Establishing ethical codes of conduct and promoting the training of media professionals to raise awareness of the multicultural reality.
  - Creating mechanisms of control in debates in the media so that they incorporate the gender perspective, and multiculturalism as a living reality in cities.
  - Promoting citizen awareness campaigns which emphasise the benefits of immigration and that re-evaluate the role of women immigrants and their participation in the building and stabilising of the urban population's well-being.
  - To promote positive models and representation of immigrant women in the various political spheres of the city.
  - To carry out awareness-raising and informative campaign directed at intercultural acceptance where a pluralistic vision, not native vision of culture is propagated.
  - To avoid utilitarian debates and potentiate the presence of immigrant women in non ethnified and not traditionally female employment spheres.

— *Administrative measures: local registration*
  Local registration is one of the first personal options immigrants have in the new society. Being registered allows one to establish the bases for future links, stability and roots in the city. In many countries registration is a resource to through which to access residency and work and the local services, but it is also the first step in achieving full political participation. Registration should be the beginning of a process of communication and participation between municipal services and immigrant women.

— *Rights to housing*
  Among the fundamental rights and respect for human dignity is the right to adequate housing.
  On the part of municipal entities, we understand that the lines of action are:

  - To guarantee and ensure access to housing
  - To rehabilitate the more deteriorated urban areas and to guarantee infrastructures that optimise the balance between the working and family life of immigrant women.

— *The right to work and social security*
  The right to work and social security is a right for immigrant people as a whole. However, due to its particular characteristics, female immigration needs measures for legal protection that guarantee the autonomy of these women whatever their family status or marital status:
  - The development of research and periodic reports on immigrant women's situations in employment spheres
  - The creation of information bureaux and mediation that direct women immigrants in their search for employment, that inform them of their rights and assess them in administrative tasks and develop mediation roles between employing entities and the employees.
  - The consecution of full employment rights for immigrant women: contractual and salary guarantees, rights to subsidies, to unemployment benefit, access to pension systems and social security.
  - The development of orientations and training programmes directed at immigrant women in situations of social risk.
  - The promotion of continuing education for immigrant women with the company
  - The improvement of the social services system, particularly those aimed at infancy and those younger than 6 years of age, the elderly and in general home help services and help for peaceful co-habitation.
  - Support for the creation of co-operatives, small businesses and employment activities directed at participation and integration of the immigrant woman's culture: food products, craft, hairdressing, *etc.*

— *The right to health*
  Among a person's fundamental rights is healthcare assistance. In the case of immigrant women, the city can become a source of risk, Due to isolation, abandonment and loneliness she is more likely to suffer from problems and risk situations.

The guarantee of the right to health of the immigrant woman should include:
- Guaranteeing access to the healthcare system whether they have their papers in order or not
- The promotion of policies of information especially directed at immigrant women to whom the working of the health systems are unknown (nutrition, children's vaccination, family planning and gynaecology)
- Identification within the health cultures of different countries those practices that are the same as native practices and can therefore be used and propose alternatives where there is a conflict of personal or religious convictions
- Support programmes for health education and training
- Promote the training and understanding of behaviour patterns in a multicultural setting for healthcare professionals
- Adapt specific health services for women to incorporate mediators for different cultures
- Support programmes for mental health directed at immigrant women in situations of risk or exclusion
- Co-ordinate and promote health training programmes aimed towards improving the overall attentions to mistreated or women who have been raped bearing in mind their psychophysical conditions

— *Right to social health assistance*
The lack of protection experienced by many women immigrants makes them particularly vulnerable to exploitation. It is the responsibility of the municipalities to react in the various fields and to promote actions such as:

- Provision of interventionist resources and programmes for women with family responsibilities and those with social needs: those who have been mistreated, single mothers, adolescent mothers, *etc.*
- Support of social services so that they increase the output of information benefits and resources available for elderly women
- Promotion of programmes with the aims of facilitating the social integration of women affected by marginalisation processes.
- Carry out educational programmes aimed at women at high risk: adolescent mothers, prostitutes, elderly women, drug addicts, AIDS, high-risk or unwanted pregnancies
- Create programmes directed at mistreated or sexually abused women

— *Right to education*
- Policies for raising awareness among the native population in order to promote harmony in municipal education centres
- Development of information campaign, leaflets in different languages, support for cultural mediators, orientation talks directed at immigrant families with the aim of making the education system and parent associations familiar to them
- Inclusion of co-educational and cultural programmes in the curriculum where equality between men and women is dealt with from an intercultural perspective
- Maximisation of immigrant women's participation in representative organisation and participation in school life
- Creation of a grant system and help for food and other school helps in order to guarantee equal opportunities between immigrant and native pupils
- Development of welcome and information programmes for immigrant students throughout the school year
- Promotion of literacy programmes and permanent professional training of immigrant women with the aim of facilitating their full participation in society
- Development programmes with professional orientation for immigrant girls in order to maximise their choice in non-sexist education and adapted to their capabilities.

