

Review of Gender Mainstreaming Provisions in Urban Planning Policies and Guidelines in India: A Comparative Analysis

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100600094>

Received: 25 May 2026; Accepted: 30 May 2026; Published: 18 June 2026

ABSTRACT

Urban spaces in India are not gender-neutral. The strategies city planners use to plan, design and manage cities reflect basic assumptions about who uses public space, how and when. The current research provides an insight into how gender mainstreaming is integrated in significant urban planning standards and regulations in India. The study examines seven policy and planning documents, such as the Smart Cities Mission Guidelines, AMRUT 2.0 Operational and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Guidelines, Master Plan for Delhi 2021, Draft Master Plan for Delhi 2041 and Development Control Regulations. A qualitative document review was performed which fell into five key categories: explicit gender recognition, data and evidence, participatory approaches, resource distribution, and accountability mechanisms. The results show that the gender integration was relatively low in the majority of the planning programs. While the most up-to-date AMRUT 2.0 GESI Guidelines give a comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming, they are advisory and ineffective as mechanisms for their implementation. Other statutory planning tools, such as Master plans and Development Control Regulations, only have gender-specific sections and are rarely put in position in a systematic manner. The study concludes that an adequate legal framework as well as gender-disaggregated data systems, participatory structures, and formal accountability structures are necessary if gender-responsive urban planning are to progress in India.

Keywords: gender mainstreaming, urban planning, Smart Cities Mission, AMRUT, master plans, development control regulations, India

INTRODUCTION

Cities in the Global South are urbanizing at a pace never seen in history. India's urban population is expected to reach 600 million by 2031, necessitating massive infrastructure investment, housing, and services. This urban change will determine the life chances of millions of people - particularly those who have typically been excluded from planning. Women are one of them; the specific requirements, limitations, and contributions of women have been systematically ignored within conventional urban planning paradigms.

As defined by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, gender mainstreaming is the process of determining the expected effects of any planned action (e.g., legislation, policy, and programme) on women and men, at every level and all areas. The latter is a strategy to make sure that women's concerns and experiences are reflected in design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies so that women and men benefit from them equally. From the standpoint of urban planning, that means considering how decisions about land use, about investing in infrastructure, about transportation, and about design of public space all disproportionately influence women and men.

The logic behind gender-sensitive urban planning is much wider than equality. Unpaid care labour by women; women's concentration in the informal economy (especially in urban centres); women's reliance on public transport (and their exposure to victimisation in public spaces) – at once shape within a city and a means of being governed. If you have planning frameworks that overlook this reality, you will create cities constraining the mobility, economic participation, or safety of your women. But equally important, female-centric planning

has unmet need to unleash the potential of women in productive capacity. It lowers time poverty and creates more diverse urban areas that do mean something to us all.

From the inauguration in 2005 of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, the urban policy terrain for India's cities had deepened markedly. Later flagship projects like Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT, as for examples, have invested heavily in the urban infrastructure and the governance reform process. In the meantime, such statutory documents as Master Plans, Development Control Regulations dominate in the physical form of Indian cities. This article explores to what extent these different regimes integrate gender mainstreaming provisions and maps achievements as well as continuing failures.

Research Objectives

The aim of this study is basically to accomplish the following three:

- i. To comprehensively catalogue gender-specific provisions included in key Indian urban planning policies and regulatory frameworks.
- ii. To contrast the depth, extent and enforceability of such provisions across frameworks.
- iii. To determine gaps and create recommendations on how to strengthen gender mainstreaming within urban planning governance.

Analysis concentrates on mission guidelines and selected plans of metropolitan planning published nationally. The Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT 2.0 are implemented by following their official implementation guidelines and supplementary documents of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. In the case of the Master Plans this analysis adopts reference to the Master Plan for Delhi 2021 and the Draft Master Plan for Delhi 2041, given Delhi as a national capital has its own form of documentation. We examine the Development Control Regulations by means of Delhi Building Bye-Laws with reference to Mumbai's DCR provisions. The report is limited to document analysis as evidence is missing about impact of the implementation. There is acknowledgement in the literature of the discrepancy between policy directives and ground level practice, however this issue is beyond the scope of this analysis. Furthermore, the variation in policy and practice of planning at the state level is noteworthy; thus, we must take the results as illustrative and not representative of Indian practice.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Gender Mainstreaming in Planning Theory

The progression of concerns over gender in planning theory has been a series of phases. Early feminist criticisms of planning were voiced in the 1970s and 1980s, when the authors pointed to how planning today was dependent on a male breadwinner model to ensure that cities were formed around the division between productive work (urban regions) and reproductive work (suburban communities). Women employed while caring for household needs were forced to maneuver fractured urban environments with insufficient transport and childcare infrastructure. Caroline Moser's seminal framework distinguished between practical gender needs and strategic gender needs.

