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Coalition for Sustainable Cities & Regions in the new UN Development Agenda

Outcomes Report
Experts' Workshop on Sustainable Cities
& Human Settlements in the SDGs

5-6 December 2013

COALITION FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES & REGIONS
IN THE NEW UN DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

I. INTRODUCTION

Communitas is the Coalition for Sustainable Cities & Regions in the New UN Development Agenda. It is led by its core partners - Tellus Institute, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, nrg4SD-Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development and UN-Habitat - with the support of the Ford Foundation and the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation. Our technical methodology is based on thematic work groups led by experts producing issues papers with proposals for a stand-alone urban Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) and urban targets in close consultation with a multi-stakeholder advisory committee.

On 5-6 December 2013, the Communitas Coalition held its first Experts' Workshop - in collaboration with UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Member States Friends of Sustainable Cities, Major Groups & Stakeholders and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN); and thanks to the generous support of the European Union and the Ford Foundation. The workshop enabled governments to discuss informally with experts, Major Groups and stakeholders, local and regional authorities, and the UN system the issue of sustainable urbanization in the future SDGs framework and UN development agenda. By building on the lessons learned and the results achieved by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the workshop's vision was to advance just, prosperous and sustainable city-regions as a key element of the overall new UN Development Agenda. It therefore capitalizes on the megatrend of urbanization in order to halt growing inequality and longstanding poverty at the city-region scale within the framework of sustainable development.

The programme (Attachment 1), issues papers and presentations by experts have been made available online at: **http://communitascoalition.org/activities.html#experts**

Drawing on a participatory process, the Communitas Coalition seeks to:
➢ Advance sustainable urbanization as a key component of the future UN

Development Agenda, its Goals, tools, means of implementation and partnerships;

➢ Contribute to the technical development of an urban Goal with targets related to the economic, social, environmental, spatial and cultural dimensions of sustainable development and a basket of relevant indicators;

➢ Ensure the presence, as appropriate, of an urban dimension in the final set of SDGs to be agreed upon.

In September 2013 the Communitas Coalition launched, assembling six expert- and practitioner- led work groups to set the overall targets for just, prosperous and sustainable urbanization.

THEMATIC WORK GROUPS

1) Integrated urban planning & design for city-region connectivity & efficiency and inclusive public space
2) Participatory democracy, poverty & inequalities reduction
3) Prosperity & jobs for all within planetary boundaries with a focus on youth & women
4) Universal access to affordable & quality social services & public utilities incl. shelter, water & sanitation, transport & energy
5) Linkages with rural development, including food security & resources provision
6) Resilience through risk prevention & management & environmental sustainability

LEAD EXPERTS & ISSUES PAPERS

Each work group is spearheaded by a Lead Expert in his/her respective field, charged with the elaboration of an issues paper proposing technical targets for the SDGs.

1) Mr. Arun Jain, Chair, "Another Urban Future" and Board Member, International Federation of Housing and Planning (IFHP)
2) Ms. Andrea Costafreda, Associate Researcher & Consultant, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs and Lecturer on Development Policies & Programmes, Barcelona Institute of International Studies (IBEI)
3) Dr. Mark Roseland, Director, Centre for Sustainable Community Development and Professor, Simon Fraser University
4) Dr. Anjali Mahendra, Strategy Head, Research & Practice, EMBARQ India, World Resources Institute (WRI)
5) Mr. Thomas Forster, Senior Government Affairs Advisor, School Food FOCUS; Adjunct Faculty, New School for Public Engagement, Food Studies Program; Co-Director, International Partners for Sustainable Agriculture (IPSA)
6) Mr. James Goldstein, Senior Fellow, Tellus Institute

Each of these six lead experts has produced first draft issues papers with contributions from the Communitas Advisory Committee.

Each Issues Paper contains an (i) overview; outlines (ii) existing conditions, (iii) policy approaches and (iv) practitioners experience; puts forward (v) targets for a stand-alone urban SDG and (vi) links to other SDGs; and closes with an outline of steps for (vii) moving forward. The Issues Papers are available online from http://communitascoalition.org/activities.html#experts.

The Communitas Advisory Committee helps coordinate the thematic work groups drawn from a wide spectrum of stakeholder organizations in the social, human rights and environmental fields, as well as from within the UN system. The Advisory Committee ensures that Communitas lives up to its identity as a cross-sectoral technical group, led by organizations of subnational and local authorities, working in a multi-stakeholder approach, along with the UN system and its Member States.

