



Call for Participants

Connective Cities Dialogue Event for the Sub Saharan Africa Region Sustainable, informed and participatory land management and land use planning in rapidly growing cities

Dates: 11th, 12th & 14th May 2021

Time: 10:00 – 13:00 CET

Language: English & French

The international cities platform, Connective Cities and its initiators, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the German Association of Cities (DST) and Engagement Global gGmbH with its Service Agency Communities in One World (SKEW), invite urban practitioners from Sub-Sahara Africa and Germany to take part in the Connective Cities virtual dialogue event on the challenges and opportunities in land management and land use planning.

Background information on land management and land use planning in Sub Saharan Africa

The World Cities Report, 2020¹ states that unplanned and unmanaged urbanization represents a threat to environmental sustainability, including unbridled urban sprawl, irreversible land-use changes and biodiversity loss, resource and energy-intensive consumption patterns, and high levels of pollution and carbon emissions. However, when well-planned and managed, urbanization provides opportunities to address these challenges and contribute to environmental value through energy innovation, sustainable settlement patterns, changes in human behavior and lifestyles, environment-related improvements to health and wellbeing, and resource efficiencies².

Africa is rapidly urbanizing, and this is manifested in the growth of its megacities as well as that of its smaller towns and cities³. The rapid urbanization has resulted in the physical space growing faster than the population, thus consuming more land for urban development.

Land is a prime resource for planning and development of any area. It is a resource which is constant and cannot be created. Therefore, the importance of optimum usage of land in the cities is paramount. The main challenge for physical planners is the proper and effective land use planning with the allocation of all the physical and social amenities for existing and the growing population of the area and its hinterlands. Land and the way it is accessed, used and controlled is a key element of sustainable urban development.

¹ UN Habitat (2020), World Cities Report- *The Value of Sustainable Urbanization* (pg xxiii)

² ibid

³ Burak Guneralp et al.; (2017), Urbanization in Africa: challenges and opportunities for conservation. Environmental research letters

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Land management encompasses all activities associated with the management of land and natural resources that are required to achieve sustainable development. The concept of land includes properties and natural resources and thereby encompasses the total natural and built environment.

The urban development that largely depends on availability and use of land has, unfortunately, not been properly managed and this is evident in the ad hoc infrastructural development, unplanned neighborhoods, and focus on the grey infrastructure often at the expense of the environment among others. Cities/municipalities now struggle to control this development process and are also faced by challenges including lack of proper land-use/ spatial plans information systems and the public outcry for lack of inclusion in the design and planning of the urban spaces.

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) envisages cities and human settlements that are participatory, promote civic engagement, engender a sense of belonging and ownership among all their inhabitants, provide safe, inclusive, accessible, green and quality public spaces that are friendly for families, enhance social intergenerational interactions, cultural expressions and political participation, as appropriate and foster social cohesion, inclusion and safety in peaceful and pluralistic societies, where the needs of all inhabitants are met, recognizing the specific needs of those in vulnerable situations.⁴

Thematic focus of the dialogue event

- **Integrating Nature based solutions in land use planning**

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are defined by IUCN as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits”⁵. NbS actions are inspired by, supported by or copied from nature.

The current land use practices in most cities continue to increase greenhouse gas emissions. NbS incorporated in the design, management and use of urban areas can mitigate against potential hazards through carbon sequestration, local climate regulation, stormwater capture and water and air purification. The results are beneficial to the environment and the wellbeing of the city dwellers.

In this dialogue event, we would like to learn from municipalities that have applied this approach through optimization of green, blue and grey infrastructure. The projects could include city parks, green roofs, and urban rivers among others.

- **Land information systems**

Many urban practitioners can hardly keep up with the fast pace of urbanization. One impediment to proper land use planning and management has been the lack of a proper land information system. Data is needed for the cities to function effectively thus the central and local governments need to provide the right set up for this including policy and organization. The information generated should then be easily accessible by the users to facilitate land management and land use planning.

