

URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES

Newsletter | March 2021 3



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(EDITORIAL AND PRESENTATION)

1. THE COVID-19 CRISIS AND THE SUBJECTS OF AN URBAN-RURAL POLITICS

Since the last issue of this Newsletter in early 2020, life has radically changed for us all. The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed old cracks in new mirrors.

The inequalities between urban and rural areas, like other social and spatial inequalities at different scales, have been exacerbated and many territories' vulnerabilities are clearly exposed and demand a response.

This crisis has also shown the importance of integrated territorial approaches to address inequalities and confirmed the heightened role of territorial systems and urban-rural linkages in the planet's sustainability and resilience.

Many people have relied on urban-rural linkages, given the critical situation in cities. These linkages were the last resort for the most vulnerable in the face of the closure of public spaces and the shutdown of entire economic sectors for months.

Urban-rural linkages provided mutual aid and solidarity in the face of the loss of incomes, social protection systems and exacerbated food insecurity in many urban areas.

This situation clearly showed the need to present and represent the voices, perspectives and discourses of those who, by their practices, create urban-rural linkages and to whom these linkages matter the most in the public policymaking process.

These actors were small producers and entrepreneurs in rural areas that expanded sales of their products directly in urban areas, informal urban workers who had to return to their homes in the countryside, and many more, including civil society organizations and

local and municipal authorities which relied on their territories to meet the challenges created by the pandemic.

The recognition of this agency, and hence the practices, constitutes one of the first steps in a truly people-oriented approach and policy. The role of territorial systems, their actors and linkages in a global crisis also reinforces the need for political and ethical mandates for government policymakers, international organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector, among others, to strengthen these linkages as a means of social protection, food security and, in general terms, increased resilience for all.



Figure 1. Migrant laborers outside the railway station waiting to leave the city due to covid-19 pandemic in Jaipur, India, May 2020. © Mukesh Kumar Jwala



WEBINARS
ORGANIZED
BETWEEN MAY
& DECEMBER
2020

As the Covid-19 outbreak became a global pandemic, little was known about the capacity of health, food and governance systems at territorial levels in many cities and regions. Mainstream media, discourse at national levels in many countries and on the international scene rarely covered the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on territorial systems. One way to obtain information about urban-rural linkages and territorial systems was to create virtual spaces for information sharing on what was unfolding on the ground. In May of 2020, UN-Habitat started a webinar series to put the focus on **Covid-19 and Urban-Rural**

Linkages. The first article in this newsletter provides an overview of this process by sharing some **insights from 9 global webinars** organized between May and December 2020. Many other international organizations and partners generated important (virtual) spaces during this crisis to continue discussions on territorial approaches to response to the pandemic, generating important insights to inform the recovery efforts in different geographies, scales and contexts. We provide an overview of these events in 2020, organized by our partners, in our section **Urban-Rural Linkages Spotlight**.

This issue also contains two **short articles on urban-rural linkages**. The first article focuses on Thuringia in Germany, where an **experimental framework for new approaches in urban-rural planning and governance** is currently being implemented as part of the **IBA Thuringia (2013-2023)**. The second short piece reports on the **key role of intermediary cities** as part of the development of a national strategy for these settlements in Morocco.

This report also spotlights the role of small and intermediary cities in recovering from the present crisis and generating resilience to future distresses.

A set of recommendations is outlined. This third issue closes with a look ahead at the role that UN-Habitat work on urban-rural linkages will play in the implementation of global agendas in 2021.

A special thanks to all the contributors to this edition: Firdaous Oussidhoum, Antonia Sabartes and Rodrigo Messias (UCLG), Richard McCarthy (Slow Food International), Hannes Langguth (TU Berlin - Urban-Rural Assembly) and Martina Doehler-Behzadi (IBA Thüringen).

I. COVID-19 AND URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES: INSIGHTS FROM NINE GLOBAL WEBINARS

URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES IN THE TIME OF COVID-19
URL WEBINAR SERIES

URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES IN THE TIME OF COVID-19
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2020 | 15:00 EAT

METROPOLITAN PERSPECTIVES
THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2020 | 16:00 EAT (UTC+03:00)

INTERMEDIATE CITIES AND SMALL TOWNS
THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2020 | 16:00 EAT (UTC+03:00)

IMPACT ON THE URBAN POOR AND SLUM RESIDENTS IN ASIA AND AFRICA
THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020 | 16:00 EAT (UTC+03:00)

NEIGHBOURHOOD GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY RESPONSES
THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2020 | 16:00 EAT (UTC+03:00)

Webinar jointly organized with:
SHLC
Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods

UN-HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

INFO: <http://urbanpolicyplatform.org/un-habitat-ply-covid-19-response-activities/>

POLICY, LEGISLATION AND GOVERNANCE WEBINAR SERIES

TOWARDS THE NEW NORMAL:
learning from the crisis to improve territorial governance

MONDAY, JUNE 29, 2020
17:30 EAT (16:30 CEST)

