

WUF11 SESSION CONCEPT NOTE

ONE UNE ROUNDTABLE

United Nations support to the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda at country level

1. List of Partners contributing to the Session:

- UN-Habitat – co chair
- United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) – co-chair
- ECOSOC President
- UN Resident Coordinators
- European Commission
- Global Task Force on Local and Regional Governments
- Programme Countries
- UN Entities: UNDP, Regional Economic Commissions, UNEP, WHO, ILO, IOM, FAO, UNICEF

2. Key words

Country level impact, Implementation of New Urban Agenda, UN systemwide strategy on sustainable urban development, UN resident coordinator system, UNCT (United Nations Country Team), UN reform

3. Objectives of the session

Based on a renewed mandate to strengthen UN support to Member States as emerged in the wake of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, ECOSOC special meeting, and the 2nd Quadrennial Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda, UN-Habitat and DCO have started to craft a Joint Initiative on Sustainable Urban Development. As part of the design process, the Roundtable aims to further discuss country level programming on urban development to assist Member States in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. And in particular it will:

1. Engage the whole system in shaping of the Joint initiative.
2. Review and discuss country level programming on sustainable urban development as reflected in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs).
3. Identify poverty reduction, climate action, crisis response, and other critical areas where urban dimensions are relevant for enhanced impact
4. Explore modalities to advance the joint initiative and strengthen country level capacity to ensure impact of urban programming on sustainable development.

4. Brief Summary

In 2019, following the adoption of the New Urban Agenda in 2016, the Chief Executives Board (CEB) endorsed the [UN systemwide strategy for sustainable urban development](#). The strategy outlines ways the UN system can better support countries in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) which advances a whole-of-system approach including inter-agency coordination at global, regional, and country levels to further sustainable urban development.

Since then, at global level, UN entities have made progress promoting the systemwide strategy with numerous urban initiatives. These include the UN Task Force on Future of Cities, the Local 2030

Coalition for the Decade of Action, the SG's Action Plan on displacement, among others. Several entities are actively working with UN-Habitat to develop strategies to fulfil the urban dimensions of their respective mandates. At regional level, the UN system has elevated urban issues in Regional Collaborative Platforms and Regional Forums for Sustainable Development often engaging mayors in the development of Voluntary Local Reviews of SDGs implementation at the local level.

To date, the UN system has made only limited progress at the country level to implement the systemwide strategy. Preliminary analysis demonstrate that urban issues are found in the Common Country Analysis which underpins the UNSDCF. Nearly all countries recognize the need to promote urban development as means to achieve strategic outcome areas. The analysis also demonstrates that several signed UNSDCFs do include urban issues as strategic outcomes. However, UN country teams lack models to link urban policy and planning to poverty eradication, equality, economic transformation, climate action, to crisis reduction and recovery, among others.

The One UN Roundtable at WUF 11 will build upon the recent review of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the engagement of the United Nations, stakeholders, and Member States at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the same topic held on 28 April 2028.

The session will present the UNDCO-UN-Habitat Joint Initiative which aims to enhance country level programming on urban development to assist Member States in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda for the achievement of the SDGs.

The Joint Initiative will also take stock of the analysis on current efforts to integrate housing and urban development in Common Country Analyses (CCAs) and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) and document entry-points, models, and ways of working, leading to inform the CCAs and UNSDCF guidance in support UN country teams.

Finally, the Joint Initiative shall also seek to enhance how UNCTs engage with local governments and civil society associations through the facilitation of multistakeholder and multi-governance platforms and develop cross-sectoral, systems approach to programming with a view to leverage joint programming leading to the mobilization of different sources of financing. By bringing the UN System together with key stakeholders, the session will be an important step in the design of the Joint Initiative.

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5. Guiding Questions for Discussions

- In what ways can country level, multi-agency programming on sustainable urban development contribute to UNSDCF outcomes on poverty reduction, social equality, economic transformation, climate action, or crisis reduction and recovery?
- What are some of the ways UN country teams can utilize joint urban programming to facilitate multistakeholder platforms and multi-level governance mechanisms to engage national governments, local governments, professional associations, business leaders, and grassroots organizations?
- How can UN country teams leverage joint urban programming to mobilize domestic and international, private and public investments to finance the SDGs?
- What leadership roles a Resident Coordinator could play to promote multi-stakeholder approaches and utilise urbanization as a driver for advancing Agenda 2030, and what support they should have access to in order to perform the leadership roles?

6. Expected Outcomes and Impact

The Roundtable will set in motion the system-wide discussion on the country level programming on sustainable urbanization and in particular will:

- Take stock of current sustainable urban partnerships, models and ways of working for country level programming on sustainable urban development
- Explore how UN country teams, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinators, can further their engagement with local governments and civil society/associations including through the facilitation of multistakeholder and multi-governance platforms
- Identify strategic entry points to leverage joint urban programming for the mobilization of different sources of financing

6. Session Format:

The session will provide the space for presentations focusing on:

- the overall design of the Joint Programming Initiative (by UN-Habitat and DCO)
- the review of the state of country level urban programming across the UN system level (by UN-Habitat)
- the advances in local governments and other stakeholders engagement (by UCLG or local government representatives), and
- the perspective of donor and programming countries (EU, member states)

A moderated discussion involving Resident Coordinators and UN entities principals (or their representatives) will address the 3 key questions regarding: inter-agencies and multi-sectoral coordination/integration; stakeholders engagement; and mobilization of resources as they relate and can be enhanced by urban programming.