INTERMEDIARY CITIES

CONSULTATION
ON THE ROLE OF
INTERMEDIARY
CITIES
IN THE GLOBAL AGENDA
OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENTS
FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

TOGETHER TOWARDS

H | III

HABITAT III

UCLG
United Cities
and Local Governments

Global Agenda of Intermediary Cities

Obj[...]

To identify and prioriti[...]

Principles and ambitions

Policies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

UCLG

IS A NETWORK OF NETWORKS THAT ADVOCATES FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS ON THE WORLD STAGE. THIS INVOLVES RESPONDING TO A TIGHTLY PACKED INTERNATIONAL AGENDA, INCLUDING THE SDGS, HABITAT III, FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PROCESSES AND FACILITATING THE GLOBAL TASKFORCE OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS FOR POST 2015 AND TOWARDS HABITAT III

AMBITION

It is our ambition to voice the perspective of our constituency in all of these negotiations, providing feedback on documents discussed by national governments. However, we also know that we cannot just be a reactive force, responding to the priorities and calendar of the international community. Our members have mandated UCLG to develop a global agenda by and for local governments, including all territorial authorities, large and small, urban and rural.

That's why we're working on a Global Agenda of Local and Regional Governments for the 21st Century. In order to do this, we are developing new, more inclusive, forms of dialogue and consultation.

Develop a global agenda by and for local governments, including all territorial authorities, large and small, urban and rural

STRATEGIC TOOLKIT

Building on the results of a brainstorming session with representatives of the UCLG Sections, Committees and academics in April of 2014, we developed a Strategic Toolkit to guide us through the essential 'ingredients' of our Global Agenda. As the Toolkit lays out, **our agenda must have a strong, compelling narrative** made up of:

- **Principles, ambitions and dreams**
- **Policy recommendations to make these dreams a reality**
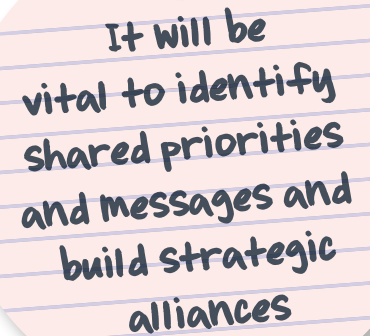- **Examples of how these policies could be implemented on the ground**

EXPLORING THE AGENDA

It will be vital to identify shared priorities and messages and build strategic alliances

Over the course of our work following international debates and actively participating in alliances with the international community, civil society and national governments, we have come to realise that one of the most important outcomes of the Post 2015 and the Habitat III agendas will be the roles that are set out for different actors.

It is in this context that we are **exploring the agenda from the perspective of different parts of our constituency**: intermediary cities, peripheral cities, metropolitan cities, regions, rural areas and small municipalities.

We have opened up our deliberations beyond our network of members, because we know that it will be vital to identify shared priorities and messages and build strategic alliances with other stakeholders, particularly civil society, in order to maximize the impact of the Agenda.

Furthermore, we are documenting these consultations in order to provide ideas to partners that might be going through similar processes.

02 STARTING POINT

Not all parts of our membership are starting from the same point in their contributions to the Global Agenda.

UCLG's work on intermediary cities is already well-developed. Since early 2013, UCLG, with the Urban Strategic Planning Committee has been consulting local leaders through city-to-city cooperation and workshops on the role and challenges of intermediary cities. Last year, the Committee published a Policy Paper, 'Building the New Urban Agenda for Intermediary Cities'. It is now developing a Frame Document of practices, examples and recommendations on Planning for Sustainable Urban Development of Intermediary Cities. We also have a strong network of intermediary cities that are working together on peer-learning projects related to local economic development, territorial management and the labour market in particular.

Through this work, UCLG has identified that intermediary cities face a **visibility challenge** at both national and international level. Our intermediary cities network, and indeed this consultation, both seek to address this challenge.

Secondly, we have tried to highlight the enormous **diversity** of intermediary cities across the world. While our work was initially geographical, focussing on mapping, planning and land use in intermediary cities, we began to find great variety in the governance structures and economic conditions they face.

We have identified that local **leadership** plays a particularly important role in intermediary cities. Another thing that intermediary cities have in common is that their relationship with their **rural surroundings** is essential to their sustainable development. They often struggle to connect to the national and global economy and rely on a few sectors (e.g. agro-industry, mining, education), which makes them vulnerable to **economic shocks**.