Although the generalisation of gender produces practical needs, practical needs are the products of roles within the gendered division of labour: they include water, sanitation, health and childcare which women have to perform as a coping mechanism rather than having to face the burden of normal daily tasks. Whereas strategic needs challenge the structures of gender inequality - including the demands for property rights, political participation and freedom from violence. It is successful gender mainstreaming therefore, then, in terms of the two dimensions not only of "reforming" (as opposed to "improving") service conditions, but of changing the conditions that spawn them. Subsequent research has emphasized intersectionality, emphasizing how gender intersects with class, caste, religion, disability, and other axes of identity in order to shape different spatial realities in urban settings. A low-income woman who is living in an informal settlement has a harder time than

a middle-class woman who lives in a gated area, albeit within a population that lives in the same city. Thus, the planned constructs that lead to women as a homogeneous entity can reinforce the complaints of women who have the most to draw from, yet tend to leave the needs of individuals at the most marginalized side behind.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Framework

In practice, these have often featured in development programming in a different light from the other frameworks - Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, the most salient. Such an approach acknowledges that exclusion operates through multiple, intersecting dimensions, and that for inclusion to occur effectively, attention is paid to:

- i. Recognition - Acknowledging the existence and specific needs of marginalized groups
- ii. Representation - Ensuring meaningful participation in decision-making processes
- iii. Redistribution - Directing resources to address disparities
- iv. Accountability - Establishing mechanisms to monitor outcomes and enforce commitments

These four dimensions provide the reference for a comparative analysis that includes a systematic assessment of the effectiveness of different planning frameworks.

Analytical Categories

Informed by the frameworks discussed above, we draw five analytical categories to analyse each policy document:

Category	Indicators
Explicit gender recognition	Direct mention of women, gender, or specific provisions
Data and evidence	Mandates for sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis
Participatory mechanisms	Requirements for women's involvement in planning processes
Resource allocation	Gender-responsive budgeting or targeted investments
Accountability structures	Monitoring indicators, conditionalities, or enforcement mechanisms

METHODOLOGY

The study employs a qualitative document analysis technique for exploring gender mainstreaming provisions in Indian urban planning policies and regulatory frameworks. The review used document review, keywords identification, thematic coding, and comparative assessment. Seven policy and planning documents were chosen based on relevance, official status and accessibility to the public.

Document Selection

The documents were identified as relevant documents about the governance of urban planning in India using the selection criteria of relevance to urban planning governance in India, official status as government-issued guidelines or statutory instruments, and public domain use. The final structure consists of:

Category	Documents reviewed
National Urban Mission	Smart Cities Mission guidelines (2015/2021), AMRUT 2.0 Operational

	Guidelines (2021), GESI Guidelines for AMRUT 2.0 (2023)
Historical references	JNNURUM Guidelines and UN Women Policy Brief (2015)
Statutory Planning Documents	Master Plan for Delhi 2021, Draft Master Plan for Delhi 2041, Delhi Building by Laws 2016

The documents were chosen based on their relevance to urban planning governance, official status and public availability. Secondary literature was gathered from academic databases including JSTOR, Google Scholar and institutional reports, applying search terms including “gender”, “urban planning”, “India”, “mainstreaming” and specific mission names.

Analytical Procedure

The analysis was performed in four phases:

1. Document Review – all documents were read to understand the purpose and policy context.
2. Keyword Identification: We searched for terms like gender, women, female, inclusion, safety, participation, childcare, sanitation, and vulnerable groups.
3. Thematic coding: Relevant provisions were coded under five analytic categories:
 - i. Explicit Gender Recognition
 - ii. Data and Evidence
 - iii. Participatory Mechanisms
 - iv. Resource Allocation
 - v. Accountability Structures
4. Comparative Assessment: Similarities, differences and implementation gaps were analysed between all documents. This procedure increases transparency and facilitates replication.

