Progress report on the implementation of GC25/1 and GC25/4 Resolution

Urban-Rural Linkages
Selected Key facts:

• Significant contribution to global discourse on SDGs (SDG 11.a) and general “change of mindset” towards a “continuum of space”;
• Contribution to global discourse for formulation the New Urban Agenda by integrating Urban-Rural Linkages as a mayor aspect for Implementation;
• Leading the discussion on the Issue Paper #10 on Urban-Rural linkages’ and the special session on this issue;
• Organization of two EGMs and several working sessions for developing tools and promoting a network for Urban-Rural Linkages aspects.

UN-Habitat and Urban-Rural Linkages

The Goals of the SDGs won’t be met without rural areas. The urban-rural development gap urgently needs to be bridged in order to make sure “No space and no-one is be left behind”. Urban-rural linkages play an important role for the flows of goods, people, information and financial resources between urban and rural areas.

UN-Habitat was mandated to work on the field of Urban-Rural Linkages on several occasions such as the SDG 11, Target 11.a, the Governing Council resolution 25 as well as, most recently, the New Urban Agenda.

For UN-Habitat, 10 entry points for urban-rural linkages have been identified:
- Spatial flow of products, services and information between urban and rural areas;
- Reducing environmental impact in urban-rural convergences;
- Urban-rural continuum in the face of disaster;
- Mobility and migration between urban and rural areas;
- Rural urbanization: the development of small and intermediate cities;
- Territorial and spatial planning for balanced urban and rural development;
- Food security systems and a “sustainable chain” for all;
- Inclusive investment and finance in both urban and rural areas;
- Enhancing legislation and governance and capacity for urban-rural partnerships;
- A global partnership on promoting urban-rural linkages.

Governing Council Resolution 25/1 and 25/4

UN-Habitat’s actions as responses

1. In resolution 25/1.2, the Governing Council requested the Executive Director of UN-Habitat to continue to support member States in the development and implementation of their urban policies to manage the continuum of human settlements.
   In response to this request, UN-Habitat has integrated diverse recommendations for strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in tools and when providing advisory services to support countries in their process of developing their (national) urban policies. For instance, during the advisory services in Cameroon, strengthening urban-rural linkages was one of the main aspects to consider when developing the NUP. Sustainable urban policies should include transport, warehousing, wholesale and retail aspects for food production and consumption that strengthen the capacity of small towns and ultimately enhance food security.
   In 2016, UN-Habitat has submitted two proposals to strengthen the capacities of policymakers to formulate and implement evidence based frameworks that strengthened Urban-Rural Linkages in African countries.

2. The Governing Council also requested the Executive Director to develop tools and disseminate good practices to promote urban-rural linkages (no 11 of resolution 25/1). UN-Habitat has started collecting international good practices on strategies that promote urban-rural linkages. Those case studies will serve as basis for the development of specific tools and contribute to peer-to-peer learning. The good practices shall be published from the beginning of 2017 onwards and should lead to a compendium of good practices for Urban-Rural Linkages.
3. As the Governing Council requested to work closely with other intergovernmental organizations and stakeholders to strengthen urban-rural linkages (no 12 of 25/1), UN-Habitat organized an Expert Group Meeting on the topic. The EGM took place from 27 to 28 October 2015 in Monteria, Colombia and brought together over 20 international and national participants from both developing and developed countries, with expertise in a variety of fields, representing academia, International Development and Inter-governmental Organizations, Development Finance Institutions, government and local authorities, the private sector and NGOs. As outcome, the Expert Group published the communique “The role of intermediate cities in strengthening urban-rural linkages towards the New Urban Agenda”, proposing concrete follow-up actions.

4. In point 13 of the resolution 25/1, the Governing Council requested the Executive Director to support member States to enhance the capacity of national, subnational and local authorities to plan and manage sustainable urbanization in order to address existing and emerging challenges, including a response to climate change across the human settlement continuum.

UN-Habitat responded to this request by publishing a policy guide for low-carbon and climate-resilient Urban development (“Addressing Climate change in national Urban Policies”) which formulates recommendations for addressing climate change in national urban policies at all scales and throughout the continuum of space.

