

WHY MIGRATION AND CITIES?

The issue of migration has become increasingly urgent around the world. An estimated one billion people are on the move. The reasons for migrating are as varied as the migrants themselves, but almost always predicated on the search for a better future. However diverse their motives and backgrounds, migration invariably ends in a city.

In their host communities of transit or arrival, especially in regions receiving large numbers of migrants, tensions between new migrants and the existing, settled population can occur over access to services as well as social and economic opportunities.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the first global development framework to officially recognise migration as a key issue contributing to sustainable development. Following 2030 Agenda, 193 governments unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and agreed to develop a Global Compact on Migration for safe, orderly and regular migration.

Taken together, more nuanced and informed policies on migration need to emerge and the interlink between urbanisation, cities and human mobility in developing countries is a key part of these dynamics.

ABOUT THE JOINT WORK PROGRAMME

With support from the Swiss Government, Cities Alliance will be implementing the Joint Work Programme (JWP) on Migration and Cities. These JWPs are multi-year activities that provide a platform for member coordination, engagement, and information sharing. They help support diagnostics, evidence-based policy recommendations, and provide a mechanism for collectively advocating shared messages on a global scale.

For the Migration and Cities JWP, the Cities Alliance will support partner cities, local governments, and communities to respond to, manage, and capitalise on the opportunities and contributions arising from migration.

Migration is one of four thematic focus areas for the Cities Alliance Strategic Plan 2018-21, along with gender, economic growth and resilience. Over the next few months, the programme and its activities will be fleshed out, and an official launch is planned for mid-2018.

MIGRATION AND CITIES: REPRESENTATION

[Inception Meeting of the Migration and Cities JWP, Bern, 17-18 October 2017](#)

On 17–18 October 2017, the Cities Alliance team travelled to Bern, Switzerland to participate in two days of discussion co-hosted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The first day focused on promoting the role of cities in the 2030

Agenda, providing a platform for participants to share experiences, learn from strategic approaches, and expand their network of relevant partners.

The second day was devoted to discussing a JWP on Migration and Cities. The goal was to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and strengthen partnerships on Migration and Cities by bringing together Cities Alliance members, international, and Swiss development partners with relevant experience.

In addition to the many members in attendance, the Cities Alliance and SDC gathered a range of experts from organisations including the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

The discussion was lively and rich, and by the end of the day three possible focus areas for the JWP had crystallised:

- Integration and social cohesion;
- The potential role of secondary cities in migration; and
- How to better link places of origin and destination.

The overwhelming consensus was that a better understanding of the nature and impact of migration on cities is much needed. The connection between urbanisation and migration presents development challenges and opportunities that are not fully understood, analysed, or addressed. The emerging JWP will bring members and partners together to inspire new global thinking on how cities can manage opportunities arising from migration and the

impact on urban programming over the long term.

The full workshop report is available at: http://citiesalliance.org/sites/citiesalliance.org/files/CA_Bern_Final_WEB.PDF



Inception meeting of the Migration and Cities JWP, Bern, 17 October 2017

Cities Alliance Assembly, Jinja, Uganda 13-15 December 2017

Two months after the Bern workshop, the Cities Alliance Assembly took place in Jinja, Uganda. As one of the thematic focus areas for the 2018-21 Cities Alliance Strategic Plan, a session was dedicated to Migration and Cities. The Migration and Cities JWP discussion paper *Urban Migration – Shaping Socio-Economic Futures* was also distributed at the Assembly.

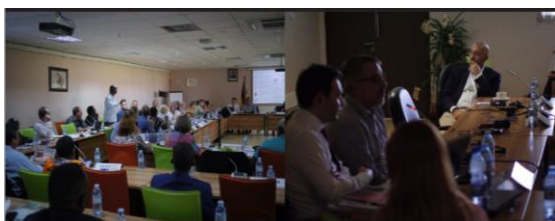
The session started with a keynote address on *Global Migration and Arrival Cities: Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean* by Dr. Edesio Fernandes, University College London, and remarks by Mr. Markus Reisle, SDC. A panel discussion followed on the question: “How do city authorities perceive and act on migration?”.

A main objective of the JWP will be supporting municipalities and promoting a narrative of integration and social cohesion.

The discussion was led by Clare Short, Chair of Cities Alliance Management Board, and included Dr. Loren Landau, Director of the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS); Issa Kato Afeku, Mayor of the Municipality of Arua; Grace Mugada, Mayor of the Municipality of Hoima; and Dyfed Aubrey, Head of Programme Division Directorate, UN-Habitat.

The discussion highlighted several points:

1. Fewer people are migrating to big cities, with more heading to small and medium-sized cities. However, without economic opportunities in secondary cities, many migrants continue their journey to capital cities and ultimately to other countries, looking for better opportunities.
2. Municipalities need support in physical planning, increasing local revenue generation, and fostering public private partnerships for local economic development. If municipalities are not supported, migration flows will end up with an increasing amount of people living in slums.
3. Informal settlement development is expensive for cities and implementing regularisation programmes is difficult. Planning for inclusion is cheaper than retrofitting consolidated informal settlements.
4. Legal and institutional changes are needed. In Africa for example, youth constitute an increasingly proportion of the population. Significant numbers of young people are moving from areas where there are no economic opportunities to cities. It is essential to find a way to accommodate their needs.



