

Opening Remarks

Launching of “Sub-National
Urban Policy: A Guide”

Thursday, 25/02/21
16:00 (EAT), Zoom

Honourable Mayors and representatives of national and sub-national governments,

Distinguished guests,

Colleagues, friends, ladies and gentlemen,

A very good Morning, Afternoon or Evening to all of you!

It is my pleasure to be with you today.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made clear that we cannot overcome the challenges of poverty, inequality, climate change and conflict alone. Joining efforts towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda has become more urgent than ever.

As we all know, **national, regional and local governments are all key actors in the achievement of sustainable urban development.** Their coordination is particularly important in ensuring policies are being aligned as well as effectively implemented at all levels.

National Urban Policies are a critical instrument to advance this coordinated action. The New Urban Agenda has defined the relevance of National Urban Policies as one of its five pillars on achieving sustainable urban development. However, the development and implementation of urban policy at the national level must be accompanied by aligned action at the sub-national and local levels. Subnational Urban Policies are can contribute to finding concrete solutions and responses on this path from the global and national to the local and concrete.

I encourage you to use Sub-national urban policies as a coordination mechanism to establish multi-level, multi-sector and multi-actor consensus for more inclusive, sustainable and safer cities. These policies can increase the participation of the regions in national decision-making, to link these decisions to the levels of government closest to citizens.

Sub-national Urban Policies could also be promoted by sub-national governments in the absence of National Urban Policies, particularly in the context of achieving international commitments.

However, the capacity of sub-national governments needs to be strengthened to allow them to fulfil their important commitments to the global agendas. This means not only supporting them with targeted programmes or trainings, but also with designing appropriate organisational systems and procedures, as well as clarification of competences that support effective decision making, policy design and implementation, at all levels.

This is why, UN-Habitat, [United Cities and Local Governments, and the Andalusian Agency of International Cooperation for Development \(Spain\), have developed the Guide on Sub-national Urban Policies, which we are launching today.](#)

The Guide is an instrument to support urban management for governments and stakeholders, particularly at sub-national level. It draws from experiences collected at different levels of sub-national governments and regions worldwide. It expands the knowledge and engagement in the better understanding of what Sub-national Urban Policies are, what they are for, who benefits from them and the problems they attempt to solve. In the Guide, you will find suggestions on how to develop Sub-national Urban Policies, the needed phases of the process, as well as citizen participation and inspiring practices.

I would like to congratulate the **UN-Habitat team**, especially the Policy, Governance and Legislation Section of the Global Solutions Division, as well as the UN-Habitat Country Office Spain, for their work and effort on developing this Guide.

I also want to thank **United Cities and Local Governments** for their valuable support and contributions to the Guide. Our close collaboration is becoming stronger as we continue along the path of integrating the voices of local and regional governments in a more dynamic discussion on the future of urban areas.

Last, but certainly not the least, I would like to do a special [acknowledgement](#) to the support of the **Andalusian Agency of International Cooperation for Development**, whose financial contribution has enabled the development of the Guide. The Agency has been one of the major Spanish contributors to UN-Habitat since 2014 and their support has been particularly key to the work on National and Sub-national Urban Policies, both on field projects and on normative work.

The Andalucía Government has directly funded the development of National Urban Policies in Cuba, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali and Democratic Republic of Congo, but have equally supported the development of UN-Habitat's normative work in this area. Besides the Guide, they supported the Expert Group Meeting on Sub-National Urban Policies and the development of the publication on "Increasing Social Inclusion Through National Urban Policy", which was done after an Expert Group Meeting in Bolivia (2019).

Finally, I am happy to announce that in the coming months a **translated version** of the Guide will be published both in Spanish and French, and that UN-Habitat, together with United Cities and Local Governments, are developing a comparative compilation of cases of Sub-national Urban Policies that will be published later this year.

I would like to invite all of you to join us on this exciting journey and help **expand the use of sub-national urban policies** globally in the pursuit of inclusive, safe, sustainable and resilient cities. Thank you!

Prepared by	Edited by	Status	Version	Word Count	Estimated Time (125 words/min)
UN-Habitat Country Office Spain	Remy Sietchiping, Shipra Narang- Suri, Raf Tuts, Neil Khor, Runze Wang	Finalized	Wed 24 Feb 18:24	782	6 min.

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME (Central European Time Zone)

14.00 | OPENING

- **Maimunah Mohd-Sharif**, Executive Director, UN-Habitat
- **Emilia Saiz**, Secretary General, UCLG
- **María del Carmen Cardoso Zea**, Deputy-Counsellor of Equity, Social Policies and Conciliation, Regional Government of Andalusia, Spain.

14.15 | PRESENTATION

- **María del Pilar Téllez**, Metropolitan / Urban Policy Expert, UN-Habitat.

14.30 | PANEL DISCUSSION

- **María del Carmen Compagni**; General Director of Urbanism and Territorial Planning; Regional Government of Andalusia, Spain.
- **M. Cemil Arslan**, Secretary General, Marmara Municipalities Union, Turkey
- **Ilce Amarante**, President of the Instituto Nacional de Gestão do Território, Cabo Verde
- **Pedro Palacios**, Mayor of Cuenca, Ecuador.

Moderation: **Sara Hoeflich de Duque**, Learning Director, UCLG

15.20 | CLOSING REMARKS

- **María de la Luz Ortega Carpio**, Director of the Andalusian Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AACID)
- **Remy Sietchiping**, Chief, Policy, Legislation and Governance Section, UN-Habitat