The current membership of the Advisory Committee is as follows:

EMBARQ, World Resources Institute (WRI) - Mr. Holger Dalkmann, Director
Habitat for Humanity International - Mr. Dan Petrie, Associate Director, Congressional Relations
Habitat International Coalition (HIC) - Ms. Lorena Zárate, President
The Huairou Commission - Ms. Janice Peterson, Director
Institute for Transportation & Development Policy (ITDP) - Mr. Michael Replogle, Managing Director for Policy & Founder
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) - Mr. Zak Bleicher, Liaison Officer
International Housing Coalition (IHC) - Mr. Bob Dubinsky, President & CEO
Millennium Institute - Ms. Mayumi Sakoh, Policy & Partnerships Adviser
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) - Mr. John Romano, Global Fellow
Oxfam Great Britain - Mr. Alan Brouder, Urban Adviser
Regional Studies Association (UK) - Mr. Gordon E. Dabinett, Board Member
Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture & Food Security (RUAF) - Ms. Marielle Dubbeling, Director
Shack / Slum Dwellers International (SDI) - Mr. Benjamin Bradlow, Deputy Manager
Swiss Re - Mr. Mark Way, Head, Sustainability Americas Hub
Women's Environment & Development Organization (WEDO) - Ms. Eleanor Blomstrom, Programme Director

Mr. Arthur Getz Escudero, Fmr. Director, **Global Policy Change & Food Systems** Advocacy, **Heifer International**
Dr. Arthur MacEwan, Department of Economics, **University of Massachusetts Boston**
Dr. Ashwani Vasishth, School of Social Science & Human Services (SSHS), **Ramapo College**

Aim of the workshop: Enable governments to discuss informally with experts, Major Groups and stakeholders and the UN system the issue of sustainable urbanization in the future SDGs framework and UN development agenda.

Objective of the workshop: Feed into the thematic discussions at the January 2014 session of the Sustainable Development Goals Open Working Group (SDGs OWG).

Outputs of the workshop: Final Issues papers (with executive summaries), Outcomes Report and Booklet of real world local and regional experiences.

Vision: Building on the lessons learned and the results achieved by the MDGs, the ultimate vision is to advance just, prosperous and sustainable city-regions as a key element of the overall new UN Development Agenda; and therefore capitalize on the megatrend of urbanization in order to halt growing inequality and longstanding poverty at the city-region scale within the framework of sustainable development.

At the workshop and in this Outcomes Report we use the terms "cities," "city-regions," "urban areas," and "urban regions" interchangeably to denote metropolitan areas that are centers of population and economic activity. Our use of these terms is also intended to include the important links to surrounding ecosystems and rural areas. The term "regions" or "subnational governments" when used alone reflects the intermediate level of government between the local municipal level and the national one, which can take the shape of regions, states, or provinces.

In the **opening session**, Ms. Maruxa Cardama, Communitas Executive Coordinator presented the vision, objectives and methodology of the Communitas Coalition and introduced the programme and structure of the workshop. Mr. Jeb Brugmann, Managing Partner at The Next Practice and Founding Secretary-General of ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, served as moderator, bringing to the discussions his experience on the elaboration of Chapter 28 of Local Agenda 21 and on the achievement of local sustainable development solutions. Mr. Brugmann emphasized the need for an urban goal and targets to be inspirational and politically attractive. He suggested that the post-2015 development agenda should be discourse- and data-driven. Mr. Brugmann reminded participants that we are not starting from scratch; over the past 20 years strong links have been forged between the UN system and local and regional authorities and Local Agenda 21 has allowed for significant grassroots experience and achievements by subnational and local authorities.

Mr. Nikhil Seth, Director of the Division for Sustainable Development at UN DESA provided opening remarks. Mr. Seth outlined the urgent challenges of rapid urbanization, highlighting three key challenges: (i) reform of land markets; (ii) modifying building codes to encourage densification; and (iii) empowering local governments. Mr. Seth urged participants to rethink urbanization and identify an urban sustainability goal and targets, relevant for cities in both developed and developing

countries, that are practical and resonate with local governments. Mr. Seth emphasized the need to approach the elaboration of an overall balanced and integrated SDGs framework and that targets do not need to be linked to a single goal but can serve multiple goals.

Each session of the workshop addressed the topics grouped under **a particular Communitas work group** and featured a presentation by the lead expert for each group. These presentations outlined key points of the issues papers produced by lead experts with input from local and regional practitioners and Advisory Committee members, as well as proposed urban targets. Following each expert presentation, respondent Member States and panelists shared a first reaction and highlighted and/or completed key messages from their respective perspectives. The second part of each session consisted of an open discussion around a targeted set of questions. The lead experts, respondent Member States and panelists' comments were followed by a lively debate with all participants.

