HABITAT III CONFERENCE REPORTING FOR ASSEMBLIES
Coordinators

Please send via e-mail: habitat3secretariat@un.org; habitat3Stakeholders@un.org

Title of the Assembly:	Children and Youth Assembly
Session:	Infrastructure for Inclusive Cities
Date:	15 October 2016
Time:	14:00 – 15:30
Venue:	Room 10, 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 *(Last Name, Name, Function, E-mail, Telephone Number)*	Lo, Sharon, Regional Focal Point (North and Southeast Asia), sharon.lo@childrenyouth.org, +852 91575743
Name of organizing partnering Institution(s) with their respective base *(City, Country)*	
Contact Person from partnering Institution(s) *(Last Name, Name, Function, E-mail, Telephone Number)*	
Approximate number of participants:	18
Number of female participants:	11
Number of male participants:	7

1. Summary of the Assembly reflecting the structure and format (max: 800 words)

The members of the session sat in roundtable style to engaging in a discussion on the theme of "infrastructure for inclusive cities." The discussion was led by a moderator (Peter Loewi) and four discussants from organizations (Habitat for Humanity & WIEGO) and academia (McGill University & The Chinese University in Hong Kong). This was a dialogue about the physical, social, financial, and economic infrastructures necessary to implementing the New Urban Agenda. This session included a discussion on the importance of community and participatory approaches to planning cities, as well an an exploration of the following types of infrastructures: logistical "smart", physical, and social infrastructure. Additionally, discussions touched on the political influence within each of the different layers of infrastructure giving rise to a well-functioning city, their intraoperatively and harmonization, and opportunities for education through design of such infrastructure. The New Urban Agenda stresses on the sustainability challenge of infrastructure in cities. This session dwelled upon issues of inclusivity in infrastructure through questions on public and private investment in infrastructure and infrastructure that is responsive to multiple needs.

Questions included:

- Thinking of infrastructure as inherently limited due to our positions, education, context, etc. - What do we think of as "infrastructure"?
    - In what way do we see these multiple kinds of infrastructures helping, or hindering, each other? How do our different views on infrastructure help or hinder the implementation of infrastructure? Getting "inclusive infrastructure" built.
    - What kinds of infrastructure projects get implemented - how are these prioritized and where does inclusivity fit within infrastructure?
- What does the informalization of infrastructure indicate about the provision of services and inclusivity?
    - Who finances them? What can be said about the relationship between certain types of financiers and their preferred form of infrastructure?
    - Are national level more effective than local level governments at some kinds? Which kinds? What about PPPs?
- Addressing the changing definition of "smart cities." How do cities shape technology, and how does technology shapes cities?
    - How can we address the digital divide in territories focusing on "open data?" How can we leverage tech/ICTs to leapfrog obstacles rather than increase disparities?

2. Key messages from the discussions.

The point of this session was to think beyond siloed thinking, between infrastructures, between infrastructures and public space, between physical infrastructures and social infrastructures, etc. Key messages included:

- Social infrastructures are the elements that make physical infrastructure work sustainably.
- The economic argument to support and upgrade informal settlements and economy may be more efficient than political, moral, social or human right demands.
- Streets and public spaces, as corridors for infrastructures and places of livelihoods are the basics.
- Learn the different layers of infrastructure within cities, as well as their interdependence, and policies needed to ensure inclusivity for all inhabitants of a city, including urban-rural linkages.
- Learn the importance of community and participatory planning of cities towards developing inclusive infrastructure for achieving sustainable urban development, keeping in mind both formal and informal sectors.
- Communities may be considered infrastructures: when they mobilise, plan, create common opportunities to enhance livelihoods, they actually contribute to creating infrastructures. They make their needs emerge, bring information to public institutions to let them know what they need and want. Community infrastructures can show the economic potential and leverage capacity of people.
- Often, the focus is on physical infrastructures, forgetting that people and social communities use them and make them live. Infrastructures and facilities can be built without anyone to make them work! When the focus is on building houses, it is forgotten that families who are going to live in there have to be supported too, in order to ensure livability, financing, maintenance, management etc. Social infrastructure is the one that makes physical infrastructure work.
- The private sector encourages building infrastructures for the knowledge economy (universities), for the "creative class" (bars, parks), and world class infrastructures to attract the "right" kind of people and businesses (convention centres, fancy malls, airports, high-speed internet, gated communities, security cctv). They do not take into account the people actually living in cities. In new cities, private planning do set infrastructures for exclusion, and they do so with huge public subsidies!
- The positive contribution of UN-Habitat in the NUA is to put streets as public spaces and drivers

