

communitas

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

I.C.L.E.I
Local
Governments
for Sustainability

nrg4SD

TELLUS INSTITUTE
for a Great Transition

Experts' Workshop

on Sustainable Cities & Human Settlements in the SDGs

5-6 December 2013 | UN Secretariat Building, Room 2726

In collaboration with:



The Group
of Friends for
Sustainable Cities

With the generous support of:



FORD FOUNDATION

Experts' Workshop: Background

Organized by the **Communitas Coalition** – UN Habitat, Tellus Institute, ICLEI and nrg4SD – in collaboration with UN DESA, Member States Friends of Cities, Major Groups & Stakeholders and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN).

Drawing on a participatory process, the **Communitas Coalition** seeks to:

1. Advance sustainable urbanization as a key component of the future UN Development Agenda, its Goals, tools, means of implementation and partnerships;
2. Contribute to the technical development of an urban Goal with targets related to the economic, social, environmental, spatial and cultural dimensions of sustainable development and a basket of relevant indicators;
3. Ensure the presence, as appropriate, of an urban dimension in the final set of SDGs to be agreed upon.

Aim of the workshop: Enable governments to discuss informally with experts, Major Groups and stakeholders and the UN system the issue of sustainable urbanization in the future SDGs framework and UN development agenda.

Objective of the workshop: Feed into the thematic discussions at the January 2014 session of the Sustainable Development Goals Open Working Group (SDGs OWG).

Outputs of the workshop: 10-page thematic issues papers (with 1-page executive summaries) - Grass roots case studies compilations / fiches - Outcomes report - Interviews with experts and stakeholders.



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Vision: Building on the lessons learned and the results achieved by the MDGs, the ultimate vision is to advance just, prosperous and sustainable city-regions as a key element of the overall new UN Development Agenda; and therefore capitalize on the megatrend of urbanization in order to halt growing inequality and longstanding poverty at the city-region scale within the framework of sustainable development.

Topics for discussion on the day:

- ▶ Growth, prosperity and jobs for all within planetary boundaries, with a focus on youth and women
- ▶ Participatory democracy, poverty and inequalities reduction
- ▶ Universal access to affordable and quality social services and public utilities: Housing, water & sanitation, transport, energy and waste management
- ▶ Linkages with rural development, including food security and ecosystem resources
- ▶ Integrated urban planning and design for inclusive public space and city-region connectivity and efficiency
- ▶ Resilience through risk prevention and management and environmental sustainability

How is the Experts' Workshop facilitated?

Each panel of the workshop will feature a presentation by the lead expert of each respective Communitas work group. These presentations will outline key points of the issues papers produced by lead experts with the input of local & regional practitioners and of Advisory Committee members, as well as proposed urban targets. Following each expert presentation, respondent Member States and panelists will have the floor for a first reaction to the lead experts presentation, highlighting and / or completing key messages from their respective perspectives. The second part of each session will consist of an open discussion around a targeted set of questions. The lead experts, respondent Member States and panelists are all given the opportunity to respond first and all participants will be actively encouraged to engage in the discussions.

Experts' Workshop: Agenda

THURSDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2013

Check-in is ongoing from 8:45 - 9:15am.

Temporary UN passes will be distributed at the Visitors' Entrance on E 47th Street and First Avenue, at which point guests will be escorted into the Secretariat Building.

Moderator: Mr. Jeb Brugmann, *Managing Partner, The Next Practice and Founding Secretary-General, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability*

9:30am **Introduction: Setting the Scene**

Mr. Nikhil Seth, *Director, Division for Sustainable Development, UN DESA*

Mr. Jeb Brugmann, *Moderator*

Ms. Maruxa Cardama, *Executive Project Coordinator, Communitas Coalition*

10:00am **Session 1: Growth, prosperity & jobs for all within planetary boundaries with a focus on youth & women**

Chaired by: Mr. Andrew Davis, *Head of Delegation of Catalonia to the US and Co-Chair North, nrg4SD*

Communitas Lead Expert: Dr. Mark Roseland, *Director, Centre for Sustainable Community Development, Simon Fraser University*

Panelists:

Ms. Eleanor Blomstrom, *Program Director, Women's Environment & Development Organization*