Finally, intermediary cities recognize the need and priority to be connected and to cooperate with one other. This is very clear in Europe, where most of the population lives in intermediary cities, and these cities cooperate on the basis of the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities.

03 DEFINITION

The characteristics of intermediary cities vary across and between countries and continents, depending on each country's political, social and economic context. They vary considerably in size, budgets and administrative competencies.

In terms of population, the European Union defines intermediary cities as settlements of between 20,000 and 500,000 inhabitants, while the World Bank raises the upper limit to one million. In the North American context, the range is usually between 200,000 and 500,000; in between Pakistan 25,000 and 100,000 and in Argentina between 50,000 and one million. In China or India, cities with more than 1 million could also be considered intermediary cities.

For the purposes of this consultation, UCLG uses a flexible definition of intermediary cities, based on population (generally fewer than one million inhabitants), and the functions that they perform: their role in the mediation of flows (of goods, information, innovations, and administration, etc.) between the rural and the urban territories within their respective areas of influence and with respect to other cities or regions.

Intermediary Cities

European Union
>20,000
<500,000

World Bank
<1,000,000

North America
>200,000
<5,000,000

Pakistan
>25,000
<100,000

Argentina
>50,000
<1,000,000

China / India
>1,000,000

CITIES' SIZE: BY NUMBER AND POPULATION

CITIES' SIZE (NB HABITANTS)	% URBAN DWELLERS		NB OF CITIES		POPULATION	
	2015	2030	2015	2030	2015	2030
1,000,000 – 5,000,000	21%	22%	428	558	847 MILLION	1,127 BILLION
500,000 – 1,000,000	9%	10%	538	731	370 MILLION	509 MILLION
300,000 – 500,000	7%	6%	690	832	262 MILLION	319 MILLION
< 3,000,000	43%	38%	-	-	1,699 MILLION	1,938 MILLION

04 THE CONSULTATION

AIM

This consultation of intermediary cities had a dual aim:

To explore the concerns and priorities of this constituency in order to contribute to UCLG's Global Agenda

To build our network of intermediary cities and their allies and partners with a view to long-term collaboration, particularly in the communication and advocacy of the agenda

PARTICIPANTS

Invitees were selected based on their knowledge of intermediary cities and their ability to contribute to a dynamic, open debate. UCLG sought to ensure a gender and regional balance in the group. Some invitees were long-term partners of UCLG, while others were contacts selected after a call for recommendations within the network. The final group was made up of over 30 participants, including elected local officials, practitioners, academics, and representatives of civil society.

PREPARATION

The methodology was based on the UCLG **Strategic Toolkit**. Participants prepared for the session by filling out the **Framework** and **Narrative-work** from the toolkit based on their own knowledge and experience of intermediary cities.

DAY ONE

Day one was composed of three stages. First, participants worked to identify and prioritize principles, ambitions and dreams of intermediary cities. Then, they suggested policies that can help to make these dreams a reality. Finally, they gave examples of how these policies have been implemented on the ground in cities around the world.

DAY TWO

On day two, participants were encouraged to work in small groups to identify the **narratives and counter-narratives of other stakeholders** in global debates, in order to develop the message of intermediary cities and seek alliances with, or respond to, other narratives effectively. Counter-narratives (many of which had already emerged on day one) were often those given by, or on behalf, of large metropolitan areas.

The methodology was based on the UCLG Strategic Toolkit

'STREAMS' FROM THE DEBATES

Ambitions

Policies

Practices

Ambitions	Policies	Practices
HUMAN SCALE CITIES	'Human scale' planning	Bilbao: Time use analysis in city planning
PARTICIPATORY CITIES	Use data collected by communities as basis for local gov-community partnerships	Kampala 'act together' slum upgrading partnership
REINFORCED URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES	Regional planning integrating urban and rural areas	Porto Novo: markets on route from rural areas to Cotonou
CITIES WITH IDENTITY BASED ON LOCAL CULTURE, AUTHENTICITY AND HERITAGE	Consider intermediary city identity and local culture in all policies	Cuenca, Ecuador: Strong identification with city contributes to successful tax collection that can be used for investment in heritage
CITIES OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY	Develop policies to adapt to the '3rd industrial revolution'	Investment and training in 3D printing

