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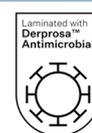
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Here's how sustainable cities can boost gender equality

Text by Stephanie Ossenbach, Corporate Sustainability, dormakaba. Photos courtesy of dormakaba.

Since the time of ancient civilisations, urban landscapes have evolved parallel to gender roles, often associating public spaces with men, and the private sphere with women. In the late 20th century, as the global urban population continued to boom, change began to seep through, and spatial researchers began to emphasize the importance of a gender-sensitive approach to urban planning. Their growing body of studies shows that gender-blind city designs not only strain women's day-to-day lives, but simultaneously limit economic and social progress.

"A woman's place is her home, office, metro, hospital, public park, university, or wherever else she needs to be."

By 2050, almost 70 percent of the world will reside in cities, compared to the 55 percent today. Hence, it is no



Developments in public transportations can improve mobility.

coincidence that sustainable and inclusive cities are a top priority for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, alongside achieving universal gender equality. There is overwhelming evidence that sustainable infrastructure helps women to fulfill their potential and advance beyond the domestic sphere.

With much of the world working towards an equitable future, the link between sustainable urban design and gender equality can no longer be a mere afterthought. The following elements in city life are crucial details to create an inclusive urban ecosystem to boost women's status in society and unleash their full potential everywhere.

Smart public lighting

According to a worldwide survey, women feel significantly less safe than men in public places, even in seemingly advanced countries perceived to be "safe". Inadequate urban lighting and dark footpaths pose security risks and restrict mobility – not just for women, but also for the marginalised and vulnerable.

Following the economic crisis of 2008, when local governments in the United States reduced the amount of street lighting to cut costs, many cities saw a shocking surge in public gender-based violence.

However, thanks to technological advances, a new generation of energy-efficient streetlights is now readily available. These streetlights tap into smart sensors to turn on and off based on pedestrian movement, allowing for cost efficiency, particularly in areas with low pedestrian density. With energy and cost-efficient solutions in commonplace areas like public lighting, women's safety and enablement can be assured in the sustainable cities of the future.

Safe public transport

Transportation determines the flow of all physical exchanges in cities. Safe and efficient public transport facilitates access to the labor market, education, and healthcare services. They also dramatically cut carbon emissions thanks to reduced car dependency.

Research has shown that women are more dependent on public transport than men. In some societies, women might not be able to ride a motorbike or drive a car due to cultural norms. Depending

on the country, personal vehicles may be difficult to afford for the average person. Overcrowded, or dimly-lit public transport may also accelerate security risks and hamper women's mobility. By achieving sustainable and gender-sensitive urban transportation networks, we can set our sights on achieving improved mobility both socially and economically, for men and women alike.

Secure buildings & access

According to criminology scholars, women feel more vulnerable to violent crimes and "stranger danger". The constant state of fear and anxiety may take a toll on women's mental and physical health. It is not uncommon for those who experience intense fear of violent crimes to show patterns of avoidant behavior and organise their daily lives around fear.

While crimes against women and sexual minorities are complex phenomena, secure buildings and entrance systems can reduce the risk of assaults. In particular, dependable doors and access control form a fundamental part of physical security.



Scramble code function: M5 & M6 digital door locks are able to detect your passcode in a string of randomly-pressed numbers to deter prying eyes.

In contrast, dilapidated infrastructure and flimsy entrances make buildings an easier target for intruders. According to the UK Police Department, most criminals break into buildings by forcing or kicking the lock. Homes with no security measures in place are five times more likely to be burgled than those with simple security measures.

Even the sight of excellent locks, secured access control systems, and



Smart home systems are deterrents to burglary. One such smart home system is the dormakaba True Access Solution (TAS).

entrance systems, can be an effective deterrent against criminal behaviour.

Access to clean energy & water

The lack of reliable access to clean energy and water resources has dire consequences. According to UNICEF, women and girls worldwide spend 200 million hours a day to collect water for their households. Relying on wood, charcoal, or animal waste for basic energy needs requires grueling hours looking for these materials. Women and girls also inhale toxic fumes while cooking, which might bring devastating health consequences.

Sustainable cities with reliable access to clean energy and water can gift this precious time back to communities to help to shift gender roles gradually. In return, women and girls can use this time to further themselves educationally, professionally, and economically, while leading healthier lives.

Intersectional approach to tackle global challenges

Solving the complex issue of global gender inequality requires disruptive approaches that are as nuanced as this problem itself. One might not immediately associate smart lights, good public transport, secure buildings, or energy and water access with gender equality. However, sustainable cities comprise parts of the ecosystems to boost women's status and add incalculable value to all societies. Thanks to shifting paradigms, an increasing number of cities are responding to the idea that men and women have equal places in society.

Shaping a sustainable future

The trusted partner worldwide for safe, secure, and sustainable places where people can move seamlessly.

We are aware of the most urgent global challenges, as well our customers' increasing demand for more sustainable products for every place that matters. In response to the growing needs and expectations of our society and customers, sustainability is firmly placed at the core of our vision, underlining our long-term commitment to shaping a more sustainable industry and future.

In our new sustainability framework, we are focused on three Pillars: People, Planet and Partnerships. We are ready and determined to take action for a low carbon and circular economy, to empower our people so that they can unlock their full potential, and to collaborate with others in our value chain to promote sustainable development.

Creating impact

dormakaba's key achievements from the financial year 2020/21

85% of our employees

are covered by a health & safety management system

1st company

in the access solutions industry to have emissions targets approved by the Science Based Targets initiative

Over 70 products

are covered by environmental impact data collected through our Life Cycle Assessment tool

15,500 tCO₂e saved

through green electricity purchases and energy efficiency projects

Over 2,000 employees

participated in our sustainability strategy survey

146 high-risk suppliers

were accessed in our supplier sustainability engagement programme

45.5% of electricity

purchased from renewable sources

45% of our manufacturing sites

are ISO 14001 certified

Questions?

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