WUF7
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DIALOGUE 2
WUF 7 CONCEPT NOTE

URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN FOR SOCIAL COHESION

UN@HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

In collaboration with

ISOCARP
Knowledge for better Cities

Objectives of the Dialogue

The Dialogue will explore how cities can enhance social integration and cohesion and support the creation of social capital among communities. The Dialogue will also discuss the planning and design principles and institutional, regulatory and financing approaches to support this.

Recent experiences have shown that social integration, inclusion and cohesion can be promoted through urban planning and design measures at different scales, including national spatial frameworks, regional planning, city-wide planning, neighbourhood design and public space design.

The objectives of the dialogue are as follows:
- **To discuss** the relevance of spatial planning in order to achieve social integration through planned city extensions and urban revitalization
- **To highlight** recent innovations in social integration through more compact, connected and better integrated spatial planning
- **To explore** institutional, legislative and financial mechanisms to promote social integration through urban (re) development
- **To encourage** the adaptation of successful initiatives and good practice to other cities and countries

Introduction of the topic

The growth and development of cities over the past decades has largely happened in a way that encourages segregation of social groups with little or no social mix. This prevailing urbanization pattern has negative effects on the urban fabric and leads to the "splintering" of the city. Undoubtedly, this is particularly evident in developing countries, where often, the urban divide is starkly reflected in the spatial configuration of the city. However, it is also becoming a significant challenge in developed country cities, many of which have recently witnessed large-scale urban violence due to socio-economic exclusion and the accompanying urban/spatial fragmentation.

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This is impacting negatively on social cohesion and reduces the economic vibrancy and the overall prosperity of the city, including the quality of life of the citizens. Informal settlements and disconnected peripheries, dysfunctional public space and increasing insecurity are often the apparent results. Too often, in all regions of the world, the urban development paradigm often leads to the production of houses and businesses "without a city in between".

It is clear that the ability of cities to promote social integration, in a sustainable and equitable way, while continually planning for the future, presents both challenges and opportunities. Identification of more compact, better connected and integrated urban patterns can help to make policy choices oriented to improve social cohesion. Undertaken in a participatory manner, such an approach can be used both in the renewal of existing neighborhoods and housing estates, as well as in urban extension and new towns projects. It would also yield significant environmental sustainability benefits and help in the fight against climate change.

Some countries and cities have demonstrated that managing spatial patterns and investing in spatial solutions can enhance urban equity and support social cohesion and set off an upward spiral and locational dynamics which have positive effects on the social development - a "spatial fix" to social problems. In some regions more radical concepts such as "spatial justice" are being debated.

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Most of these approaches emphasize investing in public space, locating services and functions to enhance proximity, increase connectivity and provide organized space for urban growth.

Linkages with Post-2015 Development Agenda and Habitat III

The topic of the Dialogue is very relevant for the ongoing debate on the **Post-2015 Agenda**. The theme of "addressing inequality" to ensure "a life of dignity for all" is high on the agenda of the Post-2015 debate. As part of the discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), several organizations, including the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, UCLG, ILCEI, Cities Alliance and UN-Habitat are making the case for a holistic approach to sustainable urban development, where social, economic and environmental/spatial aspects should be intimately connected through an "Urban SDG". The Dialogue will offer an opportunity to explore possible targets and indicators on social integration in housing and urban development.

The Dialogue will also offer a forum to discuss in depth how city, regional and national authorities can contribute to a **New Urban Agenda**, by developing improved policies, plans and designs for more compact, socially inclusive, better integrated and connected cities that foster sustainable urban development and are resilient to climate change. In this regard, "social mix" is one of the key principles of sustainable neighbourhood design promoted by UN-Habitat. In this regard, the Dialogue will deepen the aspect of social integration through successful and proven spatial planning approaches.

As part of the substantive reflection in preparation for **Habitat III**, the Dialogue will provide an opportunity to explore how the lessons learned in successful initiatives may be included in the "International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning", with particular focus on the dimension of social integration.

Key interrogatives

- What has happened in the recent past in terms of **innovations** in spatial planning that address social inclusion and cohesion in different contexts?
- How can **social mix** be promoted throughout the full **typology** of urban (re)development, including city extensions and urban revitalization initiatives?
- Which **instruments** are needed to introduce new perspectives on social cohesion and spatial justice in spatial planning?
- What are the **processes** which can make these innovations most effective?
- What are the appropriate scale levels and related **institutions** to promote social cohesion through spatial planning?
- To what degree should a higher level of government encourage inclusive zoning practices at the local level? Is **multi-level governance** needed to achieve social mix?
- How can programmes that encourage social integration be **financed** in a sustainable manner?
- Do you think that the innovative approaches presented by the other panelists could be successfully **replicated** in cities in your region
- What can we do together to **promote** deepening and widening of successful initiatives?

References

- S. Graham & S. Marvin (2001) - Splintering Urbanism
- F. Moulaert, D. MacCallum, A. Mehmood & A. Hamdouch (2013) - The International Handbook on Social Innovation; case studies from all major regions on social innovation in spatial planning and local development.
- Asian Development Bank (2011) - Inclusive Cities
- Social Cohesion Radar by Bertelsman Foundation: Exploring a possible urban application and linkages other key statistics (i.e. GDP).
- International Society of City and Regional Planners

Cases

- The City Statute in Brazil, which focuses on the spatial dimensions of inclusiveness
- San Francisco Case Study, reducing spatial inequalities/ divides by public private collaboration with developers to include units of social housing.
- The Fair Housing Act (United States) and its subsequent Regulation of 2013 introducing fiscal mechanisms for the national government vis-a-vis local governments related to zoning and affordable housing.
- National Urban Investment Programme *"Social City"*, Germany
- Kuala Lumpur City Plan 2020,
- Johannesburg 2030 Vision scheme; fixing the spatial dimensions of Inequality and Apartheid, in State of the World's Cities 2010/2011
- Redevelopment of La Mina neighbourhood, Barcelona City
- Urban Development in Delhi, India
- Low carbon public housing in Vienna, Austria
- *"Social Urbanism"* in Medellin