

World Urban Campaign Update and Way Forward

Note prepared by the Advocacy and Campaign Unit, 20 July 2020. Updated on 13 August after review by External Relations Branch Head. Approved by ERSKI Director on 7 September 2020.

This update is prepared five months after 22nd WUC Steering Committee Meeting held during the 10th Session of the World Urban Forum in Abu Dhabi. The elements described below are presented in visuals in the attached PowerPoint.

1. Towards a new vision and governance

On 12 February, the WUC Steering Committee convened for its 22nd meeting with three objectives: review the past year of WUC activities, conduct elections for the Co-Chairs and discuss the WUC workplan for 2020. The Steering Committee agreed that the campaign should be geared to action in the coming years and deliver results on the ground that are aligned to UN-Habitat's strategy. This will be reflected in the new vision and revised governance that the partners would put forward. The Steering Committee reconstituted its Working Groups into three committees to prepare a new WUC Vision and Workplan, new Terms of Reference and revisit the Urban Thinkers Campus process.

WUC partners have put forward the following reasons for revisiting the vision of the WUC:

- Clarify the mission of the WUC.
- Increase the outreach and visibility of the WUC.
- Demonstrate impacts of the WUC advocacy on the ground.
- Position the WUC under the UN Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs.
- Increase synergies between WUC partners and UN-Habitat activities.
- Make better use of the Urban Thinkers Campuses to demonstrate action and impacts.
- Better monitor results of WUC partners actions as per their commitment and demonstrate the impact of the WUC.
- Make better use of 'The City We Need' manifesto produced by the WUC as a basis for the vision and future messaging.

Similarly, the partners have advanced the following reasons for revisiting the governance of the WUC:

- Expand and facilitate membership
- Open membership to individuals
- Increase the flexibility of decision-making arrangements
- Increase the frequency of on-line meetings to keep partners engaged.

2. Proposed new vision

At the heart of the new WUC vision is the core mission defined as:

To contribute in developing solutions and take action in cities and communities in implementing the New Urban Agenda to accelerate the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The new vision (refer to Annex 1 of this document) is presented using the following headings:

- Vision Statement
- Goals
- Our Mission
- What is the World Urban Campaign?
- Our organization
- Why we need the World Urban Campaign?
- What we promote
- How do we promote
- Our Coalition
- Strategic Actions
- Principles of actions

3. Proposed new governance

The WUC Terms of Reference have been modified along the following lines:

- Simplification of the membership composed of:
 - Partners: organizations that have signed a statement of commitment supporting the principles of the WUC, The City We Need manifesto and committing to a number of activities for a minimum period of two years, approved by the Steering Committee.
 - Sponsors: organizations that have signed a contribution agreement with UN-Habitat supporting the principles of the WUC, The City We Need manifesto and committing to financially support the WUC activities.
 - City Changers: individuals that have participated in an Urban Thinkers Campus organized under the banner of the WUC, and committed to the principles of the WUC, The City We Need manifesto and supporting the key messages of the WUC for a period of two years.
- Only one decision-making organ, being the Steering Committee, composed of :
 - The WUC Co-Chairs, elected by the WUC Partners;
 - The Partners Constituent Group (PCG) Chairs elected by PCG partners;
 - UN-Habitat.
- Steering Committee meetings to be held quarterly and WUC Assembly meetings at least once a year.

The revised Terms of Reference are included in Annex 2 of this document. A draft Statement of Commitment for WUC Partners has been prepared and reviewed by UN-Habitat Legal Unit (see separate Annex 3).

4. Revising the Urban Thinkers Campus

The Urban Thinkers Campus (UTC) platform has also been revisited by the WUC Steering Committee in order to:

- Better generate tangible actions and impacts;
- Increase outreach and engagement.

The new model is described in the new Guide to Urban Thinkers Campuses available on line at: <https://bit.ly/2ZctHng>

Through this new model, UTCs are meant to deliver tangible outcomes for each UTC that would be shared on the Urban Agenda Platform: i) Priority Actions defined by the partners; ii) Commitments of Partners; iii) Role setting; iv) Targets; v) Road map(s).

5. Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemics, WUC Partners have decided to organize a series of COVID-19 UTC events in order to engage a large range of stakeholders to show-case actions and reflect on key issues. Panelists included prominent city and community leaders, social workers, grassroots women leaders, planners and researchers, scientists, business leaders and journalists dedicating time and energy to face the pandemic on the ground and preparing for a post-COVID-19 future in cities.

The COVID-19 Urban Thinkers Campus Series started on 4 May 2020 with an event entitled 'Facing Urban Vulnerabilities' followed by sessions to reflect on the many gaps faced during the pandemic: the basic services gaps, the shelter gaps, the safety gaps and, the wage and social security gaps. A session focused on the role of community leaders at the front line and the role of urban planning and design to build pandemic resilience. The final one of this first series was dedicated to reporting during pandemics engaging journalists and film makers. The discussions have been compiled in a report (LINK) that highlights key recommendations.

The success of this first COVID-19 Urban Thinkers Campus Series has triggered a second round to be held in June and July 2020 to cover other key areas or go deeper into emerging issues in order to extract further recommendations for action.

