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HABITAT III URBAN DIALOGUES
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Governance Frameworks:

There is a strong need for suitable governance frameworks, which draw advantage from the specificity of intermediate cities (e.g. the 'human scale' that has been referred to in earlier entries) and address the complexity of interactions in contemporary development.

One example was given by the Culture Summit, organized by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) in Bilbao that adopted a the Culture 21 Actions, as an update to the 2004's Agenda 21 for Culture. Some of the guidelines suggested by Culture 21 Actions in the field of the governance of culture may be valid for intermediate cities, include the following:

1- multi-actor governance: citizen participation in policy discussions, existence of permanent forums for the consultation, negotiation and regulation of goals and methods involving all relevant stakeholders in public affairs, etc.

2- Transversal or horizontal governance, i.e. dialogue and coordination mechanisms bringing together different departments or areas within local government. Because of their size, intermediate cities may find particular incentives in this type of joined-up policymaking

3- Multi-level or vertical governance, bringing together different tiers or levels of government, including the availability of frameworks that assign responsibilities and foster collaboration between local, regional and national governments.

The responsibilities of each level of government should be well defined. Many commentators mentioned that there was a lack by policy planners in connecting the urban and rural strategies to national policies, addressing problems and potentials for both urban and rural areas simultaneously. Participants stated that it is fundamental to promote the development and management of cooperation networks that enable effectiveness, sustainability and peace (both internal and external). The formation of cooperation networks for systemic action allows the integration of the three sectors (public, private and civil society) and the whole community. This context favors participative and representative democracy and provides Harmonic and Sustainable Development (HDS).

Other participants noted the need to incorporate new forms of territorial planning that allows greater control over the quality of growth. This requires adopting best practices in intermediate cities in Latin America. These new forms of planning should incorporate sustainable urban development policies, new forms of government, value capture, sustainable mobility, among other policies. This should go in line with the national policy of promoting intermediate cities with new nodes of economic growth and culture in a more general regional and national development framework. There were also calls by participants to promote national urban systems.

Citizen Participation:

Participation should be promoted from the grassroots schools, colleges, universities, neighborhoods, and other communities in order to start generating an education on "the right to the city".

Of course, participation is not by decree and has to be committed to democratic principles, which usually have very hierarchical structures, not only between authorities and civil society, but within the same social structures (i.e. school, family , etc). However, we must advance the legal framework to explicitly incorporate citizen participation and its organs and mechanisms of participation.

Similar to the creation of indexes of competitive or sustainable cities, public officials can also make an index of participatory cities with regulatory frameworks that encourages participation, so that society itself is evaluated.

The "right to the city" should be issued as a subject in schools in different level off, so that the children and the young people can meet and discuss the real problems of their cities, and thus search for solutions and alternatives to them in order to generate equitable, sustainable cities, with better quality of life, through a participatory planning not losing sight of the human scale. Participants noted the need to strengthen the management mechanisms of citizen participation overall, in order to identify their needs and perspectives on the type of cities they want and expect to live in. The topic of citizen participation must therefore be a central pillar in the New Urban Agenda.

Land-use Planning:

There is a need to generate technical instruments at national and local levels to promote orderly growth and urban boundaries and forms. Planners need to combine urban planning with territorial orders to see different scales, while also linking and harmonizing the territorial ecological order. Metropolitan planning should be a priority, for which they will degenerate intermediate institutional planning bodies that have national metropolitan guidelines. This will strengthen more compact and less extensive, disorderly and disorderly urbanization through decentralized policies and strengthening others.

Additionally, intermediate cities should not lose sight of the human scale. Many of the errors and problems that big cities face have to plan without regard to the person, the inhabitant, and pedestrians who live and dwell in those cities. Planning policies should favor a model with large avenues and macro structures. However, with the development of mega projects, cities in the long run can become cold, soulless and lifeless and economic centers.

