

WUF9 HIGHLIGHTS SATURDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2018

Delegates and participants continued their discussions on Saturday at the ninth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF9). Two high-level roundtables convened, on 'Urbanization and development: investing in the transformative force of cities' in the morning, and on 'An integrated territorial approach to sustainable development' in the afternoon. Several special sessions, dialogues and side events also took place on various themes, including on youth employment, urban labs, affordable housing, and access to basic services.

HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLES

URBANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT: INVESTING IN THE TRANSFORMATIVE FORCE OF CITIES: Isidoro Santana, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development, Dominican Republic, and Hajia Alima Mahama, Minister for Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana, co-chaired the session, and Julie Gichuru, news anchor, Kenya, acted as moderator. Naison Mutizwa Mangiza, UN-Habitat, presented the organization's action framework, through which it assists member states in implementing the New Urban Agenda (NUA) in areas of policy, legislation, planning, economic development and local action. Santana described his country's challenges, which, he noted, are typical of small island developing states, such as vulnerability to climate change, and the prevalence of informal settlements. He explained that only two levels of government exist in his country – national and local – and that several policies now focus on empowering governments at the 'intermediary' level, and on increasing resilience to environmental factors. Mahama welcomed urbanization as 'a positive force' and highlighted Ghana's policies for leveraging the potential of industry as well as for developing synergies with the Sahel region. Referring to the Roundtable theme, Corina Cretu, European Commission, noted that investing in the transformative force of cities means empowering them. She outlined the EU's Urban Agenda, which takes an integrated approach based on 'equal partnerships' with diverse stakeholders, tangible action plans, and a limited set of priorities. Minata Samate Cessouma, African Union, said that cities are a cornerstone of the African continent's structural transformation, and referred to the African Union's Agenda 2063. She argued that the large scale of the informal economy is one of the greatest governance challenges faced by African cities, and described various pathways, such as micro-financing, that can help with formalizing various sectors.

The World Bank highlighted the challenge to provide coordinated infrastructure development while countries are still at an early stage of urbanization, and the need for two billion more jobs by 2050 for rapidly rising urban populations. China highlighted its rural vitalization strategy in smaller cities and towns around major urban centres for 'livable, workable and eco-friendly' development. Magdalena García Hernández,

Director, MIRA, Mexico, stressed that productivity also depends on the unpaid reproductive and care work of women, drawing attention to 'the solidarity economy'.

Participants made suggestions, including: producing a 'state of the world's cities' report, urban leadership training, knowledge exchange among cities, promoting gender equity in public leadership, and ensuring accountability at all levels of government, including the fight against corruption. The moderator concluded by emphasizing the need to include the young in the sustainable urbanization process.

INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: Partha Mukhopadhyay, Centre for Policy Research, India, moderated the session, and Ana Paula Chantre Luna de Carvalho, Minister of Spatial Planning and Housing, Angola, delivered the keynote address. Eugenie Birch, University of Pennsylvania, described the integrated territorial approach as a portfolio of approaches to reduce urban disparities, saying such approaches have existed for over 100 years.

Panelists from Ecuador, Rwanda, China, France, Turkey, Germany, Indonesia, Algeria, Mauritania, the Huairou Commission, World Bank, Commonwealth Association of Planners, and UN-Habitat presented approaches in their respective countries and organizations to promote integrated territorial development. Shi Nan, Urban Planning Society, China, noted policies that have capped in-migration to Beijing and are directing investment toward surrounding areas so as to reduce pollution and resource pressures on the capital. Nicolas Buchoud, Grand Paris Alliance for Metropolitan Development, identified spatial inequalities – 'drinking margaritas upstairs while refugees are sleeping on the street' – as a challenge to be met by city-based community consultations, trust building, and redevelopments such as 'Les Grands Voisins,' which is promoting social, economic and culturally diverse activities at the site of an old hospital. The World Bank warned that spatial disparities affect national unity and create conflicts, and recommended moving from sector-specific solutions to area-specific investments that benefit local people.

The panelists, highlighting the social exclusion found within cities, called for citizen participation, to reflect and integrate on-the-ground realities in planning. Many speakers underscored the need for cooperation and amongst all levels of government, as well as sectoral integration.

Marcelo Cabrera, Mayor of Cuenca, Ecuador, drew attention to his city's encouragement of participatory planning through assemblies where all citizens can vote. Kundhavi Kadiresan, Food and Agriculture of the UN, called for better urban-rural linkages and highlighted the importance of understanding food and nutrition security in both urban and rural areas, noting that the nature of the issue varies in different locations.

Ani Dasgupta, World Resources Institute, presented three tools his organization uses to assist policymakers. The tools enable integration: of climate, sustainable development and NUA goals; among sectors; and between local governments. Some panelists added that coherence between the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs) and NUA can only be achieved when policies are co-produced with citizens, which requires political will.

Participants raised the need to bridge the difference between long-term objectives and short-term political goals, and highlighted disparities between day and night urban populations.

In closing, participants heard a video message from Ilona Raugze of the EU ESPON programme for EU cohesion. Raugze recommended promoting the territorial dimension in development starting with small, bottom-up initiatives that can engage different actors.

Panelists summarized their contributions, highlighting the importance of: people's participation; data collection and analysis; and the horizontal and vertical integration of governance structures and planning processes. Buchoud noted that the soon-to-be-completed Casablanca-Tangier high-speed rail project may serve to demonstrate how to overcome some of the constraints to territorial development as it is 'at the junction of worlds.'

