1st UN@HABITAT ASSEMBLY
27-31 MAY 2019

Innovation for better lives

Interactive Strategic Dialogue at UN-Habitat Assembly

📅 29 May 2019 10:00-18:00

📍 Conference Room 2

Introduction and Background

On 20th December 2018 the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution A/73/239, dissolved the UN- Habitat Governing Council as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and replaced it with a United Nations Habitat Assembly (UN-Habitat Assembly). The first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly will be held from 27 to 31 May 2019 at the headquarters of UN-Habitat in Nairobi, Kenya.

It should be recalled that in paragraph 2 of its resolution 16/12 the Governing Council decided to provide, at future sessions, opportunities for partners to engage in a dialogue among themselves and with the Governments and sub-national governments. Such dialogues help serve as input to the deliberations of the UN-Habitat Assembly. During its first session, UN-Habitat will convene the dialogue in a format of interactive discussions, *Interactive Strategic Dialogue* on Wednesday, 29 May 2019.

With a view to increasing participation in and contribution to the work of the UN-Habitat Assembly, and to the attainment of common goals to achieve the implementation by key partners of the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs, opportunities of interactions will be made for a dialogue between Governments, sub-national governments, and the partners. Representatives of stakeholder organizations will be given the opportunity to make substantive interactive discussions, followed by a dialogue or discussion among Governments, sub- national governments, and other stakeholders.

Given the first UN-Habitat Assembly with all 193 Member States participation, UN-Habitat is in a higher position to address the issues of sustainable urban development by bringing a broader partnership with innovative ideas and solutions to accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in order to achieve the SDGs. To this end, huge financial investment, unleashing of untapped resources, more focused cooperation and collaboration within the UN system, and amongst multiple stakeholders in the public and private domains are required.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing Development identify a key role of the private sector in realizing sustainable development goals, and urban development. Emphasis is placed on innovative investment opportunities as well as public, people, and private sector partnerships. Having a large number of the private sector partners at the UN-Habitat Assembly is a great opportunity to address the innovative solutions for future cities with Governments, sub-national governments and other stakeholders.

Theme and objectives

The theme for the first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly is Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities with the sub-theme of "Accelerated implementation of the New Urban Agenda towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals". The theme demonstrates the need to innovate to achieve the SDGs and the aim of leaving no one and no place behind in

the implementation of the global agendas. The Interactive Strategic Dialogue is to be centered around this special theme of the UN-Habitat Assembly and is in pursuant of the resolution of the UN-Habitat Assembly.

This Dialogue will be a great opportunity for the Governments and partners to focus on the role of the stakeholders and future investments in advancing the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda. The dialogue will combine a high-level segment with sessions focused on creating an enabling environment; co-creation of future cities and communities through innovation and investment in urban innovation.

Expected outcomes

As a result of the dialogue on the special theme and the related UN-Habitat Assembly resolution, the following outcomes are expected:

1. Renewed political momentum and collaborative efforts towards accelerated implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the related dimensions of the SDGs.

2. Exchange of experiences between Member States and partners regarding innovative implementation, monitoring and reporting approaches, with replication of promising practices.

3. Innovative advocacy and solutions for increased investment in sustainable urbanization.

4. Partnerships galvanised for implementation of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

Organization

Participants:

The Interactive Strategic Dialogue aims to bring a globally-wider partners, decision-makers and leaders, representatives from public and business sector partners and relevant stakeholders. The Dialogue will bring together those key representatives and partners to interactively debate on policies, co-creation and investment opportunities to accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve the SDGs at city-level.

Dialogue Format:

The Dialogue will follow the format in an interactive way in which speakers will get an opportunity to make their main points in a 5-minute opening round, followed by further questions from the moderator, who will also make bridges with other panelists and engage the audience as the session evolves. The form of the interactive dialogue can be facilitated by a moderator, and seating arrangement for speakers during the entire session.

For example, one dialogue session will have six panelists and a moderator with a set of guiding questions. This format helps the dialogue flow and foster an open debate and lively interaction. A guidance note for speakers and moderators in this interactive format should be made available in advance. Given the interactive nature and open seating arrangement of the dialogue sessions, speakers are asked to prepare their interventions thoroughly as they will not be relying on notes or power point presentations.

Dialogue Sessions:

Date:	Wednesday, 29 May 2019
Venue:	Conference Room 2 Time:
	10am to 6pm

10:00 am – 10:30am   High Level Opening*

The President of the Republic of Kenya will be invited to make opening remarks, followed by the statements from participating Heads of State/Government.

The President of the UN-Habitat Assembly will introduce the theme and the different segments of the session.

Executive Director of UN-Habitat will be also invited to make introductory remarks, summarizing the highlights of the Theme Paper and to give her policy statement.

*Format and order of Speakers to be confirmed

The three substantive segments are described in the following.

Session 1:

High-level Policy Segment: Creating an Enabling Environment for Innovation
Wednesday, 29 May, 10:30 am – 1:00pm

The first session will be a high-level interactive dialogue between the President of UN-Habitat Assembly, participating Heads of State, Executive Director of UN-Habitat and stakeholders to set the scene.

featuring innovation for future cities and communities, highlighting various angles through which central and local governments, business sector and other stakeholders can be engaged in implementing the New Urban Agenda and the related dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and identified collaborative opportunities, and identifying innovative solutions available for sustainable urban development.