• **The remaining problem of incorporating women with added difficulty in accessing social benefits (displaced, migrant and other groups of women)**

The mere fact of promoting women to positions of decision does not guarantee an improvement in politics or a city's well-being. It is obvious that women are not a homogenous human group but that each one participates in the problems and interest of the social, economic or cultural group to which they belong. To this extent it would be a mistake to think that there are some inherent values that can be brought to politics by the fact of being a woman, such as peace, tolerance , respect for ideas and beliefs social equality and respect for the environment. In politics women, just like men, tend to represent the ideas and values of their class and context although they may be more sensitive to certain areas of historical discrimination that they might have experienced independently of their origin or education.

Fortunately, the last few decade have produced an important advance in the incorporation of women into politics. This is true of women of a good economic level, highly educated and middle class with a good relationship with the political class. But if we leave it there one cannot really talk about a substantial change, In the end, politics would remain a matter for the well off, well educated and well connected, only slightly different from the scene of the patriarchal era: male, educated and owner. The impact of such politics on a city would be minimal.

The main challenge at the moment in achieving full citizenship is the empowerment of those women with further difficulties, made up by different groups, heterogeneous and that make up a high percentage of the population: housewives economically dependent on men, mistreated women, widows and heads of hou-

seholds who face the problems brought by poverty, such as migrant or displaced women.

The problems of political, economical and social marginalisation suffered by minorities in the city is doubly felt by women, because of origin and gender. The incorporation of these groups of women into political life and well-being is indispensable in order to change cities.

- Migrant and displaced women not fully integrated into the new community are a potential reserve of poverty and social marginalisation. They are a hotbed for resentment and especially vulnerable to exploitation and violence.
- Economically dependent women, particularly if they are responsible for other people make up the main blanket of poverty.
- Mistreated women, used to living in fear will not be able to enjoy the public sphere or reconcile their lives easily with politics

There are many programmes, and indeed ideas, meant to incorporate these women into the city's life and opportunities which makes it unnecessary here to offer solutions.

But it is necessary to insist on the values of full citizenship because without them there would be no real integration of these groups of women. The values on which all of these integration programmes should be grounded should be:

- Defence of women's human rights in the new country, including against the customs of the country of origin if these contravene their rights
- Zero tolerance of the violation of these rights as a principle for acceptance on the new society
- Respect for the ways of life and cultural values of the country of origin where they do not go against women's rights
- To offer opportunities to migrant and displaced women to contribute their knowledge and wisdom learnt in the country of origin
- To develop new ways of participation in city matters, in accordance with the idiosyncrasies of immigrant and displaced women
- To respect their ways of organisation and listen to their representative in important city matter
- Create a culture of understanding by visualising the needs and specific aspirations of people who live in the neighbourhood and supporting specific solutions by the local council
- To adopt a compassionate and committed view on specific problems because all is not well with the city if some citizens are suffering.
- To recognise the contribution these women make to the community whilst ensuring they are looked after and their future is secure.

4.3. WHAT CITIES HABITABLE BY WOMEN AND MEN SHOULD BE LIKE

This is another open topic which has been the object of many studies and debates. In this document we will limit ourselves to those aspects and conditions of the city that specifically affect women. We will attempt to answer the question of what should cities tailored to women should be like, made by the Women and Cities Programme of the Montreal City Government.[17]

- **Cities have an unsustainable growth rate with women being the main victims**

According to the United Nations study *World Urbanisation Project: The 2001 Revision* nearly a half of the world's population (47%) lived in cities in 2002 and nearly all of the population growth from 2000 to 2030 will be absorbed by urban regions in less developed countries. In these countries it is expected that the population will grow at an annual rate of 2,4% in urban areas and at a level twice below that, 0.2% in rural areas. Given that the population is increasing at an exponential rate, if this estimated level of growth is maintained in 2030 the population of cities in less developed countries will have doubled, an increase of 200%.