A list of Workshop participants is provided in Attachment 3. In addition to the Communitas Secretariat, representatives from each of the core partners – ICLEI, nrg4SD, and UN-Habitat – actively participated, as did a number of local and regional authorities from city-regions in developing and developed countries, individual thematic experts, and other Major Groups and stakeholders.

III. THEME-SPECIFIC HIGHLIGHTS

Below are brief highlights from each of the thematic discussions, followed in Sections IV by a summary of high-level cross-cutting themes. The proposed targets for each theme are included in the Issue Paper Executive Summaries (Attachment 4).

(1) PROSPERITY & JOBS FOR ALL WITHIN PLANETARY BOUNDARIES WITH A FOCUS ON YOUTH & WOMEN
- Inherent tension between achieving economic growth, prosperity and jobs for all and staying within planetary boundaries
- Globally we are well beyond certain planetary boundaries ("ecological deficit")
- Wealthy tend to benefit more from economic growth and the poor tend to suffer more from the environmental degradation associated with growth
- Social, economic and environmental objectives must be integrated
- While "green growth" is proposed as a key strategy for achieving prosperity within planetary boundaries and to address global and local sustainable development challenges, there are questions about the usefulness of this framing and how it

relates to enhancing human rights and quality of life

- Need to be careful what cities build themselves around – the examples of Detroit (cars) and Pittsburgh (steel) underscore the risks of monoculture; economic diversity (as opposed to one dominant industry) provides communities and cities with resilience
- A "just transition" would incorporate women and youth into all economic sectors and enhance quality of life
- Women's economic empowerment is directly linked to a human rights based approach
- Need to consider the importance of the "informal economy" and also the "care economy," where women are sometimes locked into roles outside the cash economy
- Need to recognize that conflicting interests exist and that there is unequal access to decision-making power; grassroots pressure comes when the poor and disenfranchised are organized
- Incentives for environmentally friendly investment (e.g., renewable energy generation) can help balance growth and ecological integrity
- Consumer culture drives excess consumption (especially in global north) and pressures on ecosystems
- Is there a post ideological public-private-partnerships approach? Need to be careful that public-private partnerships are not just winding down the state and pumping up the private sector
- Partnerships are not just public-private but also public-NGO/civil society, partnerships among subnational and local authorities and across levels of government; and all types of partnerships should have at their core the prerequisite of respecting and being accountable for human rights
- Need economic/prosperity metrics beyond GDP. For example, the World Bank's work with 50 countries and 50 companies on parallel accounts for natural capital is not perfect, but is a good start
- Opportunity to go beyond standard macro-economic approaches and implement international financial reform (to decrease financial speculation and generate funds to support developing countries).
- Strong connections between rapid urbanization and what is happening in rural areas (need land reform to lessen the pace of migration to urban slums)
- Practitioners from subnational and local authorities cite usefulness of local sustainable community initiatives, eco-city frameworks with standards and indicators; but challenges regarding: funding, lack of shared vision or a clear mandate, and poor coordination for multi-level governance
- Local authorities do not have control over all the key challenges facing city-regions; need support from and coordination with higher levels of government (e.g., financing of public transit and other key infrastructure)
- Urban youth unemployment and segregation is a reality in developed countries as

well
- Sustainability at local level is creating an entrepreneurial job market for the young
- From an Asian perspective cities are in need of systems approach and thinking - for instance approaching their development from a hydrological perspective or from a social perspective.
- Investing in urban natural systems and boosting innovation at the local level will also be instrumental to urban SD in Asia.
- How to make informality part of prosperity and growth for all and a response to its psycho-social dimension
- Organizing informal activities such as urban recycling (e.g., in cooperatives) can provide livelihood opportunities with dignity and increase incomes of the poor as occurred in Buenos Aires in 2000-2001
- Informal activities can increase city-region resilience, e.g., such as "pop-up kitchens" and new food supply chains that were established in the NYC region post hurricane Sandy

