



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL 2014 INTEGRATION SEGMENT: SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION 27-29 MAY 2014

CONFERENCE ROOM PAPER

On 27 to 29 May 2014, the United Nations Economic and Social Council will convene its first ever Integration Segment, bringing together representatives from the UN system, Member States and other relevant stakeholders to discuss ways in which to achieve sustainable urbanization. This conference room paper aims to consolidate all the inputs received from Member States, subsidiary bodies of the Council and the United Nations system, to provide an overview of the emerging sustainable solutions to the demographic, environmental, economic, socio-spatial and institutional challenges of sustainable urbanization. It will also highlight particular innovations that are unique and had made significant gains in sustainable urbanization through integrating the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Key recommendations for a sustainable urbanization framework will also be addressed.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES

BACKGROUND

The burgeoning ‘megacities’ and ‘hypercities’ around the world presents numerous challenges for urban policy, planning and urban management, to support the rapid population growth in urban areas. Almost all of the rapid population growth in urban areas will take place in developing regions, particularly in countries where resources are limited to provide for adequate housing, social services and sufficient employment. Between 2014 and 2030, the annual urban population increase in developing regions is expected to be 66 million people, compared to 5 million in developed regions. In addition, approximately one billion people will live in slums in life-threatening conditions. Rapid urban growth produces numerous challenges for developing countries to cope with extreme demographic transitions, the effects of which cause a scarcity of urban infrastructure to support the growing population, increasing insecurity of land tenure in urban centres, and high levels of health inequities in rural and urban areas.

From the many inputs received from Member States and the UN system, emerge various solutions to address the complex demographic challenges of rapid urban growth, in particular, the scarcity of urban infrastructure, poor quality of living conditions and the coercive effects of rural-urban migration. The inputs of Member States in this area of sustainable urbanization, highlight various lessons learned, best practices and innovative solutions to such demographic challenges. The inputs received from the UN system provide innovative solutions on how to best promote sustainable urbanization.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS:

Demographic Transitions

Rapid urban growth produces a number of economic, social and environmental challenges to creating sustainable urban areas all over the world. The benefits as well as negative effects of rapid urban growth can be readily seen in Asia. According to the input received from the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)**, urban growth patterns in the Asia-Pacific radiate-out and regionalize instead of concentrate, leading to the development of urban corridors, megacities and mega-urban regions. It is estimated that by 2030, 2.7 billion people will live in urban areas. Almost all Asia Pacific cities have outgrown their original municipal jurisdiction and their urban areas now extend into at least one other local government (and often many). In many Asian cities where this pattern of urban growth continues, it hinders the ability of governments to achieve urbanization that is truly sustainable. This phenomenon in Asia has produced an unequal division of the shared benefits of socio-economic growth, resulting in the social exclusion of vulnerable populations and marginalized groups, predominantly residing in informal settlements. In order to manage the footprint of cities, ESCAP recommended that institutional coordination and other forms of collaboration as well as innovative solutions are necessary to advance the resilience of cities. The **United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD)** particularly recommends for the Asia Pacific region, to utilize community based approaches to complement the lack of capacity in the local government by sharing the responsibility between the local community and the public sector. Increasing cross-sector collaboration thus can assist in addressing the economic, social, and economic dimensional challenges of rapid urban growth.

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHT: JAPAN

Japan instituted a number of development plans, based on the principles of the Comprehensive National Development Plan, which was devised to address the wide range of issues brought about by massive demographic flows. Government offices, research centres, and universities located within Tokyo's metropolitan area have been relocated to the sub-centre cities in suburban areas of the capital region. The successful implementation of these plans, has contributed to reducing over-concentration in the centre of the capital, relocation over 180 officials.

Rural-urban migration is one of the contributing factors to the vast demographic transitions within cities that also produce a number of social, environmental and economic challenges to sustainable urbanization. According to the **World Food Programme (WFP)**, data suggests that an average household's food security and nutrition status improves when it moves from a rural to an urban area, which helps explain why people migrate to cities in even greater numbers. Many of the poorest migrants move to informal urban settlements in marginal areas, causing many cities to face unique challenges such as provision of health care, sufficient employment and urban infrastructure, to address the needs of citizens living in vulnerable communities. In order to address the inter-linkages of developmental challenges produced from large scale migration and rapid urban growth, the **World Health Organization** identifies, that systematically utilizing impact assessment tools, such as Urban Health Equity Assessment and Response (Tool-HEART) can assist in identifying and responding to persistent health inequities and assess the impact on health of urban policies and programs.

