

Panel C

Leveraging Intermediary Cities in the World: A unique potential for global sustainability and territorial justice

Friday 6 July – 15:00-16:15

The UCLG Forum on Intermediary Cities is a consultation and policy development process that culminates in an event every two years. The Forum, conceived as a political process, is led by the City of Chefchaouen with the support of a core group of pilot intermediary cities.

As preparation for the first World Forum of Intermediary Cities, a series of Regional Forums were conducted. During these regional gatherings, discussions led to the identification of challenges and opportunities for intermediary cities as key actors for sustainable development and their particular role in the localization of the different global agendas (Paris Agreement, 2030 Agenda, Sendai Framework, New Urban Agenda).

A series of key topics and recommendations were identified, and provide the inputs to be discussed in the different thematic tables. The key outputs of these sessions will be included in the Charter of the Intermediary Cities of the World.

Given their growth and global impact on sustainability, intermediary cities have a unique chance to maximize the possibility of extending rights through the implementation of the global agendas: gender issues and youth promotion could find here the best opportunity to leverage basic services and basic urban rights into the framework of an urban democracy that would ask for the “right to implementation” of specific SDGs, directly linked to human capital and its empowerment. To achieve this goal, an enabling environment towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is key, which requires the involvement of multiple stakeholders.

Possible Framing Questions and Recommendations

1. Tackling inequalities by developing social policies to address global sustainability and territorial justice

- Intermediary cities can benefit from specialized funds to promote social cohesion and inclusion.
- It is important to count on mechanisms to measure and monitor unequal development at territorial level, in particular in intermediary cities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Making implementation accessible as a right: develop a ‘right to implementation’ for intermediary cities through a legal framework for implementation.

2. Multi-level dialogue towards the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals: the role of cities articulating the ‘common good’ with the 2030 Agenda as the transforming frame of this ‘common good’.



- National strategies and targeted dialogues to enable the articulation of intermediary cities in the national context.
- When provided with an enabling environment, intermediary cities can be vital actors to contribute to “leave no one behind”.
- Intermediary cities can benefit from a strategy that strengthens multi-stakeholder cooperation.
- Generating models of transformation for the city we want to live in, through facilitating mobility and accessibility, and a change of mind-set.
- The realities lived by intermediary cities on a daily basis should be taken into account when designing policies for implementation in compliance with the global agendas.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Generate a National Strategy for Intermediary Cities in the frame of a multi-scale and multi-level dialogue:
 - a) Between metropolises and intermediary cities for the implementation of global agendas and to generate ‘co-development’ for sustainability.
 - b) Supporting solidarity between cities from the same national systems in terms of economic sustainable growth.
 - c) Supporting the participation of and listening to intermediary cities in the design of national policies at world level, when it comes to developing national and macro-economic strategies, as well as implementation strategies.

3. Affordable access to basic services

Intermediary cities take responsibility for the provision of quality basic services, in accordance with international recommendations.

- Intermediary cities need to count on an enabling environment and international recognition as a key actor for development. This will enable access to aid, financial resources and grants.
- Education, gender & youth promotion:
 - It is of high importance to provide an enabling environment for intermediary cities to be able to guarantee the right to education for all children, in terms of recognition and effective resources.
 - There needs to be an effort at local level to include the rights and needs of vulnerable minorities into municipal actions, and ensure these rights are respected at all times. The development of a participatory local bill of rights can be of great help.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Municipal finances: explore the possibility of loans of ‘cooperation’ or joint projects to implement climate measures between intermediary cities, framed in a strategic vision and plan, instead of acting alone.
- Define a strategic plan of actions to balance the long-term vision with immediate necessary actions so that municipal investment can be prioritized, in accordance with participatory decisions.
- Generate a document/study on the basic services & rights that should be given by/to intermediary cities across the world to enable the right environment for implementation.