URBANIZATION TRENDS AND MULTIPLE CHALLENGES FACING CITIES

Rafael Tuts
Coordinator, Urban Planning and Design Branch
raf.tuts@unhabitat.org

United Nations Human Settlements Programme
www.unhabitat.org

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Approved by all Member States, paragraph 134 states under the heading “Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements”:

“We recognize that, if they are well planned and developed, including through integrated planning and management approaches, cities can promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable societies.”
TECHNICAL SUPPORT TEAM
ISSUE BRIEF ON
SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

• Substantive preparation for Member States in advance of Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements discussion in the 7th session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

• Co-led by UN-Habitat and UNEP with contributions from 12 other agencies, funds, programmes and commissions including ECLAC, ESCAP, IFAD, ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNISDR, UN-Women, WHO, WMO and the World Bank.

Interactive process of three rounds of comments/drafting with the effective result of a common interagency position.
STOCKTAking
KEY TRENDS
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Humanity will increase from 50 to 70% urban by 2050.

60% of the area expected to be urban in 2030 remains to be built.
KEY TRENDS

Natural increase, rural-urban migration and reclassification drive rapid growth in small to intermediate sized cities in the developing world.

Backlogs and resource constraints to overcome.
KEY TRENDS

Cities in the developed world may have to retrofit for more sustainable consumption and production patterns.
However, many cities are forfeiting their agglomeration advantages.

- Accelerating urban sprawl
- High transport and infrastructure costs.
- Higher rates of environmental degradation.
Figure II: Average Built-up Area Densities in Three World Regions

STOCKTAking
SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
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Reduced access to goods, services and jobs, increased rates of crime and violence and poor health are occurring in increasingly unequal ways.
In many cities the *spatial trap of slums* consolidates and intensifies these inequalities. Particularly vulnerable groups are also experiencing discrimination and harassment.
Despite their potential efficiencies, cities (particularly in the west) remain high consumers of energy and relatively high producers of waste and GHG emissions.

Much of this is already beyond the earth’s carrying and regenerative capacity.
Transport-related emissions per capita, 1995 (kilograms)

Source: Kenworthy and Laube 2001; City Mayors 2007.
Peripherally dispersed urban development is also fragmenting natural habitat and increasing urbanities’ exposure to natural disasters.
Countries with highest urban populations living in the low-elevation coastal zone, 2000

[Graph showing urban populations by country, with China having the highest millions and India having the highest percent of urban population.]

STOCKTAKING OPPORTUNITIES AND APPROACHES
Yet cities remain preeminent engines of growth. If their efficiencies are properly harnessed they can deliver optimal levels of economic growth, social cohesion and environmental outcomes.
A holistic focus on space and configuration are key to effectively integrating urban sectors in their pursuit of sustainability.
Integrated planning and gender responsive design can produce compact, mixed-use cities that offer a higher quality of life at lower rates of environmental degradation and greater levels of social cohesion, particularly via public space.
Inter-scalar work is required across the rural-urban continuum and at multiple levels of governance.
Ensuring alignment between education supply and labour market demand. Access to decent employment and social safety nets are critical.
SUSTAINABLE CITIES INTERVENTIONS

NEW BUILD/NEW CONSTRUCTION

NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENTS AS ‘INTEGRATED ECO-URBANISM’
- E.g Treasure Island
- Masdar
- Dongtan
- Auroville
- Gaviotas

CONSTRUCTING NEW ‘URBAN NETWORKED TECHNOLOGIES’
- E.g Hydrogen fuel infrastructure
- District heating and cooling
- Piped grey water

INTEGRATED/SYSTEMATIC

RECONFIGURING CITIES AS ‘SYSTEMIC URBAN TRANSITIONS’
- E.g ‘Low Carbon’ cities
- ‘Liveable’ cities
- ‘Post Carbon’ cities

RETROFITTING EXISTING ‘URBAN NETWORKED INFRASTRUCTURES’
- E.g Supply of desalinised water
- Modern rickshaw technologies
- Curitiba’s Bus System
- Orangi Pilot Project

NETWORK BASED

RETROFIT/EXISTING CITIES

NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENTS AS ‘INTEGRATED ECO-URBANISM’

CONSTRUCTING NEW ‘URBAN NETWORKED TECHNOLOGIES’

RECONFIGURING CITIES AS ‘SYSTEMIC URBAN TRANSITIONS’

RETROFITTING EXISTING ‘URBAN NETWORKED INFRASTRUCTURES’

CONCLUSION: Why prioritizing sustainable cities and human settlements?

Integration, Transformation, Universality

1. Educate and focus attention on urgent urban challenges and future opportunities
2. Mobilize and empower all urban actors around practical problem solving
3. Address the specific challenges of urban poverty and access to infrastructure
4. Promote integrated and innovative infrastructure design and service delivery
5. Promote land use planning and efficient spatial concentration
6. Ensure resilience to climate change and disaster risk reduction
Thank You!

And please…

Save the date

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