A few participants mentioned the need to update planning instruments available to intermediate cities. That is, officials must create more powerful tools that allow citizens to clearly define the problems and needs of intermediate cities. Together with the strengthening of the planning teams of local governments, public officials can devise real plans that aim to meet the needs of cities without losing sight of their national goals. All this work should be backed by legislation and clear rules that encourage the orderly and balanced development of cities, ultimately stopping spontaneous growth.

National Urban Strategies and Policies:

National policies and strategies for countries like Ecuador, where intermediate cities have so far not played a major role, should directly point to three key factors. First, there should be a balance in the network of cities. For example, guidelines and policies for intermediate cities should be developed so that the social, economic and cultural services have the same quality and accessibility in big cities, avoiding or slowing down in some way the growth of typical poles of attraction. Second, as intermediate cities evolve into bigger metropolitan areas, planning policies should be very clear and strong to prevent disorderly and excessive growth. Third, proposed strategies that are aimed at intermediate cities should be inclusive and favor alternative forms of mobility.

The policies arising from national and subnational governments should aim at the same objectives, each applied to the scale of its jurisdiction without neglecting the links with other "territories". It is important for public officials and planers to reinforce their planning systems by improving existing planning instruments, especially with regards to different levels of government throughout the planning cycle. It is also important to detect failures of the system to include new tools that solve specific problems that national large-scale planning cannot solve.

This is an interesting tension as intermediate cities rarely appear on the radar of federal (and too often regional) state governance authorities when it comes time to implement a national strategy within smaller regions. In such circumstances there is an opportunity to learn from the Ecuadorean example - placing the focus on constitutional authority centered on 'citizen land rights', which may be harder to subvert or by-pass than statutory authority under the guise of, more generally, 'market forces'.

One might suspect that without some form of regulatory reform in land-use planning, building codes and standards (oriented towards enforcement of sustainable and resilient solutions) the trickle-down benefit of national strategy at the level of intermediary cities is likely to be limited.

It is important to ensure that there is a way to enforce higher standards and ensure benefits for the end-user (i.e. citizen) through the constitution rather than the market (i.e. profit) seems to be a key consideration if national 'strategy' is to be meaningful when implemented across scales, and thus deliver safer, more inclusive, sustainable and resilient intermediary cities.

Integrated Approaches to Local Development:

UCLG highlighted the importance of integrated approaches to local sustainable development, which recognizes the need to include a cultural dimension alongside the social, economic and environmental components. This also applies when analyzing the challenges and risks faced by intermediate cities in a context of rapid growth. In particular, the following elements arise as particularly significant in these contexts. First, there is a need to be aware of the potential negative cultural impacts of rapid urban growth, e.g. as regards the loss of valuable cultural elements. In this regard, the recently-adopted document Culture 21 Actions suggests that 'cultural impact assessment' tools should be developed and training provided to support their implementation. Second, there is a need to adequately plan for the availability and accessibility of cultural facilities (e.g. libraries, art schools, community

centers, museums), including their decentralization as well as the suitable allocation of resources for their sustainable use. Third and last, there is a need to consider the importance of public space for civic and cultural use, given the significant impacts of public space in terms of citizenship development, social interaction and mutual recognition.

Mobility:

A major challenge is to make cities more integrated through urban mobility, especially with regards to public transportation and non-motorized mobility. Most people crave a public transport service quality at an affordable cost, having services close to their homes where can walk or with short transfers. This is where citizens must pressure the authorities, and dissuade official toward investing in continuous projects for major highways and malls.

Rapid Growth:

The first problem in managing planning of intermediate cities is understanding growth and global patterns of the growth. The current growth definition has high correlation to urban landfill transformation, high-rise buildings and mega-projects of infrastructure. The definition of rapid growth seems to be threatening the governments of intermediate cities, so they are put under pressure to apply immediate actions with minimal understanding of planning principles or sustainability concepts. The planning framework such as legislation, planning instruments and development tools only focus on build first, preserve later. This is related to the risks or poor planning.