05 KEY THEMES AND CONCLUSIONS
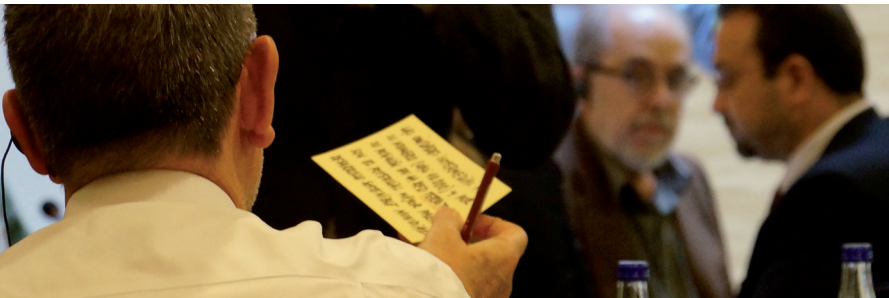
- Intermediary cities are the most numerous type of city, and they are where most urbanization is set to occur in the coming decades. They are an important national and international constituency, but are too often overlooked in policy debates.

- Intermediary cities are important in their own right and shouldn't just be defined in opposition to their metropolitan counterparts. They are unique both in the opportunities and challenges they provide for sustainable development and wellbeing, and in the role they play in national systems of cities.

- The scale of intermediary cities was quickly identified as the source of both their biggest challenges and their greatest opportunities.

LOCAL DEMOCRACY

The fact that local governments in intermediary cities are 'closer to the people' helps to generate trust between citizens and their elected representatives. It also allows local leaders to know their constituency and its resources and needs well. The small scale of intermediary cities also makes inclusive participatory governance mechanisms easier to implement effectively. However intermediary cities often do not have the legal and fiscal powers, or the human resources capacities to harness these advantages fully.

> ## Intermediary cities can champion, celebrate and nurture good democracy

CHRIS NAYLOR

> ## Building trust is a precursor to building participation; 'smart cities' and transparency will help

JAGAN SHAH

Participants

CHRIS NAYLOR

Head of Partnerships at think tank and local authority membership organisation, LGiU, UK. He was formerly Cabinet Member for Housing in the London Borough of Camden, member of the Department of Communities and Local Government Parliamentary Committee, as well as an active councillor for Camden Town and Primrose Hill (2006-2014).

JAGAN SHAH

Director of the National Institute of Urban Affairs, India. He has 20 years of professional work experience in urban development. He is a founding member of the Modern Asian Architecture Network (MAAN).

MACLOUD KADAM'MANJA

Director of Administrative Services of Blantyre City Council, the second largest city in Malawi.

MOUKARAM OCÉNI

Mayor of Porto Novo, Benin.

MOHAMED SEFIANI

Mayor of Chefchaouen, Morocco. Mayor Sefiani leads the UCLG Working Group on Intermediary Cities, representing the group within the global community and working to grow the network.

TIMM FUCHS

Senior Policy Adviser at the German Association of Towns and Municipalities (DStGB).

PLANNING

The 'human scale' of intermediary cities can be a significant factor in their liveability. Small cities also tend to suffer less from social segregation, and when social segregation is an issue, the barriers it creates (transport, access to services, employment etc.) are not as great as in marginalized areas of large metropolises. Furthermore, fast growing intermediary cities still have a chance to shape their future path by regulating future land development and use.

> **Urban planning has been raised by academic participants, rather than by elected local officials. That's revealing of the fact that planning is often neglected by local governments**
>
> JAGAN SHAH

GENDER

Gender was a cross-cutting theme in the debates, with participants suggesting that the intermediary scale could be used to promote the equality of women and girls and fair wealth distribution between genders. There was agreement that the optimal approach is to 'mainstream' gender considerations across all policy-making. Ana Falú highlighted the need for gender sensitive regional planning that takes into account the transport needs of women living in poverty with many children in the outskirts of cities. Nico Keijzer gave examples of how women have been empowered through grassroots leadership of slum-upgrading projects in partnership with local governments.

> ## "The poorest women and those with the most children live in marginalized areas. Gendered regional planning is necessary to prevent their social and economic exclusion

ANA FALÚ

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

the uniqueness of local culture to each intermediary city was identified as a strong advantage and resource for development.

We can use cultural policies to tackle economic, social and environmental challenges

YONKA AGALOVA

Participants

ANA FALÚ

Professor of the National University of Argentina, Director of the Research Institute on Housing and Habitat, and Regional Director of UN Women for Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

JOSÉ ENRIQUE GARCIA III

Mayor of Balanga City, capital of the province of Bataan in the Central Luzon region of the Philippines. Mayor Garcia is Vice Chairman of the League of Cities of the Philippines.

ROLF FENNER

Senior Policy Advisor at the Australian Local Government Association.

