



BUILDING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, UNITED STATES | 26-28 AUGUST 2019



Thematic Sessions Descriptions

68th United Nations Civil Society Conference

26 - 28 August 2019

Inclusive Cities and Communities – Leaving No One Behind

Sustainable Development Goal 11 strives to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The reality is that livelihoods in cities and human settlements are being experienced in increasingly unequal ways, especially among women, female-headed households, youth, children, and other marginalized groups including: the poor; stigmatized ethnic groups; the LGBTQI community; the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Join us in this Thematic Session if you care for matters such as:

Equality and social cohesion, Participatory planning and governance, Place-making, communities and families, Gender responsive urban and territorial development, Slums and Informality, Urban regeneration, gentrification and livelihoods, Affordable Housing and Homelessness, Land tenure security, Basic services, Mobility systems to empower livelihoods, Accessibility, Safety in green and public spaces.

Climate Change – Cities and Communities in Action

As outlined in Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and other reports elaborated over the years by the scientific community, as well as public and private sector entities, climate change with its associated risks is among the defining issues of our time, the impact of which is global in scope and unprecedented in scale and is already disrupting communities and livelihoods, especially of those living in poverty.

However, there is a growing recognition that affordable, scalable solutions are currently available that will enable us all to leapfrog to more green, clean, resilient economies in the long run.

Cities and communities, underpinned by strong advocacy from civil society are acting on reducing emissions and on development for resiliency, with innovative strategies for carbon neutrality and resilient infrastructure; transportation and energy systems decarbonisation, zero emissions buildings; innovative financing mechanisms and behaviour change among consumers, producers and policymakers.

With the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit 2019 taking place in September 2019, this session will be an opportunity to boost ambition and accelerate action to implement the Paris Agreement, with a focus on local action and the role of youth.

Join us for this Thematic Session if you care for matters such as:

Low carbon pathways and per capita footprint; Transport and mobility transformation, Renewable energy, Fiscal incentives for green tech, Coastal communities, Climate-smart food production, Land use, land-change and forestry



Peaceful Societies – Recovering from Conflict and Nurturing Peace

Peace is necessary for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and is a specific goal in itself. This session will focus on the interface between peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16) and Safe, Resilient, Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11).

The last decade has been marked by increasing skepticism regarding the viability and effectiveness of multilateral approaches to peacebuilding.

The Peaceful Societies Thematic Session will discuss how civil society organizations are integrating objective measures to achieve an inclusive and sustainable culture of peaceful coexistence in their local activities while respecting the integrity of nation states' sovereign rights.

Attend this thematic session if you are interested in:

Human rights, Gender-based violence, Human trafficking, Family valued, community building and inter-cultural understanding through arts and sports, Refugees and migrants, Arms flows, Access to information, Corruption.

Youth-led Session: Creating Opportunities and Economic Success for Youth

Half of the world's 7.6 billion people are under the age of 30¹. Youth unemployment stands at a near 60 million worldwide, with many more young people underemployed or in vulnerable and exploitative employment and working poverty. Young people's economic empowerment and access to decent jobs are essential components of a strong foundation for global societies and their futures.

The challenge lies in simultaneously creating decent jobs for the burgeoning youth population and addressing related concerns such as career skills mismatch with available career opportunities, working while living in poverty, and the suboptimal prospects attendant to school-to-work transition, especially in the developing world, as well as preparing for the rapidly changing future of work that is characterized by ongoing automation and technological advancement, while supporting the acceleration of a transition to green and climate friendly economies.

Marginalized youth often benefit most from the creation of new opportunities, skills training, microcredit provision, support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and investments in education, all of which contribute to providing the knowledge and tools needed to be well-equipped for competitive in local and international labor markets.

Attend this session if you are interested in:

Higher education; Vocational training; Marginalized youth; Digital marketplaces; Youth access to innovative solutions.

¹ According to [United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division \(2019\). World Population Prospects 2019, Online Edition.](#)



Infrastructure and Natural Resource Use

Infrastructure development and inclusive and sustainable industrialization are key drivers of growth in the service of human prosperity within planetary boundaries. Investment decisions on infrastructure impact the well-being of citizens, the availability of natural resources and the preservation of ecosystem services for decades into the future, affecting the choices of future generations. Transportation systems, buildings, energy production and manufacturing are just a few examples that affect land and water use, waste, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions in profound ways. Given that cities and communities are hubs for innovation, commerce, employment, culture, and science crucial for sustainable and inclusive economic growth and human development, optimal planning and governance are crucial to strike a balance that meets current needs without comprising future ones. With urban growth set to skyrocket between now and 2030, reaching 60% of world population living in urban areas², it is more important than ever to “build better”.

Come to this thematic session if you are interested in:

Planetary boundaries - Resource inequality, Ecosystem services across rural-urban linkages - Urban sprawl, Nature-based solutions - Public services, Protecting and restoring biodiversity - Water, Sanitation and hygiene, Social entrepreneurship and innovation.

Emerging Technologies and Innovation

Billions of people are connected by mobile devices with unprecedented processing power, storage capacity, and information sharing —all of which foreshadows stunning global possibilities. This potential is multiplied by the emergence of artificial intelligence, robotics, ‘big’ data processing, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, 3-D printing, cryptocurrencies, and blockchain technologies.

This 4th Industrial Revolution is recognized as one of the most significant ways to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 because technology cuts across all of the SDGs. The challenge to the public and civil society is to tap the power of technology to ensure that cities and communities across all socio-economic contexts can harness innovation that inspires sustainable lifestyles, eliminates extreme poverty and increases shared prosperity.