⁴ United Nations. The New Urban Agenda

⁵ <https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-ecosystem-management/our-work/nature-based-solutions> (accessed on 25.01.2021)

In this dialogue event, we seek to share and learn the tools and mechanisms applied by municipalities to ensure that a robust information system contributes to sustainable urban development.

- **Participatory and inclusive land use planning**

In the past, land use planning has been the core business of the urban planners and other professionals with little participation of the public in the processes.

Participatory planning approaches provide advantages when compared to conventional processes managed solely by professionals. Since citizens interact with these spaces every day, they provide observations and knowledge that are different from experts, thereby enriching the analysis. More than just a simple consultation, participatory urban planning promotes open dialogue and interaction between users, experts and decision makers throughout the entire process.

In this dialogue event, we seek to learn from cities that have implemented projects through a participatory process; the tools and methodologies applied. In particular, it will be interesting to learn from projects with an emphasis on gender mainstreaming.

Objectives and methodological steps

The approach of promoting peer-to-peer learning and inter-municipal exchange of knowledge contributes to strengthening the capacity of municipalities to design change processes related to urban development. In this learning process, they will also make strides towards achieving some of the SDG 11 targets⁶ including 11.3, 11.4 and 11.7.

The aim of the exchange is to get to know best practice examples from municipalities with different local conditions. The focus is mainly on pragmatic solutions and approaches that can be applied or adapted to the different local contexts. Furthermore, the event will offer a platform to discuss the challenges around the topic of land management and land use planning, and support municipalities in developing new joint project ideas among peers that can be further implemented in the respective home communities.

This dialogue event is the first step of what we call a “Connective Cities learning process”. Selected project ideas developed as part of this event will have the chance to be further supported by Connective Cities through a follow-up activity such as an expert mission or a local project workshop, webinar and through advice on options for project financing. The final goal of a Connective Cities learning process is to support a municipality with peer-advice towards external or third party financing allowing the implementation of a fully-fledged project resulting from this learning experience.

Participation and contact

If you wish to participate and actively contribute to the learning process with a good practice from a project you (are) implementing/ implemented that fits in the thematic focus of event, we warmly invite you to apply. To do so, please send us an email with your function and organisation as well as with a short description of the project you would like to showcase. We welcome the participation of

⁶ An elaboration of the targets can be accessed via [Goal 11 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs \(un.org\)](#)

municipal delegations of a maximum of two experts working in the relevant departments to present their project cooperation. The deadline for application is **15th April 2021**.

If you have any questions concerning the event and the participation process, please contact:

For Sub Saharan Africa applicants: **Sophia Kamau**, Connective Cities Regional Network Coordinator-Sub Saharan Africa; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) (sophia.kamau@giz.de)

For interested German experts: **Alice Balbo**, Connective Cities Project Manager, responsible for the cooperation with the German Association of Cities (Alice.Balbo@staedtetag.de)

Connective Cities at a glance

The international exchange platform Connective Cities has been bringing together international urban practitioners from city administrations, civil society, academia and the private sector since 2013. Connective Cities is a cooperation project of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the German Association of Cities and Engagement Global with its Service Agency Communities in One World. For more information on past and upcoming activities please visit: www.connective-cities.net

Factsheet: All information at a glance

Date	11 th , 12 th & 14 th May 2021 Time: 10:00 – 13:00 CET
Platform	Link to the virtual platform be provided
Duration	3 days (app. 3 hours per day)
Thematic focus	The event will focus on the following aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating nature based solutions in land use planning. • Land information systems. • Participatory and inclusive land use planning.
Expertise	The event will bring together urban practitioners from Sub Saharan Africa and Germany to share their knowledge, experiences, challenges and practical solutions to sustainable management and use of land.
Objectives	Initiate a practice-oriented exchange between German and international practitioners active in land management and land use planning; Launch collective knowledge process; Foster the development of joint project ideas.
Criteria for participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical perspective and first-hand experience in municipal strategies and projects in use of nature based solutions in land use planning, land information systems and participatory/inclusive land use planning. • Presentation of a local good practice example. • Willingness to engage in an exchange about current needs and challenges in this thematic area.
Language	English and French.