United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD)

Report on a Mayors' International Forum held in Lilongwe, Malawi

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1.0.   Introduction

This report presents a record of proceedings of the Mayors Forum which was held from 16-18 May, 2018 at the Bingu International Conference Centre (BICC) in Lilongwe, Malawi. The Forum was sponsored by the United Nations through the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) and UNDP Malawi. It was hosted by Malawi Government through the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Lilongwe City Council. The forum was organized as part of UNOSD support to member States in planning and undertaking integrated sustainability transformation, notably through knowledge sharing, research, training and partnership building.

This report does not reproduce the presentations that were delivered during the forum. Neither does it record verbatim what delegates said during the proceedings. It captures and documents the most salient points that were the essence of the proceedings. Readers who are interested in the presentations delivered at the forum can access them by following this LINK or at the Web address indicated in the footnote below.[1]

This report follows the structure of the Forum programme. For each session, it first lists the lead presentations that were delivered and then provides highlights of proceedings that followed after the presentations. These are captured as 'key messages' of the proceedings.

2.0.   Context and overview of the Lilongwe International Mayors Forum

The Mayors forum was organized on the basis of a recognition that cities and urban settlements are at the core of major global frameworks. They include the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals adopted in September 2015, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change adopted in December of the same year and the New Urban Agenda adopted in Quito in 2016. Cities are essential to sustainable development. Besides, being incubators for innovation, art and culture, cities play a leading role in economic development of countries, whose global gross domestic product (GDP) is created, for a large part, in cities. However, the current trend of urbanization is also often

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[1] https://www.unosd.org/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=13&menu=229

accompanied by significant social and environmental challenges, such as the lack of access to adequate, affordable urban land and housing options, urban infrastructure and basic services for a growing number of citizens, who suffer from rising inequality and exclusion. This is particularly true in developing countries, where about one third of urban dwellers live in slums. Their proportion is increasing rapidly as in many cases urbanization is taking place mostly informally, i.e., through uncontrolled urban expansion, poor land use planning and management, lack of environmental degradation, and failures in the design, construction and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure.

Besides lacking environmental services, including drainage, waste-water collection and treatment, garbage collection and adequate access to safe water, those settlements are particularly susceptible to hazards with natural or human cause. While accommodating more than half of the world's population on only 2 per cent of the earth's land, world's cities nonetheless account for 60-80 per cent of global energy consumption and generate as much as 75 per cent of the energy-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Cities are also rapidly getting more vulnerable to weather- and climate-related extreme events, which are increasing in frequency and severity with climate variability and climate change.

The proceedings revolved around SDGs, especially SDG 11 which specifically aims at making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. As a matter of fact, there is a growing recognition by experts and leaders that more than two thirds of the 169 SDG targets can only be achieved through the substantial involvement of local actors, particularly those in urban areas, hence the need for localizing the SDGs, where local governments and local stakeholders play an essential role in adapting and implementing those SDG targets in cities and human settlements.

Over 110 delegates comprising of politicians and technocrats working on Sustainable Development Goals and Local Governments (City, municipal and District governments or Administrations) from over 40 countries and diverse backgrounds participated in the 3 day intensive forum. They were introduced and recognized in the conference by country or categories of organizations they represented. The dignitaries that anchored the forum through their opening speeches included the host Mayor (Lilongwe City Council), the UN Resident Coordinator for Malawi, The Head of the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development and Malawi's Minister of Local Government and Rural Development.

A total of 8 topics were discussed. On each topic at least 4 presentations were made.

3.0.   Key Messages from Opening Speeches

During the opening ceremony, short speeches were delivered as follows:

i.   Welcome remarks: His Worship Dr Desmond W. Bikoko, Mayor of Lilongwe City Council;

ii.   Welcome statement: Ms. Maria Jose Torres Macho, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations and Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme - UNDP Malawi;

iii.   Key Note Address: Dr. Jong-Soo Yoon, Head, UNOSD;

iv.   Official Opening: Honourable Kondwani Nankhumwa, Minister of Local Government, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Malawi.