(2) PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY, POVERTY & INEQUALITIES REDUCTION
- Globalization and decentralization have elevated the importance and role of subnational and local authorities in advancing sustainable development
- How do we balance local solutions as with global frameworks?
- Regional consultations by UN Non-Government Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) resulted in a consensus among civil society that to combat poverty/inequality more diverse self-reliant economies and less reliance on natural resource exploitation are needed
- The UN's *My World* Survey For a Better World identified governance as the third most important issue for the post-2015 Development Agenda
- Sound – and democratic! – governance at all levels is essential for Sustainable Human Development
- Educational institutions have an important role to play in creating sustainable communities
- The SDGs should create a culture of true citizenship for all
- While cities are centers of economic and cultural opportunity, not everyone has access to public services and cover their basic needs
- Segregation of the poor and unequal access to employment and other opportunities is a reality in cities in developed countries as well as developed countries
- Poverty in slums is linked to lack of land reform in rural areas
- The essential focus on slum dwellers should not exclude the important need to address urban street people/homeless
- The lack of provision of basic public services for the poor results from their lack of role in decision-making and setting policy priorities
- To engage the urban disenfranchised it is essential to explain why their input is

needed and give them hope that their input and concerns will be addressed

- Need to consider whether public-private partnerships are narrowing the realm of participatory democracy
- Addressing inequalities requires democratic and effective local government with real involvement of citizens, broad collaboration among government levels, and partnerships with civil society and private sector
- A human rights approach is as a matter of justice and obligation and not only a policy approach
- To have impact on SDGs and the post-2015 Development Agenda, it will be important to translate the rights approach into concrete terms related to prosperity
- Rights approach is a useful starting point for promoting participatory democracy at the elaboration, implementation and monitoring stages of public policy
- Previous commitments undertaken by Member States in the human rights and environmental fronts should underpin the elaboration of post-2015 targets and indicators
- Sweden, for example, prioritizes women's economic empowerment and health/reproductive rights
- There are proven efficient mechanisms to engage the urban poor - such as the "rights approach" based on the World Charter for the Right to the City promoted by Habitat International Coalition HC and that underscores the need for beneficiaries of urban policies to have the right to participate in the development and shaping of such policies; Slum Dweller International's neighborhood data gathering efforts; public referenda; and citizen panels such as used in Porto Alegre, Brazil to vote on budget priorities
- Need to define cities for their social function – the Brazilian constitution does this and recognizes the social function of property
- Difficult to engage citizens who don't even know their rights, and many do not have access to technology that would allow better access to information and engagement; special efforts are necessary to engage the poor and women, such as those used by UN-Habitat and the Huariou Commission
- Common challenges identified by subnational and local practitioners include inadequate financial resources, lack of institutional cohesion, lack of voice at decision-making table
- But cities can do much within financial constraints; progressive taxation on property is an under-utilized urban policy tool
- Making a case for urban SDG needs new arguments and new actors compared to what was done for Local Agenda 21 and is linked to promoting sound governance at the subnational and local levels, as much as at the national and international ones
- As part of the "data revolution" the democratization of data and promoting going beyond official UN statistics will be essential – including through crowdsourcing, citizen monitoring and real-time reporting mechanisms as an important

empowerment tool that translates the human rights approach into practice. The official inclusion, legitimation, and support for community-collected data on nature and scale of poverty and informality in cities, especially by subnational and local authorities, would be a significant step towards the data revolution that is needed

(3) UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE & QUALITY SOCIAL SERVICES & PUBLIC UTILITIES INCLUDING SHELTER, WATER & SANITATION, TRANSPORT & ENERGY

- Trends show starkly inadequate and unequal access to urban services
- While achieving universal access is a daunting task, the MDG process has shown the power of governments and stakeholders to mobilize and address major challenges
- Similarly, Local Agenda 21 led to many city-level programs in the EU and provided legitimacy for cities' ongoing sustainability activities
- The links to the provision of housing, public services and utilities guarantees that cities are fit for life for all
- We are moving from a rural world with urban areas, to an urban world with rural areas so we are in urgent need of adequate policies for this transitional phase
- Bristol, UK is an example of how international targets and tools such as Local Agenda 21 are essential to give legitimacy to what sub-national and local authorities do at the grassroots level and to bring different actors together

Housing
- Key obstacles to universal access to housing include: land tenure insecurity, inadequate supply of affordable housing due partly to lack of private involvement, misalignment between local and national plans/policies
- Housing development in many cities around the world, particularly in the global south, is dysfunctional and/or the overall regulatory framework is cumbersome making it hard to get financing; so much happens informally; improved credit schemes are needed
- Lack of shelter pushes many slum dwellers to peripheral, often more vulnerable areas
- Decent shelter is integrally linked with improved health and economic outcomes for the poor
- Need legal/regulatory framework such as a building code to ensure minimum safety and other requirements, such as tenure, adequate space, durability, access to water & sanitation

