

2012 Progress Report on the Global Network on Safer Cities (GNSC)

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A Network that is designed to support cities in the prevention of urban crime and the enhancement of urban safety strategies, acting as a common platform that links existing crime and violence prevention networks with the different cadre of urban players. It finds it relevance from the necessity to put together and systematize different experiences and perspectives existing around the world on urban crime and violence in order to analyse the challenges that cities are facing, especially in regions of the south, and to develop more cost effective prevention and urban safety policies. In addition, as many cities experience financial difficulties to get in consultants and experts, the Network would be an ideal platform to learn from each other and exchange tools, training, knowledge, as well as to promote approaches which do not rely on outside assistance. Such a Network would also help promoting new approaches and policy dialogue to tackle urban crime and fostering new debates between state actors, non-state actors and international development partners.

A. INTRODUCTION

Today, half the world's inhabitants reside in cities, a phenomenon driven by the relentless migration of rural people to urban areas and the rapid demographic expansion of urban populations, especially in the poorest countries. Cities hold out the promise of the "urban advantage": concentrated economic dynamism, predictable access to services, and opportunities for democratic citizenship. Yet hundreds of millions of people live on the wrong side of the breach of urban poverty and exclusion. For many of the most vulnerable, violence and insecurity have become facts of everyday life, denying them the manifold benefits of the right to the city. This is the urban predicament of the 21st century.

In September 2010, UN-Habitat mooted the idea of developing the Global Network on Safer Cities (GNSC) in response to this predicament to empower local authorities and other stakeholders in delivering urban safety building on its 16 years of work on the Safer Cities Programme. Member states attending the 23rd Session of UN-HABITAT Governing Council in Nairobi in April 2011 adopted a resolution supporting the establishment of the network to allow for learning, exchange and structured dialogue based on the proven practices on safer cities in over 53 cities worldwide that could ultimately lead to the development and implementation of UN Guidelines on Safer Cities.

UN-Habitat convened several partners' consultations between April 2011 and February 2012 to conceive the operational framework for the network. As a result, a working paper was produced on the governance and administration of the GNSC which has provided the basis for the 2012 cycle of activities (see attached working paper).

In this context, this progress report captures key steps made in the year 2012 in the operationalization of the GNSC as detailed below.

B. THE LAUNCHING OF THE GLOBAL NETWORKING ON SAFER CITIES (GNSC) AT WUF VI

The Sixth Session of the World Urban Forum in September 2012 in Naples, Italy was the launching event for the Global Network on Safer Cities (GNSC). Overall attendance to the Forum was 8,209 people representing a record high of 152 countries. At the Forum, Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director of UN-Habitat appointed **Marcelo Casaubon Ebrard**, the former Mayor of Mexico City, as the Chair of the Steering Committee of the GNSC, in the presence of **Hans-Juergen Beerfeltz**, State Secretary, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, **Dr. Mikael Atterhog**, Coordinator, Global Programme Unit, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), **Ms Laksmi Puri**, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Deputy Executive Director of UN-Women and **Ms. Sarah Hendriks**, Global Gender Advisor, Plan International, among other dignitaries.

The World Urban Forum (WUF) now assumes a central stage for the GNSC in convening its cities assembly, an inclusive coalition of stakeholders enhancing urban safety that will meet at future World Urban Forums. This is in line with the goal of WUF which was established by the United Nations to examine one of the most pressing problems facing the world today: rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies including urban crime and violence. The WUF is organized and

convened by the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and is a “non-legislative technical forum drawing a wide range of experts from every walk of life including Habitat Agenda partners, national governments, local authorities, members of national, regional and international associations of local governments, Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, media organizations, human settlements professionals, research institutions and academies of science, professional associations, the private sector, business and non-profit sectors, foundations, relevant United Nations organizations and other international agencies.

GNSC will in particular bring to the urban debate a wide range of crime prevention actors augmenting the Forum’s efforts to promote the strong participation of Habitat Agenda partners and relevant international programmes, funds and agencies, thus ensuring their inclusion in the identification of new issues, the sharing of lessons learned and the exchange of best practices and good policies. Through the Forum, network partners will also have the opportunity to re-examine and contribute to the manner in which UN-Habitat is guiding and enriching the policy work on sustainable urbanization through an open dialogue. Consequently, through the World Urban Forum, the Cities Assembly of the GNSC will have the opportunity to develop new ideas and working models to ‘make prevention work’ and feed this into the Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan 2008-2013 (MTSIP) of UN-Habitat and form part of the subsequent work programme.

Participation has risen at the World Urban Forums from 1,200 delegates at the inaugural session in Nairobi in 2002, to over 4,000 in Barcelona in 2004 and over 10,000 in Vancouver in 2006. The number steadied at 8,000 in Nanjing in 2008, reached almost 14,000 at the Fifth session in Rio de Janeiro in 2010 and over 8,000 attended the Sixth session in Naples in September 2012. 100 countries were represented at the Third session, 146 at the Fourth and the number rose again to 150 at the Fifth session. The Sixth session saw a record high of 152 countries in Naples. The next Forum will take place in 2014 in Medellin, Colombia. The Forum is undoubtedly UN-Habitat’s premier advocacy platform to promote sustainable urbanization and share solutions to urban challenges, hence its natural placement as the launching event of the GNSC.