The following key messages were made through the speeches

i.   The objective of the Forum was for Mayors and city leaders to share experiences of their cities and insights on local actions to achieve SDG11. It was a forum for "Thinking Global, Acting Local". Urbanization was recognized as presenting cities with challenges in service delivery, slums and illegal constructions of settlements and also presenting real opportunities as arenas for action towards achieving the globally desired SDGs. Cities are or must be hubs for innovations and sustainable growth.

ii.   Local Governments were identified as being central to the implementation of SDGs as 2/3 of the 169 targets were achievable through local actors, especially in urban areas. It was further noted that delivering sustainable cities requires building resilience and inclusiveness (leaving no one behind) and evidence-based programming and planning. Consequently, the availability of good, disaggregated data for urban planning is of utmost importance.

iii.   SDG 11 is important because it is a catalyst for achieving other SDGs through its multiplier or ripple effects. Hence, the need for more, better and stronger linkages and partnerships City leaders were called upon to find ways of how to effectively harness collective action across social, political and economic divides within their jurisdictions.

iv.   The SDGs were emphasized are a peoples agenda not an agenda of the United Nations. Implementation of SDGs is therefore a national responsibility which must be internalized and mainstreamed in local planning processes and coordination mechanisms

4.0.   Topics discussed by the forum

The proceedings of the conference were organized in in eight sessions to which

topics were assigned as shown in the Table below:

Session No.	Thematic issue/topic	No. of presentations/speakers
1.	The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals	5
2.	Implementing the SDGs at National and Subnational Levels	5
3.	Sustainable Urbanization through Sustainable Planning and Management	4
4.	Partnerships, Monitoring Frameworks and Policy Coherence	4
5.	Low Carbon Cities	5
	City Tour	2
6.	Adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services for sustainable cities	4
7.	Making our Cities more resilient	4
8.	Implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in SIDS and countries/cities in difficult conditions	5

From the presentations and discussions under each session/theme, key messages were

extracted and summaries are presented below.

5.0.   The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

This session was co-moderated by Dr. Jean D' Aragon.

Lead presentations

The following presentations were delivered:

i. ***Overview of the progress on implementing Agenda 2030 and the SDGs*** by Dr. Jean D'Aragon, Senior Sustainable Development Expert);

ii. ***Inter-linkages: SDG 11, New Urban Agenda and Paris Agreement*** by Ms. Louise Scholtz, Programme Manager of Urban Futures, Policy and Futures Unit, WWF South Africa;

iii. Country/city experience: Country/city experience: ***Malawi's experience in implementing the SDGs*** by Mr. Walusungu Kayira, Deputy Director, Planning and Policy, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Malawi)

iv. Country/city experience: ***Implementing the SDGs in Masvingo, Zimbabwe*** by Hon. Hubert Fidze, Mayor of Masvingo; Chairman of Local Government Investment Conference (LOGIC) at Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ), Zimbabwe.

Key messages from the proceedings

i. The presentations by different delegates and representatives of different countries showed that member states of the UN are generally implementing programs and initiatives at both national and sub national levels in pursuit of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The countries are making strides despite experiencing different challenges.

ii. A key message that recurred was that success in the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs relies much on strong partnerships; integration of policies with the SDGs; citizen participation including women who are mostly directly involved in the accessing, acquisition and provision of household basic needs.

iii. Responsive and participatory local/urban governance is capable of eliciting collective action and resource mobilization if mayors and city leaders remain engaged with the people and their issues through ordinary interaction mechanisms including social media groups. The engagements with development partners, private sector, CSOs and the government – national, sub national and local levels enable all stakeholders to move together in all processes starting from planning, raising awareness, mobilizing resources, implementation, monitoring and reporting for improvements.

iv. Integration of country and subnational policies with the SDGs provides an opportunity for individual nations to implement the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs in a

manner that suits it best as it is contextualized and aligned with the country's governance framework. The mantra of 'leaving no one behind' should be reflected in policies and approaches that deliberately promote participation of specific social groups in contributing to growth and in enjoying the benefits of growth. This requires socio-economic profiling of the population.

v. Much as HLPF plays a significant role in the SDGs, closer, more direct and active-inclusive participation of citizens is required for better results. Vulnerable groups such as women, disabled, children and elderly should be factored in at all levels to mitigate discrimination. The citizens should own the agenda at local or grassroots levels. Encouraging stakeholder Partnerships and discouraging discrimination and inequalities fosters the notion of no one is left behind. Participants expressed the view that the HLPF must cascade down to the national level in the form of country chapters to ensure that there is oversight and sustained focus on implementing SDG initiatives. They observed that the HLPF has lacks mechanisms for recognizing, collecting and integrating voices of local governments. The side events at the HLPF should be a starting point for a search of a more structured and systematic way of getting local governments involved.

