GOLD VI

*Case-Based Contribution
to Chapter 6: Connecting*
*GOLD VI Report on Pathways
to urban and territorial equality*

Social and territorial connectivity.

Towards a paradigm shift in mobility

and accessibility for gender equality

Social and territorial connectivity. Towards a paradigm shift in mobility and accessibility for gender equality

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CITIES/COUNTRIES IT COVERS:

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CHAPTER

6: Connecting

SUMMARY

Metropolitan connectivity does not only imply the physical connection between areas in terms of mobility and transport, but also the endowment of those areas that are territorially and socially excluded. To be connected is to have access to a wide range of facilities, services, infrastructure, and opportunities for social, employment and economic development. It's necessary to create institutions for metropolitan governance to give real equal opportunities based on sharing taxes incomes and recognition of territorial inequity.

Mobility in the city is a right that is not always fulfilled and is an essential factor in achieving spatial justice, especially for women due to the gender roles that cause them to move around and experience cities and neighbourhoods in a different way.

Examples are focused on ways to incorporate from a gender perspective the daily routines and the necessities deriving from everyday life broadening the connectivity definition to proximity, security and polycentric to understand Metropolitan challenges.

Introduction

This article proposes to re-signify and broaden the concept of connectivity not only in physical terms but also as the way to get access to opportunities. This notion generally refers to central areas and not to peripheries, which implies redefining polycentricism as an opportunity for equality. For that is necessary to create instances of metropolitan governance to allow the equal participation of people and territories in the common decisions.

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Mobility begins and is based on walking, this principle should be contemplated in public policies in order to have equitable cities. Walking safely regardless of physical conditions, social roles or different ages is one of the foundations of the right to the city. Cities have been designed and built, especially since the 1950s, prioritising and placing the private car at the centre, encouraging expansion and territorial dispersion, creating disconnected territories that are unsustainable and unequal.

To move towards a more egalitarian, accessible, and diverse metropolis, it is essential to observe women's living spaces "from their bodies, their homes and their neighbourhoods, to the metropolitan territory as a whole, going beyond the traditional limits of cities".[1]

Intersectional gendered connectivity

Connectivity with an intersectional gender perspective[2] implies strengthening proximity to satisfy the requirements of daily life, especially those in peripheral areas that are socially segregated and territorially disconnected, as well as resolving the relationship with other areas of the city with quality public transport.

To eliminate the centre-periphery, public-private, productive-reproductive binomials, it is necessary to generate a grid connectivity, which will facilitate a better use of time, especially for women who, due to assigned care tasks, find it difficult to incorporate themselves into productive spaces. Sustainability begins by valuing and improving the use of people's time.

The gender perspective makes visible the mobility and accessibility that is not considered in the traditional studies of transport, as they only deal with mobility that is wrongly called "obligatory", which is related to productive work and university studies and not to the mobility of everyday life and care work. In addition, it incorporates walks in public spaces as mobility and not only mechanical modes of transport.

The BTR demonstrates its efficiency and benefits in terms of investment-benefit ratio, but the ratio, which is calculated at 6 persons/m^2, must be considered when designing the project, which means that it is not suitable for women,

1. Ana Falú "Egalitarian Metropolitan Spaces" *Issue paper 04*, Metropolis Observatory, Barcelona, 2018

2. Intersectionality was defined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 and refers to the approach whereby each subject suffers oppression or discrimination based on their belonging to different social categories, such as gender, race, class, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, etc.

the elderly, people with special needs, etc. As a result of the high ratio, women-only carriages are offered, as is the case in **Delhi** (India) and **Mexico City** (Mexico), although this is not a definitive solution, it is nevertheless necessary. The quality, safety, and accessibility of stations and stops, as well as the public space that connects the transport system, must be considered.

Despite the shortcomings, women go out to work, travelling through inhospitable territories, real traps for their integrity. Women are the main users of public transport and make more chained journeys. Metropolitan transport policies must be developed to incorporate the gender dimension, considering the importance of transport for equality, participation, health, education and other essential areas of citizens' lives.[3]

Socio – territorial connectivity: accessibility, safety and sustainability

The sustainable Target 2 of Goal 11 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for improving inclusive and safe public transport as well as road safety for all people. However, connecting in a sustainable way in socio-territorial terms also means generating strategies that strengthen existing networks within and between neighbourhoods. The aim is to recognise the physical and social capacities of the territory that can generate added value for constructing sustainable territories.

From distant knowledge, the urban periphery is usually associated with a socially and materially impoverished and insecure territory; however, there is additional value in social organisation, solidarity networks, cultural-artistic or productive practices that generate and promote innovation.

The violence in metropolises is structural and multi-causal, which is why the rates increase in the most disadvantaged areas.[4] **Spaces for mobility without visibility, illumination and activities are perceived as unsafe spaces, especially by women, LGBTQIA+ people, minors, and the elderly. Violence and lack of security in transport are** **limiting factors for equal access to connectivity**. Public policies such as the *Bájale al acoso (Tune down harassment)* programme[5] implemented by the Municipality of the Metropolitan District of **Quito** (Ecuador) since 2017, in the global framework of UN Women's *Safe Cities for Women and Girls*, seeks to eliminate sexual violence from the transport system.[6]

3. Floridea di Ciommo, "Derechos y reivindicaciones para la movilidad metropolitana" *Issue paper 10*, Observatorio Metropolis, 2020.

