



Enhancing Urban Rural Linkages

A “think tank” session for Habitat III PrepCom2 and UN-Habitat’s 25GC

13th April 2015, 9:00-13:30 (closed session) | Conference Room 13, UNON, Gigiri, Nairobi

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Background

It is now commonly understood that addressing the themes of sustainable cities & human settlements and rural development in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner will be essential in the elaboration of a transformative *Post 2015 development agenda* & *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) framework, as well as of a *New Urban Agenda* of universal value. Intergovernmental discussions towards the Post 2015 development agenda and its SDGs and towards the 2016 UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) have confirmed this gap, as well as a desire to bridge it, from the international community.

Discussions so far have shown particular interest in the implications of a complementary approach to sustainable urban and rural development; in particular, for an agenda related to territorial planning, infrastructure, access to services and city region food systems, all of which point to more inclusive and sustainable patterns of growth spanning rural and urban areas. Moreover, these discussions have recognised that the rural urban nexus extends well beyond the provision of agricultural goods to urban centres or the encroachment of rapidly growing urban areas on the rural space.

As discussions evolve at a multilateral level, it remains unclear how urban rural linkages will be integrated into the *New Urban Agenda* in terms of conceptualization, concrete policy drivers and indicators. This initiative for a Stakeholder Dialogue has a double aim: (a) to support multilateral discussions by providing stakeholders with the technical space required to address this question; and (b) to build capacity on the multiple dimensions, implications and opportunities presented by the rural-urban nexus. The Stakeholder Dialogue initiative is twofold: (1) to coherently unpack into concrete proposals a contemporary conceptualization of urban rural linkages away from the false dichotomy between rural and urban development; and (2) to put forward policy drivers and indicators to foster an integrated approach to this rural-urban nexus within the *New Urban Agenda* to be adopted in 2016 at the Habitat III Conference.

This think tank session co-organised by Communitas and UN-Habitat is an inception gathering of the wider initiative for a “*Stakeholder Dialogue on Urban Rural Linkages: Towards a Contemporary Conceptualisation of the Linkages and the Identification of its Policy Drivers*” proposed by the Communitas Coalition Secretariat.

Outputs and deliverables of the wider initiative for a Stakeholder Dialogue

1. Concrete recommendations for an enabling *discourse* of urban rural linkages via a contemporary conceptualization.
2. A comprehensive set of recommendations for the policy drivers and indicators of an enabling framework of sustainable urban rural linkages in the *New Urban Agenda*, in relation to relevant topics including territorial planning, infrastructure, access to services and city region food systems.

3. A technical peer review of existing publications in this field of particular relevance for policy-making.
4. A handbook of grassroots case studies on the operationalization of urban rural linkages.
5. Stakeholder technical think tanks and workshops and their outcomes reports.

Inception think tank session: Building blocks for initial political discussions

Aim: To provide space for initial technical discussion in an informal setting and for input into the deliberations of the 2nd Preparatory Committee of Habitat III and UN-Habitat's 25th Governing Council.

Participants: UN system, local authorities and a relevant group of experts and practitioners from UN Major Groups & Other Stakeholders in areas of particular relevance to urban rural linkages.

Output: Collective discussion towards Habitat III Issues Paper 10 "Urban Rural Linkages" and *Building Blocks* for a contemporary conceptualization of the rural-urban nexus, as well as for the critical areas for policy drivers.

Next suggested steps:

- Technical systematization of the outcomes of the 2nd Preparatory Committee of Habitat III and UN-Habitat's 25th Governing Council; and formulation of *zero draft* recommendations for conceptualisation, policy drivers and indicators of urban rural linkages.
- Handbook of grassroots case studies on the operationalization of urban rural linkages.
- Workshop towards first draft recommendations (October 2015): To support the multi-lateral process with further technical elaboration and wide multi-stakeholder consultation and facilitate the evolution from *building blocks* towards a first draft of concrete recommendations for a contemporary enabling discourse and framework.
- Technical refinement of proposals towards second draft recommendations and final recommendations (2016): To facilitate the final adoption in October 2016 at Habitat III of a *New Urban Agenda*, which embraces urban rural linkages at its core via a contemporary conceptualization; unpacks the nexus into key thematic and action areas, and contains specific policy drivers to enable it and indicators to monitor it.

