14 January 2022 **UCLG Town Hall Process Kick-off Meeting**

The 2022 edition of the Town-Hall will renew the structured dialogue between the local and regional governments constituency and internationally organized civil society and will be strengthened by the presence of international partners and 3 cross-cutting caucuses (youth, feminism and accessibility). The subjects of the Town-Hall are directly linked to UCLG's Pact for the Future and its three axes: People, Planet and Government.

**Objective**  
Get acquainted meeting. The proposed roadmap of activities, Lead Organizations and caucuses will be presented. UCLG will introduce the way towards the Pact for the Future. Agenda

**Kick off**

15.00-15.10 **Welcome**: Emilia Saiz

UCLG is an association of local and regional governments with over 250,000 members globally. It elects new leadership every 3 years within its World Congress and also define policy direction. In 2019 for first time, we called together a Town Hall process with leading organizations and many other partners. It was our objective to ensure that the way we did policy reflected the way our cities and territories as living beings, as more than governments. We had to follow priorities of communities. Local governments have to represent interests of their citizens. We had been building partnerships where we came to realize that many issues and priorities were ones that could reflect priorities of civil society and vice versa. We have strong legacy in joint messages via Habitat III and the SDGs. Let’s ensure that we have our own space with the Town Halls that was the heart of our Durban Congress and has been the inspiration and pillar for our work after the world closed down. We had a retreat in Tangier, Morocco before the lockdown. We continued going on listening. #Citiesarelistening was our hashtag. There is a platform dedicated to the work we have been doing and invited all to visit it.

October new summit and Congress where we will continue building with you. Our work has influenced each other; going beyond sectors and some thematic areas. We have tried to create a compilation of things we have learned that are critical for our future. We realize that our work needs to be revisited. We have claimed space at international level by demonstrating our ability to tackle some of the challenges we are facing. We haven’t done everything we could but this pandemic showcased that we were right about what we were advocating and has shown that there needs to be a compact between communities and government to face our challenges. We need to have a clear objective (Emilia: need to embrace notion of Durban Declaration – We are safeguarding the dreams and aspirations of communities and need to be reflected by our decisions). Responsibilities we have for future generations is daunting. We have used so many of the resources of the ecosystem and need to strike a balance that local and regional governments must have the full trust of communities to play this role. You need to help us shape our work and to hold us accountable. We will need to make choices and to have your voices around the table. We want to propose a new social contract around SDGs and factor in the future around people, planet and government. Next decade for UCLG should ensure that priorities for the future is kept. Happy to see some of critical issues we need to look at: caring at the heart from service delivery to a caring society is critical and will transform role of government; public is back (need to regain trust and rethink government); need to transform our relationship with the planet (culture and way we understand ourselves in the planet is key).

Caucuses are new. Issues that are relevant for everything we do. As movement we owe youth a big part of our vision; accessibility is no longer an option but must be embedded into every aspect of what we do; feminism and women and equality must be met.

15.10 – 15.20 **Introduction to the UCLG Town Hall Process by the UCLG Team**

Pablo: **4 broad themes: global commons, trust and government, climate and culture, caring systems. Two hats of Town Halls: 1) co-creating process and 2) main project towards international agendas with focus on SG’s Our Common Agenda.**

What are we planning?

1. One leading organization for each Town Hall with others contributing
2. cross cutting causes: youth, feminist, accessibility will have representatives in each Town Hall and will each have a paper which will be created during the year and delivered to local authorities.
3. Policy papers need to have concrete recommendations to be presented to our policy councils and governing bodies
4. Result in our Compact for the Future

Each Town Hall will have its own process and are open to include more constituencies if needed.

**Roadmap** Massimo Perrino UCLG

1. 14 January kick off
2. Jan – Feb Thinking big – one meeting per Town Hall = guiding questions with key note speaker

* 24 January Global Commons
* 25 January Trust and Government
* 31 January Climate and Culture
* 1 February Caring Systems

1. All Town Hall meeting at UCLG 21-25 February retreat in Barcelona to build on deliberations of earlier meetings and will be open to UCLG members
2. March – April Deep dive visit once per Town Hall; outline of policy paper
3. June-July co-drafting and consultations on policy papers via UCLGMeets platform; have a profile for each person and provide comments
4. UCLG World Summit 10-14 October in Korea

Luca Bergamo, former vice mayor of Rome; behind Rome Charter on Cultural Rights

Wants to believe that a more dignified future can be built with civil society.

15:20-16:15 **Round of Introductions and expectations of Leading Organizations and Caucuses 5 min each**

Trust and Government:

Eugenie L. Birch, Chair of the General Assembly of Partners

Members:

Open Government Partnership

Fixed Africa

International IDEA

(Youth caucus, feminism, and accessibility)

International partner UN Habitat New York Office

Eugenie Birch:

1. Thanked UCLC for including us and for your enthusiasm which is extremely welcomed by civil society that GAP represents.
2. Durban experience was extremely productive
3. Organization is more spectacular with well defined steps; organization of topics; much to be shared so that we don’t duplicate; love idea of coalitions of those working on the Town Hall that will spread the word globally; thinking meetings
4. Questions: not too many now. Will follow same format working with an editor as before. Will be engaged in defining trust and government.

