



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

Multi-stakeholder National Urban Policy - Integrating Global Agendas

Region	Europe and Central Asia
Award Scheme	Dubai International Award
Start Year	2017
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

National responsibility for coherent sustainable urban development was urgently needed in Sweden, particularly as the country is experiencing a second urbanisation wave. Uncoherent and excluding urban planning further increases socio-economic gaps between the city centre and the sprawled suburbs, making women, youth and ethnic minorities particularly vulnerable.

Background and Objective

National responsibility for coherent sustainable urban development was urgently needed in Sweden, particularly as the country of 9,000 000 is experiencing a second urbanisation wave. Uncoherent and excluding urban planning further increases socio-economic gaps between the city centre and the sprawled suburbs, making women, youth and ethnic minorities particularly vulnerable.

Actions and Implementation

The challenges and recommendations in the multi-stakeholder proposal for a national urban policy is based on the focus areas and priorities highlighted in the Nordic Declaration on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda approved by over 400 multi-stakeholders in December 2016. The declaration summarized the main findings from the study Leadership for Sustainable Cities – Nordic Urban Ways that involved a reference group of 200 multi-stakeholders and interviews with 30 local leaders from nine Nordic cities. The results were summarised in the report Nordic Urban Ways – Local Leadership, Governance and Management for Sustainable Development that was launched at Habitat III in October 2016. Based on these processes, this draft has been developed in close cooperation with the reference expert group of 30 representatives. It was further reformulated and amended by a group of 100 stakeholders and experts during the National Urban Forum 20 June in Stockholm, in discussion with the Minister for the Environment. In total, over 800 representatives from research, civil society, private sector politics and administration have been involved in the contribution to this multi-stakeholder process. It has resulted in a proposal evolving around three policy pillars formulating a three-step roadmap: five thematic priorities, four systemic and process oriented dimensions and three strategies for implementation. The entire elaboration of the national urban policy, and the core of the process, is the concept of policy dialogues, developed by the think tank. Central is to provide training, implementation support and advice to multi-stakeholders and decision-makers, where the output of the process is to define roadmaps for implementing global agendas. We utilise policy dialogues as a participatory method to formulate local roadmaps, corresponding to the following 10-step structure: - Establish multi-sectorial, multi-stakeholder groups – including representative and political legitimacy - Define and prioritize local challenges, opportunities and visions - Contextualise and correlate to global agendas - Identify priorities and responsibilities - Highlight relevant actors, good examples and tools - Identify policy and finance gaps - Define a strategy to scale-up implementation based on mapping of ongoing initiatives - Formulate a roadmap, a local action plan with local indicators - Outline frame for financing, initiating, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) - Implement and monitor the local roadmap

Outcomes and Impacts

The integration of sustainability dimensions and their mutually reinforcing capacity has been at the very core of the elaboration of a coherent and inclusive multi-stakeholder NUP for Sweden. Sweden is argued to be best placed to achieve the 2030 Agenda and deliver on the SDGs. Much due to previous successful work in locally implementing the Agenda 21. Back in the early 2000's, the Agenda 21 was implemented simultaneously with the Habitat II Agenda. We are therefore convinced that the 2030 Agenda and the NUA must follow the same methodology and be treated as a pair. The 2030 Agenda is the overall umbrella setting quantitative measures to achieve sustainable development. SDG11 targets sustainable urban development and planning, providing detailed indicators. However, most SDGs are actually closely related to cities and will have to be implemented locally in our municipalities.



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Besides, the NUA is a complementary framework setting global standards for the achievement of sustainable urban development. It can therefore serve as the qualitative toolbox for the accomplishment of the 2030 Agenda in our municipalities, with SDG11 as the backbone for a national urban policy. We are convinced that the 2030 Agenda provide a global vision, the SDGs the existing framework, and the SDG11 targets provide the goals set for a national urban policy that should be delivered on by 2030. But again, it is also of utmost importance to integrate various sustainability agendas and global agreements. Here, the interconnection between the SDGs, SDG11 and the NUA is of particular value. For a national urban policy, the NUA principles can provide the needed policy recommendations if analysed, prioritised and reformulated in the national and local context. Our national urban policy was elaborate on using the NUA principles as tools for formulating a common trajectory.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