REGISTER HERE

SPEAKERS

EMILIA SAIZ, Secretary General of UCLG

DAVID NABARRO, Imperial College (ICL) IPRHD COVID-19 Special Envoy I-ESD Leadership Mentoring Geneva CH

EMANI KUMAR, Deputy Secretary General, ICLG | Executive Director, ICLG South Asia

Mohamed Sefani, Mayor of Tafilalet (Morocco) and President of the Forum of Intermediary Cities of UCLG

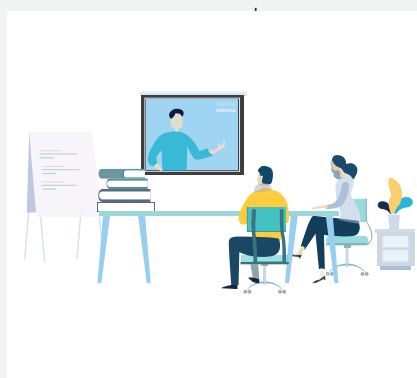
UN-HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

UCLG Local and Urban Government

Registration: [Click here to register](#)

In the years preceding the global outbreak of Covid-19, UN-Habitat convened a series of events and processes to understand more concretely how to strengthen urban-rural linkages (URLs). Expert meetings leading up to and following Habitat III and the launch of the New Urban Agenda galvanized a multi-actor global attention to urban-rural linkages.

The launch of the Urban Rural Linkages Guiding Principles (URL-GP) and Framework for Action at the UN-Habitat Assembly in was accompanied by efforts at subnational levels to bring greater URLs and the experiences at local levels.



The pandemic that spread from cities to rural areas and from region to region brought the importance of urban-rural linkages to a new level of attention. As confinement to homes and curtailing of conferences, workshops and travel became a global reality, many communities and organizations turned to on-line platforms to share experiences and lessons from the pandemic. UN-Habitat's Policy, Legislation and Governance Section Urban Rural Linkages began a series in May of 2020 to examine urban-rural the context of Covid-19.

May and December, nine global the impacts and lessons of Covid-19 were co-organized with partners and UN-Habitat.

The first series - URL in the time of Covid-19 - included five sessions:

- 1 • Urban-rural linkages in the time of Covid-19, with regional perspectives from cities in Asia, Latin America and North America.
- 2 • Metropolitan perspectives from Mexico, France and the network metropolis;
- 3 • Intermediate cities and small towns, with perspectives from the Netherlands, the International Labour Organization (ILO), United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- 4 • Impacts on the urban poor and slum dwellers in Asia and Africa with perspectives from India, South Africa, Slum Dwellers International and UN-Habitat's Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (co-organized with the Centre for Sustainable, Healthy and Learning Cities and Neighbourhoods - SHLC);
- 5 • Neighbourhood governance and community responses from the Philippines, Tanzania, Bolivia and Canada (co-organized with SHLC).



**COVID-19
RESPONSE**



Drawing on lessons shared in these webinars, a first policy brief was published in July that identified key principles from URL-GP that are reinforced by the experiences of Covid-19 in cities and subnational territories. These principles include locally grounded interventions, integrated governance, do no harm and provide social protection, and are data driven and evidence based that were key to effective responses from local and national governments. The full brief can be retrieved from <http://urbanpolicyplatform.org/un-habitat-plg-covid-19-response-activities/>

Starting in July, a new set of webinars were organized under the title Strengthening Communities for the Future We Want: Urban-Rural Linkages Policy, Legislation and Governance Webinar Series:

- 6 • "Towards the new normal: learning from the crisis to improve territorial governance". Speakers included the United Nations Secretariat's Special Envoy for Covid-19, representatives of UCLG, UN-Habitat, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and a mayor from Morocco. (co-organized with UCLG)
- 7 • "Human mobility across the urban-rural continuum in the time of Covid-19" with speakers from Colombia, India, Djibouti, the World Health Organization and United Nations Nutrition.
- 8 • "Market cities: how public markets can pump life into regional food economies and forge social cohesion?" With speakers from Vietnam, Tanzania, Philippines, UN-Habitat, Project for Public Spaces, Healthbridge International. Co-organized with Market Cities Initiative and co-hosted by Slow Food International.
- 9 • "Why urban-rural linkages? Managing the impacts of cities on ecosystems, land and climate across the urban-rural continuum" was co-organized with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and included speakers from the Economic Commission of Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) and the City of Madrid, among others.

The nine webinars were attended by thousands of participants from a wide range of organizations and levels of governance. They provided a rich source of information in real time as the Covid-19 pandemic continued to surge around the world. The many lessons will be drawn together in a report to be issued in early 2021 with an accompanying policy brief to build on the most important lessons. Among these are that:

- Social protection systems linking cities and territories for essential services of food, water, health, education and housing must be strengthened as vital safety nets.
- Informal economic and solidarity safety nets are a vital part of the mutual interdependency of urban and rural areas and must be recognized and supported.