Water & Sanitation
- Lack of access to affordable clean water and sanitation services increases disease, including chronic diarrhea, thereby lowering prospects for employment and income

growth
- Many informal settlements in cities along rivers lack sanitation services, so flooding creates significant public health impacts; climate change with increased storm intensity and sea-level rise will exacerbate this situation; important connection to building urban resilience
- City of Bristol, UK is an example of a successful public-private partnership for the provision of affordable drinking water

Transport
- Increasing motorization has led to higher energy use and GHG emissions, congestion, air pollution and related health impacts, plus higher traffic-related injuries and death
- Urban transportation systems are often quite unreliable, especially during peak commuting hours when demands for service are greatest; these bottlenecks and congestion cause huge inefficiencies in performance (cost, time, pollution, etc.)
- Huge market failures in transportation has led to many informal, uncoordinated arrangements, including poor working conditions; transport of the 21st century needs to be as reliable an utility as electricity has evolved into
- Reliable public transportation systems, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) can address many of these issues, but aren't available in many cities, especially in informal settlements, or are not affordable
- Challenging to involve informal operators in BRT, but new technologies can help integrate formal and informal transport
- Information and communications technologies can support innovative approaches such as General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) that defines a common format for transit schedules and related geographic information, low-emission zones, public transit performance monitoring and reporting, air pollution performance monitoring

Waste Management
- Rising urban consumption means more waste is generated
- Waste management costs can be a significant burden on local government budgets
- Poor waste management can lead to negative public health outcomes

Governance
- A right-based approach should apply in terms of land use to ensure adequate public space and to allocate street space for other modes than motorized private cars
- Need integrated approach to address universal access, requires cross-sectoral thinking and inter-agency coordination (specific institutional structure less important than their coordination)
- Important linkages to overall urban planning; need to anticipate and incentivize

where new informal growth occurs by providing basic services
- Leadership & support in local government is critical; civil society can bring pressure for this
- Examples of successful governance approaches include:
  - As a city-state that has transformed itself over the past 50 years, Singapore provides a unique example of what integrated planning and development, combined with dynamic governance, can achieve in terms of going beyond universal access to basic services; it's livability focus has resulted in economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and high quality of life
  - Porto Alegre has an innovative law that after five years of informal settlement the government is responsible for providing basic services
  - Buenos Aires established neighborhood-based participation centers and health centers to be more responsive to the basic needs of the poor
- Infrastructure improvements such as new roads or water/sanitation systems are sometimes resisted due to fear of construction impacts, rising cost of services, or displacement
- Where the public sector contracts or partners with the private sector, need to ensure fair competitive bidding as well as performance monitoring and independent auditing; this often requires improvements in the rule of law

General messages
- Urban land use & spatial planning has significant long-term impacts on universal access
- Key difference between rural and urban households: rural residents have access to land and are therefore more self-sufficient, while urban households are more dependent on others for basic services
- Universal access to services in cities determines economic, health, inclusion, and environmental outcomes
- Localized or distributed models of urban service delivery, with public-private-civil society partnerships, are often more efficient and enhance universal access
- Achieving universal access to urban services requires strong institutional support and empowerment of subnational and local authorities

(4) LINKAGES WITH RURAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING FOOD SECURITY AND RESOURCES PROVISION
- Continuum of urban-rural linkages and flows: people, production, commodities, capital & income, natural resources, waste and pollution
- Notion of a global nexus of city-regions is emerging, with rural regions contributing to sustainable management of planetary resources
- Linkage especially important with respect to agriculture/food systems, where rural areas provide the natural resources (i.e. soil and water) to support urban food

