

# IMPLEMENTING THE **NEW URBAN AGENDA**

## Side Event Advertisement

Tuesday, 9 May 2017, Venue: Conference room 9

Time: 2:00 to 2:45pm

Nairobi, Kenya

## Implementing New Urban Agenda in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Nations: Lessons from Afghanistan

Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, Afghanistan

Presentation by MUDH representative

**Proposed Panel for discussion:** Ministerial delegates from Iran, Turkey, Syria, Sri Lanka

### Summary of Side Event

Urbanization is a global phenomenon, as cities bulge from natural growth and increasingly from the rural to urban migrants seeking better economic opportunities, basic amenities and infrastructure, and better quality of life. Afghanistan is amongst the fastest urbanizing countries in South Asia. The context of urbanization is unique as the country emerges from active conflict to one marked by instability and economic fragility. The influx of internally displaced persons, returnees, and migrants, is rapidly exerting pressure on local infrastructure and services exacerbating pre-existing vulnerability conditions. As Afghanistan enters the transformation decade (2015-2024), the National Unity Government has prioritized urbanization for stabilization alongside governance, decentralization and citizen engagement.

The Ministry of Urban Development and Housing developed and implemented a new national enabling framework for urban development: the 'Urban National Priority Programme' (U-NPP). The overall objective of the Urban National Priority Programme is: “Afghanistan's cities become hubs of economic growth that reduce urban, peri-urban and rural poverty; increase employment opportunities, especially for youth and women through private sector investment; and contribute to improved local governance and stabilization.” The U-NPP was formulated with evidence-based research to understand the urbanization trends, using innovative, reliable and cost-effective methodology in order to examine the ‘state’ of Afghanistan’s major cities and ‘future’ trends in the major metropolitan and strategic urban regions.

U-NPP is aligned with proposed New Urban Agenda especially on National Urban Policies in the context of urban rules and legislation and urban governance. It is also relevant to spatial development in the context of urban and spatial planning and design. The programme is designed to foster the government’s strategic priorities for balanced social and economic development, strengthened rural-urban linkages and improved sub-national governance by supporting development of an urban national policy framework alongside implementation of quick-impact projects. Inter-governmental coordination and civic-engagement are integral elements of this programme for demonstrating legitimacy of government institutions as well as building community trust in the government.

The side event will facilitate the understanding of urbanization processes and challenges in fragile and conflict affected countries; showcase innovative data collection methods in a challenging environment where institutions and local governments are under-capacitated; demonstrate how data collection can strengthen the capacity of local and national governments in their role to fulfil their mandate of sustainable urban development; contribute to the global discussion ongoing regarding the data revolution which is needed for localization and implementation of the New Urban Agenda.