

Strengthening Partnerships for Cities between National Governments, Local Authorities and organised Civil Society for a Sustainable Future for all

April 15th 2015

For comments and feedback to this position draft paper draft, please contact directly:

Rene Peter Hohmann (rhohmann@Citiesalliance.org) or
Lisa Reudenbach (lreudenbach@citiesalliance.org)

Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

UCLG
The Global Network of Cities,
Local and Regional Governments

Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
MINISTÈRE
DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
INTERNATIONAL

BMZ  Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Habitat
for Humanity


Department
for International
Development

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE


SHACK / SIUSA DWELLERS INTERNATIONAL
(SIUSA)

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Confederation
Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research (SEK)
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SEKO)

Partnerships responding to Urban Challenges

Urbanization changes the world at a magnitude and speed that is unparalleled in human history. 95% of global population growth takes place in cities. Between 2000 and 2030 the urban population is expected to double, with the most significant growth happening in secondary cities. The urban built-up area is expected to triple in the same period. 80% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is produced in urban agglomerations, while 70% of global carbon emissions are generated in cities. At the same time, prevalent inequalities in cities cause an “urbanization of poverty”, particularly affecting women and youth. In fact, the absolute number of slum dwellers is growing, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, with the vast majority of them being under 24.

Urbanization transforms the social and economic fabric of entire nations, societies and economies. History has shown that urbanization can modernize societies, co-promote more accountable governance systems, address inequalities more effectively, particularly in questions of land and property rights and access to services, advance new and modern modes of production and increase life expectancy. The achievement of this vision presupposes cities in which both women and men have decent jobs, political voice and services designed to support them in their multiple and intersecting roles.

But these benefits of urbanization can only be harnessed on the condition that urbanization is pro-actively planned, managed and catered to those new urbanites that are predominantly affected by inadequate policy responses to urbanization, the urban poor. How the world urbanizes may therefore be as important as urbanization itself. The decisions that partnerships between national governments, local authorities and leaders of organised civil societies are taking today will impact cities and the urban poor for the next 20-30 years. This requires a significant change in mind-set within the international development community.

There is a breath of examples of partnerships between national and local government and civil society that need to be better understood and showcased in order to stimulate similar developments within and across cities. Evidence is showing that these are particularly successful when a coordinated, institutional framework is in place.

As the international community is shaping future global development frameworks, financing modes of implementation to reinvigorate the global commitment to

Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

UCLG
The Global Network of Cities,
Local and Regional Governments

Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
MINISTÈRE
DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
INTERNATIONAL

BMZ  Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Habitat
for Humanity 


Department
for International
Development

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE


SHACK / SLUM DWELLERS INTERNATIONAL
1981

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Confederation

sustainable development, measures to respond to climate change, a new “Urban Agenda” is in the making. The Joint Work Programme of the Cities Alliance Partnership aims therefore at highlighting and pro-actively exposing the value, experience and role of partnerships between national governments, local authorities and organised civil society in achieving sustainable development and poverty reduction in cities.

Development partnerships for Cities as key catalysts for a Sustainable Future for all

Urban sustainable development is most promising where we see coordinated action of the different levels of government – international, national and local – and with the full participation of organised civil society. For such partnerships to be successful, it is important to have clear responsibilities between the different levels of government and to have an adequate legal framework in place. Additionally, sufficient resources need to be allocated to address those responsibilities, and national and local governments have to demonstrate their capacity to work together to ensure that sustainable development practices unfold its catalytic power.

Global examples also indicate that partnerships are the most effective when each level of government is involved according to their distinct comparative advantages and the added value they can provide. In most cases, effective coordination mechanisms are required to harmonize efforts across them. There are relevant experiences of multilevel governance for development focusing on the establishment of national fora to place urban development at the top of the development agenda and make informed decisions as regards urban policy and reforms.

Finding solutions at the nearest level possible to the citizen is definitely a condition for systemic change and it is also a way to guarantee sustainability and pertinent public policies. Even though national governments have a prominent role in orchestrating development, the crucial role that local governments play as a nexus with civil society is undeniable.

Therefore, it is highly necessary to reinforce territorial partnerships for development, led by local government, that include all relevant stakeholders: civil society organisations, private sector and academia. This may constitute an opportunity to define projects in a structured, transparent way and priorities that guide the actions of all urban stakeholders to develop consensus-based solutions. This will also ensure

Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

UCLG
The Global Network of Cities,
Local and Regional Governments

Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
MINISTÈRE
DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
INTERNATIONAL

BMZ  Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Habitat
for Humanity


Department
for International
Development

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE


SHACK / SIDA SWELLES INTERNATIONAL
1991

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Government for Economic Affairs (SECO)
Swiss Contribution

stronger and more responsive accountability.

