

# Global Action Plan for Slums and Informal Settlements

Accelerating for Transforming Informal Settlements and Slums by 2030  
International Meeting Report - Pretoria, South Africa 16 - 17, October 2022



## Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of the two-day International Meeting launching the **Global Action Plan Framework towards transforming Informal Settlements and Slums in the Decade of Action**. The event brought together Ministers, Mayors, practitioners, researchers, and civil society organizations and activists who have played an active role upgrading and transforming informal settlements. Members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat in Nairobi and members of the Global Task Force on Informality of the Cities Alliance were also invited. Fifty international participants were expected to attend the Launch.

**In the end, a total of 671 people registered, -including the attendance of 205 delegates and mobilizing the diverse landscape of stakeholders in South Africa.**

The GAP Framework was designed with the ambition of accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. The International Meeting leverages the momentum of the Urban October and the preparation process for the UN-Habitat Assembly in June 2023. The Global Action Plan Framework Initiative is anchored in the Slums and Informal Settlements Network (SiSNet) launched during Habitat III in Quito as part of the global Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP), initiated by the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), financed by the European Commission and implemented by UN-Habitat. The Government of South Africa invited key partners to jointly develop a roadmap with the objective of formulating a resolution in support of a Global Action Plan Framework to be endorsed during the UN-Habitat Assembly.

The **Global Action Plan Framework** is informed by the co-creation of a global publication in search of solutions to the challenges of informal settlements and slums. The publication provides a snapshot of the current global status quo of slums and informal settlements, reflects on lessons learnt in the past 20 years and identifies sustainable and inclusive solutions for transforming informal settlements and slums. The Government of South Africa invites Member States to launch a resolution formulation process shaping commitments and endorsement in support of the Global Action Plan Framework.

The intention of the Global Action Plan Framework is to take coordination, collaboration, commitments and partnerships to the next level. It consolidates and amplifies efforts for accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) in the Decade of Action. It provides a joint vision to inform actions framed by partnerships and is the basis for Member States to elevate commitments in form of a resolution to be pledged in the UN-Habitat Assembly process.

The Framework is designed to engage multiple stakeholders at all levels of governance to foster international cooperation for regional and sub-regional strategies and implementation efforts at country level. It will drive continuous increased commitment, learning, sharing, accountability and monitoring as well as transformative programmes for greater impact

The conference programme aimed at:

1. Making the case for a next step in committing to making slums and informal settlements a priority
2. Identifying principles and commitments informing transformative actions
3. Committing to accelerators
4. Moving forward with strategic accelerators for slum and informal settlement transformation

The Government of South Africa designed field visits to underline the relevance of the international meeting by exposing living standards and realities of people living in informal settlements and presenting a variety of approaches towards providing adequate housing for all in South Africa.

## DAY 1 - LAUNCH OF THE GAP . 16.10.2022

### 10.00 WELCOME REMARKS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA, UN-HABITAT & OPENING STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT BY MEMBER STATES

Moderator: *Monika Glinzler*, Director International Relations, Office of the Director-General, Department of Human Settlements, South Africa

The opening session framed the **Global Action Plan Launch** by statements of **high-level policy makers** and their reflections on what is needed next for meeting the **scale of slums and informal settlements** today and tomorrow. The Government of South Africa served as a champion for informal settlements in the New Urban Agenda Habitat III process. In the preparation for the Habitat III Conference in 2016, the Government conducted the **Thematic Meeting on Informal Settlements** leading to the **Pretoria Declaration**. Hon Mmamoloko Kubayi, Minister of Human Settlements, Government of South Africa thus opened the meeting and reminded all participants that bold steps were needed to move forward with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Target 11.1 -as initiated by the Joined Action Plan Framework. The Global Action Plan Launch Initiative was to lift coordination, collaboration, commitments, and partnerships to the next level. The Minister reminded the national relevance of such an initiative, as the urban segregation in South Africa continues to weigh heavily on the development pattern of the country, and cities are still challenged to accommodate the poor providing an adequate standard of living.

Since last year, the Government of South Africa has started rethinking their approach towards a more comprehensive and phased response to informal settlements. The Government started with the identification of a baseline – counting 2600 settlements, 1.4 million households, - and is now setting a monitoring framework and coordinating its implementation at municipality level. Municipalities are driving the process, while the central government is allocating resources in line with the expanded, phased, and comprehensive policy packages. To support the process, a Community of Practice with non-governmental organizations and academia was founded to share information and knowledge, as well as provide tools and technical support.

Finally, the Government called for learning and exchange between countries to accelerate the creation of sustainable approaches meeting the scale needed and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in the years to come – leaving no one behind.

The Government called for expansion of partnerships to respond systematically to urbanization. Economic opportunities are also core to the development of cities and people.

*Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif*, Executive Director of UN-Habitat started her intervention by thanking the Government of South Africa for providing the platform and continuing to champion the call of “Cities for All” through their commitment to positively transform informal settlements and slums. She underlined the “need (for) leadership and investments to translate policy into positive action on the ground”. She also reminded that there are more than 1 billion people living in slums and informal settlements, translating to one (1) out of every four (4) people in urban areas. If no transformative action is taken, it is estimated that by 2050, there will be 3 billion people living in slums, an increase of 183, 000 people every day. SDG Target 11.1 -on upgrading slums and affordable, safe and adequate housing- is one of nine targets that are regressing globally!

She concluded by stating that while there is a need to take transformative actions, UN-Habitat has already developed tools to assist Member States to achieve sustainable transformation. UN-Habitat normative guidelines promote: (1) Spatial Equality and Justice, (2) Social Inclusion and Integrated Governance, (3) Reduction of Poverty and Economic Prosperity and (4) Environmental Sustainability and Protection. As Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif pointed out: *“transformation at scale cannot happen in isolation -it needs a vision that will bring partners onboard and this is what the GPAF is aiming to achieve”*.

*Hon. Obiga Kania*, Minister of Lands Housing and Urban Development from the Government of Uganda reiterated the commitment of the people of Uganda on the issue of slums. He reminded the audience that slums are the results of urbanization, -cities attracting disadvantaged people who are looking for better services and economic opportunities. The Minister noted that Uganda has developed an approach to address informal settlements, through fast-integrated service solutions. The whole country is currently declared as a planning area for service creation, both in cities and rural areas, creating a national planning framework. Together with UN-Habitat, the country targeted actions on existing slums, thanks to a pilot programme in 3 large areas (2 cities and 1 municipality), that started with profiling (services) and community engagement. Uganda is now ready for implementing transformation in slums and learning from one another in a Global effort.

*Hon Francis Asenso-Boakye (MP)*, Minister for Works and Housing, Government of Ghana renewed the commitment that Ghana already took at diverse occasions on global stages to achieve SDGs. He also welcomed the GPAF in taking coordination, collaboration, commitment, and partnership to the next level. He reminded the audience that people have a fundamental right to live with basic dignity and decent conditions, and that cities play a key role as drivers for sustainable development, which can work as catalysts for the integration of systemic solutions and the inclusion of all stakeholders.

Hon Francis Asenso-Boakye further stressed the *“urgent need for coherent and integrated national urban and housing policy, starting with implementation of national development plans and policies and resource-oriented programmes for slums”*.

He then reflected on the gap between political decisions (promise of the construction of 250,000 human settlements in DRC for instance) and the reality on site, oftentimes leading to a difficulty to fully implement. He reiterated that upgrading and transformation would not work without national plans and a legal framework, that would further need to be supported by the population. With the reform to update the town planning and construction code in R. D. Congo, a New Law on Town Planning and Construction was developed with World Bank financial support. Currently, UN-Habitat supports the process of transferring and validating this new national law to cities, mayors, and customary chiefs, to have it definitively adopted.

He finished his intervention by mentioning that urban planning tools have already been put in practice, with reference to urban plans and master plans, and further mentioned that in addition to the ongoing reform, there was also a discussion about creating a national one-stop shop for building permits.

## 11.00 SITE VISITS

The purpose of the site visits was to help delegations understand the local realities of people living in informal settlements, as well as the ways in which the Johannesburg municipality and South Africa contribute to improving their living conditions through a variety of approaches. The Government of South Africa perfectly organized the logistics and security of all the delegates to the sites.

### Rugby Club Informal Settlement

The programme started with the Rugby Club informal settlement, previously used as a social and sporting club. The area, owned by the City of Johannesburg, was selected as a resettlement site under the Upgrading of Informal Settlement Programme (UISP) Policy framework that aims to create sustainable human settlements.

In the first phase, only 181 households (shacks) were counted. Today, it has grown to 810 qualifying households and counts social facilities such as nurseries, sports fields, voting station and a local church.

The participation process (survey and community expression of needs) allowed the allocation of such amenities, with the addition of WASH components (water supplied by the Witpoortjie Reservoir and Water Tower, sanitation provided through an existing sewer system). Sanitation is provided through toilet booths; electricity is available on site with roads accessibility. Delegates had the opportunity to visit one of the houses and interact with the owner.



*Aerial view of the Rugby Club, before re-settlement of households 2012*



*Aerial view of the Rugby Club, after re-settlement of households 2022*



*Street view of the Rugby Club today*

### Fleurhof Integrated Development

The second visit was to a site developed by a private investor. This investor partnered with the municipality to provide infrastructure, such as roads, in exchange for the inclusion of social and subsidized houses in addition to commercial ones, from stand-alone houses to apartment buildings. The idea was to bring social diversity and financial balance to the operation.

The developer was onsite, to present the project to the delegations and answer questions pertaining to access conditions, prices and size of apartments. It was then brought to the attention of the audience that although it is currently essentially a housing programme, -they are in the process of providing community services such as schools, medical centers, and job opportunities. This is when the ED of UN-Habitat referred to the importance of greening and recreational areas for children and general population.