Urban Infrastructure

In addition to the coercive effects of migration, the availability of sufficient urban infrastructure to support the growing population in cities continues to be an increasing challenge, particularly for developing countries, due to limited financial resources and overall space. Unsustainable urban infrastructure can particularly result in high levels of inadequate housing in urban areas. The lack of available housing, in turn, produces a number of social, economic and environmental impacts on the sustainability of urban centres. The high cost of urban land and housing are increasingly pushing the lowest-income people into locations that are prone to natural disasters, especially in slums and informal settlements. The increasing growth of informal settlements will in turn, increase the amount of vulnerable populations living in life-threatening conditions, and exacerbate socio-economic inequities. Devising an integrated approach to increasing the availability of housing can effectively contribute to the reduction of the social, economic and environmental implications of widespread informal settlements in urban areas.

The **Plurinational State of Bolivia** has achieved many tangible results in the housing sector through implementing the Social Solidarity Housing Project, aimed at delivering sustainable housing solutions to disadvantaged groups in rural communities. The implementation of the project resulted in the construction of 52,894 new housing units in 114 municipalities in the country. The Government subsequently established a State Housing Agency, an entity responsible to decrease the housing deficit through the implementation of programs and/or housing projects, thus contributing to the access of the Bolivian population basic services and adequate housing. The **Kingdom of Morocco** has also implemented strategic policies to address the expanding needs of households while simultaneously integrating the principles of sustainable development. The government of Morocco is engaging in a rebalancing of their urban system, creating new urban centres and devising new urban policies that respond to the expanding needs of households. The National Rural Development Strategy, in particular, has contributed to the improvement of living conditions, the valorisation of the territorial

resources (natural, cultural, etc.), and the creation of a policy and institutional environment conducive in fostering sustainable urban and rural development. Such policies provide innovative means to counter the integrated development challenges that results in the lack of adequate urban housing.

Ensuring the security of land tenure is an additional means in which to limit the formation of informal settlements and slums and enhance the sustainability of cities. The **United Nations Statistical Commission** has demonstrated that monitoring the security of land tenure is an effective way to safeguard the relationship between people and land in both rural and urban areas. Securing tenure for all has a variety of benefits, including social stability, poverty reduction, improved land management and functioning urban land markets. Utilizing human settlements statistics and a methodology developed by UN-Habitat and partners can measure security of tenure in a consistent manner across countries and regions. The application of this methodology is being implemented in 25 cities around the world through household surveys, such as the Urban Inequities Survey.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

BACKGROUND:

The complex environmental challenges emerging from the effects of climate change, continue to pose risks for vulnerable populations residing in cities, particularly coastal cities, which are susceptible to flooding, earthquakes, and droughts. According to the 2014 IPCC report, a high proportion of the world's population most affected by extreme weather conditions is concentrated in urban centres. Recent research also shows that 60 per cent or about 890 million urban dwellers in large cities were living in areas of high risk of exposure to at least one natural hazard, with cities in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and in Northern America being the most heavily exposed. These urban centres often lack both local governments' capacity and necessary infrastructure to manage these disaster risks. In addition to mitigating the effects of climate change, scaling up efforts to enhance energy efficiency, biodiversity, and prevent land degradation is increasingly essential to combat the environmental challenges of urbanization.

The inputs from Member States and the UN system provide various solutions to address the complex environmental challenges of climate change, in particular, disaster risk management, energy efficiency and land degradation. The inputs of Member States in this area of sustainable urbanization, highlights various lessons learned, best practices and innovative solutions to the environmental challenges of climate change. The inputs received from the UN system provide innovative solutions on how to best promote the utilization of green technologies to counter volatile weather conditions and unsustainable consumption patterns.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS:

Biodiversity

The **United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity** urges policy-makers and Member States to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem services as a core component of sustainable urbanization. Member States can reaffirm the role of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, a mechanism in which to ensure that the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) are integrated across sectors of government and by those sectors with the greatest influence on urbanization. The Biosphere Reserves of the **United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** is an effective mean to enhance cooperation between cities and the regions in which they are located, fostering the harmonious integration of people and nature for sustainable development. UNESCO Biosphere Reserves provide ecosystem services for human wellbeing and are learning laboratories at local and regional levels.