Dr. Arthur MacEwan, *Professor Emeritus of Economics, UMass Boston*

Ms. Amanda Nesheiwat, *Environmental Coordinator, Town of Secaucus, NJ*

Mr. Sunandan Tiwari, *Deputy Director, ICLEI - South Asia Secretariat*

Session 1: Questions for Discussion

- 1. Developing country scholars have described rural villages that were unaware they were impoverished until told so. They had a wealth of social capital and spiritual contentment that has now apparently been squandered in pursuit of Western-style "prosperity." This relates to the questions of what we mean by prosperity and how we measure prosperity and well-being for all within planetary boundaries beyond GDP. Initiatives for going beyond GDP at the national level remain scarce and tend to neglect aspects of intra-national disparities. What would be the 'territorial parameters' to be included in new prosperity metrics in the interest of intra-national social and territorial cohesion? If we agree on the need to go beyond GDP as the main prosperity indicator, to what extent can the city-region scale be a cost-effective one to develop and apply new prosperity metrics?*
- 2. Poverty in cities is increasingly linked to the informal economy, where substantial percentages of women and youth are locked in. What tools are required for subnational and local governments to be able to better attend the socio-environmental concerns linked to the urban informal economy?*
- 3. Much is discussed about the goods and the evils of public-private-partnerships. One point where there is agreement is that the engagement of the private sector will be key in the transition to an Green Economy - and an urban Green Economy. What new rules for this public-private-partnership game can emanate from and be empowered at the subnational and local levels to fix the evils and enhance the goods?*

11:30am **Session 2: Participatory democracy, poverty & inequalities reduction**

Chaired by: Mr. Andrew Davis, *Head of Delegation of Catalonia to the US and Co-Chair North, nrg4SD*

Communitas Lead Expert: Ms. Andrea Costafreda, *Associate Researcher & Consultant, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs and Lecturer on Development Policies & Programmes, Barcelona Institute of International Studies (IBEI)*

Respondent: Mr. Daniel Pettersson, *First Secretary, Economic & Social Affairs, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations*

Panelists:

Ms. Maria Silvia Emanuelli, *Coordinator, Latin America Office, Habitat International Coalition (HIC-AL)*

Mr. Jeffrey Huffines, *UN Representative, Civicus*

Ms. Olimar Maisonet-Guzmán, *Policy & Program Coordinator, SustainUS: Youth for Sust. Development*

Ms. Jan Peterson, *Director, The Huairou Commission*

Session 2: Questions for Discussion

1. Human rights traditionally are seen in the 'social' block of development, but are increasingly being seen as relevant in the 'economic' and 'environment' blocks of development as well. At the same time, the sources of inequality vary from one country to another. What does it mean a human rights-based approach for the sustainable urbanization agenda within the SDG?

2. At the same time, the sources of inequality vary from one country to another. Identifying where are basic inequalities stemming from is fundamental to tackle the problem at its roots. Land ownership can be a source

of inequality in some countries but maybe not in others. Are there any common sources of urban inequality across the globe?

3. Much is being discussed these days about the needs for a data revolution, which is confronted to empiric imperatives of data availability. On a complementary note, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) suggests that "the identification of SDGs should not be data driven, but rather grounded in common values, relevant science, and a conceptual framework that represents key domains of sustainable development and interlinkages between the domains." What is the potential of grassroots community-collected city-wide data to strike an innovative efficient compromise for common needs and values and hence for a data evolution towards a data revolution?

4. The Report of the UN High Level Panel of Eminent Persons for the 2015 Development Agenda highlights calls for a 'New Global Partnership' to go beyond aid and discuss a truly international framework of policies to achieve sustainable development. What is the role for subnational and local authorities and what would be required for them to fulfill it?

