

Havana 2005
The Sustainable Cities Programme
and the Localizing Agenda 21 Programme
5th Global Meeting of partners

Achieving sustainable urbanization
Innovations for local and global results

La Havana, Cuba - 26 June to 1st July 2005

The 2005 Global Meeting of the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP) and Localizing Agenda 21 Programme (LA21) partners will take place from 26 June to 1st July in Cuba, hosted by the City of La Havana. The meeting offers the partners of the UN-HABITAT Urban Environment Section the opportunity to advance their collective know-how, exchange experiences, review activities, and discuss how to mainstream Environmental Planning and Management (EPM) into local, national and global policies. The meeting will bring together: mayors, high-ranking city officials, urban practitioners, representatives of central/federal governments, urban institutions, heads of international support programmes and key representatives of donor agencies. The meeting is organized jointly by UN-HABITAT, UNEP, the Government of Cuba and the City of La Havana.

With the Millennium Development Goals, the international community committed itself to reduce by half the number of people living in poverty by 2015 – only ten years from now. Urban poverty requires particular attention. As the urban poor are disproportionately affected by urban environmental degradation, vigorous action at the local level is key to ensuring that the Millennium Development Goals are met. Good practices show that sound urban environmental planning and management can contribute significantly to poverty alleviation. In addition, cities which focus on improving their urban governance practices have proven to be more equitable, more inclusive, safer and ultimately more sustainable.

4. Objectives of the Global Meeting

The main purpose of the meeting is to reflect on partners collective ability to transform the innovations promoted through SCP and LA21 into significant changes at the local, national and global levels, thus contributing to improved urban governance and ultimately to poverty reduction strategies and interventions.

The objectives of the meeting are:

- To review EPM approach and tools in order to ensure mainstreaming of innovations into positive changes;
- To strengthen the strategy for anchoring EPM capacities in national and regional institutions to improve urban governance.

The specific objectives are:

- To clarify what is meant by mainstreaming, and how to know when it has been achieved
- To identify experiences, challenges and good practices in mainstreaming the EPM approach and lessons of experience at local, national and global levels;
- To compare and contrast the EPM approach with other methodologies and assess complementarity.
- To assess the extent to which the good urban governance dimensions of EPM are being supported by necessary changes in the institutional, policy and legal environment.
- To provide a platform for exchange of knowledge, expertise and experiences in EPM implementation, particularly in basic urban services (BUS), sustainable urban mobility (SUM) and Environment Management Information System (EMIS) initiatives.

2. Review of the SCP and LA21 Strategy

Over the past three years, the UN-HABITAT Urban Environment Section has formulated and supported initiatives to alleviate urban poverty through a new strategy designed to increase the impact of LA21 and SCP at the local, national and global levels. As part of this strategy, support is increasingly decentralized from the Programmes' international core teams to regional and national urban partners institutions. In most countries where the Programmes of the Urban Environment Section are active, urban institutions have been identified and are progressively assuming the role of providing technical support to local authorities and national government. This significantly increases the capacity of the Programmes to respond to requests from local and national governments and to strengthen the urban institutions towards becoming EPM anchoring facilities.

Implementation of the strategy is scheduled to continue until 2007. The 2005 Global Meeting offers an ideal midpoint opportunity for the Programmes and partners to take stock of how the strategy has worked so far, and to what extent the activities of the two Programmes effectively contribute to improve urban governance, urban planning, environmental management and poverty reduction. The participants will address key questions such as:

- Are improvements or new mechanisms needed to make partners' work more efficient and effective in contributing to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals?
- Are the SCP and LA21 approaches and methodologies fully understood and integrated into urban planning and management practices of partner cities? Or do they too often remain on the margins of 'normal business' in supported cities?
- To what degree are Programme activities, in any given country, able to contribute to the improvement of national policies?
- How are SCP and LA21 experiences used by governments and other partners to feed into the international debate on urban development, environmental management and poverty reduction?

