

World Urban Campaign: Better Cities, Better Life

Revised Discussion Note

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN?

The World Urban Campaign is a platform for member States and Habitat partners to elevate policies and share practical tools for sustainable urbanization. It provides governments and partner networks an advocacy instrument to articulate a shared vision for a better urban future and to advance the urban agenda within their respective constituencies. This applies as much to organizations of the urban poor as it does to associations of local authorities, business forums, youth associations, media outlets, professional associations, women's groups, Parliamentarians, ministerial conferences, and inter-governmental bodies. The Campaign in this way seeks to position sustainable urbanization as a priority issue of the international community and as a national policy priority for individual member States.

WHY ESTABLISH A WORLD URBAN CAMPAIGN?

The second and third decades of the 21st Century are an unprecedented moment in human history. The population of the world during this period will move from 50% to 70% urban. The movement is irreversible. Lacking requisite resources and policy priorities, most city and national governments will be ill-equipped to meet the needs of the urban future. An estimated two billion people will reside in informal settlements and slums. Informal and poorly planned settlement will be the dominant urban form in cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Most people living in urban areas will lack adequate shelter and basic services. Few will be recognized as urban citizens. Fewer still will realize their productive potential.

The urban challenge of the 21st Century is not a well known narrative, let alone a coherent set of policy options, tools and practical actions. Major motion pictures such as *The Constant Gardener* (Africa) and *Slum Dog Millionaire* (Asia) offer a glimpse of this phenomenon but they lack a sense of history and relative progress. Tens of thousands of cities and towns are each in their own way grappling with how to manage rapid urban growth, be it in the form of urban sprawl and urban decay, or slum formation. Some are achieving success against great odds. Member States, again, in relative isolation, are beginning to promote national policies to make municipal and local action possible. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of organizations, are setting precedents, developing tools and offering policy options to meet the urban challenge. Yet the actions of cities, governments and organizations are disparate. Their work is not recognized or assessed and the collective impact of their actions is not realized.

WHAT ARE MESSAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN?

The Campaign will promote a positive vision for sustainable urbanization developed through consultation with cities, governments and Habitat partners. Substantively, it will describe the components of such a vision, including access to housing and land, infrastructure and basic services, and finance. The messages of

the Campaign will also include a set of guiding principles that guide efforts to improve cities. These concern stronger citizen participation, local government and private sector investment well as national policies that support these processes for sustainable urbanization. Importantly, the Campaign will offer messages that are tailored for countries experiencing different levels of social economic development and different forms of urbanization. Emphasis will be placed on what is working and why it is working. Through the dissemination, adoption and replication of best technical, institutional and business practices as well as better sectoral policies, the Campaign's impact will be assessed in part in terms of better policies implemented at all levels of government and increased budgets for sustainable urban development programs which together should have a positive impact on improving the quality of urban life for the poor.

HOW WILL THE CAMPAIGN WORK?

UN-HABITAT will coordinate the Campaign in the same manner that it supports the World Urban Forum. It will provide a platform for member States, local authorities and Habitat partners to design and apply advocacy instruments, including the Campaign messages, principles, public policy advice, and practical tool kits for a wide range of activities such as organizing local and national platforms, documenting good practice, fund raising, sharing knowledge and information. A Steering Committee will be formed from these constituencies to design, guide and monitor the performance of the Campaign.

The goal of the Campaign is to build ownership of all major stakeholder groups represented on the Steering Committee such that the value of the Campaign will be the ability of the partners to use it. In consultation with the partners, UN-HABITAT will identify the line between advocacy and knowledge management to ensure all partner networks can use the Campaign to access relevant policy options, tools, and best practices and each other for value added expertise and experience.

Based on discussions of the Pre-Steering Committee Meeting held in conjunction with UN Habitat's 22nd Governing Council Meeting in Nairobi, the following are some of the priorities for the Campaign expressed by stakeholders and future Steering Committee members. These are illustrative areas of interest and members will be reflecting more thoroughly on the WUC priorities in preparation for the first Steering Committee Meeting.