- Inequalities within and between urban and rural areas are a major vulnerability for health, safety and resilience and must be part of all Covid-19 recovery agendas.
- Ecosystems services from rural to urban areas (food, fibre, water and animal products) are at the heart of circular urban-rural economies and require improved and integrated urban-rural governance.
- In different ways, depending on the scale and context of cities and territories impacted by Covid-19, the flows of essential goods and services (food, water, shelter, funds, etc.) proved more resilient at the territorial scale than at longer distance national and global scales.
- Integrated territorial development that links sectoral priorities of health, environment, food systems, biodiversity, economy and social cohesion across urban and rural communities is a core precept for future crisis mitigation.



Speaker's presentations and webinar recordings

Speaker's presentations and webinar recordings can be found here: <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/policy-legislation-and-governance-webinar-series/>



II. SHORT ARTICLES ON URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES

• **StadtLand: IBA Thuringia as an experimental framework for new approaches in urban-rural planning and governance**

Dr. Martina Doehler-Behzadi, Managing Director, International Building Exhibition (IBA) Thüringen

Rural areas in Germany are under great pressure to adapt in a sustainable manner, against the background of demographic change processes related to the increasing field of tension between population decline

and immigration, climate change and the transformation of energy systems, technical innovations and socio-cultural change processes. Thus, conventional knowledge sets and planning concepts, including related

governance and funding instruments, are inadequate to the challenge. To address this, the International Building Exhibition IBA Thuringia (2013-2023) aims to develop new practice-oriented planning and governance tools that promote integrated urban-rural development in the Free State of Thuringia, central Germany.

International building exhibitions have been an important instrument across German-speaking countries in Western Europe for over a 100 years. Partly financed by the federal government and the federal states or cities themselves, IBAs act in the field of architecture, urban planning, landscape design and regional development. Following of from this tradition, the IBA Thuringia is pursuing the approach of a long-term, real-life laboratory in order to actively shape model projects, including new development approaches and forms of organization, that enhance socio-ecologically sustainable transformation processes across urban-rural territories.



5 *Figure 2. StadtLand Thuringia is a differentiated and historically rich cultural landscape with numerous smaller villages and settlements. The historical landscape is characterized by agricultural production, whereas, at present, the production of renewable energies is part of the landscape.*

With its primary theme of "**StadtLand**", the IBA refers to the spatial structures that impact everyday life across Thuringia. Contrary to the ordinary understanding of rural areas, Thuringia's rural patterns, which are 90 per cent of its total area, are mainly characterized in a tight network of polycentric, small-scale settlement structures with 2.15 million inhabitants living in 664 independent municipalities. By 2035, the population of Thuringia is expected to fall to 1.88 million and it is already obvious that such a decline will not be evenly distributed. Instead, larger cities especially are expected to benefit from migration, whereas more remote areas,

including small towns and villages, will disproportionately lose populations. As a result, on the one hand there is increasing pressure for growth, for example in the housing markets in urban centres, and on the other hand the negative consequences of emigration and depopulation are becoming more and more apparent socially, economically and spatially. These are the concerns that IBA Thuringia has addressed in recent years in order to open up a long-term experimental framework for actively engaging with new practice-oriented approaches to integrated urban-rural development.



Figure 3. Schlafstall - The new timber building in Bedheim, a small village in southern Thuringia, by Studio Gründer Kiefel, shows contemporary methods and approaches for participatory and site-specific timber constructions based on ecological standards.



More information

www.iba-thueringen.de

The IBA understands its working methods as a necessary reaction to current socio-spatial polarization and ecological challenges across Thuringia. Generally committing to the common good, through a 10-year process, the IBA experimentally developed a wide set of tools and projects that explore and further develop the manifold relationships between urban and rural areas. In this way, the IBA seeks to address local actors from administration, business and civil society as well as political stakeholders in equal measure in order to motivate, accompany and network with various stakeholders, support cooperative processes and promote excellent design approaches that address the public awareness.

After all, in the context of global urbanization processes, integrated and sustainable urban-rural development has become a complex task for society as a whole, in Germany and beyond. In this respect, the IBA Thuringia looks forward to expanding its international network through mutual exchange experiences and to sharing findings with other global regions. At the end of the IBA in 2023, an exhibition format will showcase and present projects and results to the public, as well as pass on recommendations to Thuringian state politics, experts and local project partners.

More information under: www.iba-thueringen.de



Figure 4. International summer school together with the Bauhaus Universität Weimar – the IBA Thuringia seeks regular international exchange based on practice-oriented formats or scientific debates.

- **The Key Role of Intermediate Cities in Morocco - A Multilateral Agreement for Multilevel Governance and Complementarity Between National and Local Levels.**



Firdaous Oussidhoum, Special adviser to the Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

In July 2018, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Moroccan Ministry of National Territory Development, Urban Planning, Habitat and City Policy, the Moroccan Ministry of Interior, UCLG, UCLG Africa and the UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States. The MOU is for the development of a National Strategy of Intermediary Cities, to enhance through localization the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.

This institutional architecture of the MOU ensures that that national and local levels sit together and base policy design on “on-the-ground” realities. After a first workshop, cross-consultations were structured with three key axes for this project’s development: climate, improving the livelihood systems, labour conditions, and solidarity.