Member States have also been increasingly aware of the importance of biodiversity and implementing programmes that enhance the sustainability of the environment. For example, the **United Kingdom** has utilized green infrastructure in the construction of Queen Elizabeth II Olympic Park. It was the first Olympic Park to have a Biodiversity Action Plan which has promoted various biodiversity gains, including long-term commitments to zero waste landfill, preservation of wildlife habitat, and water efficiency.

Disaster Risk Management

The accumulation of disaster risks in urban centres has increased the vulnerability of people and assets located in hazard prone areas to disasters. Proper disaster risk management is thus crucial to confront natural disasters such as flooding, drought and cyclones. The **United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)** indicates that building stronger linkages between disaster risk reduction and climate change efforts for local implementation is necessary to facilitate the integration of disaster risk reduction at the local level. The UN Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction (GAR) identifies that disaster risk reduction strategies should be concentrated on addressing the underlying factors that generate and reproduce disaster risk, which could be driven by social and economic development actions themselves. The assessment of urban risks and the development of appropriate programs to reduce these risks including land-use planning,

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHT: WFP

The WFP has devised targeted food assistance programmes to be implemented alongside aspects of national safety-net systems for urban areas, particularly in times of crises and in the absence of secure livelihoods. Transfer programmes have successfully been established in the Philippines during the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, as well as rehabilitation projects in areas of Sierra Leone, and institutional feeding programs in Nairobi, Kenya.

building regulations and codes, environmental management and local development will bring together the three pillars of sustainable development and counter the effects of climate change. To effectively manage the urban infrastructure in areas prone to disaster risks, the government of **Turkey** implemented Law No 6306 on Regenerating Areas under Disaster Risks. Within the framework of this law financial, legal and development wise incentives are being implemented to ease the regeneration efforts of the public either through their own or with the initiatives of the local governments. It is intended to provide incentives for the regeneration of 6.5 million condominium units over a period of 20 years.

Tackling land degradation, desertification, and drought are central to achieving sustainable urbanization. According to the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**, there is a need to acknowledge the link between land degradation and sustainable urbanization, and the need to address the root causes of unsustainable urbanization, particularly rapid degradation of land in all ecosystems leading to forced migration from rural to urban areas. The UNCCD thus stresses the need to implement the commitment of world leaders at Rio+20 to a land degradation neutral world. In addition, the **United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management** suggests, that the utilization of geospatial information technologies, such as Land Information Systems or Global Geodetic Reference Frame, can significantly contribute to sustainable land management practices and can be utilized alongside disaster risk management efforts.

Energy Efficiency

Cities have the potential to become hubs for innovative solutions to reduce carbon emissions, for green economies and sustainable management of natural resources, and be safeguards for diversity, human and ecosystem wellbeing. According to UNESCO, the growing energy needs of developing countries, the use and application of off-grid renewable energy systems, especially solar energy could prove to be the most appropriate and locally available option. The government of **Georgia** has implemented several programs to improve energy efficiency in buildings. In the Municipality of Tbilisi, the government established a partnership program created based on the framework agreement on “Municipal Energy Efficiency Planning” (MEEP) alongside the Energy Saving International (ENSI), a Norwegian energy efficiency and energy business development consulting company, to develop a database with the purpose of identification and reduction of energy consumption in the municipality-owned buildings. One of the recently implemented programs explored the utilization of biomass (biowaste) in the heating system of municipal buildings and solar energy use for hot water supply in municipal buildings. Efficient uses of power and the introduction of renewable energy for heating have reduced unsustainable levels of energy consumption and have resulted in an increasing demand for eco-friendly residences.