SILVIO BARROS

Formerly Mayor of Maringa and now acts as Secretary of Planning in the State of Paraná, Brazil. Maringa has been active in UCLG peer-to-peer learning and the dialogues of the intermediary cities group in South Africa and Mozambique.

OIHANE AGIRREGOITIA

Engineer by training, and currently Councillor for Equality, International Cooperation, and Citizenship and responsible for Open Government in Bilbao, Spain.

YONKA AGALOVA

Director of Culture and Tourism of the City of Gabrovo, Bulgaria. The city is the administrative centre of Gabrovo Province and has a population of around 59,000 inhabitants.

ECONOMY

The idea of a circular, self-sustaining economy was explored, with emphasis placed on its role in endogenous economic development and resilience to shocks. Localizing services will allow intermediary cities to create jobs and promote a circular economy (e.g. food supply, energy production and waste recovery). This will allow intermediary cities to be more self-sustaining and pose a lower risk to the system as a whole. The diversity and scale of intermediary gives them significant capacity for innovation and to act as incubators for entrepreneurship and economic development. There were discussions about the coming "third industrial revolution", based on small scale production like 3d printing. This will allow intermediary cities to renegotiate their role in the national and global economy, promote transnational collaboration and entrepreneurship. There was tension between calls for specialization and diversification in intermediary city economies.

> **We need better ways of measuring the contribution of the informal economy**
>
> JAGAN SHAH

> **We can do much more than central government in terms of sustainability**
>
> SILVIO BARROS

> **The third industrial revolution refers to new means of production which have little or zero marginal cost after the first unit. This will happen first in pharmaceuticals, then clothing, then building materials. There is a skills gap in human resources to service this new technology. We need to educate cities and provide necessary resources and capacities for them to thrive in this new economy**

BRIAN ROBERTS

FINANCING

Intermediary cities often have more limited fiscal autonomy than their larger counterparts, and struggle to attract investment when the private sector sees limited growth potential. Many intermediary cities, particularly in Africa and Asia, struggle to meet even the basic needs of their citizens. Attracting adequate public and private investment is a particular challenge in intermediary cities.

Participants

BRIAN ROBERTS
Emeritus Professor at the University of Canberra, Australia, and author of 'Managing Systems of Secondary Cities'. He has 30 years' experience as a professional planner, project manager, academic and adviser.

MATS JARNHAMMAR
Urban planner and expert on the SymbioCity Approach at SKL International, the cooperation agency of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities. He is managing director for Living Cities, a platform for urban development and social sustainability.

GANDHY VAZQUEZ
Office of the Mayor, Tulcán, Ecuador.

SELÇUT AKINCI

Alderman of the City of Breda in the Netherlands and member of the VNG Committee on European and international affairs, with responsibility for the global urban agenda.

ARNAU GUTIERREZ CAMPS

Multilateral Relations Adviser of the International Relations Directorate of the Province of Barcelona. He coordinates the UCLG Committee Decentralisation and Local Self-Government.

NICO KEIJZER

Programme Officer at Shack/Slum Dwellers International. SDI is a network of community-based organizations of the urban poor in 33 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

HUMAN SCALE

These 'human scale' advantages of intermediary cities were contrasted with the 'agglomeration advantages' of metropolitan areas. There was an **unresolved debate** about whether intermediary cities should be promoted as the 'best' model for sustainable development and wellbeing. However it was agreed that all models provide challenges and opportunities (economic, social, environmental, democratic, etc.). Maintaining and valuing a diversity of models in the system of cities would give people more choice about what kind of city they'd like to live in.

In order to take advantage of their scale, intermediary cities need autonomy and good governance, both central themes of the debate.

> **Intermediary cities shouldn't try to compete with metro areas for economic development. We don't want unemployment anywhere. Intermediary cities should aim to play their part at national and even continental level**
>
> **SELÇUK AKINCI**

> **Intermediary cities have a good opportunity to have professional capacity in government without too much bureaucracy. My city is better-known for good professional management than some larger cities**
>
> MURRAY JAMER

URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES

The importance of urban-rural linkages for sustainable development in intermediary cities was highlighted. Holistic territorial planning needed to ensure adequate infrastructure and foster cooperation between neighbouring cities. Mayor Ghazal pointed out that sometimes there were more official mechanisms and support for collaboration with cities on the other side of the world than cities just a few km away. However, when cities do collaborate and work in a networked way, this effort is often invisible. How can we make it visible and highlight its value to national governments?