- **Conurbations in developing countries**

In many of these countries the cities have grown and invaded the rural zones around them, following an urban model based on a low ground population with high percentage of urbanised terrain due to the need for increasing the traffic access around the city to link the various areas of the city. This is how conurbations are created in developed countries and they produce a significant environmental impact on the territory they are built.

This dispersed city model creates a series of problems specific to women which, in general, are outlined below:

— Decentralisation of economic activities traditionally located in city centre. In this way, there is a considerable increase in the number of displacements within the metropolitan area and the small business: small and medium-sized business are negatively affected by this situation which favours large hypermarkets and companies. Against this, workers have to spend more time and money in getting to their place of work. For women, this increase in time spent travelling as many do not have private means of transport seriously complicates their chance of reconciling work and family life.
— The increase in neighbourhoods designed for one purpose which are often a consequence of zonification. As a result of

this, there are a large number of unsafe areas within the town, which increases dependence on transport, in many cases a private vehicle. These unsafe places and increased dependence on often very limited public transport, limits women's mobility and their being able to make the most of the city.

— Disappearance of the street as a place to meet and interact as it becomes an unsafe place where the previously a natural type of social vigilance has disappeared with the reduction in pedestrians.

— Increase in the need to displace oneself across the town as a consequence of the new urban setting, accompanied by large investment in traffic infrastructure and an increase in private transport. The majority of the female population doesn't have the benefit of this type of transport which, however, occupies the larger part or roads destined for "surface transport". This strongly conditions the liveability of a town and increases the percentage of population density.

— Deterioration of the environment. All of the factors mentioned up until now are strongly linked and they all influence the environmental deterioration experienced in cities. The principle victims of this are also women as they traditionally are responsible for the health of family members and facing the health problems caused by an unhealthy environment.

The problems outlined are experienced differently by men and women. Women, in their condition of being lesser paid, mothers, with responsibility for the care of ill people, with a double working day or housewives, with more limited means of transport and with greater risk in unsafe places, are the most affected.

To these factors already mentioned, which affect the majority of the population, and especially women, we must add other factors, which affect only women:

— Women's limited participation in urban planning as either professionals or citizens. The fact is a direct consequence of gender discrimination as urban decisions and their enormous financial repercussions, like many other important decisions about the city are considered men's work.

— Women have never been the subject for who cities have been considered. In the minds of urbanists, there has always been the ideal of the traditional family where the women looks after the house and the children while the man leaves the home to do paid work.

● **Big cities in developing countries**

In developing countries, many of the city's have grown enormously in recent decades as was seen at the beginning of European and North American industrialisation.

This megalopolis growth has produced a very disadvantageous situations for women:

— Centralisation and growth of the cities economic activities. The has produced an excessively rapid population growth, mainly due to rural migration.

— Dismal urban policies, unequal access to wealth and discrimination against women. The United Nations Programme for Development has established the improvement of access by women to basic services and government as a priority object to development and improvement of condition in a city. However, in the majority of lesser developed countries, the presence of women in technical or political position is scarce. What is more, the majority of women live in poverty and have little presence in public life which drastically reduces their right to citizenship. As if this weren't enough, and to close the circle of inequality, there are still countries where women have no legal right to purchase a property and those resources necessary for production.

— The appearance of unplanned settlements and the lack of urban planning. In many cities, a large part of the population doesn't have access to basic sanitary services (drinking water, drainage systems and waste management): this produces health problems among this population. Furthermore, poverty and the fact that basic needs aren't met produces delinquency in marginalised zones. Once again, women are the main victims of this situation: they are responsible for providing drinkable water, of getting rid of waste and are easy targets for delinquents.

— The lack of housing and increase in number of homeless people or with homes that cannot be considered habitable.

— Highly dense population, water and air pollution and food contamination. Women are yet again those who have to struggle for their health and that of those around them.

  - As if the above weren't enough, droughts, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters are always affect the poor to a much greater extent: the poor mainly being women and children.

— The lack of mobility within metropolitan areas, cause by limited public transport and an increase in private vehicles as well as deficient roads for urban connections. For those who don't have private transport, mainly women, life beyond the neighbourhood is closed.

● **Reasons for women's participation in urban planning**

In general, the population's participation in urban development creates a sense of ownership and responsibility for a shared area, an increased interest in local issues and a sense of community which favours positive change within the cities. In this way the inhabitants of cities stop being passive subjects who observe how their surroundings change and become active citizens.

