



United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development

## Children and Youth Assembly

15 October 2016

### Concept Note

#### **Executive Summary**

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) will be held in Quito, Ecuador on 17-20 October, 2016. Held every twenty years, the Habitat III process provides a unique opportunity for stakeholders, including major groups and other stakeholders, to develop and agree a consensus on the effective mechanisms to shape the global sustainable urban development process, with particular focus on leveraging opportunities and addressing challenges. Habitat III will culminate in the adoption of the New Urban Agenda which will set out a new global strategy for sustainable urban and territorial development for the coming two decades. Meanwhile, children and youth have been active at all aspects of the Habitat III process, from hosting consultations to active participation in all regional and thematic conferences as well as preparatory committees, reports submitted and interventions given to formal meetings. To celebrate the contributions of these constituencies and provide a forum to explore opportunities and commitments for them to play meaningful roles in the implementation, follow up and review of the New Urban Agenda, a Children and Youth Assembly will be held on 15 October, 2016. This one-day event will gather 500-600 children, youth and other stakeholders and will consist of two sections (children and youth+others). Each section will consist of plenaries and parallel sessions coordinated in collaboration with different stakeholders on different thematic topics. Ultimately, such an event would provide a space for all stakeholders to gather, network and explore strategic inter-stakeholder partnerships toward the New Urban Agenda. This document provides a detailed concept note regarding all aspects of the Assembly.

# Contents Page

- 1. Background**
  - a. United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development**
  - b. Children & Youth Assembly**
  
- 2. Organisers**
  - a. United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth**
  - b. World Vision International**
  - c. Partners**
  
- 3. Event Details**
  - a. Focus**
  - b. Logistics**
  
- 4. Programme Overview**
  - a. Opening Ceremony**
  - b. Closing Ceremony**
  
- 5. Youth + Others Stream**
  - a. Plenary Sessions**
  - b. Science, Technology and Innovation**
  - c. C&Y in the New Urban Agenda**
  - d. Stakeholders Stream**
  
- 6. Children Stream**
  
- 7. Other Initiatives**
  - a. Exhibition**
  - b. Global Youth Declaration on the New Urban Agenda**
  - c. YoutHab**
  
- 8. Logistical Requirements**
  - a. C&Y Assembly**
  - b. Participant Support**
  
- 9. Contact**

## 1. Background

### a. United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) will be held on 17-20, 2016 in Quito, Ecuador. In resolution 66/207, the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene the Habitat III Conference to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanisation, to develop a “New Urban Agenda” (NUA), and to establish mechanisms and a strategy for the NUA’s implementation. Ultimately, Habitat III will set out a new global strategy for sustainable urbanisation for the next two decades, seeking to reinvigorate the global political commitment to the sustainable development of towns, cities and other human settlements. Habitat III is one of the first conferences to be held after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and has synergy with SDG #11 as well as urban and territorial dimensions of other goals and targets and other frameworks which were also recently adopted such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and COP21. Habitat III has adopted an open and consultative process, seeking to engage a diversity of stakeholders to provide their input regarding sustainable urban development.

### b. Children & Youth Assembly

In recognition of the strong contributions of various stakeholder constituent groups, the Habitat III Secretariat has requested four Assemblies to be convened ahead of the Habitat III Conference: for Children & Youth, Women, Local Authorities and Businesses. As mandated by the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth and World Vision International will co-organise the Children and Youth Assembly.

## 2. Organisers

### a. United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth

The UN Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY) is the official space for children and youth to contribute to certain intergovernmental and policy processes at the United Nations. It is a mandated space by Agenda 21 and a number of UN General Assembly Resolutions, as well as ad hoc agreements with UN bodies and conferences. The UN MGCY is an open constituency, space and a platform for collaboration among youth-led organizations, youth-serving organizations, child focused agencies, and individual young people. It is a self-organized space with a democratic structure, where all members elect facilitators and coordinators and everyone can contribute. The UN MGCY HIII Working Group is the official space for the participation of children and youth in the Habitat III process. This participation includes, but is not limited to, regional and thematic meetings, Urban Thinkers Campuses, official inputs to reports, and interventions and statements during formal meetings and informal negotiations, like relevant GA committees, preparatory committees, and the final global summit itself. The UN MGCY is also the chair of the Children and Youth Partner Constituent Group (CYPCG) of the General Assembly of Partners (GAP), the primary mechanism for stakeholder engagement in Habitat III.