security

- Industrial food systems are the source of significant rural environmental degradation, though this is a politically sensitive issue; new data emerging on food supply impacts and advantages of sustainable intensification
- Municipal policy approaches to enhance ecosystem resilience recognize that land uses important to rural areas are also important to urban areas
- Recent focus on "adaptive green mosaic" with working landscapes of farms and gardens
- Many good examples of urban-rural linkages where collaboration benefits both, including:
  - NYC water supply system in which the City pays communities/land owners in the Catskills/upstate for ecosystem services by investing in enhanced farm practices and land use management practices that protect the watershed; this has allowed NYC to avoid constructing multi-billion dollar treatment infrastructure
  - Argentina provides livelihood opportunities outside of the most vulnerable urban areas to enhance disaster risk mitigation
  - Russia encourages better agricultural practices through payments for ecological services
- (International Fund for Agricultural Development) IFAD, a specialized UN agency based in Rome, recognizes that urbanization is not just about growing cities, but about new urban/rural relationships; IFAD provides about $1 billion in loans per year and sees investment in small (rural) agriculture as especially effective in reducing poverty
- Agricultural trade gridlock is a persistent problem; important not to let this international protectionist issue curtail vibrant urban-rural systems
- To make explicit the importance of urban-rural links, we may want to consider a friendly amendment to the oft-cited quote from the Report of the UN High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda that "Cities are where the battle for sustainable development will be won or lost", transforming it to "Urbanization is where the battle for sustainable development will be won or lost"
- Rights-based approach is also relevant in terms of the right to food and farmers' rights
- Poverty and hunger in cities is extreme and growing, though data on the hunger count in cities is in question
- City of Toronto's Food Policy Council is an example of public-private-civil society collaboration across the food chain that is intentionally about social inclusion and health equity; the Council takes a multi-level governance approach – from neighborhood level up to City Council, provincial and federal levels – and focuses on urban and regional food systems planning and food-friendly neighborhoods; strategies include school gardens, market gardens at apartment towers, farmland

preservation, and use of food markets to animate public space

(5) INTEGRATED URBAN PLANNING & DESIGN FOR CITY-REGION CONNECTIVITY & EFFICIENCY AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC SPACE

- Biggest policy challenge related to spatial planning is countering the widespread assumption that broad social gain is best obtained through economic growth and urban development; instead, desired social outcomes should guide and define the degree and direction of urban development
- Established governance, regulatory and financial structures based solely on promoting economic growth limit the viability of new and innovative urban policies
- Given the pressures of rapid urbanization, a key challenge cities face is to spatially plan new areas to establish and integrate sustainable environmental, social and economic frameworks faster than people can arrive
- Existing urban systems must also be retrofitted in a coherent urban agenda
- The need for growth can be tempered by managing and re-purposing existing assets in urban environments, preserving and enhancing physical and social assets
- Growing evidence that many cities will be in increasingly persistent crisis management mode, which may limit substantial upgrades and aspirational objectives
- Planning and design should be aimed at providing resilience, meaning livability over time, in the face of known and uncertain crises
- The resilience theme or lens can be made very tangible and powerful (e.g., post a natural disaster such as hurricane Sandy) and helps focus on the integrated nature of cities
- There are many successes that demonstrate innovative urban planning and design strategies can be introduced and maintained, but they require ongoing political will and resources
- Internationally there are differing perspectives regarding the role of cities; some rights-based agenda proponents view cities as problematic
- Inequality in urban planning and design decision-making processes needs to be reversed so that the needs of everyone, including the provision of basic services and amenities for the poor and marginalized, are reflected in land use patterns and spatial designs; this requires special effort to involve the poor and disenfranchised in planning and design decisions
- An urban SDG is needed because place matters to achieve sustainable human development for all

(6) RESILIENCE THROUGH RISK PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- As dense population centers and hubs of infrastructure and economic activity, cities

are particularly vulnerable to shocks such as extreme weather, earthquakes, and resource shortages and economic shocks

- Poverty and inequality greatly amplify risk so the poor and marginalized are especially vulnerable to natural hazards, climate change, food insecurity, and resource shortages
- Resilience is the ability to absorb, or quickly bounce back from, an external shock; a more socially-focused definition is the ability of all people to realize their rights and improve their well-being despite shocks, stresses, and uncertainty
- Resilient cities are characterized by redundancy for vital systems, flexibility, systems to contain the rippling effects of failures, rapid rebound capacity, and constant learning with robust feedback loops
- Resilience provides a unifying, integrated framework for approaching urban sustainability and needs to be recognized as a core target of an urban SDG
- Resilience definitions should be people-centred
- Complex systems approach is useful in conceptualizing resilience, whereby the economic system is nested within the social system, which is nested within the ecosystem
- Reducing vulnerability for the poor must address inequality and power
- Enhancing resilience involves assessing existing environmental, economic, and social conditions; identifying the populations and assets most at risk; developing robust adaptation strategies and disaster response plans; and mobilizing the necessary financial and other resources
- Lack of data at the city-region level regarding existing environmental, economic, and social conditions must be addressed to enable effective resilience planning and implementation
- Most existing risks/vulnerabilities will be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change; therefore climate change mitigation efforts will also often enhance resilience
- While national governments have an important role to play in building resilience by providing financial resources for infrastructure, research and data gathering, assessing vulnerabilities and building resilience is very place-specific; subnational and local authorities play a leading role and must be empowered
- Investment in early warning systems for disasters is an important tool to mitigate risk
- Permanently moving people out of harm's way (referred to as "strategic retreat") is sometimes an appropriate policy approach, though as the state of Rio de Janeiro has found, this is very difficult politically
- Enhancing resilience links closely to other themes such as integrated urban planning and design, provision of universal access to public services, linkages with rural development
- Resilience strategies should build on existing arrangements and commitments, including the outcomes of Rio+20 as well as the development of National