> **Rather than thinking about urban-rural connections we should adopt the idea of integrated regional planning and think about cities as hubs in a system**
>
> JOAN PARPAL

Participants

MURRAY JAMER
Deputy CAO of the City of Fredericton and President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Fredericton is the capital of the Canadian province of New Brunswick.

BORJA IGLESIAS
CEO of the Network for Strengthening the Informal City, a consultancy firm that works to develop technological solutions to the present needs and future challenges of informal urbanization.

JOAN PARPAL
Former Secretary General of MEDCities, the Mediterranean Cities Network, and former Director of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona.

Participants

NADER GHAZAL

Mayor of Tripoli, the largest city in northern Lebanon and the second-largest city in the country with a population of around half a million inhabitants. He is member of the UCLG Committee of Mayors of Lebanon.

ALEXANDER PUZANOV

Head of the Department of Economics and Management of the Faculty of State and Municipal Governance at the Higher School of Economics, Moscow, and has been Director General of the Institute for Urban Economics, since its founding in 1995.

ÁLVARO IBUJES

Office of the Mayor, Tulcán, Ecuador.

THE SYSTEM OF CITIES

The invisibility of intermediary cities at national andinternational level was a strong theme. This was contrasted with the indispensable role they play in systems of cities.

ECONOMY

Intermediary cities contribute to national GDP through regional growth and development and play an important role in facilitating territorial cohesion. They provide markets for rural regional products and services for rural populations, and act as hubs between rural areas and megacities.

GOVERNANCE

Intermediary cities should be officially recognized as such, and national and regional policies should be drawn up to boost their development. Given the diversity of their needs and capacities, asymmetrical decentralization on a city-by-city basis should be an option.

RISK AND RESILIENCE

Intermediary cities are high risk. If they don't work, it has an immediate impact on the total system (especially supply chains, food security). Intermediary cities are a vital link in the chain.

> ## Intermediary cities are a voice. Which part do intermediary cities play in the national opera? Are they tenors or sopranos?
>
> **BRIAN ROBERTS**

> **When there is decentralization to intermediary cities and they function well, they attract investment away from capital cities. This competition is a good stimulation for larger cities to get their act together**
>
> DAVID SATTERTHWAITE

> **Intermediary cities are seen as troublemakers. They're not opera; they're rock 'n' roll!**
>
> DAVID SATTERTHWAITE

> **It's not enough for intermediary cities to just 'be between'; they must act as 'go-betweens'**
>
> JOSEP MARIA LLOP

Participants

DAVID SATTERTHWAITE

Senior fellow at IIED and visiting professor at the Development Planning Unit, University College London. He was the Global Coordinator of UCLG's Fourth Global Report on Local Democracy and Decentralization, 'Basic Services for All in an Urbanizing World'.

MONSERRATH TELLO

Councillor of the city of Cuenca, capital of the Azuay Province of Ecuador. Cuenca is active in the UCLG intermediary cities network and peer-to-peer exchanges.

JOSEP MARIA LLOP

Professor of Urbanism at the University of Lleida, Spain. Over recent years he has supported UCLG's intermediary cities network and our policy papers on urban planning and the intermediary cities agenda.

06 CHALLENGING NARRATIVES AND COUNTER NARRATIVES

VS

Challenging narratives from central governments and capital cities	Counter-narratives of I-cities
Intermediary cities do not have economies of scale or agglomeration advantages (metro cities)	Agglomeration also has disadvantages (pollution, traffic, travel times, high prices)
Intermediary cities are not interested/capable in participating in global negotiations (national governments, international agencies)	I-cities have been neglected by the UN. If they are invited they can and will contribute
Intermediary cities aren't a different or special category	Yes they are. They play a unique role in the development of their region and between metropolises and regions
Intermediary cities can't compete in the global economy	The global economy is increasingly based on regional diversity and competition. Furthermore, the new economic geography and 3rd industrial revolution is opening up new opportunities for intermediary cities
The rising tide (of national development) will lift all the boats, including intermediary cities (national governments)	Experience shows that isn't true. Intermediary cities tend to lose out in investment and infrastructure
Economic development policy is set at national or regional level. There is no need for intermediary cities to duplicate this task (national and regional governments)	Local economic development is distinctive, given the closeness of local governments to their communities, their knowledge of local resources and opportunities, and capacity to bring together local partners to collaborate
Horizontal collaboration between intermediary cities isn't possible. They are competitors for financing and investment	Cooperation between cities at regional level is essential for them to thrive in a globalized world. Win-win

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