Citizens' and urban stakeholders' participation requires the establishment of permanent mechanisms for dialogue, such as the city forums established in many cities in the world. Cities are the world's greatest assets for pursuing sustainable development. We therefore believe that these partnerships and platforms for cities are crucial to realize good urban governance, promote sustainable economic growth and foster social inclusion.

Building partnerships to realise good urban governance

Urban governance is the sum of many ways in which individuals, institutions, and public and private stakeholders plan and manage the common affairs of the city. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action can be taken. It includes formal institutions as well as informal arrangements and the social capital of citizens.

Cities can be key players defining their role in the urban agenda and triggering a productive debate around Habitat III in terms of proposing affordable, maintainable and democratic local solutions to urban challenges.

Many initiatives show how urban governance can play a pivotal role in poverty reduction. The importance of good urban governance in achieving broad development objectives is being demonstrated, such as through the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and those included in the Habitat Agenda. Research at the national level has demonstrated that a correlation exists between good urban governance and positive development outcomes: within this framework, cities are key actors in the definition of innovative public policies and initiatives to tackle the urban challenges such as inclusion, economic development and sustainability.

What could governments do to maintain a permanent institutional dialogue with citizenship and communities to foster development and wellbeing? Establishing reliable permanent mechanisms to strengthen local democracy: such as national urban fora, municipal fora and neighbourhood councils or community planning fora. There are many examples of cities organizing these types of events successfully and bringing an added value to global urban governance.

Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

UCLG
The Global Network of Cities,
Local and Regional Governments

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
LIBERTÉ • ÉGALITÉ • FRATERNITÉ
MINISTÈRE
DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
INTERNATIONAL

BMZ Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Habitat
for Humanity

Department
for International
Development

UNO HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

SHACK / SIDA / SWELLES INTERNATIONAL
SIDA

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Confederation

Federal Government of Switzerland
Federal Office for Economic Affairs
Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs SEDA

Development partnerships to strengthen economic development

Cities are basic engines for economic growth, job creation, and investment attraction. The quality of economic development planning and city management is extremely important when it comes to the generation of prosperity and welfare of cities.

Member states on one side, and the international community on the other, are recognizing the importance of Local Economic Development (LED) as an unavoidable source of sustainable, equitable economic growth. LED offers local governments, the private and not-for-profit sectors, and local communities the opportunity to work together to improve the local economy, focusing on competitiveness enhancement, sustainable and equitable growth.

Therefore cities need to take the lead in fostering economic growth through the establishment of permanent local platforms to increase the creation of decent jobs, protection of livelihoods and sustainable consumption. Cities resemble characteristics (as territorial concentration and institutional proximity), which turn them into the optimal scenario to help citizens and organized civil society to work on awareness raising in sustainable consumption patterns.

Strategic Urban Planning tools, such as City Development Strategies (CDS) can help a city harness the potential of urbanisation, combining under a common framework urban strategic planning, economic growth and inclusive local governance. There is a wealth of methodologies to build these partnerships and allow cities to take greater control of their economic development process at the local level, as opposed to traditional top-down and sectorial policies for economic development.

Member states and the international community can actively support the use of strategic urban planning tools and techniques at the local level as a way of promoting a real endogenous local development.

Partnerships to build up Inclusive Cities

Challenges, such as social cohesion, equitable economic growth, policies against social fragmentation, respect for diversity, the empowerment of women and demands for more democracy are increasingly critical components for sustainable urbanization.



Policy responses to these challenges need to be supported by strong territorial (horizontal) and institutional (vertical) partnerships promoting the relevance of multilevel policies as well as citizenship practices. In this sense, there is a general consensus that points towards social inclusion as a multidimensional objective to be pursued by cities, as the closest level to citizenship.

Cities are, in turn, considered the principal engine of economic and social development. The social interaction in cities drives innovation and creativity, giving rise to cutting-edge technological and cultural production systems. However, cities are often the scenario of the greatest inequalities in the world, but the paradox is that they are also the key to deliver basic services, bridge inequalities and achieve poverty zero objectives. Overcoming these inequalities is a key challenge in the Urban Millennium.

Cities therefore rely on inclusive partnerships and mechanisms fostering commitment, bold action, humanism and reconciliation with our civilization and territories. Inclusive partnerships can make cities more respectful of the environment and the future generations, more beautiful and convivial.

What are the Cities Alliance Partnership and the Joint Work Programme?

The Joint Work Programme of the Cities Alliance Partnership has been established to prepare inputs to the Habitat III Conference, while discussing priorities and messages that are key to the Post-2015 Agenda. It consists of UN-Habitat, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MFA), Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI), Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI), the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