Join this session if you are interested in:

Access to technology and media; Technology use in educational political and economic systems; Disruptive technologies.

² According to United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018). The World’s Cities in 2018—Data Booklet (ST/ESA/SER.A/417)



BUILDING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, UNITED STATES | 26-28 AUGUST 2019



Impact Investing: Closing the SDG Financing Gap

The gap to financing the Sustainable Development Goals remains in the trillions; yet the world's philanthropic funds, even when combined with the global development and aid budgets of governments, add up to only a fraction of this funding need. How do we close this gap and how can public and private actors create an environment to attract private capital and more efficiently and transparently disburse public funds for inclusive and sustainable development in cities and communities?

Impact investors are playing a key role in addressing the SDGs, including in how they are measuring and managing the positive impact they seek—a hallmark of impact investing. Impact investing is a powerful tool to build and strengthen socially, economically and environmentally sustainable cities and communities. Participants will engage in investment case examples presented by public and private sector investors that are partnering together in order to mobilize more capital toward financing the SDGs and specifically towards Goal 11.

Local and Regional Governments Leading the Way to Sustainable Communities

Local and regional governments are leading the way to “Build Inclusive and Sustainable Communities.” As the closest government entity to their citizens, they are uniquely positioned to make a difference in people’s lives, while also being on the frontlines of responding to climate change and its impacts on communities. These local governments are making meaningful progress in reducing carbon emissions, becoming more resilient to a warming world, and improving air quality while doing so in an equitable manner to ensure the needs of their citizens are being met.

Collaboration is the key to success. This Thematic Session will explore and emphasize the power of multi-stakeholder networks to share information and amplify impact. Concrete examples from several Utah communities will highlight how local governments and civil society organizations have worked together to craft programs, policies, and regulations to create more sustainable communities. Speakers will include senior-level city sustainability staff, a state representative, and local nonprofit partners. They will detail legislation that created a pathway for large-scale renewable energy development, electrified transportation initiatives, and community food production.

Attend this session if you work for a municipal government; represent a civil society organization that is looking for examples on ways to collaborate with your local government; or have an interest in renewable energy, energy efficiency, improving air quality, electrified transportation, food security or equitable program design.



BUILDING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, UNITED STATES | 26-28 AUGUST 2019



Enhancing the Role of Civil Society to Monitor Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 11

Under the SDG 11 mandate, the extent to which citizens and civil society are offered space to engage in urban planning and management processes will be tracked at the local, national and global levels. Civil society engagement in the implementation of Goal 11 is key since many urban targets are implemented and monitored at the local levels. To date no country is reporting on this civic engagement, despite. The lack of reporting may not be a true reflection of reality given that in some countries policies and legislation on public participation and access to information are being adopted; and civil society and citizens engage in governance and participate in the identification of needs and solutions to developmental challenges in their neighborhoods, communities, localities and society at large.

There are significant challenges associated with SDG 11 monitoring given that majority (13 out of 15) of SDG 11 indicators are new with no formal data being collected at the local, city, and national levels. Less than 30 per cent of Member States are consistently collecting data through the national statistical systems on the urban dimensions of the SDGs. This is far below the threshold of 50 per cent (97) of Member States required to make meaningful analysis at the regional and global levels.

While formal data collection and standardization are a primary responsibility of National Statistical Offices, in the case of SDG 11 data being collected informally by relevant government departments, civil society, academia, local governments and other stakeholders is not integrated into the national statistical systems. Remarkably, National Statistical offices are not aware of data collected by other stakeholders.

Civil society and other stakeholder groups have a critical role in contributing to the data gaps and in advocating for the prioritization of SDG11 implementation, monitoring and reporting. This session will provide an opportunity for civil society to share their experience. It will also explore approaches required to enhance monitoring of SDG11 indicators, including recognition of data and information collected by civil society.

Attend this session if you are interested in: Capacity building, partnerships, advocacy, civic engagement in urban planning and governance, and good practices on data collection in the areas of housing, slum-upgrading, access to land and security of tenure, air pollution, transport and mobility, waste management, public space, safety and security, cultural heritage, resilience and disaster risk reduction, climate change, and national urban policies.

Building Inclusive Communities Through Education

Description coming soon

Civil Society Partnerships for the UN We Need

Renewed support for global cooperation could not be more urgent. To mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in 2020, the UN@75 campaign will invite people worldwide to participate in a series of global dialogues – physical and online -- to explore how renewed commitment to collective action can secure the world we want in 2045, when the UN reaches its 100th anniversary.



BUILDING INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, UNITED STATES | 26-28 AUGUST 2019



Tackling issues such as the climate crisis, poverty and inequality, protracted conflict, migration and displacement, and the rapid changes in demography and technology will require effective cooperation across borders, sectors and generations. Failure to do so will have far-reaching consequences for the welfare of our children and grandchildren — and our planet itself.

Yet just when we need bold collective action more than ever, multilateralism is being called into question by powerful governments. Unilateralism is on the rise, as the world becomes more multipolar but also more polarized. In many parts of the world, there is a growing disconnect between people and institutions.

Participants will be invited to discuss how we can collectively navigate the gap between the future we need and where we are headed, if current global trends confronting humanity are left unchecked. What new forms of global cooperation will we need to shape the future we want?

Join us in this session if you care about: democratic people-centered multilateralism, rule of law, UN reform, civic space, transforming asymmetrical power relations, connecting the local to the global, supporting inclusive and participatory governance.