**UN Habitat III and Disability Inclusive and Accessible Urban Development**

Note by the Secretariat[[1]](#footnote-1)

The third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Human Settlement (Habitat III) will take place in Quito, Ecuador from 17 to 20 Oct 2016. Habitat III will be the first major UN conference to follow up in implementing the 2030 Agenda and one of the most important Forums that expects to result in a global New Urban Agenda, which will guide the future direction of urbanization across the world in the next two decades.

The Note was prepared by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Division of Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (DESA) as the global focal point on disability of the UN system. The major objective is to inform the broad constituencies some major milestones leading to the Habitat III, provide resources and toolkits and to identify key opportunities for participating, contributing and taking actions at international, regional and local levels, so to ensure that the Habitat III and its outcome will give due consideration of the rights, needs and perspectives of over one billion of persons with disabilities and promote accessible and inclusive urban development in the world.

**Background**

Since the adoption of the Convention, the commitment to mainstreaming disability in society and development has been strengthened at the international level. This progress is reflected in the High-level Meeting on Disability and Development, which was held in 2013 at the level of heads of states as well as more recently, with the inclusion of disability as a cross-cutting issue in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The 2030 Agenda or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially its goal 11 and other targets, specifically refer to disability and accessibility in relation to sustainable urban development.

A key question before us is how to translate these international norms into national and local urban policy and practices to ensure development is really inclusive of all people.

Persons with disabilities was not counted and engaged as a “major group” in the past for instance in the Habitat II in 1996 due to historic reasons. This needs be challenged and changed now that we are in the era with the Convention, the Outcome of the High Level Meeting on Disability and Development and the 2030 Agenda.

The forthcoming Habitat III and its preparation processes provide a historic opportunity to ensure that the rights, concerns and perspectives of persons with disabilities to be fully taken account and Governments, development partners and all major stakeholders are engaged to promote accessible urban development that is inclusive of persons with disabilities and make a transformative change in urbanization. Broad-based partnership among multi-stakeholders, Governments, urban development professionals, civil society especially persons with disabilities and their organizations, international development institutions, academia and private sectors can make a difference in ensuring a real inclusive New Urban Agenda for all.

Annex 1: Processes and milestones leading to the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III, Quito, 17-20 October, 2016)

Annex 2: Selected thematic issue areas that deserve particular attention and relevant issue papers and policy unit papers for the Habitat III

Annex 3: Additional resources and toolkits for promoting accessible and disability inclusion in urban development

**Annex 1. Processes with key milestones leading to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III, Quito, 17-20 October, 2016)**

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| **Date** | **Events and milestones leading to Habitat III** | **Location** | **remarks** |
| 24-26 February, 2016 | Habitat III Regional Meeting: Africa  <https://www.habitat3.org/abuja> | Abuja, Nigeria |  |
| 16-18 March, 2016 | Habitat III Regional Meeting: Europe <https://www.habitat3.org/prague> | Prague, Czech Republic |  |
| 17 March, 2016 | Urban Thursday Breakfast: Urban challenges from the perspective of Small Island States | New York |  |
| **1 April, 2016** | **Deadline for pre-registration or submitting accreditations applications for the 3rd session of the Preparatory Committee of the Habitat III** | Online https://www.habitat3.org |  |
| 4-5 April, 2016 | Habitat III Thematic Meeting: Public Space <https://www.habitat3.org/barcelona> | Barcelona, Spain |  |
| 7-8 April, 2016 | Habitat III Thematic Meeting: Informal Settlements <https://www.habitat3.org/johannesburg> | Pretoria, South Africa |  |
| **April 2016** | **Five-day open-ended informal consultative meeting for inputs on the draft outcome document** | TBC |  |
| 14-15 April, 2016 | UNTT discussions on the New Urban Agenda | New York |  |
| 15 April, 2016 | Urban Breakfast on Integrated territorial development in the New Urban Agenda | 8:30-10:00 am at Ford Foundation Headquarters, New York |  |
| 18-20 April, 2016 | Habitat III Regional Meeting: America and the Caribbean <https://www.habitat3.org/toluca> | Toluca, Mexico |  |
| 21 April, 2016 | Urban Thursday Breakfast: Europe: urban challenges and sustainable development | New York |  |
| 25-29 April | Intersessional Process: Open-ended informal consultative meetings  <https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/intersessional_process> | New York |  |
| **2 May, 2016** | **Deadline for pre-registration or submitting accreditations applications for Habitat III** | Online <https://www.habitat3.org> |  |
| **6 May, 2016** | **Submission of the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda** | Online <https://www.habitat3.org> |  |
| 16-17 May 2016 | Informal hearings with representatives of local authorities’ associations on the zero draft of the outcome document of Habitat III  <https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/intersessional_process> | New York |  |
| 18-20 May 2016 | Informal intergovernmental negotiations  <https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/intersessional_process> | New York |  |
| 19 May, 2016 | Urban Thursday Breakfast: North America: urban challenges and sustainable development | New York |  |
| 6-7 June 2016 | Informal hearing with representatives of major groups and other stakeholders on the zero draft of the outcome document of Habitat III  <https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/intersessional_process> | New York |  |
| 8-10 June 2016 | Three-day informal intergovernmental negotiations  <https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/intersessional_process> | New York |  |
| 16 June, 2016 | Urban Thursday Breakfast: West Asia: urban challenges and sustainable development | New York |  |
| 29 June – 1 July 2016 | Informal intergovernmental negotiations  <https://www.habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/intersessional_process> | New York |  |
| **25 to 27 July, 2016** | **The third session of the Preparatory Committee** | **Surabaya, Indonesia** |  |
| **17 to 20 October, 2016** | **Habitat III** | **Quito, Ecuador** |  |
| 2018 | Ninth session of the World Urban Forum | Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia |  |