3. Theme of the Global Meeting

Achieving sustainable urbanization - <i>Innovations for local and global results</i>
--

Innovation

Innovation thrives when a group – formal or informal – of interested, dedicated and creative people focus on an issue and think 'outside the box'. Often, such groups operate on the fringes of the day-to-day business structure. Innovation can be encouraged and facilitated by ensuring that such groups are supported by their institutions, and are allowed to establish links and to cooperate both within and outside their institutions. It is important that their ideas are given enough attention by decision-makers. It is also important to recognize that the lessons learned from failed innovations are as important as success in the learning process. When assessing the role of SCP and LA21 in the partner cities, the meeting participants must ask whether or not conditions for innovative thought and action are in place. Are the projects consciously selecting specific areas (e.g. urban planning, urban management, environmental management, urban governance, poverty reduction) on which to focus innovative efforts?

Environmental Planning and Management (EPM)

The Environmental Planning and Management approach of the Urban Environment section is about change: on the basis of tried and tested innovations, the EPM approach changes the way people think about urban development and environment, as well as changing the ways in which people and institutions behave. During the 2005 Global Meeting, participants will look beyond the SCP/LA21 process (Profile – Consultation – Working groups – Strategies and action plans – Institutionalisation) to the broader underlying EPM approach of Information – Decision-making – Implementation. During the meeting, EPM will be discussed as an innovative approach to address urban governance issues with the ultimate aim of reducing urban poverty.

Mainstreaming

The main theme of the 2005 Global Meeting will be 'mainstreaming' – how to ensure that innovative approaches to urban management are incorporated into the way that partner cities do business. To mainstream new ideas or ways of doing something, attitudes have to change, behaviour has to change, and structures have to change. This can be a prolonged and delicate process. Mainstreaming makes new practices permanent, building them into habits, procedures and routines. Mainstreaming has a significant impact on policies, processes, tools and mechanisms and generate a greater range of innovative potential solutions that would otherwise be the case.

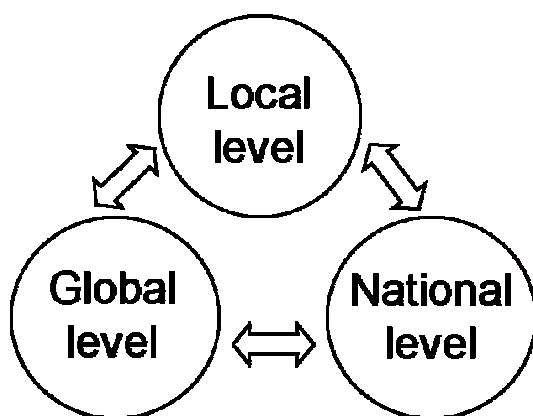
Mainstreaming at various levels

□ *Mainstreaming at the local level*

In mainstreaming EPM at the local level, the EPM approach, process and tools are integrated into the way local actors conduct their business every day. Programmes/projects activities should contribute to improvements in urban planning and environmental management. They should also contribute to significant improvements in aspects of poverty reduction, and to better local governance in general. Mainstreaming at the local level translates into changes in local policies, institutional arrangements and the relationship between different actors. **Is this the case in your city? Is the EPM process in complementary with other approaches, or not?**

□ *Mainstreaming at the national level*

When EPM is mainstreamed at national level, lessons of experience from local projects make an important contribution to the improvement of national policies related to urban development, environmental management (such as National Environmental Action Plans - NEAP) and influence poverty reduction interventions (such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers - PRSPs). In addition, lessons of experience from local projects can be used to improve support mechanisms from the central level to the local level (capacity building – finance – decentralisation etc.). A key way to mainstream EPM at the national level is by facilitating the dialogue between local actors (mainly but not exclusively local authorities) and national actors (mainly but not exclusively central government). National urban governance campaigns are one important mechanism through which these processes can be advanced. Such a dialogue improves national policies, and ensures that they are better known and understood at the local level. It also helps to identify efficient implementation mechanisms. **What is the case in your country?**