The utilization of innovative technologies, such as information and communication technologies (ICT) can substantially produce environmentally sustainable solutions. For example, the government of **Italy** introduced the creation of Smart cities, which is a city seeking to address public issues via ICT-based solutions on the basis of forward looking participatory policies and multi-stakeholder partnerships. Over 68 Italian cities have

voluntarily incorporated various solutions such as ICT enabled infrastructure to create carbon neutral and sustainable residential areas and intelligent traffic systems to manage city traffic in a sustainable manner. Such innovative traffic systems can help reduce traffic congestion while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing Italy's overall carbon footprint. Generating innovative solutions to advance energy efficiency presents a range of new imperatives and opportunities for urban planning to address environmental as well as economic issues.

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

BACKGROUND

Resulting from the 2008 global economic crisis, all regions of the world has experienced high levels of unemployment and struggled to stimulate economic growth. Urban labour markets has witnessed rapid growth of the urban informal economy in all regions of the world, in which the informal sector jobs account for more than 50 per cent of all employment in Africa and the Latin America and Caribbean region, and a little lower in Asia. Among the most significant challenges that urban policy and planning have to address in the next few decades, is how to respond to increasing poverty and inequality through searching for new opportunities to stimulate economic growth as well as decent job creation. However, cities can be purposefully used as drivers of national economic growth and an opportunity to combat extreme poverty and enhance social sustainability of development.

The following inputs from Member States and the UN system provide examples of ways in which to confront the extensive economic challenges that have resulted from the global economic crisis, in particular, job creation and economic growth. The inputs of Member States in this area of sustainable urbanization, highlights various lessons learned, best practices and innovative solutions to the economic challenges. The inputs received from the UN system, also provides sustainable solutions on how to enable an environment that can diminish high unemployment levels and facilitate economic expansion.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Job Creation

According to the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, the rapid growth of urban populations is outpacing the number of available employment opportunities. Employment creation entails not only promoting 'job rich' methods of production, but also supporting enterprises and increasing employability via for example skills training and initiatives for disadvantaged groups. Different levels of government can play a role in addressing this challenge, but the role of the local government is particularly important. Local governments, directly and via forging public private partnerships, can promote employment creation through investing in upgrading of infrastructural facilities like roads, water and energy facilities, waste management and recycling establishments, among others. Such investment

can stimulate local economies, as well as produce sustainable social and environmental outcomes. Investment in training in the different sectors of the urban economy and dealing with informality is also fundamental for employment creation. ILO's Decent Work Agenda central to sustainability. According to **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, green jobs in sustainable urban and peri-urban agriculture (UPA) represent an increasingly attractive employment opportunity for youth and women in urban areas. With proper policy support this can create new employment opportunities in urban areas, which will thus alleviate the pressures of informal job sectors, informal economies, and generate economic growth.

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHT: SINGAPORE

The Government of Singapore invested in building a deep tunnel sewerage system, to effectively manage waste and which was subsequently awarded the Water Project of the Year at the Global Water Awards 2009. The government's efforts in waste management and recycling also had spill-over value add to the economy, as the sector generated S\$4.5 billion turnover annually and about 9,000 jobs.

In order to further promote social sustainability, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** stresses the need to facilitate financing for investments from public, private, national and international sources in order to generate more opportunities for employment. The **Commonwealth of the Bahamas** has generated local jobs through investments in facilities to support economic growth in tourism and transportation infrastructure. Through projects such as the Lynden Pindling International Airport Re-development and Expansion Project and the Airport Gateway Project, this has facilitated connectivity between the airport and downtown areas and has further created economic opportunity in the airport area through improved transport links with the city centre. Investments in transportation and tourism sectors not only assist in reducing levels of unemployment but also contribute to an increase in the environmental accessibility of urban infrastructure that aids in reducing pollution but also achieves socially sustainable development. Job creation thus offers a number of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable benefits that governments should incorporate within sustainable development plans.

