

# **Proposal Title: Advancing Inclusive Urban Development in Chandragiri Municipality: A Gender-Responsive and Resilient Public Space Initiative**

## **1. Introduction**

Rapid urbanization in Nepal presents both opportunities and challenges in ensuring equitable access to public spaces and urban services. Women, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and marginalized groups often face barriers to safe and meaningful participation in urban life. Recognizing this gap, Chandragiri Municipality has initiated a transformative urban development project in partnership with UNOPS, Cities Alliance, and UN-Habitat funded by European Union and Finland government.

This proposal presents an innovative and replicable model of inclusive, gender-responsive, and resilient urban development implemented at the local level.

## **2. Project Overview**

The initiative is being implemented through a collaborative co-financing model, with 30% of the total budget contributed by Chandragiri Municipality and 70% funded by UNOPS, reflecting strong ownership from both local and international stakeholders.

The project focuses on designing and constructing inclusive public open spaces while embedding gender-sensitive urban governance mechanisms within municipal systems. The intervention moves beyond physical infrastructure to institutional strengthening, policy innovation, and participatory governance.

## **3. Objectives**

The project aims to:

- To create gender and climate responsive and inclusive public spaces.
- To increase the demand for gender responsive climate resilient public space, generate proof of concept for participatory public space projects,
- Enhance the urban planning and design capacity of municipalities,
- Promote gender-responsive urban planning and governance.

## **4. Methodological Framework**

### **4.1 Development of Inclusive Urban Spaces**

Four public parks are currently under construction within Chandragiri Municipality. These parks are designed to serve:

- Women and girls
- Students and youth
- Persons with disabilities
- Senior citizens
- Other marginalized and vulnerable groups

Universal accessibility principles, safety-focused design, and multi-generational usability guide the infrastructure development process.

#### **4.2 Participatory Planning and Community Engagement**

The initiative adopts a participatory planning approach by:

- Conducting community consultations
- Engaging women's, person with disability, students, and marginalized groups during selection and co-creating the public open spaces
- Incorporating feedback into design and implementation
- Ensuring transparency and accountability in decision-making

This bottom-up planning approach ensures that public spaces reflect local needs, priorities, and lived experiences.

#### **4.3 Gender-Responsive Urban Design**

Public spaces and infrastructure are designed with special consideration for:

- Safety (lighting, visibility, active edges)
- Accessibility (barrier-free access and inclusive pathways)
- Comfort and usability for women, children, disability and Senior citizens.
- Facilities responsive to gender-specific needs

The project integrates gender sensitivity into both physical planning and institutional processes, promoting meaningful participation of women in urban governance.

#### **4.4 Building Social and Environmental Resilience**

Beyond physical infrastructure, the initiative strengthens:

- Social cohesion through shared public spaces
- Environmental sustainability through green infrastructure
- Community resilience through inclusive governance

By combining social inclusion and environmental considerations, the project contributes to long-term urban sustainability.

#### **4.5 Policy Innovation and Institutional Strengthening**

A key achievement of this initiative is translating global gender and urban development frameworks into actionable municipal policies. The project:

- Supports policy formulation aligned with national and international commitments
- Strengthens institutional capacity within the Municipality
- Establishes governance mechanisms for inclusive urban planning

This creates a sustainable governance framework beyond the project duration.

## 5. Innovation and Replicability

The initiative demonstrates innovation through:

- A structured co-financing model ensuring local ownership
- Integration of gender-responsive planning into municipal systems
- Institutionalization of participatory planning mechanisms
- Alignment of local implementation with global frameworks

The model offers strong potential for replication across other municipalities in Nepal and similar urban contexts globally.

## 6. Alignment with I4C26 Objectives

This initiative directly addresses the I4C26 focus on:

- **Innovative Urban Solutions** – through gender-responsive park design and governance reform.
- **Inclusive Governance** – by embedding participatory planning and women-centered approaches.
- **Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Development** – by integrating environmental sustainability and resilience into urban infrastructure.

The project demonstrates how local governments can operationalize inclusive, climate-conscious urban innovation within resource-constrained contexts.

## 7. Relevance, Suitability, and Impact

### 7.1 Addressing Pressing Urban Climate Challenges

Chandragiri, as part of the rapidly expanding Kathmandu metropolitan region, faces:

- Loss of open spaces due to real estate pressure
- Increased surface runoff and localized flooding
- Safety concerns for women and marginalized groups in public spaces
- Limited structured participation in urban decision-making

The initiative responds with a practical, scalable, and municipally owned model.

### 7.2 World Application and Replication

The co-financing structure (30% municipal contribution; 70% partner funding) ensures:

- Local ownership
- Financial accountability
- Replication potential across other Nepalese municipalities

- The model is adaptable to small and mid-sized cities across South Asia and other Global South contexts facing similar governance and climate challenges.

### **7.3 Policy and Practice Influence**

The project influences:

- Municipal planning standards
- Gender-responsive governance frameworks
- Climate-resilient public infrastructure guidelines
- Participatory urban design processes

It demonstrates how local governments can operationalize inclusive climate action within constrained fiscal environments.

## **8. Contribution to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

Equity is central to the project design and implementation.

### **8.1 Inclusion of Underrepresented Groups**

The planning process actively engages:

- Women and girls
- Persons with disabilities
- Senior citizens
- Students and youth
- Marginalized communities

Community consultations and co-design workshops ensure lived experiences shape infrastructure outcomes.

### **8.2 Strengthening Knowledge Co-Production**

The initiative bridges:

- Global expertise (UN agencies)
- Municipal governance structures
- Local community knowledge

This model promotes equitable knowledge production and strengthens democratic urban governance.

### **8.3 Gender-Responsive Governance**

The intervention embeds:

- Women's participation in decision-making

- Safety-focused spatial design
- Care-responsive infrastructure planning

By institutionalizing gender-responsive mechanisms, the project advances structural equity beyond symbolic inclusion.

## **9. Expected Outcomes**

- Improved access to safe and inclusive public spaces
- Enhanced participation of women in urban governance
- Strengthened municipal capacity for gender-responsive planning
- Increased social cohesion and community resilience
- A documented, replicable urban governance model

## **10. Conclusion**

Chandragiri Municipality's inclusive urban development initiative represents a practical, locally-driven innovation that transforms both physical spaces and governance systems. By integrating gender responsiveness, participatory planning, and resilience-building, the project offers a scalable model for equitable urban transformation.

This case provides valuable insights for Innovate 4 Cities 2026 by demonstrating how municipal leadership, international partnership, and community engagement can collectively advance inclusive and sustainable urban futures.

### **Summited By:**

Ghana Shyam Giri

Mayor

Phone Number: 977-9851050816

Email: ghanashyamgiri2004@gamil.com

Chandragiri Municipality, Bagmati province, Nepal