By the end of the project, the Fleurhof Residential Development Programme (IRDP) is expected to house more than 10 groups of beneficiaries from different settlements: Xamimpilo informal settlement (400), Fleurhof informal settlement and its hostel (826), and applicants from Greater Roodepoort/Florida (400), among others, for a potential total of 12 731 residential opportunities. Many buildings were already finalized and occupied by families.



*Fleurhof Extension*



*Site visit*

## Thokoza park in Johannesburg

The group then moved to the Thokoza park in Soweto. It is quite an expansive green space of 4.5 hectares (including dam) studded with trees & featuring picnic areas, a playground & a walking path. At the time of visit, it also presented an exhibition of children's artwork.



*Site visit*

The purpose of the visit was to join the Launch of the Center for African Public Spaces. The event particularly emphasized the importance of land in the African psyche and culture, in terms of roots and appropriation of space. It was also the opportunity to acknowledge the support of UN-Habitat, the German Embassy and the participation of youth organizations, among others.



*Site visit*

## 14.00 NETWORKING EVENT: APARTHEID MUSEUM IN JOHANNESBURG

### Refreshment and traditional dance showcased

### Closing session of the day

Moderated by *Ms Marina Dumakude*, Deputy Chair of the Housing Development Agency, South Africa

Remarks by *Ms MT Kubayi*, Minister of Human Settlements, South Africa

Message of Support by *Ms Maimunah Mohd Sharif*, Executive Director of UN Habitat

Vote of Thanks by *Mr Sello Dada Morero*, Executive Mayor of Johannesburg

The networking event allowed to reflect on events of the day. One observation was that the drive through tar roads and modern buildings all the way to the Rugby club informal settlement reflected the stark contrast in the city landscape. This demonstrated the urgent need to accelerate the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030! The Apartheid Museum was also a reminder that today's experience is still a remnant of that era. The Museum informs as to the need to build from the past exclusion, discrimination, and inequalities; in the hope that the future will be brighter, with integrated and resilient communities. Nelson Mandela was a global patron for slum issues, having endorsed the MDGs for improving living conditions of slum dwellers by 2020. We now reflect on the past 20 years and lessons learned, to inform the way forward for slum transformation.

The Networking Event was marked by a call to join forces to create human settlements that are sustainable and cities that integrate working, living, and recreation areas as essential components. For this, new momentum must be created, with a new level of engagement and political mobilization. A call to all leaders to scale up and partner with UN-Habitat was done, in order to accelerate the transformation of slums, creating more equality, inclusion, and less poverty in our cities.

Overall, the day displayed the existing challenges but also the good initiatives by the Johannesburg municipality, -which is an economic hub for South Africa and for the continent. Mayor Morero closed the day, thanking the Ministry of Human Settlements and welcoming all delegations.

### Coffee break and visit of the museum

## DAY 2 - LAUNCH OF THE GAP . 17.10.2022

### 10.00 INTRODUCTION TO THE TRENDS, SITUATION, AND RATIONALE OF CALLING FOR A GLOBAL ACTION PLAN TRANSFORMING INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS AND SLUMS

The second day started with an opening session on the current global situation of slums. It was guided by a series of questions, first regarding the trends (supported by data analysis from UN-Habitat), highlighting some remaining gaps, and quickly followed by the solutions at neighborhood and city level. It was the opportunity to question practitioners on their point of view and ideas on the situation, and how it relates to the Global Action Plan.

**Moderator:** *Hon. Siphokazi Lusithi, Member of the Executive Council for Human Settlements, Eastern Cape, South Africa*

*Paolo Ciccarelli, Head of Unit - Sustainable Transport and Urban Development, European Commission (video message)*

*H.E. Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard, Assistant Secretary-General, Department of Political and Human development Affairs, Organisation of ACP States (video message)*

*Joshua Maviti, Programme Management Officer, UN-Habitat*

*Sheila Kamunyori, Senior Urban Specialist, World Bank*

*Neville Chaine, Deputy Director-General, Department of Human Settlements*

**Joshua Maviti** started by reminding the audience that UN-Habitat was in charge of coordinating the formulation of SDG indicator 11.1, and is mandated to monitor it globally. Slums and informal settlements are included in this indicator. Slums are measured at household level, while informal settlements are an indicator of the level of formal conformity of physical and legal structures.

More than 1 billion people live in slums. Globally, the proportion of people living in informal settlements has reduced by 14% since 2000 up to 2020. However, the absolute numbers have been increasing due to rapid urbanization in Africa and Southeast Asia, increasing the number of urban poor in urban areas.

With the continued rise of slums, dealing with slums and informal settlements will be central for reaching not only SDG 11 but also the other goals related to poverty, health, education, water and sanitation, resilience, and climate change. The EU, through the PSUP, has supported over 40 countries in more than a decade, financing actions from elaboration of national policy frameworks to city wide strategies, undertaking knowledge work, training, networks and implementing community-based pilot actions. Still, 27 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries have more than 50% of their population living in slums. If no action is taken, the number of people living in slums will triple to 3 billion slum dwellers by 2050.