1:00pm **Break**

2:30pm **Session 3: Universal access to affordable & quality social services & public utilities: Housing, water & sanitation, transport, energy and waste management**

Chaired by: Mr. Gino Van Begin, *Secretary-General, ICLEI*

Communitas Lead Expert: Dr. Anjali Mahendra, *Strategy Head for Research & Practice, EMBARQ India, World Resources Institute (WRI)*

Respondent: Mr. Tham Borg Tsien, *Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore to the United Nations*

Panelists:

Mr. Bob Dubinsky, *Chairman of Board of Directors, International Housing Coalition (IHC)*

Ms. Olimar Maisonet-Guzmán, *Policy & Program Coordinator, SustainUS: Youth for Sust. Development*

Mr. Alex Minshull, *Sustainable City Service Manager, Bristol City Council*

Ms. Florencia Gonzalez Otharan, *Climate Change & Energy Manager, Environmental Strategies General Office, Federal District of Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Mr. Michael Replogle, *Managing Director & Founder, Institute for Transportation & Development*

Session 3: Questions for Discussion

- 1. We hear a lot about the challenges presented by the population dynamics megatrend of urbanization. The positives of sustainable urbanization such as providing universal access services, job opportunities and cultural development are often less highlighted. How can an urban SDG help eradicate the pervasive exclusion of the poor from the economies, social services and the political structures which locks them into a category of 'non-citizens'?*
- 2. How can the SDGs contribute to strengthening the links between provision of services and human and environmental health at the city-region scale?*
- 3. The private sector will be a key partner in the achievement of universal access to services by all in urban areas. All levels of government must work together to ensure that the universal provision of public services, many of which are directly related to human rights, is not guided by vested interests. What further tools can be given to subnational and local authorities to better ensure this?*

4:00pm **Session 4: Linkages with rural development, including food security & ecosystem resources**

Chaired by: Gino Van Begin, *Secretary-General, ICLEI*

Communitas Lead Expert: Mr. Thomas Forster, *Senior Government Affairs Advisor, School Food FOCUS, Public Health Solutions*

Respondent: Mr. Farrukh Iqbal Khan, *Counsellor, Second Committee, Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations*

Panelists:

Dr. Lauren Baker, *Food Policy Coordinator, City of Toronto, Toronto Public Health*

Mr. Zak Bleicher, *Liaison Officer, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)*

Arthur Getz, *Former Director of Global Policy Change & Food Systems Advocacy, Heifer International and School of City and Regional Planning, University of Cardiff*

Session 4: Questions for Discussion

1. *Today it is commonly understood that rural and urban development can and must coexist. How can the SDGs contribute to ending the false dichotomy and promote the notion of a rural urban continuum?*
2. *What are the levers of sustainable city-region food systems?*
3. *How can the SDGs reflect the links between healthy livelihoods and diets and public procurement?*

5:00pm **Conclusions for the Day**

Mr. Andrew Davis, *Head of Delegation of Catalonia to the US and Co-Chair North, nrg4SD*

Mr. James Goldstein, *Senior Fellow, Tellus Institute*

Mr. Gino Van Begin, *Secretary-General, ICLEI*

*We would like to suggest gathering for informal drinks at: **Sofia Wine Bar & Café** - 242 East 50th Street, between Second & Third Avenue.*

<http://sofiawinebar.com/>

FRIDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2013

Moderator: Mr. Jeb Brugmann, *Managing Partner, The Next Practice and Founding Secretary-General, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability*

9:30am **Recap from Day One**

Mr. Jeb Brugmann, *Moderator*

Mr. Andrew Rudd, *Urban Environment Officer, Urban Planning & Design, UN-Habitat*

10:00am **Session 5: Integrated urban planning & design for inclusive public space & city-region connectivity and efficiency**

Chaired by: Mr. Andrew Rudd, *Urban Environment Officer, Urban Planning & Design, UN-Habitat*

Communitas Lead Expert: Dr. Arun Jain, *Chair of Another Urban Future and Board Member, International Federation of Housing & Planning*

Panelists:

Dr. Eugenie L. Birch, *Lawrence C. Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research & Education and Chair of the Graduate Group in City Planning, University of Pennsylvania*

Mr. Alexander Garvin, *President of AGA Public Realm Strategists, Inc. and President of the Forum for Urban Design and Adjunct Professor, School of Architecture, Yale University*

Mr. Eduard Rosell, *Deputy Director General for Land Planning & Landscape, Government of the Region of Catalonia*

Ms. Mary W. Rowe, *Vice President & Managing Director, Municipal Art Society of New York City*