### b. World Vision International

World Vision International (WVI) is a global Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender. WVI is active in over 90 countries. It is also the co-chair of the Children and Youth Partner Constituent Group (CYPCG) of the General Assembly of Partners (GAP).

### c. Partners

The Children and Youth Assembly is being facilitated in partnership with a range of children and youth-led and -serving organisations from across the world and other civil society stakeholders committed to including C&Y into their work. Apart from the co-organisers listed, partners are categorised into the following groups:

- Youth-led/child-focused partners: global key organisations and youth movements
- Lead partners: for entities that do not identify as C&Y constituency
- Supporters: local grassroots C&Y-based organisations wishing to support the Assembly

## 3. Event Details

## a. Focus

<b>Title</b>	Children and Youth Assembly
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Highlight and celebrate the contributions of C&amp;Y to the Habitat III process</li><li>2. Provide a platform for youth globally to share knowledge, solutions and make commitments toward the implementation of the New Urban Agenda</li><li>3. Provide a space for partnerships to be established across generations and stakeholders toward sustainable urban development</li><li>4. Promote the role of young people in shaping cities, and create awareness of the importance of their inclusion and contribution to just, equitable and sustainable cities.</li></ol>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. 500-600 participants engaging in C&amp;Y participation in the sustainable urban development and the Habitat III process</li><li>2. List of Youth Commitments toward the New Urban Agenda</li><li>3. Global Youth Declaration on the New Urban Agenda</li><li>4. Children's Charter</li></ol>

## b. Logistics

<b>Date</b>	15 October, 2016 (Sat)
<b>Time</b>	9.30am - 5.30pm (registration at 9.00am)
<b>Language</b>	English (+ Spanish for opening, closing and plenaries)
<b>Venue</b>	La Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, Quito, Ecuador
<b>Expected Audience</b>	500 children, youth and other stakeholders

## 4. Programme Overview

The Children and Youth Assembly will consist of one day of activities run in collaboration with partners on different thematic streams. Beyond the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the programme will largely be split into two sections: one for child participants (<18 y.o.) coordinated by World Vision International and partners, and the other for youth and other stakeholders coordinated by UN MGCY and partners. Taken together, the C&Y Assembly will be a collective and collaborative effort from a wide diversity of partners (some C&Y-led, some not) to develop a wide programme of activities to engage participants with various aspects of the

A tentative overview of the Assembly programme (excluding details from the Children's Section) may be viewed on the following page:

### a. Opening Ceremony

The Opening Ceremony will set the tone, atmosphere and momentum for the stakeholder Assemblies. The Opening Ceremony will be held in conjunction with the Women's Assembly and will feature high level speakers such as President Rafael Correa, the President of Ecuador, and John Closs, the Executive Director of UN Habitat.

### b. Closing Ceremony

The closing ceremony will express appreciation for the quality contributions and discussions by all stakeholders and participants. It will invite child and youth representatives to share the key discussion points / ideas / recommendations emerging from the day's discussions. High level speaker to be invited to express closing remarks in terms of next steps for the Habitat III Conference and beyond.

## 5. Youth + Others Section

## **a. Plenary Sessions**

### **i. Inter-Stakeholder Plenary**

The Inter-Stakeholder Plenary will be a stakeholder discussion on the mechanisms and tools to assist children and youth in contributing to the implementation, follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda. Moderated by the UN Youth Envoy, it will feature a panel with representatives of UN agency, philanthropy/business, local government, civil society organisation and youth group working on the SDGs and NUA. It aims to inspire and motivate hundreds of thousands of children and youth to take action in making the world a better place, and to demonstrate the importance of children and youth in achieving sustainable urban development.