Policy Analysis

Smart Cities Mission

Launched in 2015, Smart Cities Mission is one of the most ambitious urban development programmes in India. The Mission consists of a network of 100 selected cities, and significant central funds to support cities with key infrastructure, a clean and sustainable environment, and a decent quality of life, through deployment of smart solutions. This mission framework emphasizes technology-driven solutions, citizen engagement, and institutional reforms through Special Purpose Vehicles.

Gender Content Analysis

A systematic review of the Smart Cities Mission Guidelines illustrates minimal involvement with gender issues. The word “women” is used only once in the main guidelines text, in a chapter that mentions citizen safety as a key element of smart cities. Safeguarding, particularly the safety of women, children, and the elderly, “is a fundamental aspect of smart city planning,” according to the relevant text.

For one place, women are positioned at children’s and elderly peoples’ level as needing safeguards, rather than as actors or beneficiaries of urban development. This framing coincides with what analysts have called the

"women-as-vulnerable" paradigm that considers gender only as a protection or surveillance concern in the image of women, ignoring women's productive labour and movement and demand for access to public space.

Second, the emphasis on safety is brought to life by devices: surveillance cameras, smart illumination, emergency response systems. And while these interventions may do this, they treat symptoms of gender-based violence but do not address the spatial, economic and social determinants of women's exclusion from urban life.

Third, the provisions are entirely missing questions that strongly influence women's urban lives: affordable housing tenure, public transportation design, street vending, informal work, childcare infrastructure, and access to sanitation. The mission's emphasis on a small area within each city's footprint raises concerns about benefits going to informal settlements - where low-income women suffer disproportionately large service gaps.

Institutional Mechanisms

Governance of the mission's framework passes through Smart City Advisory Forums at the city level followed by Special Purpose Vehicles for carrying out implementation. The standards also don't specify women's participation in either body is required. But even though some cities may have done so voluntarily to include women's groups or gender experts, it is not a structural mandate. Without gender expertise within the governance of missions, the potential for gender to influence project selection, design, and monitoring is limited.

Data and Monitoring

Smart Cities Mission monitoring framework tracks project completion, utilization of funds, and selected outcome indicators. However, there is no mandated gender-disaggregated data collection. It also means that it is impossible to systematically assess whether mission investments benefit women and men differently. Without this kind of data infrastructure, gender-responsive course correction is simply untenable.

AMRUT 2.0

In its second phase, launched in 2021, the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation focus on water supply, sewerage, stormwater drainage, and urban green spaces across 500 cities. AMRUT 2.0 is notable for having developed a dedicated Gender Equality and Social Inclusion framework, released in August 2023, representing an advance over previous urban missions.

Operational Guidelines Analysis

AMRUT 2.0's primary operational guidance focuses on water security, sewerage coverage, and water body rejuvenation. The three main reform priorities are rationalization of the property tax base, recovery of user charges, and reduction of non-revenue water. And while these changes do have gendered implications - women bear disproportionate burdens when water supply is inadequate or unaffordable - the guidelines themselves do not have explicit gender analysis or conditionalities. The guidelines mention vulnerable populations in passing, but do not define vulnerability in gendered terms or specify how mission investments aim to tackle differential impacts. In the same way, citizen participation mechanisms laid down in these documents do not require women's representation or consultation.

GESI Guidelines: A Significant Advance

The GESI Guidelines for AMRUT 2.0 released in August 2023 represent the country's most comprehensive articulation of gender mainstreaming principles within any contemporary Indian urban mission. The document notes that "there is presently no concerted and exclusive GESI related policy guideline, roadmap, or a standardized framework to mainstream GESI aspects in the mission's urban service delivery." Such frank acknowledgment of existing gaps sets the stage for enhancement. The GESI Guidelines set out:

- i. **Screening of Detailed Project Reports:** The guidelines say that all DPRs will be screened using a GESI lens in advance of their approval. That is, whether the proposed projects will help or hurt the already excluded and disadvantaged people, such as women and population in the informal settlements.
- ii. **Participation Framework:** The guidelines call for a model where Urban Local Body-level mechanisms actively include women and slum communities. So to this end, it shifts from token or merely supportive consultation towards systematic involvement.
- iii. **Data Collection:** The guidelines suggest the collection of district-level sex-disaggregated data and monitor differences by gender.
- iv. **Capacity Building:** The guidelines stress training for ULB officials and parastatal bodies on GESI concepts and application.