Mr. Maviti particularly stressed the need for new financing commitments to scale up and focus on country level for effective, impactful results. The European Union aims to strengthen and expand access to finance for slum upgrading through the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD+). The EU Global Gateway also includes sustainable urban development,

connecting the world with investment and partnership, and exploring the role of cities as development actors within a larger network.

According to him, addressing slums will contribute to the wider development context, including SDGs. In this sense, the GAPF is not only a framework for action, but also helps to maintain focus on the need for addressing slum upgrading under a renewed joint global effort.

**Sheila Kamunyori**, then expressed her opinion on the data gaps, on both qualitative and quantitative aspects. The World Bank, which deals with the implementation of informal settlements projects, has seen quantitative data collection and processing move forward (for example with enumeration at household level and climate resilience data). Qualitative data, while still challenging, is crucial for social and physical transformation of slums and to understand the facets of socio-economic integration. Longitudinal studies of people who grew up in slums before the upgrading are useful to gauge social-economic progress over time. Partnership with CSOs is also critical for close data gaps and need to be institutionalized in order to continue even after projects ends.

Then, **Neville Chaine** spoke about the integration of plans and programmes with concrete actions as a requirement. Institutional accountability at local level was also stressed, especially its need to be bolstered. Finally, the necessary to review regulations, compliance and to consider the integral nature of slum upgrading to the city or town was stressed: “*we need to move beyond individual social intervention projects to programmes (city and national).*”

In his video message, **Mr. Ciccarelli** welcomed the new GAP initiative for addressing informal settlements and slums. Recognizing that 1 billion people live in slums and informal settlement, dealing with slums will be central for reaching many of the SDG's, not only goal 11. He reflected on the PSUP, where the EC partnered with the OACPS and UN-Habitat to extend services to 40 countries with various slum upgrading interventions. The EC is looking at scaling up this implementation and the focus is on three elements. First, more cooperation with partner countries to anchor investment projects for scaling up and more impactful results. The second is to strengthen and expand access to finance through instruments that mobilize additional finance and using blended finance to attract, promote and multiply investment in partner countries. This includes a guarantee scheme of about 40 billion with a specific window for sustainable cities. Third, through the EU Global Gateway there will be support to creation of economic corridors that connect economic agents along the urban geography, providing linkages between them. To conclude, he indicated that addressing slums will contribute to the wider global development context and support many of the SDG's. The Global Action Plan framework provides not only a framework for action, but will also help to maintain a focus on the need for addressing slum upgrading. He wished all a successful event.

**Dr. Ibrahim Norbert Richard** in a video message on behalf of the Secretary General of the OACPS, H.E. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, thanked the Government of South Africa for hosting the global platform. He acknowledged the 14 years of tripartite partnership with European Commission (EC) and UN-Habitat, which has helped shape international frameworks inscribed in Nairobi, Kigali and Brussels Habitat 3 declarations, the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

He noted that 31 countries globally have more than 50% of their urban populations living in slums, with 27 in the ACP region. He considered particularly alarming the projection that the number of people living in slums will triple by 2050, from one to 3 billion, if no action is taken. He congratulated the countries that have acted and welcomed them to share their experience while reiterating that continued strategic action is needed. He referenced the 11th World Urban Forum in Poland, where the OACPS expressed the need to jointly address the issue and explore funding possibilities to move the slum and informal settlement actions into higher gear, thus enabling long-term urban transformation. The launch would be the first milestone that will enable a new path to be taken, followed by a new roadmap and framework reflecting the common vision that will influence development strategies, future actions and activities. He also relayed the support and commitment of the members of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, where they would also inform on the GAP during the upcoming session in Maputo, Mozambique. Finally, he wished all an excellent meeting and fruitful discussions.

## **11.00 POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES ENABLING SCALING OF SLUM TRANSFORMATION**

Moderator: *Kerstin Sommer*, Human Settlements Officer Land, Housing and Shelter Section and Programme Manager of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme

*Hon. Deus Gumba*, Deputy Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Government of Malawi

*Hon. Abasse Ndiaye*, Director of Cabinet of the Minister of Urban Planning, Housing and Public Hygiene, Government of Senegal

*Kouame Kouman Kra*, Director General of Urban Planning and Land Management – MCLU, Ministry of Construction, Housing and Urbanism, Côte d'Ivoire

*Mary Ndungu*, Director Slum Upgrading Department-Ministry, Kenya

In this session, *Ms. Kerstin Sommer* introduced the panel and the discussion on **key principles and policies** that are required to **scale slum transformation**. The government representatives reflected what constitutes transformative approaches based on their country's situations. They also explored what is needed to inform transformative actions in principles, policy commitments and practical solutions.

One of the outcomes was that upgrading activities should be planned and implemented together **with the communities**, not only for the communities. The design of project interventions should be a product of the continuous public consultations with various stakeholders and partners, involving and engaging the communities to enable their buy-in. This includes private sector and civil society partnerships which are key for successful slum upgrading programs.

Governments should have emphasis on the importance of **tenure security**, which will allow people to have confidence to invest in the land. Other urban planning principles need to be adapted for slum and informal settlements upgrading.