### **ii. Feedback Plenary**

This session will bring all sessions together and share the outcomes and findings with others. It will ensure that people who are not in the stream will also be able to learn key points from the given stream.

## **b. Science, Technology and Innovation Stream**

### **i. Overview**

The Science, Technology and Innovation Stream will provide the dedicated space for Science, Engineering, Technology and Academia communities, Practitioners, and young people 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. It will produce a guideline for all other stakeholders on how they can better engage with young people 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.

Urbanization has led to an increasingly socio-technological world, giving way to an environment influenced by the design, delivery, access, and trading of technologies and knowledge. The increasing concentration of data and innovation in cities is shaping the urban landscape that surrounds us and people's quality of life like never before, while demanding for more investment in infrastructure and social services in light of growing populations. For example, the data revolution and ICTs have made the flow of information increasingly fast, communication instant, and global trade easier. Additionally, growth in technological development is reshaping health care, access and quality to basic services, transportation, job opportunities, education, and other sectors of both the economy and society. The technological scaffold within which cities have grown is also influencing its natural environment, leading 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 session will cover 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.

### **ii. Thematic Breakout Sessions**

#### **Health & Well-Being: Urban Influences and System Approach**

The percentage of the world's population living in urban areas is projected to increase from 54% in 2015 to 60% in 2030 and to 66% by 2050; 90% of expected urban population growth is expected to occur in low-middle income countries (LMICs), further straining weak health systems. Furthermore, increased life expectancy, shifts towards industrialized food chains, and changing social behaviours have led to an epidemiological transition characterized by both infectious and increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases. Water and sanitation issues present additional challenges in urban environments; one in four city residents, for example, lacks access to improved sanitation facilities. Socioeconomic development and growth in the global health spending share in LMICs have led to an increased demand for quality health delivery, surpassing the capacity for health systems to supply it in a timely manner. Urban infrastructure, spatial development and planning play a vital role in accessing quality, timely, and affordable health - especially in fast growing cities. More proactive policy decisions must be made to curb the

increasing burden of these interacting and exacerbating risk factors, as strategic planning of cities can go a long way to achieve target 3.4 of the SDGs and global targets in the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020. Resilient health systems are infrastructures unique to each community that serve to deliver quality health services to all people, when and where they need them, while considering the socio-cultural, financial and logistical barriers. Therefore, cross-sectoral inclusivity is crucial to identify bottlenecks, tradeoffs, and synergies in local health systems to promote integrated frameworks between the determinants of health, risk factors, sanitation, and urban planning to promote better-informed policy making.

### **Movement of People: Within & Between Countries**

Cities today serve as places of rapid movement- of people, commodities ideas, and information. Urban centers have developed into major hubs within our increasingly globalized and sociotechnical world. Increased urbanization has led to the movement of more people over greater distances.

We hope to engage participants in interactive sessions, focusing on the two following topics:

*Movement Between Countries* - at the cross-roads of urbanization, displacement of migrants/refugees has grown at an unprecedented rate. Calling into question traditional ways humanitarian response to crises, this session will explore the importance of appropriate humanitarian action in urban contexts, as well as avenues for integration of migrants/refugees through entrepreneurship, innovation, education, employment, inclusive infrastructure, and other means.

*Movement Within Countries* - This session will explore an equally important and urgent need to address movement of people towards urban centers - this entail better understand of IDPs, effect on indigenous populations, and impact on urban ecosystems. Furthermore, the need for enhanced integrated territorial development, bridging the urban-rural divide, will be highlighted. Addressing the themes of sustainable cities and rural development in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner will be essential, given the urban-peri urban-rural continuum and increasing flows and investments in cities.