In women's case there are specific reasons for recommending their participation in city planning:

- Women represent 70% of the world's population living in poverty and are also responsible for the care of close family: children, the infirm and the elderly.
- Furthermore, women are experts in detecting situations and places that could be dangerous as from girlhood they learn to protect themselves from attacks in the street. At the same time, interfamilial and gender violence of which women are the main objects, has made them particularly sensitive to protection, support and prevention services which a city could offer them.
- Women's lives tend to be lead in their neighbourhood. In deprived urban areas, the deterioration of the immediate surroundings seriously affects women and the family members who depend on them: children, the infirm and the elderly. For this reason women have a close relationship with their surroundings and are more sensitive to environmental issues.
- Experiences of integration from a women's perspective of town planning promotes values such as sustainability, solidarity and creativity in city organisation.

  According to a study by the Norwegian Environment Ministry carried out between 1989 and 1992, the women's main values for local planning were:

  - A global vision of the problems, in which reality was understood as something different from the sum of all the components
  - A greater concern for day-to-day issues
  - A humanitarian outlook with greater concern for those with less resources
  - Greater sensitivity towards environmental protection and ecology
  - Carrying out the functions of planning with creativity and contributing new ideas.

- **Regaining the street and the neighbourhood as spaces for living together**

As has already been mentioned, life for women tends to take place in the local neighbourhood and at home. This is made obligatory because of having to care for children and other people in their care, and because of the need to do the shopping and the other domestic tasks left to working women.

In neighbourhoods with a high car presence, the elderly and children lose their independence and this exacerbates the situation of the women who have to care for them. The fact that children have to be accompanied to school, that they can't play in the street and that they have to remain at home until they have reached a certain age produced too much responsibility and the obliged reclusion of their mothers.

To all this has to be added the lack of local services such as playschools, day centres for the elderly, safe spaces for walking and playing, cultural and leisure centres for young people and sporting facilities, etc.

Planners usually put forward several measure for regaining the street and the neighbourhood as a place for interaction, which would greatly benefit women:
- Making the street pedestrian friendly. As explained in the Letter of Sustainability in European Cities, it is necessary to favour activities close-by to reduce forced mobility and to stop promoting the unnecessary use of motorised vehicles, giving preference instead to walking or cycling for short journeys or public transport for longer distances.
- Getting rid of the arqutechtonic barriers and promoting access to housing, facilities and health services, schools and leisure and sporting facilities. This measure facilitates not only social integration and communal living for disabled people, but also the quality of life for those who look after them, generally women.
- Building suitable and accessible housing for one-parent families, single women, students or displaced workers. The new family models should be taken into account in private building projects and should be promoted in public or subsidised housing.
- To equip neighbourhoods with accessible and public local services which would allow women to balance their working and domestic lives.
- To promote neighbourhood life and a culture of neighbourhood, local associations and citizen participation to create a sense of common good and respect for the surroundings.
- To promote small businesses as an added value to the neighbourhood as it is essential to create a social ownership of the streets and reduces journeys to other areas of the city.

- **Safe and accessible transport**

Since the 1970s, the generalised idea, which according to statistics is false, has been that the private vehicle is the universal means of transport. This ideas, together with a series of private economic interests and the need to find accessible housing in habitable surroundings close to the town has created urban areas away from the city centre who design is based on the use of private transport.

Collective public transport in cities offers a series of advantages for women if one takes into account several aspects:

- The timetables and frequency, the stops and the metro and bus routes have to be adapted to the needs and patterns of women's mobility. Public transport should also be designed bearing in mind women workers with children, older women and housewives.
- Buses and trains should also be designed to enable access with pushchairs or children, which is particularly problematic on the underground or train.

– The spaces designed for public transport, such as bus stops, train or metro stations should take women's safety into account and that of the children accompanying them. The locations of bus stops should also be decided with this factor in mind.

Lastly, it must be highlighted that urban policies and plans should promote closely linking different parts of the city so that people invest the least possible time in their routine journeys.

• The safe city, free of violence

A city's unsafe areas and the fear felt by women to freely get around the city at certain times, together with the urban layout and the transport problems described are other reasons in the reduction of women's mobility and, therefore, and obstacle to her social participation and personal development.

The building of accessible and safe areas is a fundamental element in the creation of cities free of violence. Other elements include: preventative measures such as education based on tolerance at school, prevention of those who spread hate towards other groups for reasons of ideology, religion and origin, civic mobilisation for peace, research into the causes of insecurity, equality policies, the eradication of poverty, the work carried out by security forces and support services for women who are the victims of violence.