4. Pablo José Martínez Osés, Felipe Llamas Sánchez and Arnau Gutiérrez Camps "Violencias en la metrópoli: respuestas para una cuestión global" *Issue paper 11* Observatorio Metropolis, 2020.

5. Ana Falú "Egalitarian Metropolitan Spaces" *Issue paper 04*, Metropolis Observatory, Barcelona, 2018

6. An SMS platform was implemented to ask for help. It immediately activates a protocol that triggers an alarm in the vehicle and alerts the program's brigade and the metropolitan police. The program also included awareness raising campaigns in public spaces and in the transport system itself.

Calle en La Balanza, Comas, Lima.
Source: Zaida Muxí

Polycentrality towards better co-governance and participation

Women are the most affected by the lack of well-distributed and inter-connected centralities, care responsibilities and insecurity, pushing away equal possibilities of access to resources and opportunities. Feminist urbanism considers the equitable redistribution of services and infrastructures for everyday life as a key asset for spatial justice,[7] because proximity is an essential value, with a special focus on daily commuting and task chains. For this reason, the consolidation of physical and social-community bonds also implies promoting urban polycentrality strategies, with transport networks based on itineraries, stops and schedules linked to networks, services, centres, and everyday facilities. Likewise, activating co-governance based on citizen participation with a gender approach, and particularly with women, contributes to improving equal living conditions for everyone in the city.

Giving women a voice and strengthening their leadership, who due to their peripheral condition have been excluded from diagnoses and

Experiences

The provision of services and facilities in the territories must favour the connections between the different spheres of life: the productive, reproductive, personal, and political-communitarian actions.[9]

Initiatives focused on productive and environmental sustainability include the recovery of a natural area and the concession of garden areas for re-housed people in **Santa Fe** (Argentina). Or the project in the city of **Shiraz** (Iran), in which the reforestation and creation of green spaces in the periphery not only restricts the unbridled development of the city, but also improves the quality of

political actions, allows knowing the daily situation of their neighbourhoods, their relationship, and communities support spaces, as well as their daily needs in the local and metropolitan mobility.

It is about focusing attention on political violence, which generates limits to women's action, because they reinforce political under-representation, subordination criteria, and the denial of citizenship.[8]

Fitekantropus en La Balanza, Comas, Lima.
Source: Zaida Muxí

life and productive work, encourages citizens to plant rooftop gardens, and the private sector to adhere to the city's development plan.

The participatory and decentralised processes are increasingly occupying more space in models of governance, in which the principles of co-creation, equity, inclusion and rights defence, as well as accountability and transparency, are placed as the fundamental principles. The Fitekantropus space in the neighbourhood of La Balanza, in the

7. Ana Falú "Egalitarian Metropolitan Spaces" issue paper 04, Metropolis Observatory, Barcelona, 2018 .

8. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women upholds women's right to participate in public life.

9. "Metropolis, World Association of the Major Metropolises; Silvia Llorente Sanchez; Safety and public space: Mapping metropolitan gender policies. Barcelona 2018. Available at: https://www.metropolis.org/sites/default/files/resources/Mapping_Metropolitan-Gender-Policies_2.pdf

district of Comas, **Lima** (Peru), is an example of a cultural and playful process that involved both technical advice and community participation in the urban project design of cultural neighbourhoods.[10] In terms of co-governance, the case of the city of **Guadalajara** (Mexico) is relevant, in which a new governance structure is created incorporating citizens, experts, and municipalities. The Metropolitan Governing Board guides local development through multi-stakeholder, multi-jurisdictional consultation, and participatory democracy.[11]

Caring for people is one of the areas that generates the most inequalities and discrimination. Democratising care is a pending task on the political agenda of cities globally. **Barcelona** (Spain) is a pioneer in this necessary transformation towards a feminist policy.

In **Lyon** (France), SYTRAL (the public transportation system) train employees work on the safety issues women face and aim to provide accurate information about bus arrivals. These measures were implemented after SYTRAL began women's "exploratory walks", in which women ambassadors were accompanied by SYTRAL agents, highlighting areas where they felt unsafe, and making recommendations for changes to the system. In this sense, it is also worth highlighting the experiences of work on school paths, which contribute to issues of proximity, improvement of public spaces, pedestrianisation and traffic calming. There are many examples such as that of the city of **Laval**, in Montreal (Canada), where planning was based on the well-being and mobility of children, giving priority to pedestrian mobility. The provision of social facilities on a neighbourhood scale that avoids long journeys and allows autonomy in the development of the daily activities of dependent people is an improvement on several levels: environmental, in the reduction of emissions, safety and physical accessibility.

10. This proposal consisted of improving the local infrastructure: remodelling the community canteen and building a bio-garden, a multi-purpose room and a children's library, as well as the activation of the public space for the common good.

11. Participatory planning is carried out through roundtables, workshops, education, and training. The system encourages all social and institutional stakeholders to imagine, innovate and plan on a metropolitan scale and to imagine the city they want to live in. The initiative was officially launched in 2012, following the implementation of the Coordination Act, and came into force in 2014.

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