Covid-19 And Change of Model of Development Through the Intermediary Cities for The Recovery:

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic and related crises, priorities were adjusted around a consensus between the signatories that the importance of intermediary cities has increased in view of the post-Covid-19 recovery.

Intermediary cities and rural areas are the strategic territory in which to address urban-rural linkages, tourism, food systems, biodiversity protection, and others, and they are key to recovering from the present crisis and generating resilience to mitigate future crises. Within this concept, the second stage of the project was developed to support efforts by Morocco to develop a new model of development adjusted for the “build back better”.

Main Recommendations for a Systemic Transformation:

One estimate is that in Africa, two out of three people are expected to move into intermediary cities over the next decades. This is a key figure that shows at what point investing in a system of intermediary cities as the future of urbanization is critical for a resilient future. Many recommendations were addressed to accompany these reflections in a report by the Royal Commission for a New Model of Development:

- Intermediary cities must be addressed as a channel for a territorial justice regarding climate and food systems based on the linkages between rural and urban areas, addressing inequalities and with an integrated vision of solidarity.

- The capture value of intermediary cities makes them attractive in terms of health, climate and wellbeing, allowing a dedensification and different management of the metropolis.
- These cities can be a laboratory for innovative policies of proximity and nature-urban integration and planning, where the 15 minutes city is already a norm.
- Thinking more adequately economic and local production and consumption criteria, based on the sustainable mobilization of local resources.
- The intermediary cities are the future critical markets, not only because of proximity, provision and valorization of local rural products, but also for the larger markets due to their critical mass.

Today, the critical question is how to address the current economic and social crisis without putting at risk the resilience for future generations. Decision makers are confronted with capitalizing the investments made up until now and responding to the daily emergency that continues.

An alternative solution is possible that will allow both to be responded to, if the solution addresses the awakening of intermediary cities as second engines for generating resilient prosperity based on local systems of livelihood and their sustainable growth with smart planning.



III. URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES SPOTLIGHT

- **Territorial and Landscape Days - Expert Workshop**

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and BMZ (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development), with support from GIZ, organized the Territorial and Landscape Days (7-9 July, 2020) as an online expert dialogue on spatial approaches to sustainable development. Here, practitioners and policy makers from the European Union, international organizations (OECD, UN-Habitat, FAO, France's Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)), international research institutes and universities (Centro Latino Americano para el Desarrollo Rural (RIMISP), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Wageningen University), and national development agencies and ministries

(GIZ, BMZ and French Development Agency) shared their experiences in implementing spatial approaches and discussed ways to further strengthen their contribution to rural development.

On this occasion, the results of a BMZ-funded and GIZ-commissioned stocktaking on territorial approaches by the Territorial Perspectives for Development (TP4D) partner group were presented and discussed. Workshop participants were also engaged in an expert consultation process to deepen the integration of territorial and landscape approaches. The main outcomes of the online event are summarized in documents which can be accessed [here](#).



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

BMZ



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



Figure 5. Flyer of the event

• **First International Conference of the Urban-Rural Assembly (URA)**

Hannes Langguth, Researcher at Habitat Unit, Technische Universität Berlin

THEME

“Integrated Urban-Rural Planning and Governance: A Global Perspective”

SEPTEMBER 23-24, 2020

Under the theme “Integrated Urban-Rural Planning and Governance: A Global Perspective”, the first international conference in the framework of the newly BMBF-funded research and development project “Urban-Rural Assembly (URA)” was held between **September 23-24, 2020** as a hybrid event online under the project’s website (www.urbanruralassembly.com) and with physical

satellite venues in Berlin and Apolda, Germany. Organized by the German consortium partners of the Sino-German URA project, which is led by the Department of International Urbanism and Design (Habitat Unit) at TU Berlin, the conference fostered a multi-disciplinary and global perspective on current development challenges and opportunities for integrated urban-rural planning and governance.



Figure 6. Panelist during the first day of the conference in Berlin

Dysfunctional urban-rural linkages are increasingly recognized as being one of the major obstacles in the path towards a territorial and sustainable urbanization model; to improve these linkages, the acknowledgment of the trans-local and multi-dimensional conditions of urban-rural linkages as well as the metabolic relationships of natural resource flows, ecosystem-based infrastructure and

multi-directional mobility need to be addressed efficiently. New analytical models, integrated planning approaches and policy frameworks need to be further developed, which can assist in reading, revealing and steering inherent urban-rural potential and challenges, including relevant actors, institutions and processes that act across administrative and sectoral boundaries.



Figure 7. Attendees to the conference during the second day in Apolda



live-streams recordings



More information

The conference brought together international researchers, practitioners, city and regional representatives, policy makers and global networks such as ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability and UN-Habitat to discuss such challenges and to highlight practice-oriented implementation cases from China, Europe, Africa and Latin America. Followed by approximately 120 participants per session, the two-day conference shed light on current development challenges, new experimental approaches towards integrated urban-rural development, and the possibility of knowledge transfer and transnational learning. The virtual format marked a successful starting point for further exchange on urban-rural linkages

and integrated approaches of territorial development throughout the next four years, which will be based on several workshop and conference formats as well as a closer collaboration between the Sino-German URA consortium and the Urban-Rural Linkages Guiding Principles (URL-GP) programme guided by UN-Habitat.