5. In resolution 25/4, the Governing Council requests the Executive Director under point I.4 to increase (his) efforts to take on board the perspective of local authorities. Not only have local authorities been included in development of the Monteria Communique, they have been integrated in the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on the Rural-Urban Nexus (2015). In collaboration with Communitas, GIZ and IFAD the technical workshop on “Operationalizing Urban-rural Linkages for Integrated Territorial Development” took place in Berlin, Germany, on 31.5.2016. In addition to the meeting in May, the 1st Consultative Meeting for developing a set of Principles for Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Rural Linkages took place on Monday, 6th June 2016 (from 2.30 – 5.30 p.m.) at the IFAD Headquarters, Rome, Italy.

6. Under point I.7 of the resolution, the Executive Director was requested to continue to raise awareness of the relationship between positive urban-rural development linkages, to disseminate in cooperation with appropriate partners, good practices and policies in relation to mutually beneficial urban-rural development relationships. UN-Habitat took lead in promoting this relationship and as a result of discussions on the issue paper on Urban Rural Linkages for Habitat III, the organization of the EGMs and others meetings on urban-rural linkages, the “global thinking” is changing. It is now widely recognized that policy makers should not only put emphasis on cities, but also on the interdependencies between cities and rural/peri-urban areas. The need to view settlements as a continuum rather that different sectors has been widely accepted by agencies working operating in both urban and rural areas.

In the Monteria communique and during the preparation of the Habitat III conference, UN-Habitat has started to closely collaborate with other UN-Agencies and international and local development partners to form a strong network that will jointly work on guiding principles for strengthening urban-rural linkages aiming to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication for the continuum of space.
The **ongoing effort to collect international good practices and strategies** will support programmes and projects that implement an integrated approach in order to ensure well-established urban-rural linkages. In October 2016 in Quito, **UNCRD launched the RDD (Regional Development Dialogue) Vol. 35 “Urban-rural linkages in support to the New Urban Agenda”** with contributions from UN-Habitat as well as other partners from the reference group. The collection of papers stemmed from the experts’ contribution at the Monteria Expert Group meeting in October 2015.

7. In the resolution 25/4, point I.28, the Executive Director and Governments were **requested to promote international cooperation in order to share technical expertise, build technical and policy making capacity** and share successful experiences of sustainable and integral spatial planning in rural and urban areas. Within **the network**, which was further explored during the Habitat III conference in Quito in the **special session on Urban-Rural Linkages (How can Urban-Rural-Linkages support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda?)** based on the **issue paper #10**, this international cooperation was reconfirmed and UN-Habitat will push forward for **sharing existing capacity development tools** and **collaborate with our partners in developing additional guidance** and provide advisory services for member States, **integrating youth and gender perspective as requested in II.33 of the resolution 25/4**.

8. Responding to the **point III.44 of the resolution 25/4**, UN-Habitat has continuously **kept up the dialogue and partnerships with UN agencies, academic institutions and research centres** to enhance learning and to disseminate knowledge. UN-Habitat (RMPU) actively collaborates (among others) with **UNCRD, GIZ, IFAD, FAO, RMIT (Australia), IHS (Netherlands), TU Delft of Technology (Netherlands) and the Politecnico Milano (Italy)** on Urban-Rural Linkages and Metropolitan Development.
SUPPORTING MATERIALS ON URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES

Please find below some selected documents on Urban-Rural Linkages

1. UN-Habitat Flyer: “Enhancing Urban-Rural Linkages to Harness the Transformative Power of Urbanization for Sustainable Development”

2. UN-Habitat Flyer: Urban-Rural Linkages

3. The International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning


5. The Monteria Communique: “THE ROLE OF INTERMEDIATE CITIES IN STRENGTHENING URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES TOWARDS THE NEW URBAN AGENDA”
Contact Us:

The Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit (RMPU) provides tools and services to particularly serve regional and metropolitan areas and the development of urban policy and spatial development at the national scale. The Unit would welcome the opportunity to work with you. We would be pleased to be involved in dialogue regarding the development of compact, integrated, connected, and socially inclusive cities and learn more about the work of partners in metropolitan, regional, and national authorities. In order to work with us or to get more information on our tools and services, the RMPU can be contacted at:

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