FORUM BANDAR SEDUNIA
WUF9

THE NINTH SESSION OF
THE WORLD URBAN FORUM
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SPECIAL SESSION
URBAN SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Key words

2030 Agenda; Accessibility; Citywide Strategies; Community Empowerment; Crime Prevention; Equality; Inclusion; Local Government; New Urban Agenda; Partnership; Place making; Public Space; Sustainable Development Goals; Urban Safety

Objectives of the session

The Special Session will discuss the normative frameworks and implementation modalities for safer cities and public spaces at the city level; putting forward a global collaborative framework in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDG 11, SDG 17). The session aims to:

- Identify key levers (approaches, tools, policies, etc.) to advance strategic frameworks for action that contribute to driving the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals 5.2, 11.7, 16, 17.
- Propose practical actions - across the policy, legislative, regulatory, financing and planning aspects on how to co-produce safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces for all.
- Initiate a dialogue on a policy approach for safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces on the city wide scale;
- Enhance a collaborative framework for the implementation of strategies on safer cities promoting safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces for all, free from crime and violence, in line with Sustainable Development Goals 17 and 11.7.
- Distill a set of recommendations for local implementation of the New Urban Agenda and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals 5.2, 11.7, 16, 17, particularly focusing on leveraging financial and political support of governments and international partners.

Introduction of the topic

Safe public spaces are a vital ingredient of successful cities. They help build a sense of community, civic identity and culture. Public spaces facilitate social capital, economic development and community revitalisation. The liveliness and continuous use of public space leads to urban environments that are well maintained, healthy and safe, making the city an attractive place in which to live and work.

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THE NEW
URBAN AGENDA

Promoting socially inclusive, accessible, integrated, connected, accessible, gender-responsive, environmentally sustainable and safe public spaces is key in achieving the New Urban Agenda. Good quality public space provides connectivity and access, protection from crime, shelter from climate and the opportunity to rest, work and meet. An improvement of accessibility, especially of the most vulnerable groups, including women and girls, improves their chances to access life-enhancing opportunities that cities offer, whether these are in social, economic, political and cultural arenas. Adequate access and improved walkability become an empowering force to enjoy the right to use public spaces and streets without fearing of being a victim of crime and violence.

The New Urban Agenda captures the realisation of safety in cities as an outcome of multiple and integrated interventions. Although there is a compelling evidence to demonstrate that solutions on crime and violence prevention have a great impact on urban safety and accessibility of public spaces, much more needs to be done to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and long-term sustainability of these policies, plans and programmes aimed at enhancing safety and accessibility of public spaces for all.

In this regard, the New Urban Agenda calls for effective solutions that integrate crime and violence prevention policies in urban development strategies and interventions including in slum upgrading, as well as the provision of well-designed networks of safe and accessible public spaces and streets for all inhabitants, free from crime and violence, bringing people into the public spaces and promoting walkability and cycling towards improving health and well-being. The realization of the transformative commitments on safety outlined in the New Urban Agenda, will require an enabling policy framework at the national, sub-national and local levels, integrated by participatory planning and management of urban spatial development, and effective means of implementation, complemented by international cooperation as well as capacity development efforts, including the sharing of best practices, policies and programmes amongst governments at all levels.

Effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda requires rules and legislation to protect access to safe public spaces, urban planning and design to provide adequate distribution and good quality public space and local finance and economy to share values, promote livelihoods and creating safe and inclusive public space that offers opportunities for all. This requires political will, strengthening of learning on the tools and decentralisation of security policies. Local governments must take a trans-disciplinary approach by working in partnership with citizens (taking into consideration the most excluded ad marginalised such as the poor, migrants, the indigenous people, women, people with disabilities, etc.), academia and the private sector to ensure inclusive, safe and accessible public spaces making sure to leave no one behind.

Guiding questions

Q1: What are the strategic frameworks (including principles and approaches) for action on urban safety promoting inclusive and accessible public space advanced by cities that have resulted in significant impacts in the reduction of crime and violence and enhancement of inclusive and accessible public spaces?

Q2: What are some of the planning, legislative, financial, management and governance strategies that have enhanced urban safety and accessibility to inclusive public space in cities and where have they demonstrated their success?

Q3: What collaborative frameworks do we need to put in place to support cities and communities in this endeavour?

Q4: What transformational change is required in your cities and communities to ensure that public spaces are safe, inclusive and accessible for all? What can cities do collectively, including through communities of practice so that cities achieve the NUA para 100 and 103?

Q5: How can we up-scale these successful initiatives to be able to achieve the New Urban Agenda and the SDG's with regards to creating safe, inclusive and accessible public space.

Q6: How can governments and international organization assist cities to shift from paying the high costs of quick win and often fragmented interventions to investing in holistic citywide urban safety and public spaces interventions coproduced with citizens as key actors?