The recorded live-streams of the public sessions can be found under: <https://urbanruralassembly.com/en/events/16>

More information about the Sino-German URA project please find under: <https://urbanruralassembly.com/en>

• Regions Implementing the Urban Agenda Post-Covid-19: Building A Green Aftermath



Antonia Sabartes, Coordinator Forum of Regions & Rodrigo Messias, Policy Officer - United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

In October 2020, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) organized the online side-event “Regions implementing the Urban Agenda post-Covid-19: building a green aftermath” as part of the European Week of Regions and Cities. The event saw representatives from several regions share their experience with the crisis and drew important lessons for the recovery.

These regions' members and partners of the UCLG Forum of Regions included Basque Country (Spain), Catalonia (Spain), CONGOPE/Imbabura (Ecuador), Santa Fe (Argentina), East Java (Indonesia), Nouakchott (Mauritania), Gauteng (South Africa), and Guelmim-Oued Noun (Morocco). The forum had important lessons that can be incorporated into four points:

- **A territorial vision for global agendas:** regions and regional governments are strategically positioned to lead the territorial dimension of the New Urban Agenda and other global agendas and commitments, particularly as the international system engages a review of the agenda five years after Habitat III in Quito. As agents of change, regions can support and collaborate with cities and other spheres of government to drive joint and transformative action. Territories are the axis of development. It is only through a unique understanding of the specific dynamics on the ground that regions can pursue equality for all.
- Representatives of the regions in the meeting highlighted the concept of “**advanced territories**”, which is based on three main pillars. (i) Territorial cohesion: regions can provide a broader picture of the linkages between cities and territories in order to address existing gaps and secure opportunities for all; (ii) Competitiveness: cities and territories need to be equipped with the necessary tools to attain resilience and sustainable development, for example when considering GHG emissions, integrated efforts should consider spanning the totality of territories; and (iii) Physical and digital connectivity: infrastructure and mobility throughout the territory received additional attention, particularly during the pandemic crisis. Digital transformation to adapt to new situations requires equal and sustainable digital access, including in remote areas.



- **Urban-rural linkages:** The pandemic was and is an opportunity for regional governments to show leadership in supporting and collaborating with local governments, and particularly to support and drive a transformation that addresses the linkages with the rural world, especially towards recovery, building resilience and strengthening local economies, among others. Food systems, ecological tourism, water management and reforestation were highlighted as key topics for regions to consider from an urban-rural perspective. This requires the coordination and collaboration of actors working across the urban-rural continuum, beyond city administrative boundaries.
- Multi-level governance and **territories of "care"** for a green and resilient future. In both national and subnational systems, governance, regulatory and fiscal mechanisms may require review and enhancement in order to break the recurrent dichotomy between city and territory and to allow for greater coordination and collaboration. Regions can serve as the bridge between national priorities and the local level. A territorial perspective on the care of people and the environment, driving a shared agenda for the wellbeing of people and the protection of the environment.



Moving forward, UCLG will continue the collaboration with UN-Habitat and partners on the key contribution of local and regional governments in addressing urban-rural linkages in multiple contexts and linked to global agendas, for example regarding food systems, biodiversity or climate change, and against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic.

More information on this event <https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/regions-building-advanced-territories-implementing-global-agendas-towards-green-future>



• Market Cities: A New Paradigm Promises More than Just Cities of Markets

Richard McCarthy, Slow Food International

Often disparaged as archaic, ungovernable, if not unsightly, the ancient mechanism of public markets is entertaining a comeback. During the recent webinar co-hosted with Slow Food International, participants were given a glimpse into the agility of and down-to-earth practicality that a team of practitioners are finding in markets around the world.

Names aside, each shares a common structural motif: independent vendors set up shop nestled together in public places, competing for attention from shoppers who transact with them directly. Whereas supermarkets centralize the ownership and the shoppers' experience in one set of check-out lines, in public markets, they are decentralized. It is this element of orchestrated social interaction that has long fascinated those consumed with retail anthropology.

These practitioners operate under many banners: farmers' markets, street markets, food halls, bazaars, kitchen markets, and more.



Why? In short, it builds social cohesion and enables all to learn – about each other, consumer patterns, biodiversity, health traditions and innovations.

MARKET CITIES:

How public markets can pump life into regional food economies and forge social cohesion

Speakers & Discussants:

- Kelly Verel** (Project for Public Spaces)
- Kristie Daniel** (HealthBridge Foundation)
- John Taylor** (FAO Bangladesh)
- Cecilia Andersson** (UN-Habitat)
- Michael Hurwitz** (GrowNYC)
- Ana María Huaita Alfaro** (Consultant in Urban Markets)

This 90-minute webinar session is organized by UN-Habitat and the Market Cities Initiative.