- The transfer was initiated by the independent Swedish think tank Global Utmaning by activating its broad Nordic urban network and reference group for Sustainable Cities; - The purpose of the transfer was to identify Sweden's main urban challenges, priorities and formulate policy recommendations through policy dialogues, workshops, national and international conferences, interviews, applied research and on-line consultations. - The resources and financial implications involved in the transfer was particularly one staff full time, costs for organising conferences and travel costs to Nordic cities, Quito and Brussels (covered by the UN). - As said, adaptations are always required to fit any particular local or national context. However, we are convinced that using selected SDGs and NUA principles as framework and tools for a NUP would be valid everywhere. - The Swedish Government is now announcing that a holistic urban policy is needed, not just sectoral policies as they used to advocate for. - Regarding future transfers, we would assure more consistent funding in order to be able to apply its full potential.

Innovative Initiative

- Lack of national responsibility and ownership is not only a problem, it can also provide the space for multi-stakeholder actors to take on the task and become part of the agenda setting and formulation of policy. - The balance of actors is crucial, only when all actors are represented - research, civil society, private sector, politics and administration on all levels – are challenges defined adequately and long-term solutions created. - Inclusion is not just a matter of democracy or human rights. In urban planning and sustainable development, it is a question of defining coherent, legitimate and high quality development and at the same time guaranteeing the implementation of policy. These lessons learned have also been identified by other important sustainable urban development and local governance actors such as SALAR, SKL International and Mistra Urban Futures. We cooperate closely to share these lessons learned in a wider national, regional and global context. For the think tank, these lessons learned have been closely integrated into our other projects and programmes, further emphasising our conviction that inclusive leadership and local good governance is key to reaching the SDGs, NUA and other global agreements. However, in scaling up these experiences in a global context, we are aware that the strong local government in the Nordic countries is rather an exception than a rule. Even though governance structure and relations between central, regional and local government vary widely throughout the world, the conviction of inclusion of multi-stakeholder actors is always possible. We hope that our experience will help to regard inclusion as an asset and not an obstacle to urban planning and development.

Resources devoted to delivery

No. Title Source Author Publication Title Volume Number Date Page Number 1 Nu skapas framtidens städer <http://omvarldenberattar.se/framtidens-stad/> Agneta Gunnarsson Omvärlden , 8 February 2017 . Edit 2 Nordic region will be first to implement New Urban Agenda, declaration states <http://citiscopes.org/story/2017/nordic-region-will-be-first-implement-new-urban-agenda-declaration-states> Gregory Scruggs Citiscope . 7 February 2017 . Edit 3 UN-Habitat Deputy Executive Director roots for New Urban Agenda <https://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-deputy-executive-director-roots-for-new-urban-agenda/> UN-Habitat UN-Habitat . 16 June 2017 . Edit 4 Världens länder letar lösningar för snabbt växande städer <http://www.dn.se/ekonomi/global-utveckling/varldens-lander-letar-losningar-for-snabbt-vaxande-stader/> Editorial Dagens Nyheter (Leading Swedish daily newspaper) . 16 October 2016 . Edit 5 Debatt: Den globala fattigdomen kan bara lösas lokalt <http://www.dn.se/ekonomi/global-utveckling/debatt-den-globala-fattigdomen-kan-bara-losas-lokalt/> Johan Hassel Dagens Nyheter (Leading Swedish daily newspaper) . 6 July 2017 . Edit 6 Det går inte att bygga en autostrada in i samhället <http://www.dubaiaward.ae/entry/form2a/eyJpdil6IjNpVFJlQjNlU1RoM2wrTDRidXd5OWc9PSIsInZhbnVlIjojNTJcL0V5SVg4Qk04YkZPbnZjRFprbVE9PS> Matilda Molander Dagens Nyheter (Leading Swedish daily newspaper) .27 May 2017

Conclusion

The multi-stakeholder NUP initiative has been greeted by several Swedish municipalities and several local and national actors in the other Nordic countries. It will officially be handed over to the responsible minister on World Cities Day. As said, it has together with other initiatives pushed for a national responsibility for urban policy and a more coherent body of policy that today are the responsibilities of several ministers. It has also helped to put sustainable cities and local implementation of global agendas on the agenda in Sweden. For example, Sweden's action plan for the implementation of the



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2030 Agenda is highlighting cities as one of its priorities in achieving the SDGs. It remains to be seen if proposed changes in legislation and processes will follow the policy proposal.