The principle of **territorial equity** should be a basis for the demographic management process, with the creation of a new dynamic at urban poles to stimulate economic activity in cities other than the capitals, via the transfer of administrative structures.

Development of **integrated zones** and **green spaces** are crucial aspects of urban restructuring (green buildings and resilient housing). Tax exemption systems are a win-win economic model to enable people in need to obtain housing more quickly. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive approach which integrates housing with finance, land, services, and poverty reduction policies plus strategies.

It is urgent to integrate solutions to this anarchic occupation of land where there exist urban agglomeration and huge population densities. An example is the Senegal response, the Zero Slums programme was initiated to fight against the slum expansion problem; undertake urban restructuring; and the development of 100,000 housing units to be built over the next 5 years in Dakar and neighboring towns. Monitoring demographic trends that are responsible for the expansion and creation of new slums is also required.

**Profiling** to determine the number, scale, and attributes of slums and informal settlements. Governments need to understand the major influences and issues of slums. There is a need to also reflect on what has been done and what still needs to be done. Depending on the mechanisms employed, the 8 years to 2030 could be either a long or brief time to facilitate this transformation. In Kenya, the national slum upgrading and prevention strategy (2016) has facilitated implementation of various projects in slums areas of Kibera and Mathare. Following the profiling, targeted and appropriate interventions will be developed.

**Urban planning tools** need to be made available to towns and cities to promote planning and development of controlled settlements in previously occupied unplanned areas. Adaptation of legal text is also required to align it to the new reality.

Going forward, increased **financial allocations** are necessary in both national and local government budgets to back the policy commitments and complement the input by development partners that will ensure sustainability of transformation. **Legislation and policies** need to be developed or renewed to cover gaps that address the needs of the people in slums and informal settlements. There is a need for continued engagement, sharing of experiences and best practices between member states.

## **12.00 DEEP DIVE ON POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES**

Moderator: *Mark Napier*, CSIR

*Patrick Canagasingham*, Chief Operating Officer, Habitat for Humanity

*Mamphaka Jeanett Mabesa*, Director of Housing, Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship, Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho

*Marie Huchzermeyer*, Centre for Urbanism and Built Environment Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

The deep dive discussion was building on the previous session about policies and principles, providing an opportunity for in-depth dialogue on how the policy commitments from the different agencies reinforce the actions to reach scale through the action plan. The session had various urban practitioners representing NGO's, government and academia in the panel.

The practitioners put forward that the term slum upgrading has been used a lot, but now it is about term “**slum transformation**”. They urged all to take notice of the ambitious agenda to make this pivot, that now is a time for action, not talk. That should drive the kind of change that we're looking for as far as the Global Action Plan framework is concerned.

It was also noted that issues of **inequities** in slums and informal settlements have further intensified in the midst of **COVID 19**, reinforcing the issues that continue to contribute to the challenges of informality and housing. Social inclusion needs to be promoted and the SDG's embedded into strategic processes, policies, and practices. Tools such as the urban monitoring framework, can be used to localize the SDG's and support the implementation of the new urban agenda as well.

Slum dwellers should be given **priority**. People should be at the center of decision-making and the development of all the national and city development plans. Focus should also be put on areas of land tenure, advocacy, basic services, and habitability.

**Fostering collaboration and strategic partnerships** are also crucial, as we need the engagement of all stakeholders to oversee the transformation of slums, but also in order to measure the impact, as well as report on it so that we keep learning and improving.

**Improving capacity** of both the national and local governments is another key element. This is necessary for strengthening the institutions and ensuring continuity and sustainability of the responses to urban challenges.

**Arrangements around land** in informal settlements that exist oftentimes need to be reviewed. The reform and transformation in informal settlements will therefore be about speeding up and simplifying the mechanisms around making land responsive to the needs of the urban poor. The new urban agenda provides the principal social function of land and that's really something that should be underpinning all transformation in informal settlements.

In terms of **data**, there is a need not only to monitor the numbers and growth of people living in informal settlements, but also to understand the distinctive situations of these people. Many times, the urban poor are circulating around precarious forms of housing and the lowest income possibilities of that are available. Upgrading interventions need to target and incorporate grassroot voices such that their realities are shaped positively through the interventions.

#### 14.00 DRIVERS FOR ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

After the morning sessions on the situation and policies, the afternoon discussion started with questioning what would really be needed for accelerating the implementation, the roles of different stakeholders to contribute to that acceleration, and the availability of continuous investment and sustainable financing.