The purpose is to set the scene, highlighting:

- The vision for future cities and communities in the framework of the New Urban Agenda and related dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Political commitments, policies and high-level decisions needed to promote and harness innovations by national and local governments, the business sector and other stakeholders to achieve the vision.
- Innovative solutions available for sustainable urban development.

Expected Outcome:

- Renewed political momentum at highest level towards an environment that fosters innovation for a better quality of life in cities and communities.
- Enablers for enhanced collaborative efforts across sectors and stakeholder groups to accelerate implementation of the NUA and related dimensions of SDGs.
- Factors that effectively harness the resources and contributions of National and Sub-national Governments and stakeholders affirmed.

Session Structure:

10:30am – 12:30pm

There will be interactive debates on the theme of the

Assembly Dialogue with Heads of States/Government, including questions and answers.

12:30pm – 1:00pm

Summary of the first session and closure by a Moderator

Key topics to be discussed:

1. What are the national requirements for countries to create an environment that encourages innovative solutions to issues of spatial inequality and poverty, prosperity of cities and regions, climate action and crisis in urban settings?

2. The data revolution is transforming society. Innovative data systems, digital sharing platforms, cloud visualization and real-time data mechanisms provide unprecedented power to understand, analyse and ultimately change the world we live in. How can digital technologies help to develop new approaches for data collection, management, processing and dissemination?

3. The capacity of individuals and institutions to understand and use innovative technologies and methods in the design, planning and implementation of projects and overall operations is a key aspect of harnessing the full potential of digitalization. How can we ensure that no one and no place is left behind in the urban data revolution?

4. How should national institutions be reinforced so that they are better able to integrate new knowledge and solutions into established systems in the communities they serve?

Panelists:

The panel will be composed of six panelists, four of whom will represent from the central governments, and two of whom will represent from the stakeholders, including sub-national governments. The panel composition is based on thematic relevance, geographical, youth and gender representation balance considerations. Member States and stakeholders are encouraged to propose names of panelists.

Session 2:

Cities and communities segment focused on implementation, partnerships and good practices

Wednesday, 29 May, 3:00pm – 4:30pm

The second session provides an opportunity to share knowledge and experiences of innovation and collaboration in co-creating future cities and communities.

This section also looks at innovation as an enabler for enhancing the performance of institutions and partners that are working towards a better quality of life in cities and communities, by presenting a regionally, thematically and gender-balanced selection of recent promising innovation practices and initiatives.

Expected outcomes:

- Best practices and lessons learnt on innovative solutions and projects highlighted.

- Opportunities for collaboration in scaling up innovative solutions identified.

- The value of community-driven innovations harnessed.

- Addressing global norms and standards for innovations such as smart cities, creative industries and others.

Key topics to be discussed:

1. How will technological innovations support the rise of smart cities or livable cities that combine sustainable urban development with urban intelligence?

2. How can cities become living laboratories for smart urban technologies that can handle all the major systems a city requires — water, transport, security, solid waste, green buildings and clean energy — to improve quality of life for all?

3. Community-driven innovations seem to result in incremental solutions when they leverage local knowledge practices and resources and more radical innovations when they leverage non-local knowledge sources. In most circumstances, innovation is both a process and a result. How can we promote human settlements development models that are adaptable and flexible with respect to the community's needs and result from a local creative capital?

4. The field of frontier technology is very much business sector driven. For example, is there a need to develop norms and standards that link smart city technologies to urban fundamentals and better quality of life in cities?

5. What role could UN-Habitat play in assessing and advising on the innovation capacity of cities and communities around the world?

Panelists:

The panel will be composed of six panelists, two of whom will represent from the central governments, and four of whom will represent from the stakeholders, including local governments. The panel composition is based on thematic relevance, geographical, youth and gender representation balance considerations. Member States and stakeholders are encouraged to propose names of panelists.

Session 3:

Business sector segment focused on "Investing in urban innovation"

Wednesday, 29 May, 4:30pm – 6:00pm

The third session garners the strong political, technical and financial supports, commitments and partnerships to investments in innovating future cities and communities, and address financing gap in sustainable urban development. The session also debates on current approaches and mechanisms to facilitate investment in urban innovations and how UN- Habitat expands its capacity to support countries and cities with key partners in investing in and applying innovation for better cities and communities.

Expected Outcomes:

• Means to enhance investments in urban innovation highlighted.

• Best practices of public private and people partnerships in enhancing investments in urban innovation shared and discussed.

• Solutions for strengthening UN-Habitat's role, in collaboration with other UN agencies and partners in facilitating increased investment in innovative urban solutions identified.

Key topics to be discussed:

1. How can business sector technology companies develop technology that is more responsive to the needs of small and medium-sized cities as well as underserved neighbourhoods and the urban poor?

2. How can experts in the realms of urban planning, governance, resilience, transport, urban data and urban finance come together to generate new tools that can be replicated and scaled?

3. How can we make strategic use of challenge-driven innovation processes, to identify innovative solutions to urban challenges related to spatial inequality, urban prosperity, climate change and urban crises?

4. What could be the role of UN-Habitat in engaging with actors in the smart cities field to ensure that the smart city vision becomes more inclusive and moves beyond the unsustainable new town approach that has emerged, towards a city vision that is compact, connected and sustainable?

Panelists:

The panel will be composed of six panelists, two of whom will represent from the central governments, and four of whom will represent from the stakeholders, including local governments. The panel composition is based on thematic relevance, geographical, youth and gender representation balance considerations. Member States and stakeholders are encouraged to propose names of panelists.

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

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