**Annex 2: Select thematic issue areas that deserve particular attention and relevant issue papers and policy papers for the Habitat III**

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| **Thematic Issue Areas** | **Potential entry points for mainstreaming disability** | **Resources for reference** |
| Social Cohesion and Equity - Liveable Cities | 1. Reducing poverty and inequality and advancing social inclusion of persons with disabilities in the urban setting 2. Accessible urban infrastructures and public services; 3. Disability inclusive, responsive and user friendly urban disasters and humanitarian response strategies 4. Migrants and refugees with disabilities | 1. Issue Paper: [Inclusive cities](https://www.habitat3.org/bitcache/6152487d463cc5f9b70ac32fc32321cf31f59953?vid=542862&disposition=inline&op=view) 2. Issue Paper: [Migration and refugees in urban areas](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498389/view/542863) 3. Issue Paper: [Safer cities](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498390/view/542864) 4. Issue Paper: [Urban culture and heritage](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498391/view/542865) 5. Policy Paper: [Right to the City and Cities for All](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518584/view/566136) 6. Policy Paper: [Socio-Cultural Urban Framework](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518585/view/566137) |
| Urban Frameworks | 1. Inclusion of disability and accessibility in urban laws and legislations 2. Accessibility standards and their implementation 3. Investment for improving/ensuring accessible infrastructures, facilities, products and services | 1. Issue Paper: [Urban rules and legislation](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498392/view/542866) 2. Issue Paper: [Urban governance](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498393/view/542867) 3. Issue Paper: [Municipal finance](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498394/view/542868) 4. Policy Paper: [National Urban Policies](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518574/view/566123) 5. Policy Paper: [Urban Governance, Capacity and Institutional Development](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518575/view/566124) 6. Policy Paper: [Municipal Finance and Local Fiscal System](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518576/view/566125) |
| Spatial Development | 1. Universal design or design for all approach 2. Accessibility in public spaces | 1. Issue Paper: [Urban and special planning and design](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498395/view/542869) 2. Issue Paper: [Urban land](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498396/view/542870) 3. Issue Paper: [Urban-rural linkages](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498397/view/542871) 4. Issue Paper: [Public space](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498398/view/542872) 5. Policy Paper: Urban Spatial Strategies: Land Market and Segregation |
| Urban Economy | 1. Accessibility ( in sectors such as tourism or transport) as a smart investment and driver for sustained economic growth 2. Promoting employment and decent work for persons with disabilities 3. Economic empowerment through increased access to financial resources and services 4. Entrepreneurs with disabilities 5. Accessible tourism | 1. Issue Paper: [Local economic development](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498399/view/542873) 2. Issue Paper: [Jobs and Livelihoods](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498400/view/542874) 3. Issue Paper: [Informal Sector](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498401/view/542875) 4. Policy Paper: [Urban Economic Development Strategies](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518713/view/566277) |
| Urban Ecology and Environment | 1. Disability sensitive and responsive disaster risk reduction strategies and actions 2. Persons with disability as major stakeholders and agents of change in building the resilience of cities and communities and in the implementation of the Sendai Framework on disaster reduction and the Paris Agreement on Climate change | 1. Issue Paper: [Urban resilience](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498402/view/542876) 2. Issue Paper: [Urban ecosystems and resource management](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498403/view/542877) 3. Issue Paper: [Cities and climate change and disaster risk management](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498404/view/542878) 4. Policy Paper: [Urban Ecology Resilience](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518578/view/566127) |
| Urban Housing and Basic Services | 1. Accessible buildings 2. Accessible transport 3. Accessible public services | 1. Issue Paper: [Urban infrastructure and basic services, including energy](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498405/view/542879) 2. Issue Paper: [Transport and mobility](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498406/view/542880) 3. Issue Paper: [Housing](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498407/view/542881) 4. Issue Paper: [Smart cities](https://habitat3.unteamworks.org/file/498408/view/542882) 5. Issue Paper: [Informal settlements](http://dialogues.habitat3.org/file/498409/view/542883) 6. Policy Paper: [Urban Services and Technology](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518579/view/566128) 7. Policy Paper: [Housing Policies](https://www.habitat3.org/file/518722/view/566292) |

**Annex 3: Additional resources and toolkits for promoting accessible and disability inclusion in urban development**

* 1. [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf)
  2. [Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the  
     realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed  
     development goals for persons with disabilities: The way forward, a disability-inclusive development  agenda towards 2015 and beyond](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/3)([A/RES/68/3](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/3))
  3. [Accessibility and Disability Inclusion in Urban Development](http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/2015/accessibility-urbandevelopment.pdf) (DESA Issue paper)
  4. Recommendations of [DESA Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/about-us/undesadspd-forum-on-disability-and-development-28-30-october-2015/recommendations-on-advancing-disability-inclusion-and-accessible-urban-development.html) (Jointly organised by DESA and UN Habitat, Nairobi, 30 Oct, 2015)
  5. [Accessibility and Development](http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/accessibility_and_development.pdf)(UNDESA)
  6. [The right to adequate housing for persons with disabilities](http://unhabitat.org/books/the-right-to-adequate-housing-for-persons-with-disabilities-living-in-cities/) (UN Habitat, link)
  7. [Accessibility of Housing. A Handbook of Inclusive Affordable Housing Solutions for Persons with Disabilities and Older Persons.](http://unhabitat.org/books/accessibility-of-housing) (UN Habitat)

1. Comments and enquiries may be sent to the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (DESA) via [enable@un.org](mailto:enable@un.org). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)