1. The characteristics of a promising or successful campaign include: fewer messages and those that are adopted should be brief, to the point and well-crafted. Adequate funding for a multi-dimensional campaign is a must.

2. The Campaign should emphasize the Positive Role of Cities and Urbanization for the Future Economic Growth and Welfare of Communities and Countries

- Sustainable urban development guided by best technical, institutional and business practices has enormous pay-off to economic growth and quality of life improvement and should be viewed as a positive phenomenon.
- The multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral nature of sustainable urbanization must be recognized by taking a holistic and integrated approach to the

definition and interventions for sustainable urbanization. There is frustration among urban professionals and managers that urban issues have become too segmented by sectors (housing, transport, health etc) even though best practices and policies are developed sectorally.

- The Campaign should provide a 'full package' of best practices and policies for sustainable urbanization by developing a multi-sectoral tool kit for advocacy and development activities.

3. The Campaign should be the umbrella support structure for a network of networks and link up with other worldwide urban campaigns and franchise its messages to this constituency

- The WUC is a resource to the partner stakeholders who constitute a network of network of urban professionals numbering over 1.5 million. As such, the WUC needs to have a grassroots perspective in reaching this large constituency with best practices and policies to ensure impact on the ground in sustainable urbanization.
- The WUC should seek to link up with other planned and existing sustainable urbanization campaigns, such as the National Urban Campaign of Uganda.

4. The WUC needs to adopt timely issues and approaches in order to be relevant to partners and to operate within appropriate contexts.

- The Campaign needs to make the role of cities and sustainable urbanization in mitigating global climate change its highest priorities in the first year. The Campaign should project UN Habitat in a pivotal role in implementing the resolutions of the COP15 on sustainable urbanization.
- UN Habitat should strongly advocate for a General Assembly segment on urbanization in which the WUC would feature prominently.
- The Campaign should play a role in disseminating best practices and policies on the issues of internally displaced persons, urban services delivery, land tenure and sustainable urbanization.
- The Campaign must have a pro-poor focus in urban areas.

HOW WILL UN-HABITAT SERVE THE CAMPAIGN?

In addition to coordinating and facilitating the Campaign, UN-HABITAT will harmonize the way it projects the Campaign through its various external outreach instruments. These include: World Urban Forum, the Global Report on Human Settlements, Global and Regional State of Cities Reports, the State of the Water in Cities Report, *Urban World Magazine*, and World Habitat Day. Value added information and tools will be conveyed through various Habitat Partners Networks such as the Habitat Business Forum, Habitat Professionals Forum, Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, Habitat Youth Campaign, and SUDNET, among others.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS AS OUTLINED DURING THE PRE-STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING WITH PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS PRIOR TO THE FIRST STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING IN JUNE-JULY 2009?

1. UN Habitat will undertake the following actions by 5 June 2009 for review and comment by Steering Committee members:

- Develop a draft charter for the WUC Steering Committee;
- Develop draft terms of reference for the WUC Steering Committee;
- Identify the location for the first Steering Committee meeting to be held in late June – early July, 2009;
- Confirm the membership of the Steering Committee; and
- Circulate the WUC Strategy Paper.

2. Steering Committee members will undertake to:

- Better define their organizational priorities for the WUC; and
- Identify the potential networks through which the WUC might work and what resources they have that could work together with the WUC to enhance mutual impact

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE FIRST WUC STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING TO BE CONVENED IN JUNE-JULY 2009?

- Review and adopt the terms of reference for the Concept Notes on sustainable urbanization as the first product of the WUC;
- Develop the first draft WUC Tool Kit by identifying existing best technical, institutional and business practices and good policies that the WUC should advance and disseminate for replication by local actors in a given city, country or region to promote sustainable urbanization.
- Approve the first annual, 12-month work plan for the WUC and Steering Committee;
- Approve the Steering Committee's charter and terms of reference