SPECIAL SESSIONS

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,

PRODUCTIVITY AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT: Gulelat Kebede, The New School, New York, moderated the session, and Ananda Weliwita, UN-Habitat, made opening remarks. Panelists from the International Labour Organization (ILO), Interloc Development, The New School, the Municipal Council of Nicaragua and Cardiff University called for a broader understanding of productivity that takes into account social and environmental implications, and for harnessing urban citizens' capacities to achieve a variety of broadly-defined productivity objectives. All acknowledged the important role of local actors in development and decent job creation, with many underscoring the importance of organizing workers, and of creative partnerships between workers and all levels of governments. Alison Brown, Cardiff University, emphasized that economic inclusion is crucial to job promotion and local economic development.

Edmundo Werna, ILO, stated that labor-intensive employment must be available at the local, not just national level, and noted the risks to urban areas from youth unemployment. Michael Cohen, The New School, suggested that local governments generate indicators for the NUA on issues of special interest to them, rather than wait for the UN to provide common indicators. Yoel Siegel, Interloc Development, underscored the need to leverage resources and assets within cities, and Helen Arlines Toruno, Municipal Council of Nicaragua, highlighted that women entrepreneurs in her country have gained a voice in local government by organizing themselves.

Audience members highlighted the lack of jobs for youth and employment challenges caused by 'the machine economy' and called for a paradigm shift to address these issues.

URBAN LABS FOR URBAN EXTENSION AND

URBAN RENEWAL: Fernando de Mello Franco, São Paulo, Brazil, moderated this session, which focused on strengthening partnerships and scaling up the results achieved by urban labs in implementing the NUA, and ensuring cities become more inclusive.

Rogier van den Berg, UN-Habitat, in a keynote address, described the work done in UN-Habitat's Urban Labs initiative, including planned urban extension, city center transformation, and urban regeneration. He emphasized the importance of evidence-based planning and understanding the real challenges, including the regional context. He highlighted examples of this from refugee settlement work in Kenya and the planning of the Future Saudi Cities Programme.

A panel of city planners, academics, politicians, financiers and urban practitioners shared their experiences, reflecting on the complex challenges facing urban leaders, including: ensuring participation at all levels and 'leaving no one

behind;' accommodating rapid urbanization in a low-resource environment; dealing with a global migration crisis driven by environmental factors and conflict; flooding in urban areas; and educating a new generation of city planners faced with unprecedented layers of complexity and uncertainty.

To address these complexities, they highlighted needs for: projects that end poverty and address both wealth and gender inequalities; projects that are 'bankable' and implementable; stakeholder involvement at all levels; priority setting, starting with 'low-hanging fruit;' private-sector and financier involvement from the start; and a governance structure that outlines exact resource responsibilities.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL: Christophe Lalande, UN-Habitat, introduced moderator Horacio Terraza, World Bank. Joan Clos, former UN-Habitat Executive Director, delivered introductory remarks, during which he said that lack of access to affordable housing is a symptom of global inequality. Clos argued that urbanization implies compact cities, and that affordable housing must be near the city and close to jobs, rather than in city outskirts. Panelists described their countries' main challenges, gave examples of good practices, and proposed frameworks to conceptualize affordable housing. One speaker suggested affordable housing can be addressed through innovative thinking, governmental policies and public-private partnerships, while another suggested that affordable housing ought to add value by promoting economic growth, in addition to being socially inclusive and environmentally sound. Several interventions underlined that governments need to implement a public regulatory framework in order to finance affordable housing at a large scale rather than through a few scarce projects. One panelist, speaking about Mexico, stated that corruption should be eradicated as a precondition for affordable housing, lamenting that housing was largely managed by a corrupt private sector in his country. In concluding remarks, panelists pondered how affordable housing can contribute to the SDGs, and Clos stressed that housing affordability should be embedded in the process of urbanization, as opposed to being 'an afterthought.'

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES FOR ALL: Arjun Thapan, Waterlinks, India, moderated the session. In two consecutive panel discussions, representatives from companies and organizations in the basic services sector in India, Algeria, Argentina, the Netherlands, Malaysia, Japan and China discussed approaches to measuring and delivering access to basic services.

In opening remarks, Zamri Fazillah Salleh, Malaysia, stressed the importance of planning to ensure adequate service delivery, and outlined his government's new urban development initiative to create a quality living environment for people at all levels and ages, including through providing environmental services, education and recreation facilities in public spaces, and access to fresh water.

In the first panel, speakers discussed: how basic services can reach the 'furthest first,' thus focusing on the most vulnerable urban households; mobility challenges and 'smart transport' technologies, including electric vehicles, bicycle sharing and smart vehicle innovations in China; and the application of technologies such as remote sensing and water point mapping to monitor services.

In the second panel, a speaker from Argentina described urban expansion patterns that lead to socio-spatial fragmentation within and between cities, and highlighted consensus building as a key strategy for tackling the phenomenon of structural poverty. Panelists highlighted: partnerships between service providers in the transport sector; institutional strengthening at local and national levels; partnerships among different departments, and between city authorities and public operators; the challenges water utilities face, including intermittent supply, water loss and low coverage; and zero-based and integrated approaches to resource use. Participants lamented the dearth of financial resources to overcome the challenges.