Adaptation Plans under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Resilience should be integrated with broader local and national development planning, as well as international aid and relief efforts
- There is a risk of resilience becoming 'an industrialized word' at the service of private sector vested interests
- The means of implementation for enhancing resilience requires engagement of all stakeholders – governments, private sector including the insurance industry and financing organizations, civil society, international development aid agencies, etc.

IV. HIGH-LEVEL CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

The following cross-cutting themes emerged from the Workshop presentations and discussion.

- As dense population centers and hubs of economic activity and resource use, urban areas offer bother enormous opportunities and risks for the achievement of sustainable development.
- The interrelated challenges facing urban areas– enhancing well-being, eradicating poverty, and protecting environmental integrity – must be addressed in an integrated fashion, involving all levels of government and a broad range of stakeholders, if the potential benefits of sustainable urbanization are to be realized and contribute to global sustainable development.
- The real world experience of local and regional authorities is invaluable in developing the SDGs, including a goal on sustainable urbanization, and assessing the feasibility of usefulness of proposed targets.
- A stand-alone urban SDG is required to ensure an integrated and place-based approach (across social, economic and environmental objectives) that mobilizes cities, local and subnational authorities and addresses the essential role that urbanization must play in sustainable development.
- With increased urbanization expected in coming decades, advance planning and design for where and how new urban residents will live is essential.
- Cities have integral interlinkages with their surrounding rural areas – for the provision of food, water, ecosystem services, etc. – so addressing rural development challenges is critical to sustainable urbanization.
- Urban areas are particularly vulnerable to shocks such as extreme weather, earthquakes, resource shortages and economic downturns.
- Poverty and inequality greatly amplify risks to the poor and marginalized and undermine the prospects for sustainable urbanization.

- Most challenges faced by urban areas will be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change.
- Enhancing city-regions' resilience – the ability to absorb, or quickly bounce back from, external shocks – is critical for advancing global sustainable development.
- The provision of universal access to basic services in city-regions is essential for eradicating poverty, reducing inequality, promoting participatory democracy, and enhancing resilience.
- All kinds of partnerships – public-private, public-civil society, across local agencies, and across levels of government – are necessary to achieve sustainable cities and regions, and should be rooted in the full respect of human rights, transparency and accountability.
- The official inclusion, legitimation, and support for community-collected data on the nature and scale of poverty and informality in cities, especially by subnational and local authorities, would be a significant step towards the data revolution that is needed.

V. CLOSING SESSION

The closing session of the Workshop included concluding remarks from Dr. Cynthia Rosenzweig, Co-Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Dr. Rosenzweig reiterated SDSN's position that the success of the SDGs will largely be determined in the world's cities. She discussed SDSN's proposed urban SDG: "Empower Inclusive, Productive, and Resilient Cities," aimed at making all cities socially inclusive, economically productive, environmentally sustainable, and resilient to climate change and other risks. Dr. Rosenzweig also presented SDSN's three proposed targets: (i) Eliminate extreme poverty, expand employment and productivity, and raise living standards, especially in slums and informal settlements. (ii) Ensure universal access to a secure and affordable built environment and basic urban services: housing, water, sanitation and waste management; low-carbon energy and transportation; and communication. (iii) Ensure safe air quality and water quality for all, and integrate reductions in greenhouse gas emission, efficient land and resource use, and climate and disaster resilience into investments and standards. The SDSN urban goal and targets can be found at: www.unsdsn.org.

Dr. Rosenzweig suggested that SDSN framework of targets and indicators provides a roadmap for operationalizing an urban SDG. She also stressed the need for urban local governments to work collaborative with many other stakeholders including national governments, the private sector, and civil society. She also mentioned the Sustainable Cities Initiative in which SDSN is attempting to test the proposed urban indicators in

cities such as Accra, Bangalore, Durban, Rio de Janeiro, and New York City. Finally, Dr. Rosenzweig emphasized the need for a broad campaign to promote an urban SDG, including the use social media.