The second challenge is the integrity of planning authorities. It is important to realize that when the rapid growth is acceptable as an emerging issue, the tsunami of development will be happening in intermediate cities. At the same time, however, the tsunami of skilled planning officials and planners are contrasting. The discretionary power of the consent authorities is likely to serve the private sector rather than the public interest, due to the vast publication of planning instruments versus major development applications around the world. The risk of this challenge is the abuse of power through development approvals.

The recommendations is therefore to understand the core of the governments, communities and planning patterns of intermediate cities regarding the rapid growth issue before making a planning projection with potential hidden agendas. The second is improving the planning and management skills of the consent authorities in urban planning and development.

Infrastructure:

Airports and ports are needed in intermediate cities for continued development. Public transport is the main source of mobility in all these intermediate cities. Governments should prioritize both industrial and service sectors in these cities. The governments have to look for recreational open

parks, closed door stadium, and other function halls. Open spaces for all are essential in future planning practices. Future development should be tailored for each region [or area] of a city to accommodate at least 20% of the given or projected population of that area.

Many intermediate cities are also somewhat handcuffed by building codes determined at the national level and regional (i.e. state) level with regard to land-use plans. This affects not only housing but major infrastructure such as airports and industrial complexes (shipping, trucking etc.). Where development is slated for high-risk areas there could be a greater attention paid in protecting local administrations from litigation (by large trans-national development corps), especially where LGA's or local governments are unable to enforce a higher standard of building code with regard to flood protections, bushfire protection, and heat island management (i.e. when building roads with wide verge and installation of bioretention flood defenses on verges or in swales and ensuring tree cover).

These kinds of progressive ecologically aware infrastructure solutions are being retrofitted at massive cost, but if planning guidance could require such installations be designed in earlier in the development process it would ease the financial burden on retro-fitting for local governing bodies and private owners - especially a consideration for large scale, low cost housing developments. Some of the planning guidance for the development of climate resilient estate in the UK, for instance, lays out some professional practice and property owner guides, but there is no statutory obligation for developers to adhere to these rules when designing large housing blocks, housing estates, industrial estates, shopping centers and the like. Too often, where we see successful local regulation or enforcement, these are overturned in the higher courts leading to future vulnerabilities of no concern to developers who have already sold the retail, industrial, residential floor space and moved on to the next project. In this case the risk is passed onto the end-user at no cost to developers, this is a big challenge to overcome for rapidly urbanisating areas; one worthy of discussion by this forum.

Combating corruption

Participants mentioned the need to adapt criminal law to include the crime of "endangering the orderly urban development", especially when regulations are not respected.

Foreign Investment in Intermediate Cities

Many medium-sized cities have joined the global networks of production and trade, by receiving large amounts of foreign investment. In turn, the intermediate cities have had important economic and cultural role as nodes within their regions, quitantdo pressure to big cities. The roles of intermediate cities in Mexico, for instance, have been considered as a space for demographic, economic and cultural decentralization. This brings pressures for the demand on infrastructure, equipment, and housing to meet the demand for services for the population and economic activities.

One important factor of intermediate cities has been creating platforms for attracting new foreign capital investments, which links it to the global network of cities. This requires new infrastructure such as airports, ICT, roads and logistics systems. Investments in the automotive industry, for example, have been made in primarily in intermediate cities and not in the big cities.

There are also intermediate cities with tourist vocations, as alternative centers to traditional beach destinations. There are a lot of intermediate cities, however, that are lagging behind in infrastructure, equipment and services, including being isolated from commercial and cultural nodes. Intermediate cities will be the most dynamic places in the 21st century; its role is essential to achieve a more sustainable living and maintain a more human scale. However, policymakers will have to have a well-defined comprehensive policy plan to make them real economic hubs as both global and regional nodes. They are an opportunity to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants.

A situation that is going through the intermediate cities is that they are having a metropolitan process. That is, they are growing and uniting accompanying localities, which brings different levels of government structures together. This is a phenomenon that certainly requires more planning.