Cities Alliance Assembly, Jinja, 15 December 2017

Cities Alliance Migration and Cities JWP at the World Urban Forum 2018

On 9 February 2018, Clare Short, the Chair of Cities Alliance Management Board, moderated a special session at the World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur on *Unlocking the Positive Impacts of Migration in Cities*.

The session included Carola Gunnarsson, Mayor of Sala, Sweden; Dato’ Sri Hj. Mohammad Mentek, Secretary General, Housing and Local Government, Malaysia; Doug Saunders, Journalist, *The Globe and Mail* and author of *Arrival City*; Jean-Louis de Brouwer, Director of Europe, Eastern Neighbourhood and Middle East, DG ECHO, European Commission; Jil Helke, Director for International Cooperation and Partnerships, IOM; Raf Tuts, Director Programme Division, UN- Habitat; and Tobias Metzner, Regional Portfolio Manager, ICMPPD.

The panel highlighted that society worldwide is witnessing the emergence of an unprecedented refugee situation. Although refugee camps are no longer a temporary affair, they are not planned as a long-term solution.

Panellists discussed key factors contributing to the successful inclusion and integration of migrants and refugees in their host communities, the obstacles impeding proper integration processes, the impact of various sources of migration, and the role of local governments and institutions in the inclusion and integration of migrants.

They agreed that while migration flows and regulations are managed primarily by national governments, local authorities are coping with the daily challenges of social and economic integration of newcomers and their interaction with the host community. Local governments have the responsibility to provide equal access to rights and basic services for all, including migrants and refugees. However, most of the time they are limited in term of finance and capacities.

DISCUSSION PAPER: TOWARDS A JWP ON MIGRATION AND CITIES

After the discussions in Bern and Jinja, the JWP finalised a discussion paper titled *Urban Migration – Shaping Socio-Economic Futures* that outlines a potential approach and thematic lenses for a JWP. All three lenses areas will have a strong focus on gender.

The full [discussion paper](http://citiesalliance.org/sites/citiesalliance.org/files/CA_Bern_Final_WEB.PDF) is available on this link:
http://citiesalliance.org/sites/citiesalliance.org/files/CA_Bern_Final_WEB.PDF

1. Integration and Social Cohesion

Most cities do not consciously plan for or understand what it means to integrate migrants from diverse cultural, economic, political and religious backgrounds. Outdated policy frameworks and weak local administrations often result in tensions between new migrants and the existing, settled population over access to services, social and economic opportunities, and cultural differences.

Migration to cities brings both challenges and opportunities. Migrant aspirations for social and economic mobility can either be realised or destroyed through exclusion and deprivation. The difference depends on a city's policy response to migration and its ability to plan and develop practical solutions that consider how migration transforms, expands, and diversifies the city and its inhabitants.

2. The Role of Secondary Cities

Most population growth is taking place in secondary cities, where backlogs and needs are greatest and resources weakest. It is not surprising that migrants arriving in these cities either do not settle or contribute to urban degradation and inefficient, costly city growth.

It is possible to imagine a different trajectory: If capacitated, secondary cities have

significant potential to transform and drive rural and regional development and to benefit men, women, girls and boys alike. And if the governance and economies of secondary cities were to be transformed so that they attract investment and generate decent, gender-responsive employment, the scale of the potential impact on global human mobility could be astonishing.

A [Cities Alliance blog](http://www.citiesalliance.org/migration-lozet-blog) entitled “How migration can benefit secondary cities” is available on this link:
<http://www.citiesalliance.org/migration-lozet-blog>.

3. Better Linking Departing and Arrival Cities

Migrants tend to form country and hometown associations that allow them to maintain ties with and materially support their places of origin. Many of these groups are voluntary and consist of working-class members, who have little time to devote to the groups and so they tend to be organisationally weak.

Migrants also often remit money to families left behind. Given the low levels of household livelihood security, the money tends to be spent on immediate, basic needs – food for the family, children's school fees – rather than invested or saved. Relying on monthly remittances is risky, as it is likely that they will decline over time as new generations are born in the host country with weakened links to the homeland. The question emerges if there are better ways to structure remittances such that they help build household livelihoods as well as empowering the recipient individuals and households.

Download *Urban Migration – Shaping Socio-Economic Futures*:

http://citiesalliance.org/sites/citiesalliance.org/files/Migration_JWP_Concept_Note_15092017_Post_workshop.pdf

OTHER ITEMS

Migration and Cities JWP Team

The Cities Alliance Secretariat is currently finalising the recruitment of the Programme Manager for the Migration and Cities JWP. In parallel, the Secretariat is establishing a pool of experts who will act as external consultants throughout the entire length of the JWP.

A Constituency for the JWP

Several Cities Alliance members and partners have shown a strong interest in the issue of migration and cities, and a strong constituency committed to this topic already exists. Cities Alliance will continue engagement with interested partners.

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