Moderation: *Prof. Thuli Madonsela*, Chair of the Board, Cities Alliance  
*Ana Claudia Rossbach*, Director, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (video message)  
*Hon. Collin Croal*, Minister of Housing and Water, Guyana (video message)  
*Léa Ravoavinoorosoa*, Secretary-General of SENVH, Madagascar  
*Rose Molokoane*, Slum Dwellers' International  
*Yasmin Dina*, Project manager, Municipalities and Urban Development, Agence Française de Développement (AFD)  
*Fabrice Menye Me Noah*, Sociologist & Head of the Prospective Studies Unit, FEICOM Cameroon  
*Seana Nkahle*, South African Local Government Association

*Léa Ravoavinoorosoa*, Secretary-General of the SENVH, Madagascar, representing the Ministry for Housing and New Cities started to present the situation in her country. People living in slums currently represents 50% of the population, projections show that they will be 80% by 2023. The country is currently under a policy pushing for the construction of 40,000 houses in 5 years. The regulatory framework is already in place with the national territory planning policy, the national urban development policy, and the national housing policy (2022) with the objective to provide economically adapted housing solutions for all. The country currently needs about 1.730 million housing. In addition to that, she also stressed insufficient sanitation provision in the face of climate change, urban resilience to floods, landslides, and hurricanes. She mentioned the support of UN-Habitat through the PSUP in 3 cities and the construction of earthquake resistant traditional houses. On the other side of the curser, the strategy is to create new cities and urban nodes to welcome newcomers and by doing that minimizing the pressure on existing slums. In terms of funding, she evoked the creation of a National Housing fund that would support international and national initiatives.

She was then followed by *Yasmin Dina*, Project manager, Municipalities and Urban Development, at Agence Française de Développement (AFD). The agency is in South Africa since 1994 and focusing on municipalities and urban development, also in support of other countries in the region. As such, it was also supporting initiatives on sanitation and water at various scales, including in informal settlements in large metropolitan cities, social inclusion in fragmented cities. There is a will today to work in a more transversal way by prioritizing climate resilience, mitigation, and adaptation, in support of vulnerable groups in urban areas, in relation to communities in informal settlements. She recognized that national and international narratives around the SDGs and the NUA will ultimately depend on very practical solutions at municipal level, in opposition to never implemented plans, and this is where collaborations are needed. The resources are also going to be available for intermediate/intermediary cities, taking pressure from growth, economic and climate vulnerabilities. She stressed the need to bring new financing tools and instruments directly to municipalities, who actually need to be listened about their needs, specific contexts, and residents' needs, in order to bring informed and adapted long term responses. “The ecosystem of actors should allow more partnerships in terms of peer-to-peer exchange, academic community, civil society organizations, international agencies with local agencies.”

**Fabrice Menye Me Noah, Sociologist & Head of the Prospective Studies Unit, FEICOM Cameroon,** then responded to the question about the drivers for accelerating the implementation of the sustainable development goals and the new urban agenda. He reminded the role of the FEICOM as public financing institution in support of cities and regions. In the past 3 years, it financed about 1200 development projects in municipalities for 200MUS\$. In terms of sustainable urban development, the FEICOM supports regions to elaborate strategies to develop new cities. For the past 20 years, it worked with UN-Habitat on urban upgrading and renovation, like in Bamenda city for instance. Based on that experience, he is convinced that an approach of mixed funding – international and national partners - is necessary to finance cities, operations of urban renovation. Too often, it is considered that funds are not available nationally when several ministries (water infrastructure, electricity, education, health, urban planning) can contribute together into a basket fund or onto the same project and neighborhood. He also mentioned the necessity of coherent public policies, public and private partners to get together, integration of communities with their own means. And finally, institutions like FEICOM offer an opportunity to lower the risk of project financing for cities as well as offer a 'basket funding' approach for local authorities to invest in informal settlements upgrading.

**Rose Molokoane, from Slum Dwellers' International,** then intervene to raise the difference between listening and understanding of the slums living conditions. "*The SDGs belong to the papers when the implementation should happen on the ground!*" reminding the fact that it won't happen without the communities. These later, supposedly in the center of policies and strategies are still often left on the side of decisions. Community organizations and federations are already organized by collecting information, and calling for partnership but not enough heard. She complained that governments and municipalities are too often planning in silo, without communities. So they organized themselves and managed to build 15000 houses in South Africa. SDI is also successfully working in Uganda, Ghana, Senegal, Malawi, Kenya, Sierra Leone. She invited government and municipalities to engage with community organizations, putting them at the center of the conversation, answering their needs. To finish, she reminded the 5 campaigns of SDI: climate change, greens over my table (environment), savings (empowering women), roofs over our heads (housing quality), creation of partnerships with all governments. She couldn't stress enough the need for funding to reach implementation.

**Seana Nkahle, of the South African Local Government Association,** closed the session. He talked about how everything comes back to partnership, bringing all stakeholders working together for a common purpose. Then on PPPs, there's a regulatory framework that showed some good results but sometimes brought challenges as well, so it is being research for improvement. Still, it is very hard to find good bankable projects. It was also recognized of the quality of work done by community organizations without and despite the government. He reminded that when housing and informal settlement management are divided between different government responsibilities, local governments are still the closest to the ground and should be given a lot more authority, empowering municipalities.

The panelist finally agreed on the importance of partnership and collaboration, already between the government institutions, with its decentralized bodies, and with communities into a participatory and inclusive planning approach – as key to success.