• *Mainstreaming at the global level*

At the global level, mainstreaming EPM ensures that lessons of experience from the local and national levels are used to improve global agendas for urban development (Habitat Agenda), environmental management (Agenda 21, multilateral environmental agreements) and poverty reduction goals (MDG). Lessons of experience from the local and national levels can be used to improve support mechanisms from the international community to national and local levels (multilateral, bilateral, decentralised cooperation). One of the chief ways in which EPM can be mainstreamed at the global level is through the facilitation of dialogue among national actors (mainly but not exclusively national governments), especially through intergovernmental meetings such as the Governing Councils of UNEP and UN-HABITAT, and the Commission on Sustainable Development. Through such dialogues, global agendas could not only be improved, but would also be better known and understood at the national and local levels. In addition, more efficient implementation mechanisms could be identified. **Is this happening? What urban environment issues are percolating into the global agenda through this process or other existing processes?**

3. Structure of the Global Meeting

- The meeting will be preceded by the launch of the two UN-HABITAT Global Campaigns (Urban Governance and Security of Tenure) in Cuba. Participants will also have the opportunity to attend this event, which will count with the presence of the UN-HABITAT Executive Director.
- The meeting will be structured into plenary sessions, targeted presentations and roundtable discussions. Partners will discuss programme strategy and focus, and will share their experiences at the local, national and international levels. The meeting will be interpreted in three languages (English, Spanish and French) apart from some of the thematic sessions.
- A morning of thematic sessions will review progress in specific fields on which the SCP/LA21 are focusing operational activities. This will include: Basic Urban Services (BUS), Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM), Capacity Building Agenda, Environment Management Information System (EMIS), gender, environmental resources and energy use.
- Technical visits will be organized to showcase Cuba's experience in urban development, environmental management and poverty reduction.
- A special session will be dedicated to allow regional groups to exchange views and to agree upon regional agendas.
- An exhibition by UN programmes and SCP/LA21 partners will run throughout the meeting.
- Our Cuban hosts will organize a series of activities to facilitate participants to discover the beautiful host city of La Havana and the unique culture of Cuba.

5. Results and outputs of the Global Meeting

The meeting will explore ways to enhance the mainstreaming of EPM strategies for sustainable urbanization and poverty reduction. Specific outputs will include:

- A contribution to the achievement of the MDGs particularly Goal 7 on environmental sustainability through the identification of good practices and recommendations;
- Contributions to a framework for local, national and global strategies to mainstream the EPM approach and lessons of experience in the form of sourcebook for SCP/LA21 projects;
- Definition of local, national and global agendas to mainstream the EPM approach and lessons of experience and commitments from participants to implement these agendas.
- A report, documenting the Global Meeting.

For more information visit the meeting Website at:

www.unhabitat.org/havana2005

or write to the meeting secretariat: havana2005@unhabitat.org

Provisional Agenda

Saturday 25 June	Sunday 26 June	Monday 27 June	Tuesday 28 June	Wednesday 29 June	Thursday 30 June	Friday 1 st July	
	Registration	Campaign launch	Mainstreaming at local level	Thematic session	Mainstreaming at national level	Forward looking, synthesis, recommendations (regional)	
		Opening				Closing	
		Urban Environment Exhibition					Farewell lunch
	Campaign launch	Cuban Experience	Mainstreaming at local level	Technical visits	Mainstreaming at global level	Bilateral meetings	
		Visit of Havana					
Arrival of participants	Cuban Diner	Welcome cocktail	Cultural event		PSAG	Departure of participants	

Indicative list of potential participating countries

Asia- Pacific

- China
- India
- Indonesia
- Korea
- Mongolia
- Philippines
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Viet Nam

Africa

- Burkina Faso
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Malawi
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Senegal
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Zambia

Arab States

- Egypt
- Lebanon
- Morocco

Latin America and Caribbean

- Brazil
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Ecuador
- Peru

Europe

- Belgium
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Russia
- Spain
- The Netherlands