—HABITAT III—
ASSEMBLY REPORT

Title of the Assembly:	Children and Youth Assembly
Session:	Intro Session to the Science, Technology, and Innovation Stream
Date:	15 October 2016
Time:	11:00 – 11:30
Venue:	Room 9, Casa de la Cultura
Name of leading organizing institution(s):	UN Major Group for Children and Youth
Country/City where leading organizing Institution(s) is/are based:	United Kingdom
Contact Person	Lo, Sharon, Regional Focal Point (North and Southeast Asia)
Approximate number of participants:	40

1. Summary of the Assembly reflecting the structure and format

Habitat III is a testament to the growing prominence of cities on the global stage – and the recognition among both politicians and scientists that what happens in cities matters for the world. Cities produce roughly 80% of the planet's GDP but also emit nearly the same percentage of its carbon emissions. The increasing attention to cities has also left researchers asking some weighty questions: What will the role of science be in a post-Habitat III world? And does the globe need a formal, recognised body for coordinating, assessing and communicating the state of research on cities? (excerpt from Future Earth article)

The Science, Technology and Innovation Stream of the C&Y Assembly provided a dedicated space for science, engineering, technology and academia communities. Practitioners, and young people were able to discuss emerging issues and challenges related to and the role of youth in the Science
- Policy Interface (SPI) at all stages of the policy process. One objective was to develop guidelines for stakeholders on how they can better engage with young practitioners to achieve sustainable urban development. The outcome will also include a set of recommendations on strengthening the SPI components in the implementation, follow-up, and review of the NUA to turn words into action.

This was the introduction to the ST&I stream of the Children and Youth Assembly. There was an opening message made by Donovan Gutierres, then Jacob Kalmakoff presented using a powerpoint on his work at the UN Habitat Lab. After that, facilitators made brief introductions to the stream events of the day and the session was closed by Donovan. The session was open to all participants (youth and non-youth), with a focus on youth engagement.

In the following notes, objectives and outcomes regarding both the overall ST&I (science, technology, & innovation) and SPI (science-policy interface).

2. Key messages from the discussions

A main objective of the STI session is to further the understanding among young people and other stakeholders of the role that youth can and are playing in the sustainable development SPI and to highlight venues for engagement.

Key takeaway from Jacob's presentation: Resilience is a multifaceted and multileveled idea. Technology and innovation can and should play a role in understanding and improving a city's resiliency, however, science and technology is not a unitary tool—as resiliency is not a unitary concept, and a city is not a unitary function. Technology and innovation must be applied along a multilateral path that encompasses every type of infrastructure, with the social sphere being extremely important in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and follow-up and review of urban resiliency initiatives.

The technological scaffold within which cities have grown is also influencing its natural

environment, lending to systemic issues such as climate change and resource depletion. However, science, engineering, and innovation also hold vast potential to develop context-appropriate, people-centered, environmentally-conscious, and equitable solutions to overcoming major barriers to sustainable development and disaster mitigation and response.

Drawing from the description above, this stream covers how - if used appropriately - technology and science can play a powerful role in guiding urban governance, spatial planning, and tracking of resources by providing the necessary evidence-base and tools for designing, building, and managing sustainable urban development policy and societies.

3. Action-oriented recommendations/ way forward in the framework of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

- Engaging young practitioners (scientists, planners, engineers, etc.) in decision making.
- Perform appropriate ex ante and ex poste impact assessments on the social, environmental, and economic dimensions of sustainable development using contextualized key performance and risk indicators for determining the appropriateness of new technologies.
- Building linkages between the science-policy components of different sustainable agendas, as the Technology Facilitation Mechanism - providing enhanced spaces for stakeholders to formally engage, especially representatives from Major Groups and Stakeholders.
- Developing appropriate ICT solutions that will close the digital divide, rather than expand them.

4. Key commitments (if any) within the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. [Collective, individual and from the organization represented]

The NUA outlines commitments to youth engagement at all levels, and also mentions the importance of the role of science, technology, and innovation. The ST&I stream aims to promote the follow-through of these key areas as we prepare to implement the Quito Youth Commitments.

Jacob's work within this branch of UN Habitat is focused on concrete implementation of elements within the New Urban Agenda. The team is composed of the vast group of young people with a diverse set of skills and backgrounds, many of which may be considered "non-traditional" in the realm of urban development work. This is important as it allows for innovative solutions from a variety of perspectives. The group works directly with municipalities around the world—working closely with mayors, chief executives and other local authorities. The group employs an empirical, evidence and research-based strategy to inform their choices and projects, tailored to the needs of each municipality. These methods of engagement are consistent with the mechanisms outlined in the NUA.

As part of the UN MGCY's Quito Youth Commitments, the Sustainable Urban Development Youth Initiative (SUDYI) seeks to enhance the role of young practitioners in contributing to the SPI components of the New Urban Agenda, as well as SPI components of the urban dimensions of other agendas (i.e. Sendair Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction). It seeks to achieve the following:

- Sustainable Urban Development Youth Initiative website - featuring initiatives and commitments of young people around sustainable urban and territorial development.
- Contributions to UN MGCY SPI Publication & Relevant Conferences - identifying emerging issues, best practices, and present progress in relevant spaces.
- Enhancing the Science-Policy Interface - making proper linkages with science, technology, and innovation applications within the UN and further supporting an evidence-based approach to policy design, implementation, and review.
- Building Coherence between the NUA and urban dimension of other sustainable development agendas.

5. Way forward and next steps on monitoring the implementation of the outcomes and the commitments from the Assembly
The UN MGCY will continue to follow through with our Quito Youth Commitments. We will remain engaging youth in science and technology and highlighting the key role that youth play in the NUA implementation, follow-up and review cycle.

In terms of Jacob's presentation, he outlined the ways we need to change our methods of implementation going forward:

We must stop viewing cities as unitary functions and resilience as an application to such a unitary function. This UN Habitat Lab work aims to expand the definition of resilience to apply to a more encompassing understanding of an urban area as a collection of interacting systems, as opposed to a single function.

The open nature of the Habitat III WG within the UN MGCY will be leveraged to make this possible and continue facilitating meaningful engagement of young practitioners.

6. Proposed partnerships, network and synergies with other stakeholders and constituency groups within the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, emerging from the Assembly

Networks between young people from various backgrounds need to be strengthened, as well as the avenues between youth networks and wider communities.
As always, community participation in any policy design or urban planning is crucial to the success of projects.

These included starting discussions with groups such as ICSU, WFEO, Future Earth, WRI, etc.

7. Outreach and communication strategy to take forward recommendations and commitments for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda

It will be increasingly important to maintain strong engagement with young people in the sustainable development science-policy interface (SPI) to further highlight and understand the role that young scientists, engineers, practitioners, etc, play in the cycle of policy design, implementation, monitoring, and follow-up and review. Effective communication between generations is just as important for effective implementation.

The open nature of the Habitat III WG within the UN MGCY will be leveraged to make this possible and continue facilitating meaningful engagement of young practitioners.