Critical Limitations

But the GESI Guidelines also face a number of limitations that limit their effectiveness. The guidelines are a guideline not a condition for the funds release (the advisory status). Mission funds are available to states and ULBs without verifying compliance with GESI requirements. That undercuts accountability fundamentally at the outset.

Separating from operational guidelines: The GESI Guidelines are not the main document of operational guidelines but rather a supplementary manual. This structural separation is a danger that GESI itself could become an addendum rather than an element of mission implementation.

Informal settlement challenge: The guidelines acknowledge that vulnerable groups living in informal settlements "tend to remain invisible in official statistics for many cities," and as such, need to be taken into account. GESI recommendations are unlikely to extend to the most marginalized women especially in the absence of mechanisms to address this invisibility-such as mandatory enumeration or special provisions for non-notified slums.

Monitoring gap: The guidelines propose data collection but provide no indicators, baselines, or targets for measuring GESI outcomes. The mission's general monitoring framework fails to consider gender-specific metrics in its overall monitoring framework.

Historical Context: JNNURM and UN Women Recommendations

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, operational from 2005 to 2014, provides important historical context for understanding the evolution-and stagnation-of gender mainstreaming in Indian urban policy. A 2015 policy brief by UN Women systematically assessed JNNURM through a gender lens and offered recommendations that remain largely unimplemented.

Key Critiques

The UN Women report presented the following core inadequacies in JNNURM's stance towards gender analysis:

Household Assumptions: Planning paradigms of the mission's frameworks defined the core unit of analysis as the nuclear family unit. "Urban planning should adequately respond to the widening diversity of household forms as single adult households and female-headed households become an important and proliferating household format," as the policy brief noted. In City Development Plans / DPRs no household composition or female headship figures were available, which rendered these populations unseen.

Consultation Gaps: JNNURM required community participation in project design but made no mention of the manner in which participation for women would promote meaningful participation. In practice, processes of

participation - which were typically controlled by male community leaders - did not capture women's priorities.

Shelter Focus: Although JNNURM had a Basic Services to the Urban Poor component, focusing on shelter, UN Women analysis indicated that special housing needs among women, such as security of tenure (widows and separated women), protection from domestic violence through housing options, and proximity within livelihood and services, were not among measures.

Recommendations Not Adopted

In the context of the UN Women policy brief, the recommendation was suggested for the establishment of a Technical Advisory Group with an explicit mandate to integrate and monitor gender concerns across JNNURM implementation. However, this recommendation was not adopted during JNNURM's operational period and hence successor missions also have little gender expertise within governance structures.

Further recommendations include the requirement to subject City Development Plans to mandatory gender audits; the incorporation of gender-specific indicators for mission monitoring; and tailored capacity building for female representation in urban governance. The constrained translation of these recommendations to subsequent missions reflects ongoing institutional resistance against gender mainstreaming.

Master Plans

Master Plans are statutory instruments developed under state Town and Country Planning Acts that provide the legal framework for land use regulation, development control, and infrastructure planning over 20-year horizons. Unlike mission guidelines, which channel central funding with associated conditionalities, Master Plans carry the force of law and shape private development through zoning and building permissions.

Master Plan for Delhi 2021

The landmark Master Plan for Delhi 2021 from the Delhi Development Authority has spearheaded the Capital's development over twenty years and is presently to be replaced by MPD 2041. The analysis of MPD 2021 reveals that traditional Indian master plans do not identify gender as a specific planning category.

Land Use Framework: The layout scope for all land use categories including residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, public and semi-public facilities does not reflect gender analysis. Some issues - like where employment zones correspond to residential areas - don't account for women's travel habits or care responsibilities.

Transportation: The transportation in this chapter includes roads, the public transit system, and parking sites. While public transportation investments do help women (they use buses and metro more), the plan does not address last-mile accessibility, transit safety or easily accessible stops.

Social Infrastructure: The Plan prescribes norms for schools, health care institutions and community centres. These are somewhat indirectly gendered but not explicitly gendered. Childcare facilities appear in residential zone regulations to some extent but without serious standards.

Safety Provisions: MPD 2021 addresses safety issues, similar to the Smart Cities Mission, in a physical design dimension-lighting, visibility, avoiding isolated areas-among others. These clauses are helpful but insufficient.

