



**25th SESSION OF THE
GOVERNING COUNCIL**
17 - 23 APRIL 2015 ♦ NAIROBI

Tuesday, 21 April 2015 – Venue: Conference Room 10

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.

Nairobi, Kenya

SIDE EVENT

**Global Network of Urban Planning Labs for sustainable
development**

**UN-Habitat, Guangzhou Planning Institute,
Department of Planning City of Joburg,
UN-Habitat Lab Saudi Arabia**

Background

To convene eight to ten global Urban Planning partners during the celebration of the GC25 to touch base and take the first steps towards the formation of a knowledge sharing platform for the operational implementation of sustainable development projects. During the event the different partners will exchange approaches and methodologies to transfer normative work into operational outputs. The main objective for this side event is to exchange the first ideas toward the consolidation of the network of already existing Labs committed to translate the principles of UN-Habitat into action through concrete projects.

The Urban Planning and Design Lab of UN-Habitat (UPD Lab) has been active since 2013 and was officially launched during the 7th World Urban Forum in Medellin. The UPD Lab was established by direct request of the Executive Director as an operational work-force to design and implement tangible pilot projects that showcase the sustainable urban planning principles of UN-Habitat. By linking actual design proposals to knowledge on local legal, economic and financial conditions the Lab aims at creating plans with concrete implementation potential.

The UPD Lab offers services of Capacity Development and Technical Assistance to national, regional and local governments. The main strengths of the Lab are its international expertise and an integrated and holistic approach to urban development from the three main knowledge areas of:

- Spatial planning
- Legislation and governance
- Economy and finance

The 25th GC side event for the Global Network of Urban Planning Labs would represent the perfect venue to present this global initiative for sustainable development from which developed and developing countries would benefit, raising awareness of the need to connect expertise and sources of funding to support urban sustainable development.

The Global Network of Labs for sustainable development will be a powerful tool to guide public and private stakeholders to create a vision, develop a strategy and implement specific projects that contribute to more compact, socially inclusive, better integrated and connected cities and territories that foster sustainable urban development and are resilient to climate change.

Purpose

The event will certainly contribute to both the mandate of UN-Habitat and the theme of the twenty-fifth session of Governing Council. First, the Global Network will integrate urban planning and management in relation to specific sectors such as housing, transport, employment opportunities, environmental conditions and community facilities (as per Habitat II); in order to become a tool to enhance the effectiveness of official development assistance in the United Nations operational activities. As a learning platform, the Global Network will also fostering capacity building and training for human settlements planning, management and development at the national and local levels, responding effectively to the requirements for appropriate planning, design and construction of sustainable urban settlements.

The Side Event for the Global Network of Urban Planning Labs would be relevant for the 25th GC as it would promote the implementation of normative work, which is a major step in order to promote and achieve sustainable development. The link with the sub-topics would be also quite strong, as the network would operate as a tool to explore the linkages of sustainable development at the different scales of planning, including peri-urban areas and urban rural-linkages. The operationalization of UN-Habitat's expertise through the network would be also crucial to shape the role of UN-Habitat in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Organizers

UN-Habitat, Guangzhou Planning Institute; Department of Planning City of Joburg, UN-Habitat Lab Saudi Arabia

Contact

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