Economic Growth

The contributions of cities to national economies, particularly to economic sustainability, are becoming increasingly important. Well-planned service centres and towns provide numerous opportunities for investment to both the private and public sectors, especially to developing countries, including in pro-poor housing and basic services such as clean drinking water, adequate sanitation, energy and transportation. Stimulating economic growth can thus increase the provision of basic services to vulnerable populations, which in turn, contributes to reducing urban poverty and inequity. According to the **United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**, the economic growth that most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean experienced in the past decades has

allowed several socioeconomic groups to overcome extreme poverty and has even let some segments of the population to consolidate as middle-income groups. The percentage of urban residents in Latin America and the Caribbean live in slums without access to basic services, such as housing, clean water and sanitation has decreased from 33% in 1990 to 23% in 2010. However, even though the percentage of people living in slums is decreasing, the total numbers are still rising due to population growth. ECLAC recommends the need to harness the potential of urban economies through implementing smart urbanization, through “city-smart” public policies that maximize the benefits of urban processes through an integrated approach.

The government of **Brazil** has put in place a series of policy programs that enabled the government to accelerate economic growth and simultaneously address the various social and environmental constraints of rapid urban growth. The “Growth Acceleration Program” (PAC) was launched in 2007, as a model of economic and social development to promote economic growth, increase job creation and improve the living conditions of the Brazilian population. A set of measures aimed at increasing private investment, public investment in infrastructure, and reduce bureaucratic, administrative, regulatory, and legislative obstacles to growth has allowed the program to come to fruition. This initiative successfully resulted in poverty reduction and the inclusion of millions of Brazilians in the “formal” job market. The application of inclusive economic growth models can thus additionally result in a number of socially and environmentally sustainable results.

SOCIO-SPATIAL CHALLENGES

BACKGROUND

Socio-spatial change refers to rural-urban inequalities, reflected in the growing differences between wealthier and poorer areas in both developed and developing country cities. Due to the division between wealthier and poorer areas in urban cities, populations (women, youth, children and other marginalized groups such as people living with HIV/AIDS, stigmatized ethnic groups and people with disabilities) residing in these areas experience differences in access to as well as quality of services and infrastructure that is based on socio-economic class, which in turn contributes to the fragmentation of society and severely undermines the social, economic and environmental sustainability of urbanization. To target the cross-cutting issues of socio-spatial change, local authorities along with national governments must implement an integrated approach to strengthen the synergies of different processes in areas such as health, education, empowerment of women, and environmental sustainability. Reinforcing the three dimensions of sustainable development within urban spatial planning mechanisms will ensure that urbanization processes are truly sustainable.

The following inputs from Member States and the UN system provides examples of ways in which to confront the multi-dimensional challenges of spatial change such as the lack of access to services for vulnerable populations and marginalized groups in urban centres as well as confronting high crime rates. The inputs received from Member States and the UN

system provides sustainable solutions, such as spatial urban planning, to decrease the division between rural and urban populations in all regions of the world.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Vulnerable Populations and Marginalized Groups

Too often the poor, people living in informal settlements, minorities, migrants, refugees, indigenous peoples, people living with disabilities and older persons, are not considered in urban development, resulting in a number of social, economic and environmental implications that further marginalizes and discriminates against those most in need. In order to advance sustainable development initiatives in urban areas, recognizing the specific needs of vulnerable populations and marginalized groups is essential to promote inclusive growth and ensure that the benefits of sustainable development is experienced by all social groups. In order to strengthen the social sustainability of urban areas and address disparities within them, the **United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development** suggests that identifying new opportunities to scale up job creation and greater investment, especially in slum areas, will provide sustainable solutions that address the inter-linkages of socio-spatial challenges. The provision of adequate and affordable housing, infrastructure and basic services, including in education, health, water and sanitation requires an integrated approach from governments and local authorities in order to mitigate the coercive effects of spatial change. Promoting social inclusion, such as through providing affordable housing for youth and older persons in urban areas, including persons with disabilities in urban planning and establishing indigenous' peoples centres to address their medical needs, will ensure that vulnerable populations and marginalized groups are included in sustainable urbanization processes at all levels of society.

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHT: REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

The Belgrade Land Development Agency, in cooperation with UNOPS, has implemented the Belgrade Action Plan for Romani relocation. The partnership has successfully relocated Romani families from living in informal settlements to newly established communities. Approximately 12 families have been relocated to Orlovsko settlement and 15 families to location Jabucki rit. This integrated approach has enabled the government to combat poverty, prevent social exclusion and address various cross-cutting issues of spatial change, such as adequate housing, employment, and education.