Draft Master Plan for Delhi 2041

Draft MPD 2041, released for public comment in 2021, represents an opportunity to assess whether recent planning processes have incorporated gender perspectives. The draft shows incremental improvement in some respects:

Night Shelters: The draft includes provisions for women's night shelters, acknowledging homeless women's distinct needs for security and facilities.

Public Toilets: Standards for public toilet provision include gender-specific ratios, though enforcement mechanisms remain weak.

Informal Sector: The draft shows somewhat greater recognition of street vending and informal markets, spaces where women workers are concentrated.

However, fundamental gaps persist. Gender is not integrated into the plan's vision, objectives, or implementation framework. There is no requirement for gender impact assessment of planning proposals. The participation processes that shaped the draft did not include structured mechanisms for women's input.

Development Control Regulations

Development Control Regulations translate master plan provisions into binding requirements for individual development projects. DCRs specify plot coverage, floor area ratios, building heights, setbacks, parking requirements, and facilities that must be provided within developments of various types.

Facility Mandates with Gender Relevance

DCRs are the most operationally specific level of urban regulation, comprising several provisions with direct gendered implications; the following provisions apply to them:

Crèche and Childcare Facilities - Many DCRs mandate the creation of crèche facilities for group housing over a certain number of dwelling units or for commercial buildings of a particular floor area. Among them, Building Bye-Laws in Delhi require crèche facilities for certain development types. However, implementation is inconsistent, quality standards are missing, and location within developments is not specified, and crèches can be placed in inconvenient basement or isolated locations within developments.

Toilet Facilities - Public toilet requirements contain gender-specific ratios (with more toilets for women given longer usage times). Some regulations mandate separate entrances and adequate lighting. Menstrual hygiene facilities, accessible design, and maintenance standards vary.

Working Women's Hostels - The laws on hostels and paying guest accommodations include provisions for women's hostels with security requirements. These provisions recognize women's housing needs but apply narrow attention to unmarried, working women rather than the entire range of women's housing needs.

LIMITATIONS

DCR is narrow in that it focuses on sites rather than systemic issues of gender. A development, for instance, can fully comply with DCRs but deliver an environment that does not suit the needs of women. One residential township could have the required crèche but is located far from jobs and public transit, limiting women's labour force participation.

Enforcement of DCRs is notoriously lax in Indian cities. Not even stipulated facilities may actually be built or may be converted into other uses post-occupancy. Without gender-specific monitoring, there is no way of knowing if or how concretely these provisions translate into actual improvements for women in the cities.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The preceding sections have examined each policy framework individually. This section synthesizes findings through comparative analysis across the five analytical categories.

Explicit Gender Recognition

Framework	Explicit Gender Recognition	Data and Evidence	Participatory mechanisms	Resource Allocation	Accountability Structures
Smart Cities Mission	Low	None	General citizen participation only	None	None
AMRUT 2.0 Operational Guidelines	Limited	None	Limited participation provisions	None	Weak
AMRUT 2.0 GESI Guidelines	High	Recommended sex-disaggregated data	Structured participation recommendation	Limited	Advisory only
JNNURUM (Historical Context)	Limited	Weak	Community participation without gender safeguards	Limited	Weak
Master Plan Delhi 2021	Low	None	Public consultation only	None	None
Draft Master Plan Delhi 2041	Moderate	None	No structural gender participation	Limited	Weak
Development control regulations	Faculty specific	None	Not applicable	Faculty based provisions	Compliance focused, not gender outcomes

From the analysis, we see the trend from near-absence of gender recognition in the Smart Cities Mission to substantial articulation in the AMRUT 2.0 GESI Guidelines. But, even the most advanced framework is still in the advisory realm, while the frameworks with binding legal force (Master Plans, DCRs) show the weakest degree of gender integration.

DATA AND EVIDENCE INFRASTRUCTURE

No framework considered requires comprehensive sex-disaggregated data collection prior to either the plan being granted or funds released. While the AMRUT 2.0 GESI Guidelines recommend that this be done, they do not specify indicators, methodology, or who is responsible for non-compliance.

This lack of gender data infrastructure is a core obstacle to evidence-based gender mainstreaming. But without baseline data on women's access to services, mobility patterns, time use and economic activity, planners cannot pinpoint gender gaps or judge the effectiveness of intervention. The invisibility of gender in urban data systems reproduces and legitimizes gender-blind planning.