Jeb Brugmann's closing remarks stressed the need to develop allies among UN member state delegations, starting especially with the Group of Friends of Sustainable Cities, to gain support for an urban SDG and related targets. He emphasized the importance of going beyond identifying a goal and targets and to consider means of implementation – the program for partnering and collaborating to make it happen. Mr. Brugmann also highlighted the importance of driving resources to bottom-up (local/regional processes) enabling local responsiveness to global targets.

The final closing remarks were provided by Felix Dodds, former long-time Executive Director of Stakeholder Forum and currently a Special Advisor to the Communitas Coalition. Mr. Dodds reiterated the integrated nature of the many themes addressed in the various sessions and presented a framework for identifying the important inter-linkages. He concluded by describing next steps to be undertaken by the Communitas Coalition including revising the Issue Papers based on discussions at the Experts Workshop and feedback from the Advisory Committee, preparing a synthesized Issue Brief for the SDG Open Working Group session on cities and related matters in January 2014, promoting the urban SDG and targets among UN member states, and piloting the proposed targets in several cities around the world to test their usefulness.

VI. TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

1) **Urbanization is a defining issue for the post-2015 Development Agenda.**

2) It is increasingly understood that **urban and rural development should - and can - be worked out in a holistic and synergetic manner.**

3) As dense population centers and hubs of economic activity and resource use, **cities offer bother enormous opportunities and risks for the achievement of sustainable development**.

4) The interrelated **challenges facing urban areas – enhancing well-being, eradicating poverty, and protecting environmental integrity – must be addressed in an integrated fashion, involving all levels of government and a broad range of stakeholders via participatory democracy mechanisms**, if the potential benefits of sustainable urbanization are to be realized and contribute to

global sustainable development.

5) A **stand-alone urban SDG is required to ensure an integrated and place-based** (across social, economic and environmental objectives) that mobilizes cities, local and subnational authorities and addresses the essential role that urbanization must play in sustainable development.

6) **The urban SDG should stress that cities should be inclusive and resilient**.

7) The **risk of mainstreaming** the focus on urban issues across the SDGs is that **the critical importance of urbanization and cities and as integrators of strategies to address sustainable challenges will be lost**.

8) SDGs should **build upon existing commitments and international frameworks**.

9) **Subnational and local authorities will be essential actors in implementing the SDGs** and achieving the targets but their **financial and capacity needs** are clear obstacles.

10) Already existing tools such as **Local Agenda 21 and Decentralized Cooperation** have clustered around them over the past decades rich experience and know-how and hence represent major **means of implementation** for the SDGs at the subnational and local levels.

11) As part of the "**data revolution**" the **democratization of data and the promotion of grass-roots data collection systems** – including crowdsourcing, citizen monitoring and real-time reporting mechanisms – will constitute an important empowerment tool to translate the human rights approach into practice

VII. MOVING FORWARD

- By year's end, the Communitas Lead Experts and Secretariat will **revise the draft issue papers**, drawing on the rich discussion at the Experts Workshop and the input from Advisory Committee members.

- In order to inform the UN intergovernmental SDGs Open Working Group session in January, which is dedicated to sustainable cities and related topics, the Communitas Secretariat will submit two documents: (1) a **Synthesis Report**

presenting the refined Communitas proposals for a stand-alone urban SDG and other urban targets (to be done in consultation with other groups currently working on this issue); and (2) an accompanying **booklet of real-world experiences** drawing from the questionnaire responses collected from local and regional authorities via ICLEI and nrg4SD and from our Advisory Committee members.

- Also in January, Communitas will pursue a **side event during the SDGs Open Working Group** session. We are also organizing **informal consultations with UN agencies** and will seek to convene a meeting with other groups working on urban targets in order to contribute to collaborative approaches and joint strategies.

- For mid/late February Communitas will engage in **multi-stakeholder exercises advocating for an urban SDG** to feed into the very early stages of the preparation of the report of the SDGs Open Working group.

- Communitas will also be participating in the **NEXUS Conference** in Chapel Hill, North Carolina in March 2014 and the **World Urban Forum** in Medellin, Colombia in April 2014. We will continue to host future events with our core partners and collaborators as opportunities arise.

Attachments

1. Experts Workshop Programme

2. Lead Experts Biographies

3. List of Workshop Participants

4. Compilation of Issue Papers Executive Summaries
    (including zero draft proposed targets)

5. Results of Workshop Crowdsourcing Exercise – Ideas for an Urban SDG & Urban Targets