While the World Urban Forum focused on various issues related to the Urban Future towards shaping cities that are more democratic, just, sustainable and human, the Forum also provided a global platform for safer cities partners and UN-Habitat to examine the substantive agenda for the GNSC in contributing to a safer urban future. In particular, two substantive flagships were discussed in detail - the **UN Guidelines on Safer Cities** and the **Urban Safety Monitor** that aim to support cities in delivering a measurable improvement in safety for urban citizens globally. There was in large measure, a shared consensus on the necessity to develop these two products to broaden the present discourse on the prevention of urban crime to include ways to improve the quality of urban life through securing the urban advantage for all (see attached communiqué).

There were several safety events at the Forum that systematically examined old and new emerging factors that contribute to securing the urban advantage for all, exploring the triggers that generate desired positive changes from various perspectives – gender and youth included. For example, what kind of strategies do successful cities deploy, what obstacles lie in the path of cities that fail to secure the urban advantage for all and how will such cities find their way out to move towards a trajectory of progress?

Hence, the launching event set in motion the Global Network on Safer Cities as a reference for local, national and regional authorities to address the current and future challenges cities are facing. The network intends to target multiple countries and selected cities and report to the future **Cities Assembly on Safer Cities**, that will be an inclusive coalition of stakeholders enhancing urban safety that will meet at future World Urban Forums. This will contribute to the exchange of knowledge and experiences on urban crime and violence prevention among cities and citizens, transform societies to be more inclusive, and encourage a culture of crime prevention. The GNSC will provide the following core services:

1. Expert service: a hub that draws on existing expertise and knowledge on urban safety and the prevention of urban crime to support policy and institutional reform.
2. Citizens Advocacy and Outreach: mobilise citizens to participate in making their cities safer
3. Knowledge exchange: development and exchange of tools and working practices on urban safety and the prevention of crime.
4. Training and Capacity Development: facilitate a city to city networking and training programme

C. THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE GNSC

In the period of September to December 2012, the newly appointed Chair of the GNSC in consultation with the secretariat at UN-HABITAT has been working on finalising the composition of the steering committee ahead of its first meeting which is scheduled to take place on 14 and 15 March 2013 in New York. The composition of the steering committee has taken into consideration regional balances of mayors and representation of the Habitat Agenda partners and development partners based on expressions of interest made. A final list will be submitted by Chair Marcelo Ebrard to the Executive Director of UN-Habitat early 2013.

The Steering Committee will lead the political processes towards drafting the UN Guidelines on Safer Cities and advancing the Governance and Administration framework for the GNSC, including the establishment of a safer cities trust fund to enhance resource mobilization at global and local levels for urban safety interventions; as well as supporting city to city cooperation, learning and exchange on urban safety practices. In this respect, the Chair of the Steering Committee set in motion a global plan of action 2013 – 2016 on 5th November in Mexico City. As a first step, the chair is tentatively scheduled to visit the 4 UN duty stations early next year to advocate for the UN Guidelines on Safer Cities and preside over the first steering committee that will discuss the global plan of action and a draft resolution for the 24th session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council which will take place at the UN-Habitat Headquarters in Nairobi from 15 – 19 April 2013.

D. THE ADVISORY PANEL OF THE GNSC

In the period of September to December 2012, the Advisory Panel of the GNSC was established under the chair of **Dr. Franz Vanderschueren**, the founder Coordinator of the UN-Habitat Safer Cities Programme and current Director of Urban Safety at the Universidad Alberto Hurtado in Santiago de Chile. From Chile, he

directs several projects on urban safety globally and in recent times with particular focus in Mexico. The Panel vice –chair is **Dr. Robert Muggah** who is a former Director of Small Arms in Geneva, the current Research Director of the Igarapé Institute, a Principal of the SecDev Group, and a professor at the Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro. From Brazil he directs several projects on international cooperation, peace-support operations, transnational organized crime, citizen security and violence prevention, and humanitarian action in non-war settings across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Other members include Anna Mtani, the founder of the Safer Cities in Tanzania and current Director of Urban Development in the Ministry of Local Government in Tanzania; Pedro Strozenberg, a former advisor of President Lula da Silva on decentralised security policies, a former Deputy Director of Viva Rio and current Director of ISER in Rio de Janeiro; and Mr. Fausto Lugo, the former Mayor of Mexico City advisor on urban safety who is credited with the design improvements that have impacted on the experience of safety in the city.