There are specific characteristics in urban areas that make them favourable for violent aggressions and harassment, such as:

– The lack of use of some urban areas and their subsequent appropriation by violent or marginal groups. Where there are no small businesses, the building in the area can decay and be abandoned by their inhabitants, there is no police vigilance, the streets are not used as a place to meet and there are no public services which means that these areas become "lawless".
– Some places are not busy enough or too busy. Whereas solitary places make it difficult for women to be helped in the event of an attack, busy places make it easy for petty crime such as the theft of bags or wallets.
– Badly lit areas with isolated spots prevent women from seeing and from being seen, Sound barriers or excess noise prevent women from hearing or being heard in the event of physical aggression.
– The complicated design of some urban areas and buildings, coupled with inadequate signposting makes it difficult for women to get their bearings and escape from an attacker if necessary.
– The lack of quality and deterioration of surroundings. Untidy or disorganised areas, which are dirty and unwelcoming fail to create a sense of belonging and control in the people who use these areas which engenders delinquency and vandalism.

• Indicators for cities habitable by both women and men

Spaces within cities are not neutral and they respond to a specific design. If the latter isn't based on citizen quality of life
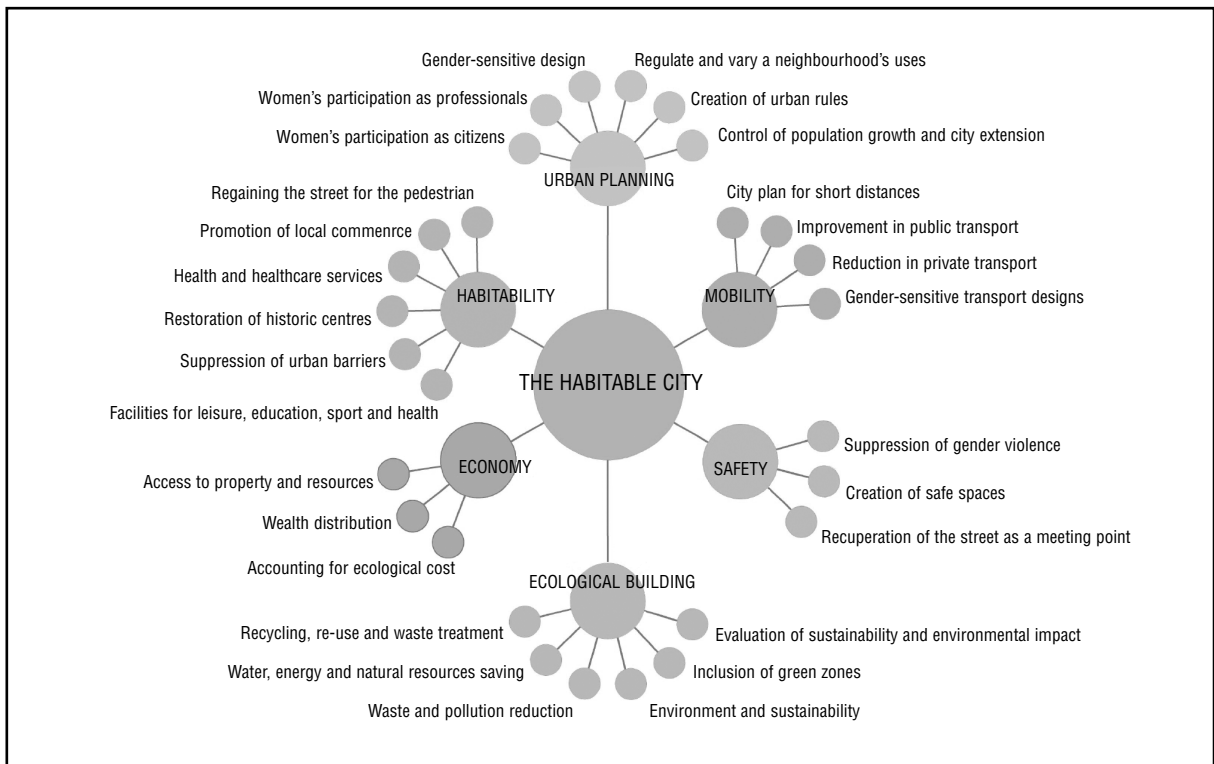
it can be, and must be, changed. It is obvious that the current design for use of space in many cities does not take in to account women's quality of life. For this to happen, women should participate in the changes, which means that the indicators for whether a city is habitable or not and for improving quality of life have to be defined. Without attempting to be exhaustive, the following diagram shows possible indicators.