vi. Cities are key actors in pursuing agenda 2030 and SDGs. They are challenged with the task of mitigating or controlling climate change. The emissions in urban centers contribute significantly to climate change. It is against this background that cities are being called upon to ensure they apply a balanced effort towards rapid urbanization and safeguarding the world's natural environment.

vii. Cities are experiencing challenges as they strive to achieve the 2030 agenda. Some of the challenges are climate change and environmental degradation; Disasters (floods and fire); illegal constructions; poor waste management; water pollution. These events and activities have a direct negative bearing on the attainment of both agenda 2030 as well as SDG 11. Failure to deal with such challenges is largely due to poorly performing economies and dwindling resources which lead to inadequate or no funding at all. However, waste recycling is a common initiative in the cities. In some cities, there is a practice of introducing levy fees for specific projects such as sewer treatment; electricity generation; road infrastructure after the councils' wide consultations with the private sector, CSOs and the residents.

6.0. Implementing the SDGs at National and subnational levels

The session was co-moderated by Ms. Alka Bhatia.

Lead presentations
Five presentations were delivered as follows:

i. Overview of UNDP Malawi's work on supporting national and subnational authorities in implementing and monitoring the SDGs by Ms. Alka Bhatia, Economics Advisor, United Nations Development Programme – UNDP Malawi)

ii. The vision and achievements of the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-Africa) to localize the SDGs by Prof. Dr. Samson Kassahun, Academic Vice President, Ethiopian Civil Service University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;

iii. Methodology and Tools for localizing the SDGs by Dr Mpilo Ngubane, Director of Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE) of Durban, South Africa;

iv. Country/city experience: Decentralization process in Morocco by Ms. Touria Azzaoui, Researcher in Sociology, Ministry of Administration Reform and the Public Service, Morocco;

v. Country/city experience: Implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Guyana's City and Towns by Hon. Ms. Waneka Arrindell, Mayor of Municipality of Linden, Guyana.

Key messages from the proceedings
i. There are many and varied experiences in implementing SDGs among countries. The experiences vary on the basis of several factors including the extent to which countries are peaceful and just and how strong power and administrative authority of the state is decentralized

ii. While local governments are central to realizing SDGs and agenda 2063 (for Africa) their revenue and fiscal capacities are small and transfers from central governments are proportionately low (5% of the National budget in Malawi and Zimbabwe). Participants recognized the need to build state/local government capacities in revenue collection and fiscal performance and also for reforms in budget allocations at country level to ensure that more development resources are allocated to local governments where action for development, consistent with the SDGs is expected to take place.

iii.   Localizing SDGs is not amenable to 'one size fits all' formula. Country contexts matter and initiatives for localizing SDGs will have to be alive to contextual factors. Much as there may be 'Best practices' that can be replicated across countries, the emphasis for implementation lessons should be on 'Best fit'. In this regard, efforts were underway in Africa to build capacity and provide education on SDG implementation for local councils including through developing curriculum by ALGA. This effort is building a network of practitioners that will then be able to disseminate and support countries at the local/district level.

iv.   Country ownership of SDGs is best and easily achieved by mainstreaming or integrating the SDGs into country strategies with financing support through the national development budget. Thus all governments at all levels must ensure that their priorities align very well with the SDGs. Furthermore, at all levels of government, it is necessary to identify champions to support implementation of SDGs and to develop networks of actors with shared interests to accelerate SDG localization efforts.

v.   Participants observed that in order to motivate implementation of SDGs at local level, it was important to have a facility through peer monitoring and reporting and sharing of experiences on SDG implementation at the level of city council would be enhanced. In this regard, it was suggested that an **online forum** be created for this purpose where practitioners and stakeholders could continue to exchange ideas and experiences. Furthermore, participants recommended that the implementation of SDGs should encourage peer learning through 'Regional Conclaves' to enable appropriate contextualization and also promote South-South engagement to account for differences that are evident in north-south initiatives. The need for Regional Mayors Forum was particularly highlighted. UNOSD was specifically asked to consider supporting such regional for a.

vi.   It was emphasized that country reporting on the implementation of SDGs is voluntary and systematic in that a country is free to choose and focus on any few indicators and targets in a year depending on its national priorities. Participants felt that the same principle should cascade down to city and district governments.

7.0. Sustainable urbanization through sustainable planning and management

The session was co-moderated by Prof. Dr. Samson Kassahun.

