

CONCEPT NOTE

12TH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM (WUF12)

SIDE EVENT ON PURSUING THE URBAN AGENDA IN GHANA: THE SUCCESSSES AND CHALLENGES

6TH NOVEMBER 2024, CAIRO, EGYPT

BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

Urbanisation is a global phenomenon, with cities serving as hubs of innovation, economic growth, and social development. Ghana, a rapidly urbanising nation, is witnessing significant shifts in its urban landscape. With over half of the population residing in urban areas, Ghana faces unique opportunities and challenges in pursuing a sustainable urban agenda.

The adoption of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) at Habitat III in 2016 was a pivotal moment for cities across the world, including Ghana, emphasising inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban development. In alignment with global frameworks like the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities), Ghana is tasked with ensuring its cities are safe, resilient, inclusive, and sustainable.

Ghana has institutionalised and organised Ghana Urban Forum (GUF) since 2009, as Platform that serves a policy dialogue and deliberations relating to urban development and management resulting in evidenced based decision making and policy formulation as well as creation of resilient, livable, safe and sustainable cities, towns and communities.

Prior to participating in the upcoming 12th Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF12) in Cairo, the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development hosted the 2024 Ghana Urban Forum, under the theme: ***"Nurturing Roots, Growing Futures: Combining Policies and Partnerships for Urban Resilience and Transformation."***

The WUF 12 scheduled to take place in Cairo, Egypt in November 2024, presents a unique opportunity for nations around the globe to come together and exchange knowledge, experiences, and best practices in pursuit of sustainable urbanisation. Under the theme ***"It All Starts at Home: Local Actions for Sustainable Cities and Communities,"*** the Forum aims to highlight the crucial role of local actions in achieving orderly, resilient and sustainable cities and towns and by extension people-centred smart cities. This marks a historic occasion as WUF12 convenes on the African continent for the first time since its inception in 2002.

In line with Ghana's commitment to localising the New Urban Agenda and advancing local actions towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11, the Government of Ghana, through the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development in partnership with the World Bank, European Union and GIZ will host a side event during the WUF12.

The event will also demonstrate Ghana's commitment to sustainable urban development and management and its vision for the future of its urban areas within the context of critical global policy frameworks such as the SDGs, New Urban Agenda, AU Agenda 2063 and the climate change and disaster risk reduction related Protocols and Agreements.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the side event at WUF12 is to share critical milestones of Ghana's urban development and future of urban development in Ghana.

Discussions during the Side Event will offer an invaluable opportunity to share insights, experiences and challenges, as well as the major strides made in the urban space. It will be a key moment for international collaboration, experience, and knowledge exchange on sustainable urbanisation, reinforcing Ghana's dedication to contributing to the global dialogue on shaping the future of urban spaces.

SCOPE

The Side Event fits within the framework of *Dialogue 3 - Stronger together* – of the WUF12 Agenda, which aims to address how local realities and solutions shape global agendas through partnerships.

The Side Event will focus on initiatives and interventions that showcase concrete, tangible and positive impact combined with a space to amplify the voices of all, with an emphasis on children and youth, women, persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

The Event is being organised under the theme “*Pursuing the Urban Agenda in Ghana: The Successes and Challenges*”. The Event will cover the following discussion areas:

- a. Ghana's urban development journey: highlighting the successes and challenges
- b. Addressing emerging urban challenges with a focus on building resilient and sustainable cities
- c. Fostering and strengthening partnerships and collaborations for a coordinated response
- d. Integrating frameworks and local actions for urban resilience and transformation

METHODOLOGY

The Side Event will consist of presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions. It will also include the dissemination of knowledge materials and audio visuals that showcase urban advancement and desired future in key areas such as infrastructure development, mobility, spatial planning, housing, smart and green, and child-friendly cities.

CONCLUSION

The Side Event at the Twelfth Session of the World Urban Forum will serve as a platform to foster collaboration and dialogue on Ghana's urban development. By sharing experiences and best practices, we hope to contribute to the global dialogue on sustainable urban development and forge partnerships for a more sustainable urban future.