- **The values that make cities habitable for both men and women**

Although nearly everything has been said on habitable cities, the debates that have taken place within the network have pinpointed, without going into depth, one decisive aspect: the new values that have to be introduced in city management so that cities become places where everybody can live with a measure of life quality.

A primary value is that of proximity, not only on a spatial level but also on a human level. Many of our cities, particularly the bigger ones have become impersonal and anonymous areas where everything happens in a hurry making it difficult to get close to reality. Many of the neighbourhoods are consciously made invisible, not just to tourists who will never find them in their guide books, but also to the city's citizens. These are the more problematic neighbourhoods that are difficult to get to because they are unsafe, decayed from an environmental point of view, display poverty and have no pleasant areas that can be enjoyed. The well-off and far-off residential islands are also invisible as they tend to be secluded to prevent the problems of the city reaching them.

The search for closeness, the regaining of a sense of neighbourhood with all that it brings with it in terms of living together with understanding between inhabitants, is perhaps the first value towards which the building and management of cities should be directed. It is not so much about multiplying investments in order to achieve it as about having political vision and focusing on citizenship as a meeting point between people who have decided to live together and feel as though they belong to a community that above all brings them closer to the people around them. This closeness will be built on respect towards and acceptation of neighbours differences and, in turn, their respect and anticipation of us. Closeness is not social control but understanding and willingness to live harmoniously together accepting the plurality and differences of those around us.

Another important value is protection, the support or care of the neighbours. The city should be protective. In general, cities spend a lot of money on infrastructure and improvements, which is good and creates short-term political benefits. Yet they nearly always have limited resources for social protection and care of those people who most need it. The cost of any of the important improvements, often carried out with the idea of increasing the prestige of those governing, would be enough to create a good

network of social protection services. A protective city is a city that makes its citizens feel safe, which guarantees care for those who need it, which promotes solidarity and redistribution. This "compassionate" level in city management creates security, protects against fear of the future and promotes a positive perception of others.

A third value, also linked to the previous two, is that of inter-subject communication, or promoting the relationship between people. This has to be a pillar of citizenship as this has a lot to do with the willingness to solve common matters together. Dialogue, communication, being able to put yourself in someone else's position, understanding the worries and aspirations of our neighbours are all essential elements to this end. Intersubject communication is also the foundation for solidarity, compassion and an ability to live together. In summary, it illustrates the most noble aspect of politics, which is based on debate, dialogue and negotiation.

A habitable city is, above all, a city which is governed following the values such as closeness, social protection and communication. Women have a lot to gain and contribute, particularly in a city that promotes closeness because it helps them balance their personal, working and political life. They have a lot to gain if society takes on the responsibility for the care of people almost exclusively in their care. They would also benefit from spaces where there is communication instead of isolation or confrontation.

This new ethical outlook of city management is an important field for reflection and in-depth study.

5. CARRYING ON NETWORK WORK

After running for more than three years, the URB-AL Nº12 Women-City Network has created an excellent space for knowledge exchange and has helped to raise awareness and provide tools to promote women's participation at local decision-making level.

5.1. THE NETWORK HAS ALLOWED VARIOUS LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

Through the network we have learned several lessons:

- Cities need the presence of women in its decision-making bodies, on equal standing with men so that they are habitable spaces capable of integrating all the different groups and people.
- In egalitarian democracy, a city's progress is the result of many factors: national laws, measures taken for positive action, the commitment and support of political parties towards women candidates, the work of women's organisations, the constitution of networks of elected women, programmes for political training for the candidates, processes of decentralisation of basic services towards local authorities which have

underlines the value of the contribution made by women to governability, etc.

- To achieve a city tailored to women implies political commitment in at least the following aspects:

  1st Increase in effort by the whole political class to equal the numbers of women and men in local decision-making bodies, consultation and planning.

  2nd Application of the principle of mainstreaming, integrating a gender perspective to all policies, programmes and services of local government.

  3rd In order for transversal policies with gender perspectives to be efficient, a four-stage action plan should be applied with the right methodology:

  4th To make a correct diagnosis of the situation which differentiates men and women's realities in the city, The portrait of the situation will enable use to see how, in many instances, the municipal services are not egalitarian and accessible to women.