Lead Presentations
The following five presentations were delivered:

i.   ***Integrated Planning for Sustainable Urban Development*** by Emily Hosek, Associate Sustainable Development Officer, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs – UN DESA;

ii. ***Achieving urban relevance: enabling the beneficiaries to participate directly in their city's planning and development*** by Javier Vergara Petrescu, Co-founder and Executive Director, Ciudad Emergente;

iii. Country/city experience: ***Public participation in urban planning – Case of Lilongwe, Malawi*** by Hon. Desmond W. Bikoko, Mayor of Lilongwe City Council;

iv. Country/city experience: ***Incheon Metropolitan City Sustainable Development*** by Mr. Sang Bum Lee, Director General, Incheon Metropolitan City Government, Republic of Korea.

Key messages from the proceedings

i.   Sustainable urbanization through sustainable planning and management invites for forums at different levels of governments where experiences, success and challenges are shared among stakeholders in the interest of advancing the implementation of 2030 Agenda. The forums create opportunities for adjustments in institutional frameworks and integration of the agenda and SDGs by all stakeholders in the planning sessions at all levels. Thus, Vertical (between levels of government) and Horizontal (across sectors and constituencies) integration of the SDG and 2030 agenda in the planning sessions, ensures proper implementation as it is based on the context of individual cities.

ii. Some countries have instituted structures (Inter-ministerial/ Inter-sectoral/ Inter-secretarial Committees or Commissions) to centrally coordinate integration of planning and implementation of SDGs. The SDGs are global but the implementation for sustainability should always be local. The approach has positive attributes as it ensures proper use of resources (reduces duplication of efforts); strengthens institutional capacities; inclusiveness.

iii.   The cities and sub national governments have a mandate to deal with urban planning, the built environment, transport sector, water and waste management, energy provision etc. Different approaches are and should be used in different contexts and sectors to achieve sustainable development. This requires innovation by technical people such as engineers, urban planners since it is clear that there cannot be standard or uniform solutions in all contexts across countries. Innovative solutions may require the support of local government through instituting the enabling legal frameworks such as by-laws.

iv.   Despite HLPF and other structures instituted solely for the implementation of SDGs, it remains a fact that city and local governments are tools or vehicles of the agenda and SDGs.   The City and local governance, therefore, should allow maximum participation of citizens in the implementation of the same. The structures of local governance should clearly provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the urban development plans, formulation of the by-laws, implementation and evaluation of interventions if the SDGs are to be achieved. Citizen participation can be through their representatives in the structures of local governance or through structured interface sessions between citizens and relevant duty bearers of the local government.

v.   It was observed that the SDG agenda does not yet have very clear indicators of sustainability to guide local level action. It was suggested that the UNOSD must look at the need to develop very clear indicators of sustainability that can be tracked easily at local and national government levels.

8.0.   Partnerships, monitoring frameworks and policy coherence

This session was co-moderated by Mr. Keping Yao.

Lead presentations
 Five presentations were made as follows:

i.   ***Collaborative and open government for a whole-of government and whole-of-society approach*** by Mr. Keping Yao, Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs;

ii. ***Data, monitoring and accountability: Shaping policy and institutional coherence*** by Mr Salvo Feliciano Tchamo, Evaluation and Monitoring Officer, Ministry of Land, Environment and Rural Development, Mozambique;

iii. Country/city experience***: Civil registration system and its linkage to national ID in Nepal*** by Mr. Bhagawan Aryal, Director, Department of Civil Registration, Nepal;

iv. Country/city experience: ***Trelawny Local Sustainable Plan*** by Hon. Collen Gager, Mayor of Falmouth, Chairman of Trelawny Municipal Corporation, Jamaica.

Key messages from the proceedings

- Data collection systems and methodologies are often inconsistent leading to challenges in planning for SDGs – coordination mechanisms between central and local governments are extremely important to ensure availability and accessibility of timely, accessible and disaggregated data that is necessary for reviewing progress and planning.

i. The Partnership, Monitoring Frameworks and Policy Adherence approach calls upon the recognition of the significant role of the public institutions in the implementation of SDGs. The public institutions are supposed to be transparent, accountable, inclusive and with high integrity to maximize participation of every individual citizen or actor including the vulnerable or marginalized groups to improve public service delivery. The aforementioned qualities of the institutions are enshrined in the enhanced capacity building and SDGs awareness for all actors especially the civil servants who are a majority of the technocrat stakeholders.

ii. Partnerships are important because development is an outcome of concerted effort involving governments, business sectors and civil society actors. Thus, the 'whole of Government' and 'whole of Society' approach to partnership for development is central to institutional coordination and policy coherence across the sectors.

