



'Slum Upgrading and Prevention in the Decade of Action'

POLICY DIALOGUE 1:

Slum Upgrading and Prevention in the Decade of Action

6th July 2021, at 12:15-14:00 am (EAT)

Venue: Online

About the Fourth OACPS/EC/UN-Habitat International Tripartite Conference

The three-day Fourth OACPS/EC/UN-Habitat International Tripartite Conference on Slum Upgrading and Prevention in the Decade of Action has been organized within the framework of the global policy dialogue of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP). PSUP was initiated by the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and has been implemented by UN-Habitat in 190 cities in 40 ACP countries since its inception in 2008, with funding from the European Commission (EC). The Tripartite Conference seeks to take stock of progress made in transforming living conditions in informal settlements and slums, and examine the lessons learnt, recommendations, commitments and next steps needed to meet the scale and implement the SDG and the New Urban Agenda (NUA).

Description of the session

Slums and informal settlements have been in the **International Development Agenda since 2000** with the Millennium Development Goal 7 “**Significantly improve the lives of at least 100 million slum residents by 2020**” and the Sustainable Development Goal 11 Target 11.1 “**11.1 by 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums**”. The New Urban Agenda provides **51 entry-points** related to slums and informal settlement upgrading and transformation. The social value of urbanization is strongly anchored in the transformative commitment of the New Urban Agenda “*sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty*”. The recent UN-Habitat World Cities Report and Chapter 5 speak to this analysis in the context of inequalities and sustainable urbanization. The report states “*this commitment acknowledges the importance of people-centred urban development and respect for basic human rights of migrants, displaced persons and refugees. It also promotes equitable access to physical and social infrastructure for all. The NUA mentions social integration and inclusion, emphasizing the importance of sustainability managing the urban environment and developing programmes to achieve an improved quality of life for all. The social value is built on the pillars of spatially-just resource distribution, political agency, and social economic diversity*”¹.

¹ UN-Habitat, World Cities Report – The Value of Urbanization, 2020, Chapter 5 The Social Value of Sustainable Urbanization, P.145;
<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>



Yet in 2021, **we still have an estimated 1 billion slum dwellers** and an alarming rapid urbanization and continuous population growth and often lacking adequate responses. An **estimated 3 billion people will need adequate and affordable housing by 2030!**

There are a number of champion countries having prioritized slum transformation and invested in social housing and, or slum upgrading. Their framing, approach and impact can inform future learning. They are not yet the norm. UN-Habitat observes an increase of countries that are “ready” to make the next steps to scale. Political will is expressed, policy and strategy frameworks reviewed, and communities are engaged. Still actions do not always follow or are not meeting the scale they should.

The session is inviting experts and leaders at the forefront of tackling scaling in their context. They are to contribute to set the stage for the conference and share their experiences and knowledge. These will be also important anchors for UN-Habitat’s effort of updating the Global Flagship Publication “The Challenges of Slums”. It is one of the most read publications of UN-Habitat and we would like to update thinking and learning from around the world as well as provide data on today’s trends and realities in informal settlements in slums.

20 years later after the MDGs and the commitment to the Right to Adequate Housing as the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living and particularly now with the COVID-19 global crisis we have learnt that slums and informal settlements are part of our cities. It is a wake-up call to realities in our cities, connectivity, and the need to change perspectives. The living conditions in slums and informal settlements inform overall prosperity, health and transformation of our cities. COVID-19 demonstrated the extend of vulnerabilities of slum dwellers today: the increased exposure, the lack of basic self-protection measures and help when people are getting infected. We want to take this momentum to rethink and re-mobilise for meeting the commitments of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Decade of Action leaving no one and no place behind.

Guiding Questions

This conference and this policy dialogue are to start where the 2003 publication stopped. It is to position the conference theme “**Slum Upgrading and Prevention in the Decade of Action**”. We are to look at the following key questions within 90 minutes of panel discussions.

- What is transforming slums and informal settlements?
- What are challenges, ingredients when addressing slums and informal settlements and what can we expect in the long-term?
- In your view, what was the biggest progress made in the past 20 years?
- What are your current organization’s actions and why when addressing informality and informal settlements?
- What guidance and support are needed to Member States to make the next steps? What is missing today?



- Where are we today and where will we be in 2030 and 2050?
- What is your personal ambition in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs?

Expected Outcomes

- Initial outline of current challenges and assessment of new policy commitments needed
- Key orientations for the élaborations in working sessions
- Principles and entry-points for transformative actions in informal settlements and slums