for prosperity. A lot of elements can help in building a holistic thinking, with infrastructures contributing to inclusion and integration. If you acknowledge the importance of public space, automatically, you get to a very different concept of the city more in favour of people. On the contrary, the problem is that if you make it wrong from the beginning, it is very hard to go back once it is settled materially.

- Though it is not easy, to show the economic potential and benefits, you can convince further (maybe even more than with a planning or human right case): the economic argument can convince.
- Upgrading programmes are perfect examples of how physical and social issues go together to preserve existing livelihoods. If you just plan and build houses, you remain completely disconnected from existing livelihoods. The participatory approach to planning is key to preserve and enhance the potential of slums as local economies, with public places, business facilities etc.
- Actually, the political decision of new housing production is by itself disrespectful of the fact that people have built their own access to housing!!! It disregards people's investments, this is violent! At the macro-level, the biggest issue is the lack of recognition of these communities: they are considered as if they did not exist, just because they are informal, but this is just a question of norms and standards that could be changed. Cities are informal, they have a huge contribution to the economy of cities, they are investors, and they are entrepreneurs, that fell under the radar of formal infrastructure because laws are inadequate. There is a complete mismatch between population needs and what is politically dictated. So they do have a right to their investments to be supported: when they get access to social and physical infrastructures, they flourish.

3. Action-oriented recommendations/ way forward in the framework of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda [key points only, including specific global, regional and local actions].

- Integrating the difference dimensions of infrastructure that give rise to smart cities.
- Ensuring inclusivity throughout the different infrastructures that make up cities.
- Consideration for the needs and inclusion of both formal and informal parts of cities.
- Purposefully designed and planned urban spaces

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

Follow-up on the discussion to develop best practices on how to identify gaps the quality or inclusion of different dimensions infrastructure in cities. Providing a space for young practitioners to further engage in discussions and opportunities related to this topic.

5. Way forward and next steps on monitoring the implementation of the outcomes and the commitments from the Assembly.
Use the open, inclusive platform provided by the UN MGCY Habitat III WG to gauge interest, collect ideas, and share opportunities.

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

Potential synergies with groups like Habitat for Humanity, who are particularly interested in working with youth on ensuring more sustainable and inclusive urban infrastructures. Also, links with groups of similar interest in the list of Quito Commitments.

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

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ideas, and share opportunities.

8. Any other relevant comments or outcome from the session not covered above.

9. Detail information of speakers/presenters/moderators (add as many as applicable):

Full name (Mr/Ms):	Kendra Hughes
Nationality:	USA
Organization/Institution :	WIEGO
Position:	Programme Support Officer
Contact address (Email):	kendra.hughes@wiego.org

Full name (Mr/Ms):	Susana Rojas Williams
Nationality:	Filipino
Organization/Institution :	Habitat for Humanity
Position:	Director, International Shelter Initiatives - Global Programs
Contact address (Email):	SRojasWilliams@habitat.org

Full name (Mr/Ms):	Sarah Moser
Nationality:	Canada
Organization/Institution :	McGill University
Position:	
Contact address (Email):	sarah.moser@mcgill.ca

Full name (Mr/Ms):	Prof Hendrik Tieben
Nationality:	Dutch
Organization/Institution :	Chinese University of Hong Kong
Position:	Director, MSc Urban Design Programme and Associate Professor
Contact address (Email):	hktieben@yahoo.com