



Private Sector Partnership Forum

Innovative Solutions to Challenges in Slums & Informal Settlements in Africa
24 to 26 June 2020, eConference

The Challenge of Urbanization

Date: Thursday, 25 June 2020, 1045-1145

Topics Explored

Country Perspectives:

1. Voices from the Grassroots
2. Government Priorities
3. Perspectives of Financing Partners

Moderator

Robert Lewis-Lettington, Chief of Section, Land, Housing and Shelter, UN-Habitat

Panel Discussions

1. Hon. Mohammed Adjei Sowah, Mayor, City of Accra, Ghana
2. Hon. Achobong Tambeng Paul, Mayor, City of Bamenda, Cameroon
3. Hon. Samuel Gajere Akala, Executive Chairman, Karu Local Government, Nasarawa State, Federal Republic of Nigeria
4. Joseph Pade, Commissioner for Urban Development, Ministry of Lands, Housing & Urban Development, Uganda
5. Sheila Kamunyor, Senior Urban Specialist, World Bank
6. Stefan Atchia, Manager, Urban Development Division, African Development Bank
7. Anaclaudia Rossbach, Regional Manager, Latin American & Caribbean Region, Cities Alliance
8. Rafael Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat

About the Private Sector Partnership Forum

Recognizing the key role played by the private sector in all areas of development, engaging the business community is critical to the realization of the SDGs. Even though approx. 60% of urban populations in Africa live in informal settlements, the economic importance of this large market remains untapped, yet it presents lucrative business opportunities. Companies and investors lack the enabling environment needed to develop business cases for modern solutions and affordable innovations for informal urban areas. For this reason, PSUP is taking the first steps towards addressing this major opportunity and duly matching private sector solutions with the needs in informal urban settlements and slums.

The three-day Private Sector Partnership Forum has been organized in recognition of the critical roles played by the private sector in innovating and piloting novel solutions to development challenges, and the public sector in scaling up successful innovations. To this end, the Forum seeks to facilitate partnership between national governments and municipalities with private sector companies, specifically investors and innovators with low-cost innovative solutions to development challenges.

About the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) together with the European Commission (EC), and the Secretariat of the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) entered a tripartite partnership to address the challenge of slums in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Countries through the launch of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) in 2008. Since then, the PSUP has worked in over 40 countries and 200 cities and urban centres, developing the capacities of country partners in slum upgrading and urban profiling for sustainability. In addition, the Programme has developed more than 30 citywide slum upgrading and prevention strategies and identified concrete entry-points for participatory slum upgrading at city scale.

Description of the Session

The challenges of rapid urbanization that cities are facing globally are expressed in the growing proliferation of informal settlements in urban areas. One billion people worldwide live in slums. Provision of affordable and environmentally sustainable housing and basic services for the urban poor remains a key challenge for many African countries. In Sub-Saharan Africa the urban poor living in informal settlements and slums constitute 62% of the urban population. Despite the progress in improving slums and preventing their formation – represented by a decrease from 39 per cent to 30 per cent of the urban population living in slums in developing countries between 2000 and 2014 – absolute numbers continue to grow, and the slum challenge remains a critical factor. The magnitude of the slum challenge has been recognized globally and included as part of the international development agenda.

Target 11.1 of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #11 commits states and their development partners to ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums by 2030. This global goal guides countries towards sustainable urbanization that involves improving living conditions of slum dwellers by improving access to affordable housing and upgrading slums. Similarly, the New Urban Agenda (NUA)'s principle of "Leaving No One Behind" and commitment to "Sustainable Urban Development for Social Inclusion and Ending Poverty" binds member states to paying special attention to urban poverty and the needs of slums dwellers.

The key issues of slums and informal settlements are the lack of urban planning, overcrowding, lack of appropriate housing and infrastructure, including lack of social and economic services, and lack of vital basic services such as water, sanitation, and waste management. Other issues are environmental degradation, health deprivation, traffic congestion and lack of access to education, health services, employment and business opportunities. The dimensions of political and social issues of slums extends to the lack of public safety and social segregation, social disparities and stigmatization. The key challenges to ensure a sustainable urbanization process that includes the 62% of urban residents living in informal urban areas are in the financing and policy development for the provision of affordable housing, water, sanitation, waste management, roads, urban drainage, communal infrastructure, employment, long-term service provision and the financing of maintenance of infrastructure.

The session will focus on the concrete challenges, priorities and untapped opportunities facing national and local governments and the communities of informal settlements in African cities. Financing partners will present their perspectives on the financing for sustainable urbanization that is inclusive of the urban poor. The session will explore the impact of COVID-19 and the required practical short and long-term measures that are needed to successfully respond to these challenges, also in regard to access to finance and the investment requirements for the long-term development of informal urban areas.

Guiding Questions

- ✓ What are the challenges to ensuring a sustainable urbanization of informal urban areas that can be overcome through strategic partnerships?
- ✓ What are the key barriers to private sector entry to address the challenges of urbanization? What are some of the actions that governments need to take to eliminate these barriers?
- ✓ What are the opportunities available that can be built on in addressing the key challenges?
- ✓ What are some of the good practices or flagship programmes or partnerships or innovative financing models that have been successful and need replicating?
- ✓ What are some of the key innovations in addressing a sustainable urbanization process? What has been the recipe for their success?
- ✓ What measures can governments implement to incentivize or reduce the risks to developers willing to venture into the lower end of the market to provide infrastructure and services?
- ✓ What measures can governments implement to address the informality of informal settlements to reduce the barriers for investment into housing, infrastructure and services?
- ✓ What existing infrastructure, investments or partnerships can be leveraged to accelerate the realization of a sustainable urbanization in informal settlements?
- ✓ Which key strategies, policies and sector reforms would accelerate the realization of investments in informal settlements? Reforms in formalization of urban planning of informal urban areas, access to land and ownership, land value capture for urban rehabilitation etc.

- ✓ What investments are required to meet the challenges in informal settlements and slums?
- ✓ What are your municipality's plans and budgetary commitments towards upgrading of informal settlements or providing affordable housing to residents of informal settlements?
- ✓ How can we successfully address the affordability challenge for residents of informal settlements and slums?
- ✓ What is the role of communities living in informal settlements in the realization of sustainable urbanization?

Expected Outcomes

The Forum is among a series of events organized by UN-Habitat to strengthen partnership with the business community to support sustainable and inclusive urban development and the New Urban Agenda. It provides a platform for matching the needs of informal settlements residents and demands of cities with innovative private sector solutions. The session is expected to have:

1. Demonstrated the business potential and identified opportunities to develop and deploy low-cost innovative solutions to a sustainable urbanization that is inclusive of informal settlements
2. Identified opportunities for partnership and matched governments and investors with investable innovative solutions and models are explored
3. Identified bankable and investment-ready projects to be piloted in slums and informal settlements