27 October 2020

17:00 East Africa Time (EAT)
15:00 Central European Time (CET)
10:00 Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)



Figure 9. One of the flyers of the event.

Project for Public Spaces



And while this core strength of the public market motivates the convening partners of this new Market Cities Initiative (i.e., HealthBridge Foundation of Canada, Project for Public Spaces, and Slow Food International), the partnership is built on a new idea.

The **ecosystem of markets** within a municipal territory is where investments should be made. Whereas many in the market world have been saddled with the unenviable task of sustaining their individual markets, there are places on the map where market systems are beginning to transform public policy, economic development and social possibilities. This is what the initiative refers to as a market city.

They have identified seven principles (or indicators) that support a market city: 1) to recognize a wide variety of public markets operating as one market system, even if they are not formally one system; 2) diverse partners and stakeholders to take action together; 3) to measure value and understand how markets function; 4) regional distribution networks; 5) to invest in markets regularly; 6) helps diverse types of vendors start and grow businesses; 7) cultivates markets to be inclusive public spaces.

The webinar speakers not only addressed these principles, but importantly linked them to current and urgent Covid-related actions that are largely being led by civil society:

- » Professor Furaha Abwe in Tanzania highlighted the importance of mapping markets;
- » HealthBridge's Tran Thi Kieu Than Ha described how **charrettes** with architecture students triggered municipal (and now national) efforts to save and renovate endangered markets (without homogenizing them);
- » Namata Serumaga-Musisi shared how in Ghana, the Mmofra Foundation built play areas for the women vendors' children (reinforcing that markets are more than places for commerce but also for community);
- » FAO's John Taylor described how agile Dhaka's wet markets have been during the pandemic lockdown (despite undercapitalization and weak governance), resulting in (previously unimaginable) outdoor sales;
- » The Project for Public Space's Kelly Verel shed light on the efforts by North American farmers' markets to be recognized as "essential services" by local governments during the lockdown;
- » Peruvian market expert Ana Maria Huaita Alfaro painted a picture of the precarious place Lima's markets have occupied during Covid-19 — super-spreader or preventative health institution;
- » GrowNYC's Michael Hurwitz reminded us all of how frequent and varied are the disasters that beset markets, as they have for New York City's street markets (from terrorism to hurricanes to pandemics).

The Market Cities Initiative represents both long-standing leaders in the public market field and newcomers motivated by strategic use of these public institutions to link planetary health, wealth and climate creativity beneath the canopy of commerce where the informal meets the formal. In December, the team staged a webinar about mapping your markets, as a Terra Madre Worldwide public forum. More are planned for 2021 together with UN-Habitat.

If you missed the November webinar "How public markets can pump life into your regional economies and forge social cohesion", watch the video recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBL5llj4r4Y>

More information about the Market Cities Initiative: <https://www.pps.org/market-cities>



• **Urban-Rural Partnerships (URP) 2020**

Hosted by Stadt Land Plus and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the URP 2020 scientific conference brought together over 400 participants from academia, international organizations and government authorities, for which UN-Habitat co-organized three sessions out of the 60 parallel sessions. The goal of the conference was to share experiences on ongoing projects, increase learning across territorial levels, and create a platform for the exchange and co-design of ideas related to sustainable and resilient regional development. UN-Habitat shared tools, methodologies and case studies on Urban-Rural Linkages Guiding Principles (URL-GP), which was promoted as one of the global tools that could enhance urban-rural partnerships. During the discussion, URL-GP proved to be the common language of knowledge of urban-rural partnership and territorial approach is critical. Based on this, it supports partners to find common vision, figure out differences in context and raise complementarities.

The key message highlighted was that the international multilateral partnership is key, pulling and linking urban-rural actors and different sectors to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. Partners raised their voices to co-create platforms and mechanisms for mutual learning, to find synergies through common projects and to promote multi-level governance and whole of government approaches to address challenges in urban-rural partnerships.

Co-creation and sharing of knowledge such as global and local agendas, comprehensive and aggregated data, laboratory and experimental research in urban-rural lab, case studies of best practices and tools for implementations were discussed to inform integrated territorial development plans, policies and land use. The conference was also a prime event for UN-Habitat to soft launch its upcoming publication titled "From Smart Cities to Smart Villages, Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages through Smart Approaches".

• **Urban-Rural Linkages and Biodiversity**

Urban activities have direct and indirect consequences for the natural environment in the short, medium and long term, and their scale of influence typically extends far beyond the boundaries of what is typically considered to constitute "the city". Managing these "extended" impacts and linkages is vital to conserve resources and natural assets that sustain life.

For this, governance mechanisms are required to manage the teleconnections and linkages between cities and nearby and distant ecosystems, including rural areas, hinterlands and/or natural spaces.

Currently, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and UN-Habitat are collaborating to develop a joint publication to mainstream biodiversity concerns in urban-rural linkages, but also to highlight the importance and transformative power of governing urban-rural linkages for biodiversity and increased resilience in the face of threats such as climate change and desertification.