**Ms. Ana Claudia Rossbach** who had prepared a video message thanked the Government of South Africa, the Department of Human Settlements and UN-Habitat for the existing partnership with the Lincoln Institute on the GAP. She noted that very serious structural challenges need to be addressed to enable real urban transformation. She considered the high level of inequalities and access to land as profound existing challenges. She pointed out three main aspects where attention is required. One, the need for adequate information about slums in order to monitor SDG 11.1 globally and respond to the slum challenge. Second are the legal frameworks related to land, looking at how the laws can operate in favour of the right of slum dwellers. This included frameworks that support slum dwellers staying where they are, providing tools to cities and stakeholders to act in addition to promoting land regularization programs, slum upgrading improvements, integration of cities and land supply for low-income housing. Third was the focus on institutions, governance and participation, with a high degree of coordination both vertically and horizontally combining expertise and action from different sectors and actors. She invited all to share the experiences from this forum and the forum in Dominican Republic which she was attending and engage other organizations within a global community of practice. Urban transformation can be achieved if partners work through a co-creation and collaboration mode at all levels. She proposed action as a collective rather than dependence solely on international organisations or governments. By bringing different pieces of the solution, then there will be strength to move the wheel and push the agenda. That is primary commitment that is needed.

**Hon. Collin Croal**, in his video message pronounced that the transformation of informal settlements and slums is a strong indicator of government deep interest in creating a better life for its citizens. The transformation would enable provision of adequate housing which would support achievement of SDG 11, a pillar for which the development trajectory of every country should be built. He explained that informal settlements are a challenge for Guyana, which is in the midst of rapid infrastructural development with new urgent demands for sustainable solutions. The country established a country team that included central and local governments, private sector, NGOs, academia and occupiers of informal settlements themselves and the media with specific roles to prepare and to implement Guyana strategy for informal settlement upgrading and prevention. This approach allowed for interventions and solutions that were people centered and that considered the living situation of citizens who live in settlements and thus enabled the government to rally support from all stakeholders for the strategy. The informal settlement transformation program is funded through a combination of blended financing and aims to leverage private sector investment, community-based financing and household-led financing for sustained investment to match the scale and the complexity of achieving the strategic goals. In closing, he spoke of the need for greater awareness on informal settlements issues, strong partnerships, long term solutions and ensuring political will to confront the challenge. The launch of the Global Action Plan Framework provided a timely and critical global response to the challenges that informal settlements and slums pose to countries. He closed by thanking the government of South Africa for hosting events affirming the country's response to this global call to action.

## **16.00 PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK / ANNOUNCEMENTS OF MILESTONES ON THE WAY FORWARD**

This last session was planned as an attempt to push forward the discussion on the concept of partnership, at the current stage of programming but also beyond commitments, in the process leading to implementation. How can partnerships be made more effective and what are partnership set-ups that could facilitate this? It also stressed the need to spread the initiative of the GAP over that event and beyond the participants.

Facilitation by *Ms Pam Tshwete, MP, Deputy Minister of Human Settlements, South Africa*

*Margaret Mengo, Director of Operations, Programs Management, Habitat for Humanity* started by stressing that in order to sustain progress on this GAP initiative, partnerships and coalitions are critical and required at all levels, be it local, national, regional and global. She reminded that Habitat for Humanity has supported the development of the GAPF and that the organization is committed to continue supporting in the areas of advocacy, knowledge production and further convening partnerships through housing forums and demonstration projects. As a co-partner in the GAP, HFH is committed to the vision for accelerating the implementation of the SDG target 11.1, ensuring that no one is left behind through a new advocacy campaign in 2023 which will be focused on increasing equitable access for adequate housing for individuals in informal settlements. The campaign will bring together 70 national organizations to engage on policy and system change to unlock the barriers of adequate housing.

As HFH has been doing, there is need to continue raising profiles of informal settlements and adequate housing plus driving governments to take the issue seriously both directly and through foreign assistance priorities. On coordination and knowledge component, HFH will work through the global housing forum and regional urban coalitions in middle east and north Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia pacific. And finally, they will develop demonstration projects, working with partners to identify, spotlight and mobilize resources to build the capacity of initiatives in slums and informal settlements that show promise replications and scaling. She then recognized that partnerships and coalitions are critical and required at all levels.

She was followed by *Anne Wanjiru Mbuthia, Mathare Legal Aid and Human Rights Advocacy Kenya, & Huairou Commission*, who also responded on the commitments of its organization. She reminded that implementation of the action plan should be inclusive, participatory, from household level to the private sector and the government. Once again, there shouldn't be anyone left behind, or have any kind of discrimination, with the support and engagement of grassroots organizations. Effectively, the implementation of the GAP should not discriminate on the basis of local, political, social or economic characteristics in a country.