iii. In current practices, however, partnerships are incomplete or incoherent as there is lack of full engagement of Parliaments, CSOs, Private sector, audit institutions with the national and sub national governments for successful implementation of SDGs. This shortfall undermines efforts aimed at achieving sound resource management and corruption prevention. Collaboration is an inherent framework for anticorruption as it promotes integrity and provides oversight mechanisms that present incentives for delivery. Collaboration goes together with Open Government

particularly in procurement where it ensures effective resource governance for development and service delivery at any level of government.

iv. Parliamentarians and other politicians often have very short term horizons because of the electoral cycles which affects consistency and continuity of long term plans which are central to achieving SDGs: how can the implementation of SDGs be institutionalized across general elections? How can cities deal with policy coherence with the general elections and bye-elections that take place within few countable numbers of year? Participants indicated the need for a systematic study of this issue to identify what kind of incentives can be built into country and subnational level systems to ensure long term planning and policy consistency and credibility despite elections.

Effective Civil Registry and Vital Statistics (CRVS) and ID Management systems were recognized as being central to SDG implementation because these systems provide vital data and statistics for urban planning. Local governments should develop capabilities for connecting to such huge databases and use them for effective data collection, especially in developing countries and those countries in crisis.

A participant initiated discussion on how to impart knowledge to and engage young people in the implementation of SDGs especially in countries that have young population. The forum observed that many developing countries have or are getting to a youth bulge in the structure of the national populations. It was further observed that it was necessary for countries to take advantage of this and create or reap a 'demographic dividend' through the implementation of SDGs. It was suggested that collaboration with different organizations to review Primary and Secondary school curriculum could help transmit the messages about SDGs to young people. The exercise could enable the government to develop a new curriculum incorporating the SDGs. It was further suggested that UNOSD should explore and consider Youth engagement conferences on SDGs.

9.0.   Low carbon cities

The session was co-moderated by Ms. Birgitte Bryld.

Lead presentations

The following five presentations were delivered:

i. ***Sustainable energy in the city*** by Dr. Vincent Kitio, Chief, Urban Energy Unit, Urban Basic Services Branch, UN-Habitat),

ii. ***Affordable and clean energy policy and infrastructure supporting sustainable cities -Experiences from South Africa, and elsewhere*** by Ms. Louise Scholtz, Programme Manager of Urban Futures, Policy and Futures Unit, WWF South Africa;

iii. ***Sustainable transport for sustainable cities*** by Birgitte Bryld, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

iv. Country/city experience: ***Initiatives to reduce environmental impact in Port-Louis, Mauritius*** by Hon. Daniel Eric Clive Laurent, Lord Mayor of the Municipal City Council of Port Louis, Mauritius.

v. Country/city experience: ***Reducing environmental impact in Ecuador's largest coastal resort city*** by Hon. Oswaldo Cisneros Soria, Mayor of City of Salinas, Ecuador.

Key messages from the proceedings

i. Cities are the sites or arenas with high emissions of greenhouse gases. These are actually by - products from industrialization and transportation both of which depend on the urban energy supply. Many cities have energy challenges with many of them relying on fossil fuel which emit high quantities of carbon monoxide which directly contribute to climate change. Thus, city governments or Administrations need to be proactive in the search and implementation of green technologies to reduce carbon footprint. In particular, cities should seek to shift from fossil fuel powered systems in open public places and gardens into renewable energy powered systems which include solar, wind and geothermal.

ii. Most African cities are growing horizontally and energy consumption practices are inefficient while uptake of green and energy efficient technologies is still low. City councils or governments should encourage, enforce and implement 'green strategies' by incorporating in statutes and/or subsidiary legislation minimum requirements that promote energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, and

environmentally friendly building. However, incorporating in law such requirements is one thing. The most important is to actually comply with them.

iii.   City government should carry out stakeholder analysis regularly to identify those companies or organizations and individuals that are willing, have high influence and capabilities to contribute to the attainment of climate goals and SDGs. City governments should engage with these stakeholders to leverage their influence positively for sustainable technologies in the cities.

iv.   In addressing climate change challenges in cities, there is need to adopt a whole product approach/circular economy approach that pays attention to both production and consumption.

v.   Transport is a key component of sustainable cities especially and SDG 11. Cities should have tangible interventions in the transport sector. Urban planning should reinforce and promote multi-modal mobility in the cities. This will require cities to make provisions for pedestrians and bikers non-motorized means of mobility) and other green means of mobility within cities.

vi.   Cities should promote and expand public transport using electric vehicles powered by renewable energy sources compared to private transport. This will help to decongest cities as well as reduce emissions.

vii.   Urban planning and spatial (territorial) designs should consider all effects of rapid urbanization, especially in many African cities. The designs should include modern buildings which are relevant to Tropical and Equatorial climates in Africa in order to achieve and sustain energy efficiency so that energy gaps are addressed.

viii.   The sustainability agenda demands city and local governments to particularly identify the role of youth in energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and fuse it in their planning for sustainable cities.