400
 participants
 government authorities
 academia
 international organizations

UN-HABITAT
 organised

3
 sessions



out of the **60** parallel sessions



Organized by



Figure 10. Cities and rural areas are inextricably bounded. Urban consumption and practices are undoubtedly shaping the landscape outside the urban, driving biodiversity loss in many cases.



“Why should we care about urban-rural linkages? Managing the impacts of cities on ecosystems, land and climate change”

DECEMBER 1, 2020

As part of this joint effort, the webinar “Why should we care about urban-rural linkages? Managing the impacts of cities on ecosystems, land and climate change” was held on December 1, 2020. The aim of the webinar was to add to the discussion about urban-rural linkages and biodiversity by bringing the perspectives of different economic sectors, actors and disciplines. During the webinar, Andrew Rudd (UN-Habitat) highlighted the role of peri-urban areas and their management as being important to reduce impacts on biodiversity. The concept of fragment landscapes, namely spaces outside of a decision-making boundary, was also presented to illustrate how rural areas are not often aligned with the decisions adopted for cities.

The discussion went further, introducing the challenges and cross-cutting solutions in urban-rural linkages in the food systems of Latin America. Paul Wander (CEPAL) underlined the connection between urban consumers, agriculture and natural resources such as water and soil. He also put the focus on the role of factors in agricultural productivity, such as pesticides, and the impacts on biodiversity.

Kate Newman (World Wildlife Fund) presented the challenges and importance of biodiversity and ecosystems for infrastructure development from a regional perspective, i.e. urban-rural perspective. She also highlighted the fact that the traditional approaches to infrastructure development between cities does not allow nature to persist and undermines many of the ecosystem services.

Ms. Newman also pointed out the little guidance on infrastructure development outside of urban areas. The Arco Verde project of the Community of Madrid was also introduced by Ángel Sánchez (Community of Madrid). The project is an example of water management, an urban-rural linkage, at the regional level, seeking to protect the main natural assets and resources of Madrid.

The webinar was closed by Joji Carino (Forest Peoples Programme) introducing the role and practices of Indigenous People in the Philippines in keeping their linkages in urban areas with the “rural”, as well as the impacts of urban consumer demand on biodiversity outside urban areas.



If you missed this webinar, you can find the presentation and video recording here: <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/policy-legislation-and-governance-webinar-series/#s2-session-2>



10 Guiding Principles seek to guide the actions of stakeholders to start managing the multiple linkages and impacts that urban activities have on nearby and distant territories.

Figure 11. Ten Guiding Principles seeks to guide the actions of different actors in managing the multiple linkages and impacts that urban activities have on nearby and distant territories.



IV. 2021 OUTLOOK- URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES AND ACHIEVING GLOBAL AGENDAS

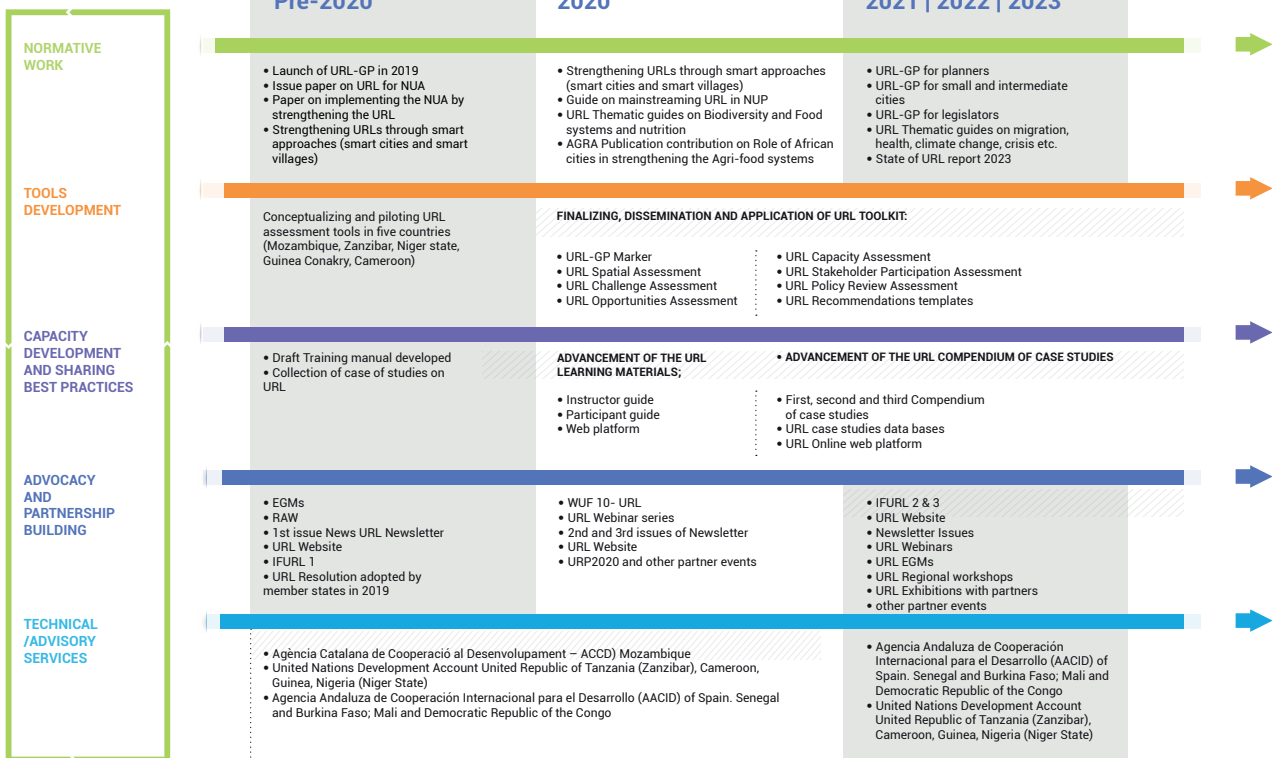
In so many virtual conferences, events and zoom meetings in 2020, the year of Covid-19, the importance of integrating policy and planning across urban and rural areas has been heard over and over again. From webinars on building back from the terrible economic and social impacts of Covid-19, to the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity, and debates about territorial approaches to sustainable development (OECD, GIZ), improved urban-rural linkages are key.

