



SPECIAL SESSION CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Key words

2030 Agenda; Civic Engagement; Democratic Governance; Inclusion; Innovation; New Urban Agenda; Participation; Sustainable Development Goals; Technology

Objectives of the session

The Special Session aims to:

- Share successful examples of innovation allowing for broader participation and civic engagement in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda;
- Provide speakers and audience with tested concepts for scaling up / regionally adapting successful techniques for wider civic participation in order to drive sustainable urban development and create open and inclusive cities
- Share innovative tools, methods and approaches to civic participation in the implementation, monitoring and reporting on the New Urban Agenda.

Introduction of the topic

Civic engagement has been emphasized in the New Urban Agenda as part of the vision for cities and human settlements as the participation of urban dwellers fosters social cohesion, inclusion and safety in peaceful and pluralistic societies.

In the New Urban Agenda, stakeholders and Member States have also committed to utilizing innovative tools, including information and communications technology, to encourage inclusive civic responsibility and broad participation contributing to responsible governance as well as increased efficiency. Civic engagement and participation was also highlighted by a wide range of stakeholders during the Habitat III thematic meeting on public spaces. Participants declared that democratic cities need public policies and urban planning that encompasses a culture of civic and critical engagement as well as participation and accountability for all inhabitants.

More than one year after the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, this session will therefore take stock of successful, innovative initiatives from a variety of regional backgrounds addressing different groups of inhabitants. Speakers will discuss their best practices, as well as any challenges they have encountered, and thus enabling the panel and the audience to identify opportunities for scaling up and forming partnerships in their cities and urban dwellings.



Reflecting the topic, the session will draw speakers from national and local governments, private sector, civil society and individual inhabitants. As such, information can be exchanged between key stakeholders to understand hurdles and solutions to increased civic engagement in order to effectively implement, monitor and report on the New Urban Agenda as a modality for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 11 and Goals 17.

Guiding Questions

Q1: What are the results of increased civic engagement and participation?

Q2: What measures were taken to ensure broad participation, ie to ensure that those that are often left behind were able to participate?

Q3: What tools and community mobilization strategies are needed to support citizen's participation in monitoring and reporting?

Q4: What were some of the key hurdles / challenges and how were these overcome?

Q5: What is the role of the different actors – local governments, civil society groups, but also the private sector in contributing to increased civic participation?

Q6: What is the future for civic engagement – emerging trends?