The **United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** also identifies various means in which to ensure that an integrated framework for sustainable urbanization is inclusive and supports the principles of non-discrimination and equality. According to the input received from OHCHR, sustainable urbanization must ensure the free, active and meaningful participation of the beneficiaries of development in order to sustainable goals. Sustainable urbanization must also address the root causes that violate the principles of non-discrimination and equality and incorporate strategies for the political and

economic empowerment of the people, especially the most vulnerable and the most marginalized. Implementing policies that promote social inclusion will thus ensure equal access to quality services and infrastructure and foster the integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

In many African countries the ability of cities and towns to act as engines of national economic growth is often hampered by weak rural-urban linkages and lack of mechanisms that promotes the social inclusion of vulnerable populations such as the urban poor. According to the **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)**, the immense rural-urban divide requires an urgent need to transform existing planning and basic services from facilitating urban inequity to fostering inclusiveness, sustainability and prosperity. Urban inequity and the vast amount of informal and unregulated settlements can produce a number of adverse economic, social and environmental effects such as increases in land degradation, uneven economic growth, and urban unemployment. The ECA stresses, that adopting a Transformative National Urban Policy that acknowledges the power of urbanization as an integrated process will propel economic growth and reduce poverty in rural and urban areas. The input received from **Burkina Faso** provides an example in which the Government has implemented a number of integrated development policies that have contributed to an improvement of the livelihoods of populations residing in urban areas. The Urban Development Projects (PDU 1 and 2) and the project for the Improvement of the Living Conditions of Urban Centres (PACVU or PDU 3) have greatly strengthened the provision of services to local communities, particularly in the area of sanitation, in the cities of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. Such inclusive policies and urban planning structures is thus a contributing factor in strengthening rural-urban linkages and decreasing the urban divide.

Crime

Urban fragmentation often exacerbates the vulnerabilities that undermine human development, such as poverty, income inequality and social marginalization, and in-directly creates an enabling environment for criminal and drug-related activities to thrive. The correlation between combating crime and drugs and achieving sustainable development is increasingly evident. Intensifying efforts in providing access to adequate health-care, education facilities, and social services targeting vulnerable groups prevalent in urban areas can assist in offsetting the certain spatial risk factors that can heighten the presence of criminal and drug-related activities. The **United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice** has advocated for peaceful, non-violent and inclusive societies, based on the respect for human rights. Promoting inclusive societies through maximizing consultations across all sectors of society on crime prevention strategies and plans, can effectively formulate an integrated approach to combating crime and addressing the inter-linkages of sustainable development. The **UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs** has also called upon Member States to ensure that drug demand reduction measures are effectively integrated within the provision of public and private health, education and social services. Sustainable urbanization can thus potentially function as an effective tool for mainstreaming

crime and drug prevention objectives in socio-economic development plans to ensure that the needs of vulnerable populations are effectively targeted across all sectors of society and that the various cross-cutting issues of sustainable development is properly addressed.

Urban Spatial Planning

Formulating and implementing urban spatial planning strategies to counter the coercive effects of spatial change, the drivers of which often lie outside the control of the local government, can be an effective means for governments to produce an integrated response to social inclusiveness, environmental sustainability and economic productivity challenges of sustainable urbanization. Integrated urban spatial planning approaches can address the fragmentation of social groups in urban areas and address cross-cutting issues such as inequality and labour market polarization, through ensuring greater policy coherence and cooperation amongst the different tiers of government as well as across sectors.

Many Member States have provided examples of urban spatial planning policies and tools to confront such challenges. For example, the government of **Montenegro** adopted the Spatial Plan of Montenegro, which calls for a cross-sectoral approach to provide solutions related to the use of resources, development priorities, and control of other spatial developments. The general goals of the Spatial Plan are related to furthering the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development through mitigating regional inequities in economic and social development and scaling up development in urban and rural areas in accordance with their potentials and limitations. The **Slovak Republic** has also implemented spatial planning to cope with the increasing gap in income structure between rich and poor. According to the government of the Slovak Republic, spatial planning is a key instrument for establishing a long-term, sustainable framework for social, territorial and economic development, reflecting also on environmental aspects of urbanization.