The year 2021 will see four important, interlinked global events. All three Rio Conventions, the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), the UN Convention on Combating Desertification (UNCCD), and the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) will have meetings of the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) in 2021. The first UN Summit on Food Systems (UNFSS) will take place in 2021 and the core issues in all four events are closely interlinked in spatial and functional ways.

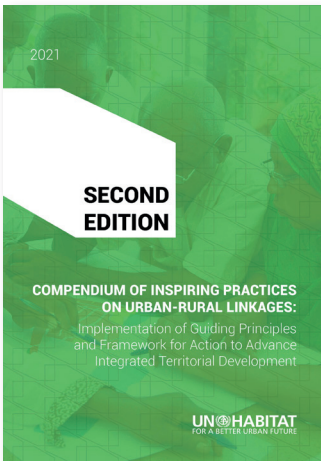
Urban-rural linkages have risen to the fore partly because this framework helps to make operational complex interlinkages of food, biodiversity, climate and ecosystems in both functional and spatial ways. In 2019, the launch of Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles (URL-GP) and Framework for Action to Advance Integrated Territorial Development, convened by UN-Habitat with more than 130 stakeholders, came “just in time” to provide a way to ground the complex interlinkages in specific locations and contexts.

The arrival of the URL-GP also came just in time to help understand the complexity of both the impacts and design interventions for recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic will continue to be with the world in 2021 and it will not be the last one. The lessons from this pandemic about better integrated and more equitable governance at all levels, for new approaches to provide social protection to urban areas while creating rural resilience through ecological restoration and food system transformation, will require an integrated approach to sustainable urban-rural development.

UN-HABITAT'S URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES PROGRAMME



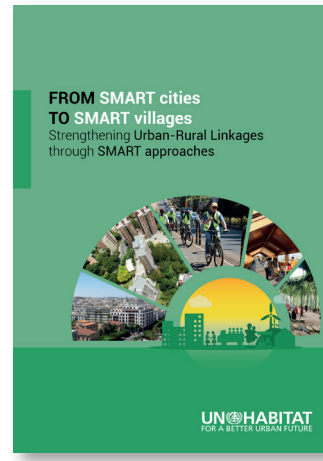
V. PUBLICATIONS ON URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES



Compendium of inspiring practices on Urban-Rural Linkages - Second Edition



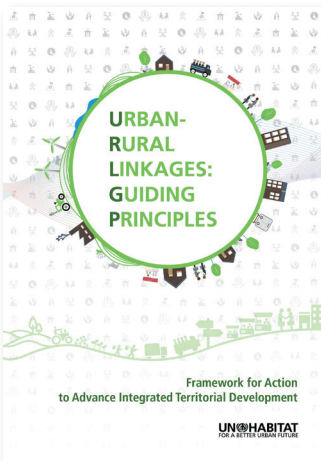
Territorial Approaches for Sustainable Development: Stocktaking on Territorial Approaches - Experiences and Lessons



Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages through smart approaches



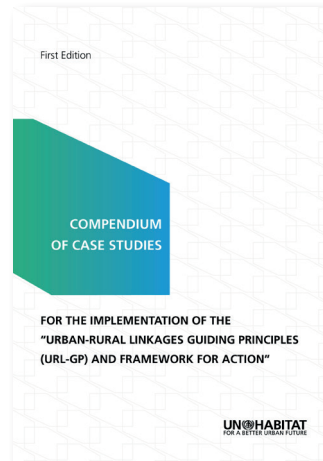
Issue brief: COVID-19 in the lens of Urban-Rural Linkages



URL-GP (English version)



Implementing the new Urban Agenda by Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages



URL Compendium of case studies



Regional Development Dialogue



Read More

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