10.0.   Project Site Visits
Lilongwe city council waste transfer station
Delegates visited Area 25, North of Lilongwe City, where the City Council is implementing Waste Transfer Station Project. Key elements of the project include:

i.   The Council provided land for the station and prepared a Site Operating Plan (SOP) containing general instructions for facility management and operational standards.

The Council allows community based organizations (CBOs) that have hands-on experience in waste management to manage the waste transfer stations. The CBO is supported by the Waste Transfer Station Committee whose membership is drawn from the vulnerable community members within the catchment area. The committee oversees the daily operations of the facility.

ii.   The CBO receives the waste from the public through council's and private waste collectors, sorts them out into plastics and organic wastes. The plastics are cleaned and resold for recycling. The organic waste is turned into compost manure which are also sold to public and some companies doing flower and horticultural nurseries.

iii.   There are a number of benefits from the project. The facility helps keep the city clean and protect human health; creates job opportunities and improve socio-economic being of waste collectors; achieves partnerships, community involvement and inclusiveness (the committee) in the pursuit to Agenda 2030 and SDGs.

Low Cost Housing project: Likuni Meadows

Delegates visited Likuni Meadows, a low housing estate development project, in area 58 of Lilongwe city. The project is implemented by CCODE, a Non-Governmental Organization.

The Likuni Meadows is a rental housing scheme, comprising of varied housing units ranging from bedsitters to three-bed roomed units. There are 230 housing units in total. Each housing unit has separate water and electricity connections and also uses micro sewer system.

The construction of the houses was mainly managed by women construction facilitators selected from informal settlements of Lilongwe. These women had had their capacity in construction built by CCODE itself through its sanitation projects – construction of toilets.

The project contributes significantly to the provision of low affordable housing which is a prerequisite to have sustainable cities where shelter, a basic right is provided.

During a plenary session on the site visits during the following day, delegates made the following observations and suggestions:

i.   The site visits were insightful and provided an opportunity of real learning – much better than sitting for long hours listening to presentations coupled with limited discussions. Future Mayors Forum should strike a balance between conventional

conference approach with lots presentations and discussion with site or community visits which are also good for true local government practitioners.

ii. Deliberate involvement of women in waste treatment and sorting was lauded as a good example of being sensitive to the need for inclusive approaches

iii. While low cost housing project is good, there is need for policy analysis and dialogue on whether renting out low cost houses to the poor is better than a scheme that allows the poor to make instalments towards ownership of the housing units while they live in them.

NB: Delegates were in the evening entertained at a dinner hosted by the Mayor of Lilongwe City Council. A local music artist, Lulu performed for the audience, the City Council's Cultural Troupe also performed for the audience demonstrating different cultural dances of various Malawian tribes. Q- Malewezi, a poet recited some of his works. The evening prgramme was managed and moderated by Joab Frank Chakhaza, a Radio and Television personality at a leading private media house, Zodiak Broadcasting Station (ZBS).

11.0.   Adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services for sustainable cities
The session was co-moderated by Mr. Fistum Abraha.

Lead presentations
i. ***Women feeding cities: Food security, micro-finance & Enterprise Development*** by Mr. Fistum Abraha, Senior Economic Advisor, United Nations Development Programme – UNDP Tanzania);

ii. **Financing Urban Infrastructures in Africa** by Dr Mpilo Ngubane, Director of Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE) of Durban);

iii. Country/city experience: ***Tbilisi, Georgia by*** Mr. Tengiz Jokhadze, Head of Department, Tbilisi City Hall Economic Development Office, Tbilisi, Georgia)

iv. Country/city experience: ***Improvements to Water Supply System*** by Hon. Winston L. Maragh, OD, JP, and Mayor of May Pen, Chairman of Clarendon Municipal Corporation, Jamaica)