Caring Systems

Greg Munro, Director of Cities Alliance, lead organization and

Members:

Public Service International

IFLA

Civil Society Action Committee

(Youth, Feminism and Accessibility)

International partner: UNHC2030

Greg Munro: Moving from local government to local governance is key but we having been doing that sufficiently. We still have lessons to learn to strength voice of civil society to influence local delivery and leadership. How interdependent our economies are and putting people in the forefront is important.

Question: Slum Dwellers International and WIEGO are important partners and asked about how to include them. Emilia: Yes. Luca: yes that is a responsibility to include partners.

Global Commons

Lorena Zarate, Global Platform for the Right to the City, lead organization

Members: Cities Coalition for Digital Rights

Open Society Foundations

ACCORD

Youth, Feminism and Accessibility Caucus

International partner: FAO and UNICEF

Lorena Zarate: Right to the City is a political space including professionals, local governments, movements, etc. Key milestones were Durban process and Habitat III in 3 levels: 1) deepen shared narratives including how to transform societies; 2) consolidate and widen collaborations and partnerships; 3) strengthen public policies – need a renewed public social collaborations to bring justice, democracy and sustainability.

Outreach of the commons –

suggestion to discuss what it is not just the global one but also within cities; material dimensions of land, housing, food and symbolic dimensions of culture and heritage; all the public is common but not all the commons are public; centrality of care and a feminist approach; focus on the how.

We have developed 4 papers since Durban some are on line.

Process for Habitat III and Durban and got resistance from powerful actors including from the European Union of city as a common good; LGBT rights was also missing.

Doubts and questions: more details about the first meeting which will define scope of the theme and partnerships who will be involved and are new to us for collaboration.

1) We have little time to build trust.

2) what is public outreach during the process and not wait until October.

3) what support UCLG can offer us

Nelson Saule Junior asked how is the dialogue between civil society and local authorities will happen. Shouldn’t we begin with some leaders from local authorities in the process?

Climate and Culture

Lead organization: Andrew Potts, ICOMOS- Climate Heritage Network Secretariat launched in 2019 in Edinburgh consisting of over 250 networks

Members:

Climate Chance

Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature

International Indigenous Women’s Network

(youth, feminism and accessibility)

International partner: MCR2030

Andrew Potts:

World agreed in 2015 to hold below 1.5 Celsius but number is increasing not decreasing moving in the wrong direction. What has been missing from climate strategy has been cultural dimensions recognized by UCLG which has termed culture as the fourth dimension of sustainable development.

Challenges with this topic:

Goes often unrecognized

Culture is part of a solution and part of the problem of climate change (extractive view)

Questions:

Four topics are each comprehensive and transversal and how we learn and connect will be interesting. Would like to not be too siloed in a culture sphere as there are not entry points into international agreements.

It will be timely as UCLG will wrap up before COP in Egypt

**Caucuses:**

Feminist: Huairou Commission Sri Husnaini Sofjan

Huairou developed gender equality and women’s empowerment for the last UCLG policy paper; feminist is for all who support women’s equality. UCLG created the feminist caucus taking into account women’s empowerment and gender perspective.

Congratulates UCLG bringing in UN agencies.

Question: We are expected to follow each Town Hall discussion. Are we given opportunity to review their drafts to make sure that we are included developing trust from both sides. Pablo: yes.

We are expected to produce a paper which links together 4 Town Halls, yes?

Accessibility: Victor Pineda, President and Founder of World Enabled

Emilia set stage really well about having a real stakeholder participatory process and what progress we have seen since last Congress. Civil society has tremendous resources and capacity to offer cities that are listening and are engaged in executing transformations on the ground. Framing is about sustainable urban transformation that requires coordination of language, resources with mechanisms within governance structures that creates accountability to monitor, enforce, reward at the local level and at all levels. A strength of our process is that we have networks. World Enabled was one of first to open up dialogue not just city to city to broaden the dialogue. Town Hall policy papers of 2019 laid solid framework of how we can tackle urban challenges and for urban transformation. UCLG has elevated accessibility of care and as a universal operating concept for government. Our Common Agenda shows we have to accelerate interventions based on consultations as well as more importantly to create clusters of active, knowledgeable connected organizations that can embed actions that are stronger. We need to break the siloes. We see older people and PwD left behind with infrastructure related to climate change. Also left out are gender issues; also need to understand how race, gender and disability play out in being left out.

We will look at:

1. Practical interventions – accessibility is an ecosystem
2. How do we lock capabilities with the right knowledge. We have developed training models with UCLG on accessibility
3. Innovation – need to reinvent our future, breaking new ground with new systems and new ways and leveraging new tools for equity.

Youth: Viviane Ogou Corbi, Youth Council of Barcelona

She is part of this Council but not representing it today. Youth caucus is in the process of being built. We are men, women, non binary, activists. Most of us are privileged and we will try to reach out to non urban youth. Every day sees more initiatives for youth to speak up and to contribute and we are motivated to claim for our rights. We believe in very different things. We want to be part of transformations that you are promoting and be slightly revolutionary and bring our demands and are ready to learn from you and to support your efforts to move forward on our common objectives.