6. A synergetic platform to engage in the '1,000 Cities, 1 Billion Lives' Campaign under the UN Decade of Action

Given its large outreach and its new vision to deliver under the Decade of Action in partnership with UN-Habitat, the WUC is well positioned to take a key role in the '1,000 Cities 1 Billion Lives' Campaign.

The role of the WUC could be to act as a synergetic platform to promote and demonstrate actions to deliver the SDGs towards the broad aspirational targets in areas of urban transformation, in particular: reducing inequalities, digital transformation, climate action, migrants inclusion, gender equality and human rights.



Urban Thinkers Campuses may be used by WUC Partners to discuss action areas, define activities, commitments, targets and road maps.

Progress of WUC partners may be shared on the **Urban Agenda Platform**, showcasing urban solutions and achievements against targets in the different streams of action.

Annex 1:

World Urban Campaign Vision 2030

Vision Statement

- Together shaping the future of cities leaving no one behind.

Our Goal

- Help achieve the urban dimension of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030 and implement the New Urban Agenda

Our Mission

- Our mission is to contribute in developing solutions and *take action in cities and communities in implementing the New Urban Agenda to accelerate the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030.*

What is the World Urban Campaign?

- The World Urban Campaign is a coalition of urban stakeholders to raise awareness about positive urban change in order to achieve sustainable cities and communities.
- The WUC was established in 2009 to elevate the urban agenda combining two existing UN-Habitat campaigns on good urban governance and secure tenure. It was launched in 2010 at the 5th World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro as an alliance of 20 organizations to promote a new urban paradigm towards better cities, better life. The WUC is coordinated by UN-Habitat and currently comprises more than 200 partner organizations.

Our organization

- The World Urban Campaign partners convene and take decisions in a Steering Committee and are led by (co)chairs.
- The World Urban Campaign is as coalition of partners independent from UN-Habitat, while the secretariat which facilitates and supports the WUC is part of UN-Habitat. Through this model the World Urban Campaign can act as advisor to the Executive Director (ED) of UN-Habitat.

Why we need the World Urban Campaign?

- **Cities are drivers of change in today's world.** To achieve the 21st century city we need, we must work together to craft their respective policies, legal frameworks, strategies, financing, and actions that embody the key principles of a new urban paradigm. How we plan, build, and manage our cities now will determine the outcome of our efforts to achieve a sustainable and harmonious development tomorrow.
- *Cities and urban communities are at the heart of the Decade for Action to achieve the SDGs.* The world is rapidly urbanizing with cities accommodating 55% of the world's population, set to rise to 60% by 2030.

- **Joint actions are needed to accelerate the achievement of the SDG.** Two-third of the SDG targets and indicators have urban dimensions.
- **Continuous discussion on policies for the urban future** are required in a rapidly changing world, which can best be done through multi-stakeholders' partnerships as done in the World Urban Campaign.

What we promote

- The World Urban Campaign promotes the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve the SDGs. It does so through a set of principles and drivers of change as defined in *The City We Need*.
- *The City We Need* promotes cities that are socially inclusive and engaging; affordable, accessible and equitable; economically vibrant and inclusive; collectively managed and democratically governed. It advocates for cities that foster cohesive territorial development, is regenerative and resilient, have shared identities and sense of place. It promotes well planned, walkable, and transit-friendly, safe, healthy and it promotes well-being, and cities that learn and innovate.

How do we promote

- The World Urban Campaign engages the general public through action campaigns on key areas to raise awareness on critical issues and promote positive urban changes.
- The World Urban Campaign promotes policy dialogues to discuss urban issues, identify solutions and take action through initiatives developed and implemented locally along agreed platforms such as the Urban Thinkers Campus.
- Solutions and actions are documented and lessons learned shared broadly for improving future actions.

Our Coalition

- We represent a variety of stakeholders engaged in cities and communities. We thrive to represent all voices through our constituent groups: local and sub-national authorities; research and academia; civil society organizations; grass roots organizations; women; parliamentarians; children and youth; business and industries; foundations and philanthropies; professionals; trade unions and workers; farmers; indigenous people; media; older persons. This variety enables dialogue and cooperation between the partners in the World Urban Campaign and a comprehensive joint outreach on urban issues.

Our Strategic Actions

- *Advocate and raise-awareness on the role of cities and communities in achieving the SDGs and delivering positive change.*
- *Identify solutions to catalyze action between stakeholders in cities and communities.*
- *Promote actions that have the best potential to scale-up and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.*
- *Mobilize partners to implement the NUA and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs through specific alliances and joint actions*
- *Measure the results of joint actions and identify concrete achievements towards the SDGs.*

Principles of actions

Our actions are driven by the following principles:

- **Ambition:** With just 10 years to go to meet the targets of the SDGs, we need to have ambitious goals commensurate with the global effort needed to deliver the 2030 promise under the Decade of Action.
- **Collaboration:** we conceive and deliver action in a spirit of collaboration and mutual support among the diverse community of partners, complementing each other rather than competing. We thrive to build synergies in order to catalyze action as needed in implementing the NUA to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. Urban Thinkers Campuses are the key platforms to do so.
- **Result-driven:** Our actions are driven by results that are measurable. We are accountable, transparent and we monitor our actions on the ground and demonstrate impacts of solutions in cities and communities. Our contributions to the SDGs are tangible.
- **Partnership:** We thrive to deliver in partnership with UN-Habitat.