Key messages from proceedings
i. The city environment for entrepreneurship in many African countries remains hostile to women yet their economic activities are central to food availability and access at household level. In particular, as urban informal economy actors, women are vilified

or ill-treated by city authorities. Cities must find ways of encouraging entrepreneurship while enforcing rules. City authorities should come to terms and understand that informal economy is not an affront but a foundational stage for entrepreneurs. Instead of treating them with contempt as criminals, city authorities should seek ways to support them grow their businesses and make provisions for city dwellers.

ii. Cities can address challenges experienced by women entrepreneurs through provision of market spaces to create a conducive environment for informal entrepreneurship where ill-treatment by City authorities and police would be reduced. Furthermore, organizing women in groups or cooperatives would ease access to micro – finance which would eventually lead to formal entrepreneurship in the long run, an anticipated attribute of sustainable cities.

iii. Addressing informality requires creating inclusive policy dialogue forums at city level and if necessary at sector or subsector levels. It is power and authority exercised through a genuinely engaging dialogue that solves most of the problems about informality rather than a show of force by city authorities.

iv. Financing urban infrastructure requires a stock of knowledge and a skills set among Mayors and city leaders that can be accessed through Massive Open on Line Courses (MOOC) which provides the technical knowledge and networking for accessing financial resources to address the problem of financing infrastructure. It is a five weeks five module course provided by ALGA. A question was raised about how ALGA reaches out to people that do not have internet or relevant technology in their local communities but are interested in the course? It was acknowledged that there was indeed a problem with technology infrastructure such that there is need for innovative ways of accessing the technology to improve internet connectivity in some cities and parts of countries. However some cities provide free Wi-Fi to residents.

v. Delivering sustainable housing requires use of very good data and availability of skills sets within city bureaucracies to analyze and interpret the data. Thus, cities must

invest in their people to enhance their skills and also in their equipment and systems to enable data capturing and information processing facilities that aids in planning.

vi.   Cities need to develop strategies for maintenance and renewal of housing and other buildings as they age and become dilapidated. There are a number of institutional arrangements for doing this including those that are exclusively government or private sector and arrangements that combine government and private sector actors to deliver housing services. In order to be cost effective, cities should seek out public-private partnerships that are cost effective in delivery of services including housing.

vii. Clean, safe, fresh water is increasingly become a problem in cities. Climate variability coupled with limited financial resources affects water security in urban areas and so requires innovative approaches to water resources management.

viii. Cities and communities should appropriately invest in storage capacities, rain water harvesting and catchment management and law should be made and enforced to support these initiatives.

12.   Making our cities and communities more resilient
Dr. Jean D' Aragon also co-moderated the session

Lead presentations
Four presentations were delivered:

i.   ***Addressing urbanization, poverty and vulnerability in developing countries*** by Dr. Jean D'Aragon, Senior Sustainable Development Expert, UNOSD;

ii. ***Urban livelihoods, environmental protection and climate change adaptation in African cities*** by Dr. Shwaib Lwasa, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Makerere University Kampala, Uganda;

iii. Country/city experience: ***Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) as a tool and public policy to localize SDGs: Case of Seoul, Republic of Korea*** by Ms. Jin-kyung Choi, Team Manager, Global Social Economy Forum – GSEF;

iv. ***Urban housing sector profiling and City resilience action planning tool in Africa*** by Mr. John Chome, Head of Habitat Solutions, Lilongwe, Malawi.

v.   Country/city experience: ***Promoting resilient cities, reducing urban poverty and impact of climate change in Nepal*** by Mr. Kalanidhi Devkota, Executive Secretary, Municipal Association of Nepal – MuAN

Key messages from proceedings

i.   Rapid urbanization is quite significant in medium sized cities which are common in Africa and Asia. The global Population percentage trend between Rural and Urban indicate that it was 50 - 50 in 2007 and will be 40 - 60 by 2030.

ii. Growth of cities is mostly in slums and in areas prone to disaster. Due to lack of capacity, the urban poor are left with no other choice but establishing their settlements on vulnerable land. Disasters perpetuate the cycle of poverty. In an effort to make our cities and communities more resilient, therefore, it is not proper to fight the informal but rather formalize and integrate it together. The approach will generally, help deal with the "two cities approach" which is a constraint in the housing sector in many African countries. City authorities must stop recognizing slums as a natural or expected phenomenon of urbanization: slums are manifestations of failed city policies and systems resulting in informality that supplants or substitutes formality. Cities must assess how responsive they are to social trends and urbanization.