Session 5: Questions for Discussion

1. *Planners, designers and geographers encourage us to focus our attention on the spatial dimension and the powerful ways that it formalizes, reinforces and often reproduces production and consumption patterns. For many urbanists planning and design are seen amongst as the ultimate 'acupuncture point' capable of delivering more sustainable, functional, equitable and efficient cities. Yet the 'spatial fix' can also be fetishized as seen in the excessively grandiose tabula rasa master plans of the 20th century and its various tactics to 'design out' crime and other undesirable activity. The negative results are all too obvious: land use patterns ill-suited to human convenience and public spaces that are forbidding and formulaic. How can planning and design play their stage-setting role without upstaging the other sectors they are meant to facilitate?*

2. *It can be said that form of a city closely correlates to the prevailing mode of transit at the time of its development. Many land-rich developed countries are already largely locked into infrastructure built for the private car. At the same time, many upwardly mobile citizens of developing countries still aspire to owning a car. Despite abundant data showing that car-oriented development tends to promote segregation, sprawl and - perhaps paradoxically - congestion, many cities in the developing world risk to replicate the mistakes of the developed world. Corporate profits are fueling the aspirations of consumers. And despite the evidence that*

the cost is mounting, many governments in the developed world are reluctant to invest in retrofitting infrastructure at a scale that will deliver the impact we need. How to design for a future of resource constraints and expensive energy when the immediate incentives are not there?

3. When it comes to urban density, one size clearly does not fit all. Appropriate densities are contingent on levels of infrastructure, amounts of public space and sociocultural perceptions of crowding. Land-rich countries sometimes argue that low densities are sustainable in their context, despite evidence that shows lower per capita rates of resource use and emissions with higher levels of compaction. Fast-growing developing countries with high proportions of slum dwellers sometimes maintain that their slums are already too dense and their growth pressures too severe and that sprawl is the only way. How can we frame a better argument for the compact city?

4. A recent survey showed that during the past two decades a number of national governments have passed legislation attempting to curtail or even 'illegalize' urbanization. Many of these countries contain extremely rapidly growing cities with already high infrastructural backlogs and slums bursting at the seams. Yet much of this may actually be based on excessively rigid planning and zoning. For example, colonial legacy may have restricted CBDs to commercial land uses, fueling informal residential settlements at their margins. Gated residential developments are a further symptom of this dysfunction. How to convince governments that slums, sprawl and other forms of spontaneous urbanization are the symptom rather than the problem? That urbanization must be seen aspirationally if its diseconomies are to be effectively tackled?

11:30am **Session 6: Resilience through risk prevention & management & environmental sustainability**

Chaired by: Ms. Sena Segbedzi, *Program Analyst, Metropolitan Opportunity Unit, Ford Foundation*

Communitas Lead Expert: Mr. James Goldstein, *Senior Fellow, Tellus Institute*

Panelists:

Mr. Ailton de Mesquita Vieira, *Director of Monitoring, Information and Surveillance, Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro (INEA-RJ)*

Mr. John Romano, *Global Policy Fellow, National Resources Defense Council (NRDC)*

Ms. Emma Torres, *Director for Brazil, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN)*

Dr. Ashwani Vasishth, *Associate Professor of Environmental Studies, Ramapo College*

Session 6: Questions for Discussion

1. *How can the SDGs maximize the benefits of city-to-city and region-to region cooperation and peer learning in these fields?*
2. *Economic Development, Sustainable Development, and Environment sadly are often seen as separate policies, there is a stark need to merge all of these together, particularly in light of the global challenge of climate change. Can community resilience be the 'meeting point' of these three traditionally separate policies?*
3. *How do we get the value of enhancing resilience (which requires an integrated long-term perspective and investment strategy) recognized by urban stakeholders and reflected in development planning and programming, including budgets?*

4. *Are there innovative models involving public-private partnerships that have been effective in demonstrating the value of resilience and mobilizing financing efforts to achieve it? If not, what is lacking for them to be feasible?*

1:00pm **Concluding Remarks**

Ms. Sena Segbedzi, Program Analyst, Metropolitan Opportunity Unit, Ford Foundation

Dr. Cynthia Rosenzweig, co-Chair, “Sustainable Cities: Inclusive, Resilient, and Connected,” Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN) and Senior Research Scientist, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies

Mr. Jeb Brugmann, Moderator

Mr. Felix Dodds, Special Adviser, Communitas Coalition

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