CONCEPT NOTE

SDG Local Solutions

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TOPIC

The United Nations estimates that 70% of the world's population will live in urban areas by 2050, with the significant majority of urban growth occurring in Asia and Africa. This means an immense potential to plan new city neighborhoods in a more inclusive way. Urbanization brings benefits, such as increased economic opportunities and increased access to public services, but also brings challenges in the absence of careful urban planning.

Inclusive neighborhood development is a methodology that local governments can use to foster social cohesion and understanding among populations of different ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. At its core, inclusive neighborhood development is a deliberate commitment to planning and building cities that benefit all residents. It includes access to safe, affordable, and quality housing and public amenities like healthcare, transportation, recreation, and government services. It also means including sustainable development and inclusivity in infrastructure and public spaces.

As cities continue to expand, inclusive neighborhood development offers a blueprint for building just, resilient, and prosperous communities. For example, in Medellín, Colombia, the city invested in cable cars and escalators to connect informal settlements to the city center. Local residents also engage in participatory budgeting and planning, which increases access to local government and reduces inequalities. Meanwhile, in Ahmedabad, India, the city launched the Slum Networking Project, a collaborative project involving multi-stakeholder partnerships to revitalize slums, provide basic services, and legalize land for informal residents.

Successful implementation of inclusive neighborhood development requires coordinated action across sectors, inclusive governance frameworks, and long-term urban planning strategies. It demands strong institutional commitment, equitable policy, and active community engagement, particularly from marginalized populations. For local governments, the ability to create inclusive, equitable, and resilient neighborhoods is essential for achieving broader goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and fostering social cohesion.

This webinar will present two city examples, showcasing how local governments can foster inclusive neighborhood development through concrete and targeted urban solutions.

CASE STUDIES

Chicago, United States

Through its **Office of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights,** Chicago has created one of the most inclusive urban environments in the United States. The city supports affordable housing programs, access to municipal IDs regardless of immigration status, and inclusive zoning laws.

Montevideo, Uruguay

The **Montevideo Habitat Program** is a participatory urban regeneration initiative that improves living conditions in vulnerable areas through infrastructure upgrades, cooperative housing, and community-led construction. By reclaiming abandoned properties and supporting over 30 neighborhoods, it promotes inclusive development, reduces inequalities, and fosters dignified living environments.

SPEAKERS

Roberto Requejo

Roberto Requejo is an urban planner specializing in equitable neighborhood development, systems change, and cross-sector coalitions. He is a Senior Fellow at the Center for Community Investment and an independent consultant on equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD). From 2017 to 2024, he led Elevated Chicago, expanding the city's ETOD pipeline and advancing landmark policies. He also serves on the Chicago Transit Board, overseeing a system that moves nearly one million riders daily.

Lucia Soca

Lucia Soca is a strategic policy advisor in housing, urban, and habitat affairs for the government of Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay. In this role, she specializes in implementing urban policies with a strong emphasis on citizen engagement, and her work intersects with social movements and organizations, focusing on their relationship with government policies to foster sustainable habitat transformations through community organizing.

MODERATOR

Adela Pozder-Cengic

Adela Pozder-Cengic is a development professional with over 19 years of experience at UNDP, specializing in policy analysis, program management, and governance. She has led complex development interventions, built high-performing teams, and forged partnerships with the EU, bilateral donors, and multiple stakeholders to advance sustainable outcomes. Currently serving as Policy Specialist at the UNDP Crisis Bureau, she provides policy advice to public officials, designs research initiatives, and promotes innovative approaches to governance and development.

WHAT QUESTIONS DO WE WANT TO ADDRESS IN THIS WEBINAR?

- How can inclusive neighborhood development reduce social isolation and urban inequality?
- What public policies and planning tools are most effective for inclusive neighborhood development?
- How can local governments measure the success of inclusive neighborhood initiatives?
- What role can the private sector, civil society, and international organizations play in supporting inclusive neighborhood development locally?

AGENDA

5 min	Presentation of the initiative: "Local solutions for local SDG action", translation, recording, use of chat, etc. Introduction of the moderator by Diana Lopez Caramazana, Advisor, cities and local governments, UNDP.
10 min	Moderator's introduction to the session.
15 min	First experience, followed by a question from second experience
15 min	Second experience, followed by a question from first experience
12 min	Questions and answers from the audience
3 min	Closing and conclusions by the moderator

Organized by UNDP in the framework of its work with cities and local governments, this series of webinars generate a conversation between cities to highlight local solutions to implement Agenda 2030. The lessons learnt will be shared globally through UNDP's SDG Local Action networks, webpage https://sdglocalaction.org/ and YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/@sdglocalaction8192