iii. Participatory and inclusive pro-poor gender-sensitive approach to slum upgrading and Urban Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building is key to success while ensuring partnerships and collaborations among different actors at different levels – ranging from central governments, Disaster Management Agencies, CSOs, Private sector to local authorities.

iv. In order to deliver on the many values and aspirations of the SDGs, the conceptual framework of social solidarity economy provides pathways to inclusivity, encourages democratic governance, and promotes economic growth while being sensitive to social justice issues. Local government programmes should seek to localize SDGs that value social justice and inclusivity. The marginalized members of the community and women in particular should be supported with general willingness and commitments of political parties to secure seats in any structure of elected representation.

v.   Bearing in mind that effective representation and participation demands clear comprehension of contemporary issues, there should be deliberate effort by all

stakeholders to translate the SDGs and targets in local languages for awareness and sensitization of entire citizen community.

13.   Implementing the 2030 agenda in SIDS under difficult conditions
(Moderator: Ms. Emily Hosek

Lead presentations
i.   ***The SIDS Partnership Framework*** by Emily Hosek, Associate Sustainable Development Officer, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs– UN DESA;
ii.   Country/city experience: ***Implementing the SDGs in Ebon Atoll*** by Hon. Ione Debrun, Mayor Ebon Local Government, Ebon Atoll, Marshall Islands;
iii.   Country/city experience: ***Challenges and opportunities in implementing the SDGs in landlocked country*** by Hon. Karma Thobgyal, Mayor of Samdrup Jongkghar Thromde Municipality,, Bhutan;
iv.   Country/city experience: ***UNDP'S work in Syria: Implementing the 2030 Agenda and the***
v.   ***SDGS in conflict-ridden environments*** by Hon. Nadia Ksaibi, Mayor of Homs Municipality, Syria);
vi.   Country/city experience: **The impacts of internal displacement on host communities - Al-Herjalleh, Syria** by Hon. Abdul Rhman Alkhstib, Mayor of Al-Herjalleh, Syria.

Key messages from the proceedings

Partnerships can be effective in overcoming some of the challenges that SIDS face in the implementation of SDGs. However, it is important to have very specific objectives for the partnerships, and track progress to identify bottlenecks and catalyze tangible results. Lessons from the SIDS Partnerships Framework can be applied to other types of partnerships in other areas.

Education and community-building are extremely important areas to focus in post-conflict societies, as well as access to micro-finance to overcome problems such as inadequate knowledge on nutrition and proper agricultural practices. Education and awareness in SIDS should help community members change their mind set – instead of thinking tourism only, people should also think agriculture.

Proper agricultural practices in SIDS should be supported by farm input programs which enable communities to be food secure and food self-reliant. Adding value to the local food products would also help to scale up income generating capacities and improve socio-

economic wellbeing. Further, the school curriculum should try as much as possible to integrate the concepts of food production with the eating habits (diet) so that non communicable diseases may be dealt with translating into good human health.

- Cities in difficult situations, such as those suffering from conflict, have been significantly set back in the implementation of the SDGs. Rebuilding, however, provides an opportunity to improve previous development practices and build better (i.e. green).
- SDG 16 is a goal which cuts across countries, not only affecting those in conflict, but also surrounding countries and even those in other parts of the world who must provide support for refugees;
- ICT also contributes significantly in the implementation of 2030 agenda and SDGs. It helps in the effective and efficient public service delivery and has huge potential for contributing to the implementation of the development agenda at local level and enhance good governance.
- Rapid population growth and human activity increases waste generation in the SIDS and affects the environment, leading to natural disasters, especially flooding in these settlements.

14. Closing Remarks – Key Messages

In the closing session of the forum, Dr. Henry Chingaipe, facilitator of the Forum presented a summary of the proceedings. He highlighted key points under each of the eight themes discussed during the conference.

The Head of UNOSD, Dr Jong-Soo Yoon congratulated every one: facilitators, presenters and participants, for sharing knowledge, ideas and experiences in implementing the SDGs at local level. He observed that there huge appreciation on the field visits conducted, where, on their way back, delegates had an opportunity to witness some very fine craftwork from Malawi. He commended the traditional dances, music and poetry performances which proved that Lilongwe was a good choice for the Forum as it signified land of peace and opportunity.

Mayor for Lilongwe City, Dr. Desmond Bikoko, asked delegates to commit themselves to the implementation of SDGs and anything learnt from the forum. Successful implementation of SDGs requires proper leadership and commitment. It was asked if UNSOD could consider creating a platform where city leaders who attend such forums could share their experiences with the rest.

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