With the aim of achieving balanced spatial sustainability in relation to rational use and preservation of land, sea and underwater space, the **Republic of Croatia** has adopted necessary spatial planning documentation. The Spatial Planning Act in particular, is an integrated approach to spatial planning that allows for the realization and protection of public and individual interests, defines strategic investments of importance to the government, and assists in the sustainable development of overall space. Overall, implementing spatial planning programs can advance the formulation of integrated approaches across different levels of government.

INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

BACKGROUND

Successful sustainable urbanization depends on setting up integrated institutional arrangements and mechanisms that facilitate the governance, administration and management of urbanization processes and urban centres. Responsive and accountable leadership, human resources that are capable in all aspects of governance, administrative and managerial mechanisms are essential in order to implement policies and programmes efficiently and effectively. The emergence of different urban governance models and planning tools can mitigate the risks of urbanization and may produce innovative and unexpected approaches to sustainability. Integrated approaches to effectively converge different inter-governmental processes and implementing existing institutional frameworks, can serve as a means to strengthen the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The following inputs from Member States and the UN system provides examples of ways in which to confront the varying institutional challenges, such as governance, implementing effective institutional mechanisms and adopting multilateral approaches to scale up sustainable urbanization. The inputs received from Member States and the UN system identify ways in which to enhance capacity building of governance structures, promoting inclusive participation and facilitating collaboration between many actors in order to achieve sustainable development.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Systems of Governance

Urban planning through the local government level is dependent upon collaborative forms of governance in order to effectively implement cohesive programs to enhance the sustainability of rural-urban centres. Such emerging governance structures for sustainable urbanization includes: participatory models involving municipal decision making processes; centralized models of urban governance; inter-municipal or regional models structured around voluntary or mandatory collaboration between local authorities and inclusive mayor-city council models that advances the collective public influence on urban development. Inputs from Member States illustrate a range of specific governance models and planning tools that are adopted to produce a variety of solutions to the complex challenges of urbanization and at the same time, integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The input received from **Spain**, identifies how the government devises and implements urban planning within the decentralized structure of the Spanish state and how responsibilities are distributed across three levels of government: local, regional and national. Responsibility for the design of urban policy lies with the local authorities, although in the context of regional urbanization legislation and also basic national legislation. Thus, the local authorities draw up urban planning, such as Master Plans (*Planes Generales de Ordenación Urbana*), which must be in line with the corresponding regional urbanization legislation and basic national

legislation on land, building and urban rehabilitation, regeneration and renewal. The national and regional governments also have diverse responsibilities for such matters as roads, coastal areas, water, railways, ports, airports, etc. that have an impact on urban planning. Effective governance for urbanization actions therefore calls for the involvement of all three levels of public administration. This inclusive governance approach to urban planning is one example of how to enhance collaboration on sustainable urbanization.

The **People's Republic of China's** centralized urban governance model provides that the national government plays a central role in urban management and planning, assuming the responsibility of implementing urban development objectives. The government of China is actively promoting institutional reform in the process of urbanization and focusing on strengthening the effective management of urbanization. The government set up the National Development and Reform Commission "to promote the work of the Office of urbanization," responsible for policy formulation, piloting, liaison and coordination, and international cooperation. China's National Development and Reform Commission will work with relevant departments to further the introduction of the household registration system, supporting urban investment and financing mechanisms, and will focus on identifying key issues and promote successful models of sustainable urbanization. Meanwhile, the central government will supervise the preparation of the introduction of local government planning and guidance of urbanization procedures. The varying forms of governance structures across the world thus provide valuable insight to the differences in approaching sustainable urbanization in developed and developing countries.

Integrated Models

Introducing an integrated approach to urban development policy promotes synergies and "win-win" solutions between sectors, thus maximizing the effectiveness of policy delivery. Cross-sector collaboration is essential in order to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development and produce innovative solutions to the various cross-cutting challenges to sustainable urbanization. Engaging in multi-stakeholder partnerships and forums that facilitate the collaboration of multiple actors is crucial to devising a holistic approach towards a sustainable urbanization framework and a Post-2015 development agenda.

