

**IV Session SDG OWG – 19 June 2013**  
**Interactive exchange of views on “Health and Population Dynamics”**

***Reactions by the Local Authorities Major Group delivered by  
Maruxa Cardama from ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability***

Thanks Co-chair for giving me the floor. I am Maruxa Cardama from ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability, speaking on behalf of the Local Authorities Major Group.

We have followed with great attention the discussions over the past days and particularly welcome the unanimous recognition of **urbanisation as a megatrend in current and future population dynamics, with its challenges and also its opportunities.**

The figures that have been presented by the experts invited to the sessions, by the various reports recently elaborated and by you, distinguished delegates, are self-explanatory. **Particularly impactful** are the figures on urbanisation trends shared by **the LDCs**. I would only recall that **by 2050** the global proportion of **people living in cities** is expected **to raise to about 67%**. Besides, **6 million people will enter the global urban slum population annually**, unless significant improvements are made.

**Urbanisation is unstoppable. So it is the shared responsibility of all levels of government** - national, subnational and local – **to harness the sustainable development potential of this megatrend** of population dynamics **with a Human-Rights centred approach and within planetary boundaries.**

In this context, I would like to leave with you **5 messages** regarding interlinkages, targets with a territorial dimension, data needs and tools for implementation. These are namely:

**1.** Bear in mind the **overarching connection between poverty eradication and 2** aspects that are inherent to the role of subnational and local authorities and to sound local governance. These are **democratisation and provision of public and social services.**

**2.** Use **urbanisation and city-regions to enhance the interlinkages of the overall SDGs** framework by means of a systemic approach.

How to do this? **With the system of Legos, the modular approach**, that is being put forward by Colombia. So let us work for **a Goal on cities and human settlements with targets shared with other Goals.** These would mean elaborating targets on strong and accountable institutions; safer and more resilient urbanisation; reduction of inequalities; environmental sustainability and local economic development.

We need to move away from the 'business as usual' approach that sees urban development as a silo and sectoral discipline. **The complexity of poverty eradication and urbanization require systemic approaches both thematically and geographically.** This means addressing urbanisation with a **multi-disciplinary city-region wide approach**, to work beyond administrative boundaries and acknowledge the interlinkages between sustainable cities and rural development.

**3.** As regards **possible city-region targets to enhance interlinkages** related to the topics we are addressing in this OWG session, we can think of:

- city-region land planning to reduce urban sprawl and increase public space
- integrated job & skills strategies for the urban green economy with a clear focus on youth, woman and the urban poor
- local public procurement for healthy and sustainable food at schools

**4.** Our fourth message regards data and monitoring mechanisms. We fully encourage you to **go for a data revolution we seem to need with** (i) **segregate parameters relevant to urbanisation and its interlinkages**; (ii) with **data collection at subnational and local levels** and (iii) very importantly **with standardised methodologies** for data collection at all levels.

**5.** Last but not least a thought **on implementation**, let us not forget the **potential for quick 'localisation' and appropriation of SDGs at subnational and local levels** of the both (i) the thousand of **Local Agenda 21 strategies worldwide** that have achieved results on the ground over the past decades, **and (i)** the several **decentralised cooperation initiatives** that articulate peer-learning and solidarity among subnational and local authorities around the World.

Thanks very much for your attention.

Video available from:

6th meeting, 4th session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (17-19 June 2013)

At minute 29:16

<http://webtv.un.org/search/6th-meeting-4th-session-of-the-open-working-group-on-sustainable-development-goals-17-19-june-2013/2492384222001?term=SDGs>