STI FORUM

Science, Technology & Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs

New York, 5-6 June 2018

Meeting Summary for side event: "Urban Resilience: case studies of socially-inclusive technology towards effective climate change mitigation & adaptation"

Conference Room A, New York, **5 June 2018, 13:15-14:30**

1. Objective of the side event (1 para)

Can science, technology, and innovation be utilized to address climate change and socioeconomic inequalities in urban resilience frameworks? This side event highlights case studies across different stakeholders, such as international organizations (e.g. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies), UN Agencies (e.g. UN-Habitat), local government (e.g. Atlanta, Georgia, United States), the private sector (e.g. Microsoft), and philanthropy (e.g. 100 Resilient Cities, Rockefeller Foundation), as a means of sharing best practices and success stories for knowledge-building, as well as to gain a better understanding of the key components for contextualizing technologies in ways that promote resilience and are democratized across the space in which they are implemented. It also a showcases an AR piece at the intersection of art, technology and innovation by the UCL artists Jessica Anderson and Sebastian Monroy. Public and community art is advocated to play an important role for reaching urban resilient solution, but also as tool to raise contextual awareness with its spectators/active participants.

2. Organizers & Participation

Main Organizer: Urban Catalyst Lab
Co-Organizers: UN Major Group for Children and Youth, Microsoft, 100 Resilient Cities
Panelists:
Taylor Woodruff - Chief of Protocol, City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Internal Affairs
Xango Eyee - Senior Technical Account Manager, Microsoft
Regine Guevara - Outreach Advisor, UN-Habitat
Jason Whittet - Associate Director - Solutions Development and Innovation, 100 Resilient Cities, Rockefeller Foundation
Liana Ghukasyan - Senior Humanitarian Delegate and Charge d'Affaires, IFRC
Jessica Anderson & Sebastian Monroy - Artist Intervention - Interactive AR Demo, Urban Catalyst Lab
Havard Breivik, The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) & Global Alliance on Urban Crisis

3. Major issues discussed in the session (in bullet form)

- Partnerships between local governments and global partners (e.g. City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of International Affairs worked with Cape Town) foster learning from best practices and launching new programs to engage both the public and private sector in reducing carbon footprints through various initiatives and technologies, bringing quality change to communities
- Microsoft highlighted the importance of accessibility of available technology to build the infrastructure for change and transformation of cities around the world, fostering innovation and the localization and optimization of services

- Lack of data integration and an integrated platform for data usage and availability has led to the creation of CoLab by 100 Resilient Cities -- this initiative will launch in 2019 and aims at being a platform for urban data
- Outreach to engage youth to engage local communities and incentivise local awareness, regular capacity building, and entrepreneurship opportunities
- An interactive art installation engaged the audience, provoking contemplation on issues around climate change mitigation such as the inextricable impact of human presence on an ecosystem and ruminations on what is positive and negative impact. The piece provided a visual representation of how slow impact over a period time may not be obvious without thoughtful consideration, and reflected the desire to see a human imprint on the environment while suggesting that the assumed dichotomous relationship between humans and nature is false.

4. Main outcome

   This side event was successful in fostering a discussion around concrete examples of effective STI applications for climate change mitigation. The topic of accessibility and the impact that STI can have when implemented in a way that promotes social inclusion was central to many of the presentations. The case studies highlight best practices at both the local and global level to engage communities and promote urban resilience. The issue of data usage and ownership was a point of discussion, particularly the lack of data integration, available platforms, transparency of algorithms which hold normative values and accessibility. It was beneficial to see 100 Resilient Cities' CoLab initiative addressing this space and raising a need of urgence to move towards global data integration. In addition, the topic of governance around technology and innovation, not only in relation to climate action, was raised. Lastly, the interactive art demo illustrated the role of art in aiding knowledge dissemination, especially around complex issues such as STI and climate change. The artwork incorporated the state/presence of the participant in its visual representation, by using sensing technology and interactive code underlying the visuals. The result is an increased number of climate change mitigation and adaptation advocates and action takers. The side-event has set initial steps/the pretext for the inclusion of art in the global STI debate on climate action, which is currently underrepresented at the global governance level.

5. Key recommendations for action (in bullet form)

- Build solutions with communities that are visionary (=all-inclusive & effective), not reactionary (=mostly non-inclusive & partly solving the issue).
- Importance of recognizing, measuring, and accounting for multi-dimensional risks (social, environmental, economic) in the design of technologies for sustainable urban development
- Promoting integrated territorial development that overcomes the urban-rural dichotomy to better account for the continuum of territorial spaces.Involve young urban planners, especially those at the university level.
- Use innovation to drive programs: the business of doing it differently.
- Public space for interaction is easily done, but mostly overlooked. Capitalize on this space.
- integrate art in the STI solutions to broaden your outreach pool.
- Special attention should be placed on the influence urbanization and technological innovation has had on resource extraction, production, consumption, and waste - especially concentrated in cities. Circular economy, seeks to shift away from the linear model of make, use, dispose in order to reduce both material use and waste.
- Cities today serve as places of rapid movement- of people, commodities, and information. At the cross-roads of urbanization, displacement towards cities has grown at an unprecedented rate. Calling into question traditional ways humanitarian respond to crises, it raises the importance of appropriate humanitarian action and risk reduction when considering migratory patterns.