On behalf of the Huairou commission, she committed to utilize its active grassroots linkages to engage the community, particularly for women's empowerment, building capacities of grassroots women and communities, and participation into their own development processes and decision-making processes. It was a commitment to support the implementation of the GAPF at grassroots level by engaging the communities in different countries worldwide: focus on inclusiveness, participatory in nature, through a multipronged vertical, horizontal and centered approach focused on the interest of slum communities. Huairou commission has also made a commitment to monitoring and evaluation of the GAP implementation through its existing mechanisms.

*Kerstin Sommer, Human Settlements Officer Land, Housing and Shelter Section and Programme Manager of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme for UN-Habitat* started to reflect on the event, stating that the GAP launch conference has shown the importance of partnership, learning, exchange and having a consolidated vision. While acknowledging that the challenge is huge and with limited resources, she still considers as essential the strong partnerships needed to match the immense scale of intervention required to reach the more than 1 billion slum dwellers (and the estimated 3 billion by 2050).

She then thanked and appreciated the government of South Africa, who since 2016 and more recently in preparation for the launch has supported the twin tracks of political mobilization and leadership, with technical mobilization from partners in the global taskforce. Informed by this global knowledge backbone, UN-Habitat has the objective to deliver the solutions to slums global publication expected to launch in 2023 at the UN-Habitat General Assembly.

The UN-Habitat commits to continue supporting the coordination of the Global publication as a knowledge product and advocate around it. The content will also be integrated into the New urban agenda platform and a joint monitoring and reporting framework developed. UN-Habitat will also follow on the exchanges towards having joint programming at country level, translate the action plan to actions on the ground.

The session ended with the allocution of *Sindisiwe Ngxongo, Acting Director-General, Department of Human Settlements, Government of the Republic of South Africa*. She reflected on the journey which started 6 years ago where stakeholders met to provide inputs to the New Urban Agenda and now meeting to determine how to scale up implementation in slums and informal settlements. The conference demonstrated that there is a wealth of ideas and experience from attendees and across the globe. For her, the inputs and deliberations have so far shown the great importance of the collaboration and partnership but also the need to continue the conversation.

With the GAP there is now a tool for action and advocacy going forward to adoption and endorsement of the framework during the UN-Habitat assembly in June 2023. There is need to mobilize networks and spread the word for more countries and partners to join, continuing the discussion between countries, regions, and other platforms (Climate Change Summit). Ms.Ngxongo finished her intervention by stating that a resource mobilization strategy should be included into the formulation of the resolution and that preparation should start immediately to be ready for June next year.

#### **16.45 FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ**

**Hon Francis Asenso-Boakye (MP), Minister for Works and Housing, Government of Ghana**  
 The Minister presented the final communiqué at the recently concluded launch of the Global Action Plan Framework on Informal Settlements and Slums. After the two-day high-level meeting, world leaders have endorsed the “Global Action Plan Initiative for transforming informal settlements and slums”.

He further highlighted this Action Plan as a timely and strategic multiple-partnership initiative with the leaders committing to initiating a global, regional, national, and local transformation.

*“We commit to look at eight years of the Decade of Action to build the foundation for transformation in the future and introduce an initial benchmark that is catalytic to meet the needs of 1 billion slum dwellers today and 3 billion in 2050 if no action is taken”*

#### **Key actions toward scaling slum transformation:**

1. Multi-level participatory governance
2. Data
3. Policies
4. Comprehensive packages
5. Finance
6. Land
7. Community Resilience and Empowerment
8. Socioeconomic empowerment
9. Capacity Enhancement
10. Ensure equitable and empowered participation of the residents
11. Implementation framework

Closing remarks from the Executive Director of UN-Habitat:

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif expressed her thanks for the attendance and full participation of the delegations during the past two days and acknowledging again the support of the government of South Africa. She invited the audience to together show proof that cities are also the powerhouses to drive transformative changes, policies, and strategies. She heard from audience members the need of both vertical and horizontal integration, localized targets, and integrated development framework to translate policies to actions. Communities should be integrated, women to be empowered and economic opportunities created for the youth and women. National and local governments need more budget allocations and funding partners should increase their contribution in the hope to leverage private investors. This is core to partnership for the transformation of slums.

Closing remarks from the Minister of Human settlements, Government of South Africa:

Hon. Mmamoloko Kubayi stressed the need to act more and talk less, in order to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe and sustainable. We should all work together to scale up the work and make programmes more impactful facing the rise of urbanization. She also reminded the importance of urban safety and crimes mostly affecting women and children, and highlighted the need to strengthen institutions in terms of capacities and efficiency. Thanking the audience and the ED of UN-Habitat for their presence and participation, she finished her speech by quoting Nelson Mandela: “like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural, it is manmade, and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. And overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity, it is an act of justice!”. She closed the day by stating that “elimination of slums and informal settlements and placing people in decent homes is not an act of charity but an act of justice!”

The closing came with departing gifts to all participants, panelists and delegations.



*Closing session*

#### [Link to Recordings:](#)

**[Launch of the Global Action Plan for Slums and Informal Settlements](#)**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTQZbEc6Bv5\\_ItFpl5rU8BS48IR3WQ5rw](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTQZbEc6Bv5_ItFpl5rU8BS48IR3WQ5rw)