Programme

8:30 Registration of participants

9:00 Welcome and setting the scene

Ms. Maruxa Cardama, Executive Coordinator and Co-Founder of Communitas

Mr. Remy Sietchiping, Leader, Regional Metropolitan Planning Unit, Urban Planning and Design Branch, UN-Habitat

9:15 Urban Rural Linkages: From a development dichotomy to a nexus approach

Facilitated by: Remy Sietchiping and Maruxa Cardama

a. Presentations followed by Q&A

- How do urban rural linkages happen on the ground? - Evidence, strategies to leverage the linkages, key focal areas, recurrent obstacles and needs

- Moving from a development dichotomy to a linkages approach

Dr. Cecilia Tacoli, Principal Researcher, Human Settlements Group, International Institute for Environment and Development

Mr. Yunus Arikan, Head of Global Policy & Advocacy and Manager Cities Climate Center, ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability

b. Discussion session among participants on a contemporary conceptualisation of linkages with a view to collectively unpack the linkages in key thematic areas - All participants are kindly encouraged to actively engage in the discussions.

Lead discussant: *Mr. Nicholas You, Director, Global Programmes and Partnerships, Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation*

10.40 Leveraging urban rural linkages for human development: Exchange of views on the drivers for knowledge, frameworks & policies, governance, partnerships, financing, indicators and monitoring

Facilitated by Ms. Maruxa Cardama - All contributors are kindly requested to limit their initial statements to 4 minutes and to also react and complement ongoing discussion in the interest of an interactive exchange

a. Contributions by UN System, academia, experts and practitioners identifying drivers, followed by discussion among all participants

Mr. Remy Sietchiping, Leader, Regional Metropolitan Planning Unit, Urban Planning and Design Branch, UN-Habitat

UNEP

Mr. Michael Cohen, Director, The New School's Observatory on Latin America; Director, Studley Graduate Program in International Affairs, and Professor of International Affairs, Milano School of International Affairs, Management, and Urban Policy

Dr. Clarissa Augustinus, Chief, Land and GLTN Unit, Urban Legislation, Land and Governance Branch, UN-Habitat

Ms. Ghislaine Hermanuz, Professor of Architecture at the City College of New York on behalf of the Huairou Commission

Dr. Alexander Jachnow, Senior Urban Planning Expert, Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, HIS

Ms. Vanessa Leon, Adjunct Professor "Race, Ethnicity and Immigration", Urban Studies Faculty, Queens College; Practitioner on urban planning and community development in the Caribbean region

Ms. Jane Katz, Director of International Affairs & Programs, Government Relations and Advocacy, Habitat for Humanity International

Ms. Joyce Nangobi Slum Women's Initiative for Development (SWID)

b. Contributions by UN System, academia, experts and practitioners identifying drivers, followed by discussion among all participants

Dr Cecilia Tacoli, Principal Researcher, Human Settlements Group, International Institute for Environment and Development

Ms. Esther Mwaura-Muiru, Coordinator, Groots Kenya

Mr. José Gabriel Siri PhD, MPH, Research Fellow in Urban Health, United Nations University International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH)

Ms. Lena Simet, PhD Candidate in Public and Urban Policy and Graduate Teaching Assistant, The New School

Mr. Davinder Lamba, Executive Director, Mazingira Institute (Kenya) on behalf of Habitat International Coalition, HIC

Ms. Patricia Chaves, Director, Espaço Feminista

Mr. Samuel B. Mabikke, Ph. And Mr. Solomon Mkumbwa, Land & GLTN Unit, Urban Legislation, Land and Governance Branch, UN-Habitat

Mr. Felix Dodds, Senior Fellow, Global Research Institute, University of North Carolina; Associate Fellow, Tellus Institute

Mr. Mathias Larsen, External Relations Division, UN-Habitat

Mr. Chris Dekki, Organising Partner, UN Major Group Children and Youth

Mr. Yunus Arikan, Head of Global Policy & Advocacy and Manager of Cities Climate Center, ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability

12:40 Towards Habitat III Issues Paper 10 "Urban Rural Linkages" and Policy Units

Facilitated by Mr. Remy Sietchiping, Mr. Jackson Kago and Mr. Zhang Xing-Quang - All participants are kindly encouraged to engage in the discussions and offer their remarks in the light of the previous exchanges

Presentation of plans towards Issues Papers and Policy Units for Habitat III, followed by exchange of views among participants.

13:20 Conclusions and next steps

13:30 End of the think tank session