Participatory Mechanisms

Framework	Participation Requirement	Women-Specific Provisions
Smart Cities Mission	Citizen engagement through digital platforms	None specified
AMRUT 2.0	Community involvement in planning	GESI Guidelines recommend

		women's participation at ULB level
Master Plans	Public comment on draft plans	None specified
DCRs	Not applicable	Not applicable

This participatory mechanism, while useful across frameworks, cannot guarantee any meaningful involvement of women. Given gender gaps in digital access and literacy, the focus on engaging with technology and access means that the Smart Cities Mission is unintentionally excluding women. Master Plan public comment periods are dominated by organized interests and rarely elevate women's priorities. In this regard, the AMRUT 2.0 GESI Guidelines are the only framework that advocates for guided structured participation for women but without mandatory status.

Resource Allocation

Mostly, none of the aforementioned frameworks includes gender-responsive budgeting, nor does it enforce dedicated resource allocation to women's priorities. There is no gender impact assessment in project selection criteria. Fund release is not conditioned on gender outcomes.

Notably, given India's broader experience with gender budgeting at the national level, this absence is particularly notable. Since 2005-06, the Gender Budget Statement has been part of Union Budget documentation, yet this practice has not been extended to urban development financing.

Accountability Structures

Framework	Monitoring Indicators	Gender-Specific Accountability
Smart Cities Mission	Project completion, fund utilization	None
AMRUT 2.0	Service coverage, reform compliance	None in operational guidelines; recommended in GESI document
Master Plans	Implementation progress	None
DCRs	Building compliance	Facility provision only

All frameworks analysed lack accountability for gender outcomes. Mission monitoring measures physical and financial progress without gender disaggregation. Reviews of Master Plan implementation do not assess differential impacts on women and men. Where it takes place, DCR compliance verification may check facility provision without assessing quality, accessibility, or utilization.

DISCUSSION

The analysis points to three broad patterns. For instance, gender concerns are primarily framed as safety and surveillance in the Smart Cities Mission and Master Plans, yet in terms of mobility, livelihoods, housing and participation, the topics are underrepresented. Second, the AMRUT 2.0 GESI Guidelines are a major policy development but remain advisory, which is a small piece in its puzzle as far as implementation goes. Third, there is a poor integration of gender in the statutory planning instruments with legal effect, such as Master Plans and Development Control Regulations.

A further key finding is the lack of strong gender-disaggregated data systems and gender-specific monitoring markers across all systems. This restricts evidence-based planning and accountability. Overall, the findings indicate that gender mainstreaming in Indian urban planning appears to be fragmented and inadequately institutionalized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings presented, this paper concludes with the following key recommendations:

- i. Include GESI clauses in compulsory funding requirements for national urban missions.
- ii. Implement gender impact assessments for Master Plans and major urban projects.
- iii. Create sex-disaggregated urban data systems and gender-responsive monitoring indicators.
- iv. Ensure structured representation of women in planning and decision-making processes.
- v. Create technical advisory groups to support gender mainstreaming at both the city and state levels.
- vi. Revise planning legislation to include gender-responsive planning requirements within statutory instrument.

CONCLUSION

This comparative perspective demonstrates the continuing disparity between recognition of gender within urban development and the effective integration of gender considerations into planning. The Smart Cities Mission reduces gender to safety surveillance. AMRUT 2.0 has created promising GESI Guidelines which are still advisory and disconnected from conditionalities on fund release. The weakest gender integration has to do with Master Plans and Development Control Regulations, the most legally binding legislation.

But this suggests changes in gender mainstreaming will need to be performed on multiple fronts simultaneously. Re-evaluating mission priorities, setting conditionalities, and transforming centrally-funded programming can facilitate it. Changes are needed to state planning laws in order to incorporate gender within the legal framework provided for in statutory instruments. Building the infrastructure of data makes it possible that evidence-based planning processes and accountability can be generated.

Greater involvement of women at the collective level will lead to greater gender mainstreaming: focusing on the needs of women more than planners' interpretations of what women need. Urban India is at an inflection point. The infrastructure investments and decisions that are made in the next few years will guide cities everywhere over generations. And the question of whether these cities will serve their women of necessity - whether they will advance mobility, livelihoods, safety and the right to community voice - will depend on the decisions being made in the moment.

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