    - Establish a strategy for action where positive activities are clearly identified, as are the expected results, the indicators by which to measure them and the financial and human resources required.
    - To evaluate the results and impacts obtained taking into account women's opinions and that of those involved.
    - To go over and re-evaluate from time to time the policies that have been set up given that realty is changeable and it is necessary to check that changes are taking place in the right direction. Changes sometimes take several years in becoming visible as they are linked to social processes that are usually slow.

  — To achieve women's visibility in the city, their problems, needs and capabilities, through data differentiated by gender and groups.

  — To turn cities into habitable spaces which are designed with the roles carried out by women in mind, which facilitate living together and are safe and sustainable.

  — To promote, as a priority, the full citizenship of those women, among them emigrant women, without access to social benefits.

  — To create in all local municipalities some structure with human and financial resources to handle gender equality issues.

- The international and national co-operation between local governments appears to be a commitment that cannot be put off. It makes the exchange of experiences, ideas and methods for developing policies and strategies to do away with the barriers that prevent women's full citizenship possible.

The Nº 12 Women-City Network has been an excellent space for this type of co-operation and because of this we feel it should carry on and continue developing the links that have been established with the aim of seeing the presence of women in places of local power and leadership. The mutual support and encouragement of member entities could continue to help to overcome the tepidity shown by some municipal officials towards the existing democratic deficits and towards the creation of efficient tools with which to build habitable cities for every man and woman.

5.2. SOME AIMS FOR THE FUTURE WORK OF THE NETWORK

Before the end of the contract with the European Commission, the Diputación de Barcelona has decided to continue with the Women and City Network with the aim of consolidating the relationships established over the last three years of the working of the network and to reinforce the enriching links and exchanges of experiences.

The aim is to turn the network into a stable organisation of European and Latin American local collectives, lead by the Diputación de Barcelona which has the support of bilateral and multilateral bodies that share its aims. One important step in this direction has already been taken: in November 2005, a collaboration agreement was signed with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), with whom a project has been started to continue the Women and City Network.

In tune with the lines of action and the open debates, the general objectives for co-operation and exchange put forward by the network for the future are:

- Promotion of women's participation in democratic city management

This objective implies supporting common activities that have the aim of:

— Improving girls' education so that in the future they can take on economic, political and cultural responsibilities equal to men's.

— Sponsorship or organisation of political training and skills programmes for women.

— Promotion of women's associations and organisations, and the training of these groups to become social leaders.

— Encourage the participation and equality of women in city planning and in decision making on planning

— Fostering of women's control over investments and municipal public spending so that budgets cover their needs in terms of spaces and services.

— To continue, investigate in further depth and spread the good practices started by the joint projects between member entities.

- **Integrate the gender perspective into the building of habitable and sustainable cities**

This objective implies that the network should encourage and spread, among the member entities good practices aimed at:

– Promoting the remodelling of urban areas: bring the workplace, the home and services closer in order to facilitate balancing family life with work and women's participation in urban activity.
– Facilitating women's access to means of production and housing, drinking water, energy and health services.
– Guaranteeing conditions for citizens' safety, the lack of which makes women the main victims of violence.
– Improving the layout, security and functionality of public transport in order to guarantee mobility and accessibility to services by the most needy, women or men.
– Designing cities that reduce environmental risk which can have a disproportionate effect on women and children's health.
– Making women agents as well as beneficiaries of local development.
– **Supporting the integration and participation in cities of emigrant or displaced women and other groups with difficulty in accessing social benefits.**

This objective implies developing joint initiatives in order to:

– Encourage the integration of their culture of origin and that of the new country
– Foster emigrant or displaced women's participation in the city's associative web
– Support their local registration and their projects in the new society
– Facilitate their access to basic social services and rights: housing, work, social and health assistance and education.
– Combat racism and xenophobia by protecting the basic rights of immigrant women from cultural stereotypes of their culture of origin and the new culture.

- **Fostering new ethics in local government**

Based on the values of closeness, social protection, communications and most prominently the harmonious cohabitation between male and female citizens.

5.3. THE NETWORK'S LINE FOR ACTIONS

The project to continue Women and City proposes three principle lines of activity. The first, directed towards co-ordination and dynamism; and the second towards training; and third concentrated on the joint projects carried out between member entities.

- **Activities for co-ordination and dynamism of the network**

In this section the following activities would be included:

– A communication system to co-ordinate the network, established in Barcelona together with the member entities through a web page and electronic circulars, etc.
– An open annual seminar or meeting for the member entities, with the aim of:
  - Maintaining and consolidating relationships
  - Exchange of ideas and experiences
  - Dissemination of results and impact of joint projects
  - Promotion of new projects between the member entities
– A resource and documentation centre on the network's subject, with headquarters and organisation support in Barcelona and with an online documentation service accessible by the general public.
– A publishing series connected to the network's subject.

