World Cities Day October 31
BETTER CITY, BETTER LIFE
LIVERPOOL, UNITED KINGDOM 2018

Building Sustainable and Resilient Cities

World Cities Day 2018

Social Resilience

Urbanization provides the potential for new forms of social inclusion, including greater equality, access to services and new opportunities for all. Owing to their scale and proximity, cities can foster wider engagement among citizens in decision-making processes to better capture diversity and ensure the needs of all are taken into account. Globally however, the number of poor urban residents is growing and many struggle to reap the benefits of economic growth in cities. Systems of inclusion in the planning and management of cities, and equity in the distribution of urban services and public amenities are key to strengthen socially cohesive, resilient urban societies.

KEY WORDS

Social Inclusion, Migration, Community, Urban Safety, City leadership, Refugee, Internal Displacement Person (IDPs), Equality, Discrimination, Urban Growth, Social Innovation, Spatial development.

FIGURES AND KEY FACTS

- The urban population of the world has grown rapidly from 751 million in 1950 to 4.2 billion in 2018.[1]
- Around 1 in 8 people globally live in slums.
- The number of people living in extreme poverty—767 million in 2013—would be between 136 million and 165 million higher without social protection transfers.[2]
- By 2030, the world is projected to have 43 megacities, most of them in developing regions.[3]
- The number of international migrants worldwide has continued to grow rapidly in recent years, reaching 258 million in 2017[4]
- In 2017, there were 30.6 million new displacements associated with conflict and disasters across 143 countries and territories[5]

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[1] 2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects – United Nations

[2] Fisz-bein, Kanbur and Yemtsov, 2014

[3] Ibid

[4] International Migrant Report (2017) United Nations

For many, the prospect of the city is one of new economic prospects, access to services and education, and the opportunity for a better future. The reality for a growing number is however unstable or unequally remunerated jobs, difficulties accessing housing and basic services, and abject poverty. Despite these challenges, cities are still major actors in the fight against inequality and have lifted millions out of poverty. The challenge for cities in terms of social resilience is how to accelerate the positive drivers rooted in urban growth while minimizing the negative impacts.

When cities are faced with sudden shocks such as economic crisis, or long-term stresses such as high unemployment, the poor are inevitably the hardest hit. Precarious living and working conditions and a lack of economic and/or social safety nets means that they struggle to recover and risk entering a cycle of exclusion and hardship. Globally, women are impacted disproportionately, not only because they are, on average, poorer than men but also because they often lack access to decision-making spaces and experience greater difficulty in mobilizing resources and services tailored to their needs.

Cities must plan in such a way as to foster "place-making" for all city dwellers, especially women, migrants, refugees and internally displaced people. Planning for urbanization includes spatial as well as regulatory planning to eliminate legal and practical barriers that prevent the full participation of vulnerable groups urban economy and system. Improving the spatial connection between land use and accessibility, eliminates or reduces the imbalances between residential and working areas and can foster a city for all.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

The city of Maputo, the Hauirou Commission that promotes women grassroots leadership and the Global Platform on the Right to the City of Brazil and Cities Alliance that promotes cities without slums will respond to the following guiding questions in initiating a discussion on social resilience:
- Who should lead the charge to make cities more inclusive? Local governments? National governments? Other?
- Are cities fulfilling their promise of lifting people out of poverty? Or simply creating new 'urban' poverty?
- What lessons can we share on involving marginalized or excluded groups in decision-making?
- How are participant cities and organisations addressing the need of vulnerable groups such as women and migrants?

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[5] Internal Displacement monitoring center