



Tackling Urban Health Challenges in a Changing World

Special Session

Tuesday, June 28, 2022, 16:00-18:00, Auditorium

As the world transitions through a global pandemic and against a background of unprecedented urbanization, extreme climate events, and conflicts, the health of urban populations is increasingly at risk. Health services are pushed to breaking point and often, classic public health interventions are the only option to protect vulnerable citizens. Additionally, the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the existing health inequities.

Delivering health services is increasingly relying on multi-sectoral approaches, requiring city authorities to develop new governance approaches and innovations to deliver health. Many diseases are effectively managed by modifying the living environment, so planning of urban areas, access to open-space, good housing and environmental services are critical. As WHO defines good health as both physical health and well-being, healthy urban space can support better outcomes.

Given the speed with which many isolated diseases can quickly reach pandemic proportions, the role of city leaders is now recognized as an effective, nimble implementing partner. Understanding their capacities will be important to manage future pandemics.

In conflict settings, aside from injuries sustained, migration-induced urban growth to neighbouring- regions and countries, places an additional burden on weak health services.

Re-thinking urban space is thus important to tackle health both in re-design of existing cities and towns, and also for the many urban areas yet to be built. By “designing-out” ill health, we can ensure that significant gains in health, achieved through treatment campaigns, can be maintained. This is equally important in cities in the global south and north. Healthy environments go hand-in-hand with good urban design.

This session will present a range of health challenges faced by city leaders and some of the new approaches to managing disease, including tracking, managing disease epidemics and prevention through improved urban design.

Agenda

16:00 – 16:45	<p>High-Level Panel: Global Strategic Priorities and Importance of Tackling Urban Health Challenges</p> <p><i>What is the main urban health challenge from your perspective? What is your organization doing to advance urban health?</i></p> <p>Moderated by: Graham Alabaster, Chief Geneva office, UN-Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat (confirmed in person) • Naoko Yamamoto, Assistant Director-General, WHO (confirmed in person) • Dmitry Mariyasin, Deputy Executive Secretary, UN ECE (confirmed in person) • Sir Danny Alexander, Vice President, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (TBC) • Michel Sidibé, Commissioner, Global Commission on Drug Policy (confirmed in person)
16:45 – 17:00	<p>Keynote Address: Global Trends in Urban Health</p> <p>Mark Nieuwenhuijsen, Director of the Urban Planning, Environment and Health Initiative, Barcelona Institute of Global Health</p>
17:00 – 17:40	<p>City Panel: The Role of Local Authorities in the Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Urban Health Challenges</p> <p><i>How is urbanisation affecting the health and well-being of populations? What are the main challenges and inequalities? What have we learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of preparedness, response and recovery in urban contexts? How can this inform future action? What are the policies and governance measures that can be put in place to address gaps and identify opportunities? What are the challenges in cities in conflict including those as a result of migration? What can stakeholders, national governments and local governments do? How can we assess the needs and provide tools for improvement?</i></p> <p>Moderated by: Kamelia Kemileva, Co-Director, Geneva Cities Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onyeka Erobu, Senior Health Adviser to the Mayor, Freetown City Council (confirmed online) • Rotina Mohd Daik, Director General, National Landscape Department, Malaysia (confirmed in person) • Ana Paula Matos, Vice Mayor, Salvador (confirmed online) • H.E. Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulrahman bin Rashid Al Khalifa, Governor of the Capital Governorate, Bahrain (TBC) • Sulayman Abdulmumuni Ujah, Chairman, The Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities, Nigeria (confirmed in person)
17:40 – 18:00	<p>Knowledge, Tools and Programmes</p> <p>Moderated by: Graham Alabaster, Chief Geneva office, UN-Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nathalie Roebbel, Head of Urban Health, WHO (confirmed in person) • Noor Abdisalan, Technical officer, WHO (confirmed online) • Sarah Beeching, Executive Director, Oshun Partnership (confirmed in person) • Anne Amin, Legal Specialist, Policy, Legislation and Governance Section, UN-Habitat (confirmed in person)
18:00	<p>Closing Remarks</p>

Logistics

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Translation: Polish, Spanish, English, French, Russian, Chinese, Arabic + ISL [Polish + English]

Streaming: [UN Web TV](#) (for participants to join remotely)

Venue: Auditorium (12)

