



United Nations

HABITAT III **POLICY DIALOGUES**

National Urban Policies

Tuesday, 18 October 2016

3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Room 15-Teatro Demetrio Aguilera, Casa de la Cultura

Lead Organizations: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

1. Summary of the Dialogue and key messages of the Discussion

From the perspectives of different National Urban Policy stakeholders, the Policy Dialogue session aimed to provide a space to discuss and consider the findings of Policy Unit 3, National Urban Policies and particularly to consider how the findings could be operationalized in order to contribute towards the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Overall, discussion in the Dialogue highlighted that National Urban Policy is an essential tool for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. From the perspectives of representatives of international organizations, national government, local government, academia, and civil society, participants discussed how, from their perspectives, National Urban Policy provided a framework to structure and guide urbanization for sustainable growth. Moreover, discussion of the Dialogue focused on how partnership and collaboration could be key mechanisms for supporting the implementation of National Urban Policies for the New Urban Agenda.

Key messages from the Dialogue included:

- For a broad base of stakeholders, National Urban Policy is an essential tool for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Despite hearing different and broad spanning urban challenges from different country experiences, National Urban Policy was recognized as a feasible and legitimate way to tackle these challenges, in different country contexts.
- In order to successfully engage in the implementation of the recommendations of Policy Unit 3, National Urban Policies, there needs to be a foundation of knowledge on National Urban Policies

and a collaborative approach to the development of National Urban Policies and to the support for the development of National Urban Policies.

2. Action-oriented Recommendations/ way forward within the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

Looking forward, there was recognition of the need for a foundation of data on National Urban Policies, including country examples and a forum or framework for following up on the commitment to support the implementation of National Urban Policies that support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. In terms of ways forward to address these comments, two below activities are proposed:

1. **Global State of National Urban Policy Report:** The aim of the forthcoming Global State of national Urban Policy Report, to be produced by UN Habitat and OECD, is to provide a foundation for understanding how and in what forms NUPs have emerged globally, and to highlight and cross-reference country-level experiences in undertaking the NUP process. This Global State of National Urban Policy Report will provide a global perspective on NUP.
2. **Global Database on National Urban Policy:** UN Habitat's ongoing project of building a Database for National Urban Policy will ultimately result in an important tool that provides a global overview of urban policies at the national level. The database gathers country-level data (when available) for almost all United Nations Member States on the existence of relevant National Urban Policies. The aim of the database is to gather pertinent information in a central location and therefore make available a broad overview of the state of national urban policy globally

3. Key Commitments (if any) within the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

The launch of the National Urban Policy Programme and the commitment during the Dialogue of UN Habitat, OECD, and Cities Alliance to lead and support the Programme is an acknowledgement, both in the Dialogue session and at the Habitat III Conference in general, of the commitment of these three organizations to work with partners to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, particularly through the development of National Urban Policies.

As discussed in the Dialogue, the National Urban Policy Programme, and the three co-leading organizations, commit to working with partners and member states to support the development and implementation of NUP. This commitment will be implemented through the five below target areas:

- Contribute to fill the gaps in urban **data, knowledge, and tools** by providing a forum for knowledge creation, knowledge exchange and knowledge management for evidence-based urban policy and planning.
- Bridge the **capacity** gaps by working with national and local governments as well as relevant stakeholders to build the specialized skills required to develop a coordinated approach to development of NUP.
- Support the **development of effective and implementable NUPs globally and strengthen urban governance** through the provision of technical assistance and advisory services on the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of NUP and its associated processes and ultimately.

- **Monitor the progress of NUP** in its role as a part of the monitoring process of the New Urban Agenda / Sustainable Development Goals, through a global review and country specific reviews on NUP.
- Provide a platform for all levels of government and relevant stakeholders to network and engage in the processes of developing and implementing NUP. This platform will also facilitate the **broader engagement of all relevant stakeholders**.

Overall, through the National Urban Policy Programme the three co-leading organisations will work to answer the call in the New Urban Agenda to:

“take measures to establish legal and policy frameworks, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination, to enhance governments’ ability to effectively implement national urban policies, as appropriate, and to empower them as policymakers and decision makers, ensuring appropriate fiscal, political and administrative decentralization based on the principle of subsidiarity.” (New Urban Agenda, 2016: 18)

4. Way forward and next steps on monitoring the outcomes and the commitments from the Dialogue

It is proposed that the International Conference on National Urban Policy series can be one vehicle through which to monitor the commitment of participants of the Dialogue to promote National Urban Policies and for UN Habitat, OECD and Cities Alliance to jointly work to support the development of National Urban Policies:

1. **Second International Conference on National Urban Policy:** The Second International Conference on National Urban Policy entitled ***National Urban Policies: Implementing the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda***, to be held May 2017 in Paris, France, will be the first opportunity following the Habitat III Conference in Quito, and during the ongoing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) process, to consider in an international forum the role of National Urban Policy (NUP) in the global urban agenda. The Conference will also be the first official event of the National Urban Policy Programme, a joint initiative of UN Habitat, OECD, and Cities Alliance, aimed at working together to support the development and implementation of NUPs globally. The Conference will work to fill the need of a forum in which to monitor the outcomes and commitments made during the Habitat III process in relation to National Urban Policy by trying to consider to what extent, since Quito, progress has been made on developing and implementing NUP to support sustainable urbanization through the New Urban Agenda, the SDGs and other global agreements.

5. Proposed partnerships, network and synergies with other Stakeholders within the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

The need for partnerships and to define or better understand the roles for a variety of stakeholders was a key goal of the Dialogue. Discussion in the Dialogue recognized the need for these partnerships. While the above mentioned partnership between UN Habitat, OECD and Cities Alliance is a concrete example of proposed partnerships, broader collaboration between other stakeholders are necessary for the development of National Urban Policies and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

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

As mentioned above, the Second International Conference on National Urban Policy will be the first planned activity that will give a forum for monitoring progress towards the implementation of National Urban Policies to support the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Outreach and communications for this event is ongoing and will support the communication of the outcomes of the Dialogue session, with the ultimate goal of building on the discussion, findings, and outcomes of the Dialogue session.