

Urban Development: Habitat III-Conference, 17.-20. October 2016 in Quito/Ecuador

Event: Integrated resource management for sustainable urban development for all: the urban nexus as an action-oriented guiding principle

Tuesday, October 18, 2016 in the German Pavilion from 17.00-17.45

Institution/Organization:

GIZ/Integrated Resource Management in Asian cities: the Urban Nexus Project (leading), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), Local Governments for Sustainability/South Asia (ICLEI SA)

Event title:

Integrated resource management for sustainable urban development for all: the urban nexus as an action-oriented guiding principle

Methodology and structure according to guidelines of the involved stakeholders:

Interactive panel discussion with short statements (5 minutes) by Dr. Stefanos Fotiou/Director/Environment and Development Division/UN ESCAP (panelist), Emani Kumar/Deputy Secretary General ICLEI World Secretariat & Executive Director/ICLEI South Asia (panelist), Mayor John Bongat/Naga City/Philippines (panelist), Introduction and summary by Ruth Erlbeck/GIZ Project Manager/ Integrated Resource Management in Asian cities: the Urban Nexus Project (Moderator) combined with some strategic questions to the panelists and thereafter opening up to the plenary for contributions.

The **moderator Ruth Erlbeck** introduced the **Urban Nexus** Project, financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), implemented by GIZ in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific (UN ESCAP) and ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability). The urban Nexus was brought into the discussion by Germany in the landmark 2011 Bonn Conference prior to the Rio + 20 Summit, encompassing the sectors water, energy and food security, their synergies and their trade-offs. The urban Nexus is considered an action-oriented guiding principle to promote multi sectoral planning, management and implementation of infrastructure projects within local governments in the context of a circular economy vision. The governance aspect is equally important focusing on a decentralization of national competences as well as financial resources and the strengthening of capacities at local as well as at subnational and national level.

The Urban Nexus is embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda approved in Quito, Ecuador. Both Agendas are to be implemented in an integrated manner – the urban Nexus being an important tool (vehicle) to enhance integrated cross sectoral planning and implementation enabling decision makers and civil servants of local and national governments to “look out of the box”.

Dr. Stefanos Fotiou/Director/Environment and Development Division/UN ESCAP pointed out that “by 2018 the Asia and Pacific region will pass a historic threshold, in which over half of its population will be living in urban areas. Cities are increasingly national development assets producing an estimated 80 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) on just 2-3 per cent of the land’s surface. “

Yet this growth pattern is also highly inefficient, and is placing an intolerable burden on the world’s resources. According to United Nations estimates, by 2030 the world’s population will

need 30 per cent more water, 45 per cent more energy and 50 per cent more food - and climate change will exacerbate this stress even further.

Noting the need for transformative urban change and the associated challenges, **Dr. Stefanos Fotiou** confirmed that UN ESCAP is committed to support an urban integrated resource management agenda. The **urban nexus framework** cuts across sectors such as land (food), water energy and waste – to support the region’s urbanization and sustainability challenges. It provides a useful framework which moves beyond sector-specific policies and planning. An integrated or nexus approach advocates a resource-efficient path to economic growth which is people-centered and respects planetary boundaries, while concurrently meeting the needs of both present and future generations.

Understanding and meeting the challenges associated with mainstreaming nexus approach ‘transformative financing mechanisms’, and ‘cross-sectoral governance are required to address response to growing risks and uncertainties, with a focus on stronger networks across the private sector, levels of governments and bureaucratic structures, as well as informal networks.

The imperative of articulating a new urban agenda moves beyond linear resource use and towards multi-level and collaborative governance.

Dr. Stefanos Fotiou highlighted that it is important to recognize that the New Urban Agenda has specific and many references to resource efficiency which is a core concept of the urban nexus approach...

Emani Kumar/Deputy Secretary General ICLEI World Secretariat & Executive Director/ICLEI South Asia elaborated practically on how two Indian cities (Nagpur in Maharashtra with 2,5 million inhabitants and Rajkot in Gujarat with 1,2 million inhabitants) became Nexus „Followers“ in the 2nd phase of the Urban Nexus Project.