There are many examples of which Member States and organizations within the UN system have adopted integrated approaches to support action planning, to enhance cooperation and collaboration across sectors and to produce tangible results. For example, the UNCRD has developed an integrated regional development planning (IRDP) system, which is an instrument utilized to attain sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth with sustainable organization of natural resources and ecosystems. IRDP has a multidisciplinary and integral approach, which promotes participatory planning to enhance better governance mechanisms to address urban and rural linkages, a balanced distribution of population and economic activities in a spatial context to attain equity, and social cohesion. It is a process through which communities enter into partnership with local or city governments and international as well as national organizations to reduce poverty, inequality, unemployment, and to improve the quality of human life.

Another example of integrated urban planning is the “Delegation for Sustainable Cities” formulated by the government of **Sweden**. During 2009 -2012, the government of Sweden implemented the “Delegation for Sustainable Cities” initiative, which gave support to various types of investments with the common goal to decrease the negative impacts of climate change as well as to highlight other important dimensions of sustainability, from a more social or economic perspective. The Delegation for Sustainable Cities mentioned above was launched to address the three dimensions of sustainability in urbanisation and to show and share positive experiences and relevant knowledge to a large public. The Delegation consisted of actors from different sectors and with different roles, e.g. academia, private sector, national agencies, local governments, interest/lobbying organisations, housing companies, environmental specialists etc. The Delegation for Sustainable Cities successfully supported a number of upgrading-projects in such housing areas and heavily decreased energy consumption, which have been central features of the initiatives that have been given financial support. Overall integrated approaches are a means to effectively and efficiently produce innovative solutions that address the various inter-linkages between the three dimensions of sustainable urbanization.

Institutional Frameworks

In addition to implementing integrated approaches and applying varying forms of institutional governance mechanisms, existing institutional mechanisms and intergovernmental processes promote guiding principles to mainstream sustainability within decision-making processes. The **UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration** has elaborated tools to enhance the development of capacities for the achievement of national and local development objectives.

Various ILO conventions, recommendations and other instruments also provide a sound basis for Member States to refer to in order to strengthen social protection, protect worker’s rights, and promote social dialogue on issues cross-cutting issues to sustainable urbanization, such as unemployment. ILO programmes such as the Strategies and Tools against Social Exclusion and Poverty (STEP) and ILO’s International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour can support Member State initiatives to address the multi-dimensional challenges of sustainable urbanization. Finally, the

OHCHR provides concrete guidance on ways to ensure that human rights norms and principles are integrating in urbanization processes by all actors. In particular, the “Guiding Principles on security of tenure for the urban poor” and the “Basic principles and guidelines on development-based evictions and displacement,” can be utilized as guidelines for Member

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHT: WHO

In 2010 the WHO Centre for Health Development (Kobe Center) convened a Global Forum on Urbanization and Health with over 85 countries, their mayors, Governors, and national officials as well as WHO and UN-Habitat. The WHO Kobe Call to Action called upon governments, cities, civil society, and the UN to act to uncover and address urban health inequalities to build healthier cities; show leadership by including health in all urban policies through intersectoral action; and use effective mechanisms for community participation in urban policy and planning.

States to confront the demographic challenges of sustainable urbanization and advance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Overall, the inputs received from Member States and the UN system on various solutions, innovations and integrated approaches to scale up sustainable urbanization provides a concrete basis for fruitful discussions to take place at the Integration Meeting on the 27-29th of May 2014. The following represents the key recommendations, derived from the various Member State and UN system inputs, to mainstream a sustainable urbanization framework within the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote creativity, research and innovation, cultural diversity and social inclusion, as well as integrated management of natural and cultural resources and assets as drivers for sustainable urban development
- Identify specific public policy opportunities to foster multi-sectoral action for mutually beneficial results
- Strengthen capacities to share knowledge, match demands with scalable solutions around urban development, and foster partnerships through south-south and triangular cooperation
- Integrate the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable urbanization through harnessing the potential of urban economies; improving access and quality of public goods and services; and focus on production, distribution and consumption patterns
- The UN should scale up resources to better respond to Africa's sustainable urbanization challenges
- Mainstream crime prevention and community safety objectives into development and urbanization policy frameworks
- Sustainable urbanization framework should incorporate a rights-based model to ensure accountability and transparency
- Rural economic diversification needs to build on strengthened rural-urban linkages