### **Urban Resilience: Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Adaptation**

Historically, urban areas had the image of 'safe havens', providing shelter from the impacts of natural hazards. However, the modern recognition is that these areas are seen as hotspots of disasters and risks. Recent events like Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Hurricane Sandy in New York area and floods in Bangkok revealed the multi- faceted nature of vulnerability in modern cities. Climate change presents a serious threat to the functioning of urban systems. The cities are growing at an unprecedented rate, and there is a need for an intersectoral to tackle the situation, encompassing variety of stakeholders and number of disciplines. In the recent years, numerous initiatives such as 100 Resilient Cities by Rockefeller Foundation and UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient Campaign started with the aim of creating a resilient urban future. Climate and disaster resilience is becoming mainstreamed in political agendas at different scales. The Paris Agreement (COP21) and the Sendai Frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015- 2030 both emphasize the importance of Science Technology and Innovation (STI) for achieving their ambitious goals. This interactive session will discuss how modern scientific and technological advancements can play a role in supporting cities to reduce disaster risk and and appropriately adapt to climate change. It will allow participants to share experiences, identify gaps in the current discourse and propose a way forward.

### **Infrastructure for Inclusive Cities: Sustainable Urban Growth**

In our task to build the sustainable cities of the future, to implement the New Urban Agenda, we must begin by laying the tracks for our train of progress. But this is not a train with first class, second class, and third class cars. Our cities must be built around inclusivity and equality. In this session we will discuss the basic building blocks, be they economic, physical, political, social, or technological to ensuring an inclusive city for all. Infrastructures are the systematic basis for the operation of facilities and services, while ensuring that urban development evolves in a sustainable fashion. They can take many forms, or no forms at all. Just as the roads, sewers, and power lines are examples of infrastructure for transport, water management, and energy, broadcast towers,

welfare centers, and school boards are the basic infrastructure behind internet access, social health, and education. Bones, muscles, nerves, and veins all serve very different purposes in the body, but they are all necessary infrastructure in a human body. Similarly the economy, markets, and governance structures have the ability influence our own lives and those of society, locally and globally.

Infrastructure for Inclusive Cities will be a dialogue about various different types of infrastructure necessary to implementing the New Urban Agenda.

### **c. C&Y in the New Urban Agenda Stream**

#### **i. Overview**

This will address the various ways the children and youth constituency can play key roles in the New Urban Agenda. Using the “Right to the City” framework as a starting point, participants will be equipped with critical knowledge and tools to meaningfully engage with the New Urban Agenda beyond Quito, from developing and implementing urban solutions to participating in the formal follow up and review mechanisms available.

#### **ii. Right to the City Workshop**

This interactive workshop will introduce participants to the “Right to the City” Framework and will establish the theoretical foundation for why the participation of children, youth and other constituent groups in the Habitat III process is critical for a sustainable future.

#### **iii. FuR Mechanisms**

Drawing from the provisions made within the New Urban Agenda text, this session will identify the mechanisms available for follow up and review of the NUA at a local, regional, municipal and international level. Participants will come away with technical knowledge and basic skills for how to engage with this over the coming years.

#### **iv. Sustainable Urban Development Youth Initiative Showcase**

This would provide a critical space to showcase the multifaceted and innovative ways young people are contributing to sustainable urban development in their communities around the world. Functioning similar to the Urban Speakers Corner in PrepCom3, this will feature a range of youth innovators and speakers who will share in 15-minute slots about their various initiatives. This exchange will serve to inform and inspire others to contribute toward sustainable urban development within their localities in the coming future.

### **d. Stakeholders Stream**

#### **i. Overview**

Interstakeholder partnerships are critical to achieving the successful implementation New Urban Agenda. It is essential for all actors to work in collaboration with one another to ensure more effective strategies, efficient use of resources, and greatest possible benefits from each activity. This stream will provide a forum for intergenerational and interstakeholder dialogue to occur, with a view to developing partnerships for sustainable urban development which will support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda from a local, regional, national and international level.