Luca: positioning of women, men and non binary is different than prior generations. He asked about the multi layered process including the Town Halls building constituencies. How can we maximize accessibility of the value of this process to have policies implemented?

Emilia Sainz: acknowledged some observers on the call. Grateful that you are saying we are on the right path and fighting the good fight as it is not easy. We need to fight to put feminism on the agenda. We have matured together. We are not forgetting specific topics e.g. informalities which continues to be a difficult topic for local governments. We are building on our legacy together. It is bold move to combine climate emergency with culture. Likes the idea that Lorena brought up on some of the losses that we had to assume with Habitat III e.g. Democracy, notion of the city as a common good. Intergenerational social contact; understanding accessibility beyond care; moving from local government to local governance are all important remarks.

UCLG support: look together to see what is possible. We cannot pay for your time but to compensate for deliverables and will cover participation in critical moments if we can travel again. We are trying to expand methodology and offer some practices of our membership to invite us to join field visit at least one per Town Hall. We want you to visit our leaders in action.

When do you talk with political leadership of UCLG? You agree that it is too late to do so at the Congress. We want to connect the Town Halls with policy councils which will be meeting throughout the year. The retreat is another moment of meeting with them.

Outreach – how and when will we do this? Her team is kicking off the Town Hall via social media and are delighted to get your suggestions on how to make this visible globally. We want UN agencies to acknowledge us too. This is a co-creation process and there is a lot of room for you to fill in. April 28 HL meeting on the New Urban Agenda is one opportunity.

How will we work together with new partners? Leading organizations is an UCLG process. We are trying from the Secretariat to see leading organizations to safeguard the process. We value your platforms, organizations and perspectives. Many of you are partnerships. We entrust you to help us see where pitfalls might be. We need to engage others and let us know if others should be here. Upcoming meetings are important in how to organize yourselves. She suggests a prep meeting to explore approaches with us to make adjustments if we need to make. There is no single format for the Town Halls. We want you to think big. We are working with reports on path towards equality with different chapters many overlapping with the Town Halls and will be asked on findings of their research. **Our group are activists with an agenda to propose so that things change. We need to allow ourselves to dream making recommendations to shape our future while addressing needs of current generations.**

We are expecting written recommendations. We have an interactive UCLG platform. Results of deliberations and AV results will be collected into this interactive platform that all can access.

Format of first meetings – we will get back on this

What we expect of outcomes:

Pablo: caucuses – representatives have full membership to all Town Halls. Yes the ideal is to have a self standing document from each caucus. Ideal is to meet after Thinking Big Meetings and have 1-3 interactions and will have access to UCLG Meets with drafts available. Thinking Big Meeting – ask each Town Hall lead organization will provide 3 questions.

Emilia: noted comment from Kathy about ageing concerns being left out of accessibility caucus. We had not intention to not include ageing issues when World Enabled was named as the lead. “You are smart on in notifying us of the importance of older persons” and happy for the team to help you address this. Victor is open to this kind of partnership.

Lorena: one question on in person and ability to travel this year needs to be discussed so we have hybrid models. Need to combine this process with UN ones to take advantage our themes. Emilia: this process will be mostly online. Hybrid retreat. Korean Congress will be hybrid in part and cannot guarantee now if Town Halls will be so. Aiming for assuring participation. She noted the time difference coming from Korea.

Greg: all fine

Andrew: all fine. He wasn’t involved in Durban process so has practical questions eg how keynote and participants are selected. He can write to Pablo and Massimo. Emilia: if you want to contribute, let us know. We want Ubuntu advisors and some of our advisors play a role and send us yours.

GAP VPs and Kathy are here: Ines we are there to contribute with our different constituencies. She was recently appointed chair of AGGI of UN-Habitat. She will share her extensive notes with Emilia, Pablo and Massimo.

Sri: Besides our participation in Thinking Big Meeting can caucus leads to meet with organizations in Town Halls and can we request organizations to have a point person to feminist caucus for example? Massimo: yes we can discuss this with lead of Town Halls. You will receive all communications from the organizations and will be able to organize something.

Octavi de la Verga Mas: He is an observer. He sees leap from Durban to now and is impressed by commitment of partner organizations and UCLG. Focus on topics fits nicely with Metropolis’ work. Everything is changing so fast.

**All should think about: fighting inequalities; building empathetic societies, taking into account digital disruptions.** How do you connect with the work of the UCLG sections?

Emilia: It is a leap forward. How are we making sure that all of this impacts our work including of our UCLG sections (will end up in our strategy and in our work plans). We might be able to connect with the Assembly Process of the World Congress.

Nelson Saule Junior: he is OK

**Wrap up and next steps**

Luca: This is his first time in this process and not representing anyone. He has admired UCLG to bring diverse views together and come out with meaningful action. Urgencies from the pandemic exist. His wish is that quality that can generate policies, connections and alliances also follows things through implementation. It is one of the challenges. Maybe after the Congress there could be a collective thinking on how to transform what this quality is generating. Town Hall is filling a gap by bringing in civil society. How is it fostered at local governance level?