

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON “INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ RIGHT TO EDUCATION”

Key Messages from UN-Habitat

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND URBANIZATION TRENDS:

- With over 50 per cent of the global population currently living in cities, **rising urbanization is one of the most significant global trends of this century**. By 2030, the rate is expected to rise to 60 per cent. By 2050, two out of three people will be living in cities.
- **Indigenous peoples are no exception to this trend**: to date, many countries – such as Mexico – have one third of their indigenous people living in urban areas. In many other countries – such as Canada and Chile – the number surpasses one in two.
- Among the main **reasons for the accelerated urbanization of indigenous communities**:
 - city limits expand thereby engulfing indigenous settlements,
 - migration to cities in search of education and employment opportunities,
 - migration to cities due to the impacts of climate change,
 - migration to cities through forced relocations as their rights on rural ancestral lands are violated.
- **Indigenous peoples have a lot to contribute to the future of our cities**, as cultural diversity is crucial for the development of inclusive and participatory urban communities where families can live in security, peace and dignity – three major conditions to sustainable urbanization. Additionally, traditional cultures bring a lot of knowledge to the table in terms of green building practices and construction technologies.

THE ROLE OF HOUSING

- The transition into urban living is rarely easy. Despite some immediate benefits, such as the proximity to services, **many indigenous persons face systemic discrimination with regards to housing, employment, education, and other basic needs and rights**.
- UN-Habitat, through the Housing-at-the-Centre approach sees **urbanization as a development force** that can help the world to overcome major challenges, in particular those related to poverty, exclusion and inequality. We must ensure that **indigenous communities are part of the solution** by including them in urban planning, especially in matters related to housing. **Lack of adequate housing can be an obstacle to accessing other socio-economic rights and opportunities such as education and employment**.

- **Urban decision-makers have a major role to play** in ensuring that no vulnerable group is excluded from the right to adequate housing, key to accessing many other rights, through the development of policies, of inclusive forward planning, and through other key enabling roles (financing, respect for cultural diversity,

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

- Over the past decade, **UN-Habitat has been a strong advocate to ensuring that the rights of vulnerable groups and minorities – including indigenous peoples –** in cities are respected and taken into account in urban planning and policy making.
- **Various reports and documents have been developed by UN-Habitat to help national and local governments** achieve the right to adequate housing for indigenous communities. To name a few:
 - a policy guide to Housing for Indigenous Peoples in Cities,
 - a handbook on Security of Tenure and Access to Land,
 - and a report on Urban Indigenous Peoples and Migration.
- **Indigenous communities contributed their concerns and their vision for the upcoming New Urban Agenda** during the latest World Urban Forum in Medellin, Colombia, and more recently through and on-going dialogue with the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to ensure that our cities.