- **Activities directed towards training and enabling women to access and consolidate their presence at local decision-making level**

In this section the activities related to the "Women and City" Centre for Political Training, to be created during 2006, should be included:

– On-site and online political training directed at women members of the network
– Research in the objectives and activities of the Centre
– Exchange programme between European and Latin American women
– A thematic Resource Centre linked to the network which compiles bibliographic material and informative documentaries.
– A publishing series, linked to the network, to publish informative material.
– A virtual community through the webpage through which to channel debate among students during and after the courses.

- **Activities aimed at promoting projects between member entities of the network**

The European Commission has approved a total of 17 joint projects arising from the Nº 12 Network Women and City. Only three of these have completed their work and the majority are still mid activity. Some have not yet started. However, an analysis phase has begun on the results and impact produced by these projects with a view to set up a mechanism by which to systemise these data. The dissemination of the latter will lead to a second phase, the setting up of transfer and replication processes in other municipalities of the network.

The project of continuity for the Women and City Network is also contemplating the promotion of new joint projects between member entities. In order to do this, external finance offering the opportunity to continue working on a co-finance basis will be necessary. The projects concerned, it is envisaged that between three and six member entities will participate to carry out intervention programmes, preferably in municipalities in Latin America.

For illustrative purposes only, the projects to be included could be:

— The setting up of equal opportunity offices in one or several cities with technical support from one or more member cities.
— The setting up of local development programmes with a gender focus in one or more cities in which services planning is done with women's participation.
— The carrying out of urban plans and studies that take women's needs into account and that are sustainable form an environmental point of view.
— Training projects for women local leaders: politicians, community leaders, conflict mediators, managers for local development, *etc.*
— Technical assistance projects for one or more municipalities to implant gender mainstreaming in all policy areas of city government.
— Support projects for social cohesion and poverty in one or more cities where women are the focus and beneficiaries of the project.

The co-ordination body of the network will offer technical assistance to get these projects going: The assistance will include:

— Documentation and information on the subject
— Technical assistance to carry out the project if necessary, or to examine its viability
— Technical assistance to follow and evaluate the project
— Assistance and information on possible sources of external finance for the project

With regard to the finance of these projects, it is important to note the following principles:

— The cities participating in the projects must co-finance them, not necessarily equally, but those with more should contribute more. European cities will be able to channel their own or external co-operation funds towards Latin American cities with limited resources with whom they wish to work. Help could also be offered in terms of technical support the project management and evaluation.
— Another part of the financing, not the part co-financed by member entities, should be obtained through bilateral or multilateral international co-operation bodies.

The network could, with sponsorship from local, regional, national or international organisations, offer a prize for the most innovative or exemplary project in terms of:

— Its results in the creation of conditions or support services for social cohesion and the struggle against poverty where women have participated or are the principle beneficiaries.
— Its contribution to habitable, sustainable and committed cities that promote living together with a special emphasis on women's needs.
— Its transversal political character with gender focus
— Its commitment to the promotion of women in areas of local power.

5.4. CONCLUSION

In general, cities have not been built or planned to tailor to women's needs. This is the case mainly because only very exceptionally have women participated and contributed to the processes and decision-making bodies.

We think that other types of cities are possible, more habitable cities that facilitate living together. Cities that should be built with women's input and with emphasis on the gender perspective in municipal policies.

We also believe that intermunicipal co-operation is enriching in terms of exchanging experiences to jointly develop methods, policies and strategies.

The URB-AL Nº 12 Network Women and City has taken the first steps in this direction which is why we feel it is necessary to continue in our efforts. To do this, we invite all the member entities to accompany and support us in broadening the horizon of achievements and possibilities that we have begun to glimpse together in the three years of network working.

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ANNEX: DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED BY THE NETWORK

The complete texts can be consulted on the network's website:
http://www.diba.es/urbal12

- • Presentaitons and seminar conclusions:
- — San Salvador
- — Barcelona
- — Montevideo

- • Publications:
- — *Operative documentation*
- — *Initial dignosis*
- — *Interim document*
- — *Final document*
- — *Women and City Magazine*

- • Joint projects:
- — Project descriptions

- • *Good Practice Catalogue*