After an Expression of Interest (EoI) sent to 17 cities 11 Indian Cities responded (**more than 60%**). The GIZ Urban Nexus team and ICLEI SA made visits to the cities finalizing their selection July, 2016. It was ensured that the selected cities are also part of **at least one of the 4 Missions of the Government of India (Smart City Mission, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation Scheme (AMRUT), Swach Bharat Mission (SBM), Housing for All.**

Up to now the following steps have already been accomplished:

- Signing of a tripartite MoU between project cities, GIZ Urban Nexus and ICLEI SA. 2 MoUs (each with Nagpur and Rajkot)
- **2 engineers** each from Rajkot and Nagpur trained in innovative wastewater management (focusing on vacuum sewer technology) in Hanau, Germany in September, 2016 to be applied in the respective metropolitan areas

Water demand management study including water balance and recommendations to improve water management discussed, first measures already ordered to be implemented by Commissioner of Rajkot

CEO of EU Welle, a German enterprise handling solid waste management, presented Maximum Yield Technology (MYT) as one of the options for integrated solid waste considering the circular economy as model (don't waste the waste").

Scope of work in Nagpur

- Introduction of innovative engineering technologies with regard to solid waste management considering reuse of water and producing energy from waste
- Study and provide feasible options for the rejuvenation of the Nag River and surrounding areas
- Optimization of water and waste water management considering high water leakages.
- Cooperation with the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) for the introduction of innovative engineering technologies

Scope of work in Rajkot

- Introduction of innovative engineering technologies with regard to **water and wastewater management**, reuse of water and nutrients.
- Improved building materials, building guidelines and affordable **low-cost housing technologies** including standards.

Finally, Emani Kumar stated "the nexus approach of integrated resource management is to be scaled up at the local, state & national level, **enabling Indian Cities to integrate the Nexus Approach in their Urban Planning Activities thereby resulting in Optimized Resources Management, Circular Economy and Improved Institutional Performance.**"

Mayor John Bongat/Naga City/Philippines elaborated on the practical Nexus approach in his city.

"Do more with less" was his final conclusion emphasizing the importance of realistic planning to maintain credibility. "Local Governments should live with their means" and integrating the Nexus principle and the SDGs into the integrated local development plans of the city, however, allowing a certain flexibility to address urgent upcoming problems and support the implementation of SDGs.

However, it is obvious for Mayor John Bongat that public participation, a bottom – up approach, is the only way to empower cities in a sustainable way. The engagement of the population should not be considered a burden but an opportunity for a stronger negotiating power of local governments also towards the national government enhancing decentralization of competencies as well as financial resources to the local level.

He elaborated on the creation of a cross sectoral Nexus Task Force in Naga City institutionalized by resolution of himself as Mayor and a Memorandum of Understanding creating the basis for collaboration with the GIZ Urban Nexus Project.

The Nexus project has developed improved housing schemes in collaboration with Naga City and Habitat for Humanity as well as a pilot climate change resilient low-cost house in collaboration with the Bicol College for Applied Science and Technology (BISCAST) to be used as a row house saving up to 40% of construction costs in comparison to conventional construction

due environmentally friendly construction technologies (prefabricated beams and hollow blocks) without wooden formwork.

Studies on improved solid waste management and innovative waste water management for selected Barangays have been completed whereas a waste water management system for the main market is underway as well as another comprehensive housing scheme. Housing schemes are ideal for cross sectoral approaches as housing requires the cooperation of different sectoral departments to reach its final goal providing integrated infrastructure for improved living conditions.

The **discussion** concentrated on the following **points & recommendations**:

- Innovative resource efficient technologies from Germany are in high demand in India as well as in South East Asian cities
- To start where the problems of the cities are
- First use all possible resources you can mobilize within your city (taxes, charges, fees) before requesting additional finances
- Cross sectoral cooperation might seem more time consuming but pays off in the end
- The bottom-up approach is essential, cities have to fight for more autonomy, also with regard to their planning procedures
- The Philippines have been a good example of bottom-up planning up to now; hopefully it will not be revised.

The final recommendation was “do more with less”, stated by Mayor John Bongat from Naga City in the Philippines at the end of the event.

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