

Cities Alliance
Cities Without Slums

Hosted by
 **UNOPS**

CONCEPT NOTE. V2

2023 SDGs Learning, Training and Practice Event

TITLE:

***Sustainable cities and communities for all
Harnessing the potential of local communities to withstand crises***

A Special Event of the 2023 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) organised by
Cities Alliance Secretariat in New York, USA

Thematic Focus:

SDG 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

SDG 17 Partnership for the Goals

Date: Wednesday 12 July 2023

Time: 15:00 – 17:00 EST

Venue: TBA

1. EVENT SUMMARY

Home to more than 55% of the world's population – a percentage projected to swell to nearly 70% by 2050 – cities are considered engines of economic growth, knowledge generation and innovation. On the one hand, cities have the potential to propel sustainable development and promote equitable economic growth. On the other, cities are also at the frontline of multi-layered crises including the recent Covid-19 pandemic and other health crises such as Ebola; climate change and related impacts including food and water scarcity; migration and forced displacement, and conflict to cite but a few. These multiple crises have not only exacerbated inequalities in cities; but also derailed progress towards achieving sustainable development goals; and, often, worsened pre-existing forms of exclusion.

In this context, Cities Alliance and its members are coming together to facilitate a learning event focusing on how different institutions and their constituencies can partner to support cities in harnessing the potential of local communities – particularly the 1 billion urban poor living in informal settlements – to respond and adapt to crises in cities. The aim is thus to share knowledge and very practical examples on how the key to achieving SDG 11 is to empower urban communities to respond to these multiple crises.

The event will underscore the vital role of urban communities, with a focus on communities from the Global South, in addressing and withstanding external shocks. The strategies and tools that will be presented will emphasize participatory and inclusive decision-making and implementing approaches, placing urban communities at the centre of response, recovery and resilience-building efforts, to ensure that no one is left behind. The session will highlight the critical role of organizations of the urban poor in leading response and recovery efforts with examples from cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

2. EVENT OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this session is to promote peer learning and the exchange of ideas between urban actors on locally-led approaches to response, recovery and resilience-building efforts, to ensure equitable development and leave no-one behind in cities. The event will also facilitate sharing of knowledge and best practices among participants on successful approaches to recovery and resilience in cities. Furthermore, the event seeks to foster collaboration and partnerships among local authorities, community-based organizations, government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders to leverage resources and coordinate efforts for sustainable recovery and resilience.

3. LEARNING TOOLS

Cities Alliance supports cities to deliver sustainable development. The learning and training session will include presentations on tools and strategies used by Cities Alliance and its members to empower local communities to withstand various crises that affect the urban poor. The focus on harnessing the potential of the urban poor ensures the learning and training event contributes to accelerating recovery at the local level. Placing the urban poor at the centre of recovery efforts through community-led approaches, reinforces the Agenda 2030 goal of leaving

no one behind and ensures inclusive & equitable development. Furthermore, the collaboration among Cities Alliance members to support recovery efforts led by local communities demonstrates the importance of partnerships in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Case studies from Africa and Latin America will promote knowledge exchange across regions to accelerate SDGs implementation.

4. KEY OUTCOMES

- **Promoting Inclusivity:** Showcasing how to plan and implement community-led initiatives that encourage inclusivity and leverage the power of collective action.
- **Empowering the Urban Poor:** Emphasizing the importance of a bottom-up approach to sustainable development by empowering the urban poor and acknowledging their critical role in overcoming urban crises.
- **Sharing Successful Case Studies:** Presenting successful case studies of community-led resilience from Africa and Latin America to inspire similar initiatives elsewhere, thus accelerating the implementation of SDGs across regions.

5. CO-ORGANIZERS

Slum Dwellers International (SDI), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)

6. SPEAKERS

- Laura LIMA PhD., Head of Programmes, Cities Alliance Secretariat
- Joseph Muturi, Chairperson, Slum Dwellers International (SDI)
- WIEGO, Jenna Harvey, Focal Cities Coordinator (WIEGO)
- Switzerland - TBC
- UCLG (TBC)

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