The Advisory Panel will support the Steering Committee in the technical process of developing and implementing the UN Guidelines on Safer Cities. As part of its first undertaking, the team supported UN-Habitat in the review of the proposal on the urban safety monitor at an Expert Group Meeting which was convened on 10 and 11 December in Paris alongside the European Forum for Urban Safety (EFUS) Conference. The Paris Meeting on the urban safety monitor incorporated a number of experts drawn from collaborating partners and cities. In addition, the Chair of the Advisory panel participated in the Africities Summit from 4 – 8 December in Dakar Senegal where he facilitated a session towards the adaptation of the UN-Habitat Latin America manual on safer cities to the African context. These manuals will provide a source of reference for the development of the UN Guidelines on Safer Cities.

The Advisory Panel is expected to support the secretariat in the coming year to consolidate a consultant’s database on urban safety that will be made available to cities via a virtual learning environment, as well as assist the steering committee to compile a list of promising practices on safer cities that will be recognised at the next World Urban Forum in Medellin, Colombia.

E. THE PARTNERS CONSULTATIVE GROUP OF THE GNSC

The secretariat of the GNSC has put into motion a call for interested partners to join the Partners Consultative Group which will formally meet in April this year, bringing together relevant tools that support cities in the development and implementation of citywide crime prevention and urban safety strategies.

Towards this end, at European Forum on Urban Safety Conference “*Security, Democracy and Prevention*”, Aubervilliers, France, 12 - 14 December 2012, **Aisa Kirabo-Kacyira**, Deputy Executive Director of UN-Habitat formalised the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the President of EFUS that will bring to the Partners Consultative Group the wide knowledge base and tools that EFUS has developed over the years working with over 300 municipalities in Europe. World Vision International will formally become a partner early next year when they formally sign their MoU with UN-Habitat bringing to the table their vast experience towards developing a multi-dimensional tool on urban safety. Other on-going institutional

collaborations with UN-Habitat that will be bring their safety tools in support of cities include with UN-Women, UNICEF, Huairou Commission and Women In Cities International (WICI).

Ahead of the April meeting, the secretariat has commissioned two consultancies towards the consolidation of a local government safety toolkit and the development and implementation of a Virtual Learning Environment www.safercities.org.

F. OTHER INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO THE GNSC PROCESS

The UN-HABITAT Safer Cities Programme has been working closely with UNICEF and UN-Women in the development of a Safe and Friendly Cities for All Initiative – engaging 8 cities. As the joint programming takes root at the city level with municipal governments, a city to city networking and training project will be developed and will provide a concrete output for the GNSC on monitoring the policy and practice of urban safety policies.

In addition, UN-Habitat has entered into discussion with institutions in Santiago, Cape Town and Sydney towards the development of Regional Centres of Excellence on Safer Cities that will support the development and implementation of regional plans of action on providing technical support to local authorities on the development and implementation of crime prevention and urban safety strategies in collaboration with UN-Habitat regional offices.

Finally, UN-Habitat is also entering into discussion with cities and partners on the development of regional, sub-regional and national forums on urban safety that will advocate and benchmark urban safety interventions at the local level. EFUS is a good practice model of a regional forum for urban safety, while at the national level - Cote D'Ivoire and Brazil have established similar forums.

G. SOME POTENTIAL DATES FOR 2013 MEETINGS

In the implementation of the global plan of action on safer cities, the secretariat will actively be engaged with partners in 2013 to discuss potential areas of collaboration - both short and mid term but also to better understand how everyone's work fits in - especially in these times of limited resources (both financial and human) as well as weak political support on the prevention agenda at country and city level.

We are interested in finding synergies and investing where we are each most strategic!

The following meeting points have been proposed back to back with already scheduled partners conferences:

1. The World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty Conference – UN-Women/UNICEF/UN-Habitat Safety event, 20 February, Ireland
2. The First Steering Committee meeting of the GNSC/ UN Inter-agency meeting on Safer Cities, New York, 14 – 15 March 2013. This meeting will take place on the margins of the session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) from 4 – 15 March.

3. CITINET Regional Forum, Seoul - launch of the regional plan of action on safer cities for Asia, end of March 2013.
4. The First Partners Consultative Group of the GNSC, Nairobi, 13 – 14 April 2013. This meeting will take place on the margins of the session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council.
5. An Africa Forum on Urban Safety/ Expert Working Group of 5 African Cities on their Safer Cities policies/practices & development of African Guidelines on Safer Cities, Durban, March/ April 2013.
6. UNICRI International Forum of Mayors on Security and Crime Prevention in Urban Settings, Turin, 4 – 5 April 2013
7. The Annual International Forum within the German Congress on Crime Prevention 22 and 23 April 2013 at the City Hall in Bielefeld, Germany
8. UNODC Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Vienna, 22-26 April 2013
9. World Forum for Local Authorities of Periphery, Canoas, Brazil, 11 - 13 June, 2013
10. Metropolis Board of Directors Meeting – GNSC half day event, Johannesburg, 16 – 19 July 2013