#### **ii. Youth and Young Mayors Roundtable**

The youth and urban communities, share of which will increase globally in the Post-Quito period, are the most critical groups in these processes, as being in the frontlines of both impacts and responses. The Roundtable aims to create an opportunity of dialogue and synergy in tapping the potential of both youth and ambitious local leaders in developing innovative solutions that will much rapidly and collectively transform communities locally and globally, in a path to sustainability in the Urban World of the Post-Quito period.

#### **iii. Civil Society Dialogue**

Dialogue sessions to provide opportunities for engagement between youth and other stakeholders crucial to sustainable urban development and the Habitat III process. These will be spaces to build common understandings of the process, challenges, and urban issues with representatives from groups such as academia, foundations and local government representatives.

## 6. Children Section

Led by World Vision International and partners, the children's component of the assembly aims to provide a platform for children to reflect upon their experiences of living in a city and discuss issues such as access to quality education, safe public spaces, protection from urban violence, and voice and participation in city planning and budgeting processes. The sessions overall aim to change the perception of the role of young people in shaping cities, and create awareness of the importance of their inclusion and contribution to just, equitable and sustainable cities. The key recommendations and discussion outputs of the Assembly will inform a **"Children's Charter"** and shared throughout the Habitat III Conference.

The program of activities will address the theme of children's potential as leaders and empowered agents of change to create 'inclusive and smart cities'. Four activities will be organised to maximise the representation of different age groups and backgrounds, ensuring all children and youth from various neighbourhoods of the city are heard.

1. Design an 'inclusive and smart city' using art and plasticine (aged 8-12)
2. Build a child friendly smart neighbourhood (aged 8-12)
3. Debate on the role of young people in building 'inclusive and smart cities' (aged 12-16)
4. 'Map my city' by children and youth from the slums and informal settlements of Quito (aged 13-16)

Approximately 250 children are expected to participate from local, regional and global child led service agencies, organisations, networks and groups.

## 7. Other Initiatives

### a. Exhibition Fair

The exhibitions fair will be a space to showcase the work of children and youth movements and their projects, as well as provide an added venue for networking and informal information sharing. All interested stakeholders will establish booths which will consist of posters, leaflets and interactive displays showcasing the participation of children and youth in sustainable urban development in their localities.

### b. Urban Solutions Corner

Similar to the "Urban Speakers Corner" organised at PrepCom3, the C&Y Assembly will host a stage in the exhibitions fair during the afternoon of the 15th, providing a space for children and youth to formally present their urban initiatives, and to make commitments on behalf of their organisations toward the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

### c. Global Youth Declaration on the New Urban Agenda

A Drafting Team will be organised by the Organising Committee to draft the outcome declaration of the C&Y Assembly. <<to be added after Chris re-shares the CN>> More information available here

### d. YouTHab Conference

From 13-15 October, the YouTHab Conference will be organised by CLIC, the Latin American and Caribbean Youth Network on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, a member organisation of UN MGCY. This forum will consist of a series of actions, activities, interventions and events relating to Habitat III, the Right to the City, and creation of opportunities for participation for youth regarding sustainable urban development. UN MGCY recognises and supports this forum as a valuable youth-led space dedicated for youth to network and engage in the Habitat III process. YouTHab Conference and UN MGCY are complimentary forums where

## 8. Organisation

### a. Organising Committee

The Children and Youth Assembly is being coordinated and overseen by a global Organising Committee (OC), consisting of a team of young individuals and representatives from a number of youth-led organizations and movements. This group was selected through an online application process, which was publicised to youth from around the world, and are representative in terms of regional background and gender balance. The OC will take primary responsibility for programme development, global youth outreach, publicity, fundraising, collaboration with stakeholders, and communications. The OC will be



supported by other UN MGCY mandated focal points (particularly from the Habitat III working group and Science Policy Interface) and by the Assembly's core partners.

**b. Other Communications**

Similar to the "Urban Speakers Corner" organised at PrepCom3, the C&Y Assembly will host a stage in the exhibitions fair during the afternoon of the 15th, providing a space for children and youth to formally present their urban initiatives, and to make commitments on behalf of their organisations toward the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.