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Outcome Document
Expert Meeting on the Learning Platform on Human Mobility (LPHM)
Antwerp, Belgium
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*"....(D)iversity is an asset not a problem... The focus must be on municipalities, and at the centre : 'a well understood cosmopolitanism': open and welcome to talent",
--Cathy Berx, Governor, Province of Antwerp¹*

General Observations pertaining to the Learning Platform on Human Mobility (LPHM)

1. Cities are composed of communities-and increasingly communities are corridors of diversity. It is therefore imperative that policy makers' become aware of the fact that all major cities have, moreover *need*, good functioning place(s) of arrival, and that managing these neighborhoods needs a specific approach. Indeed, there is little alternative but for Local Authorities (LAs) to think, plan, envision with courage, and as one participant stated: "design (cities) to emancipate". A forthcoming report from the AMICALL Project² indicates that there is simply more political will at the local level than at the national level. As Doug Saunders points out in his book "Arrival Cities", there is a need to: *"devote far more attention....for (arrival cities) are not just the sites of potential conflict and violence but also the neighbourhoods where the transition from poverty occurs, where the next middle class is forged, where the next generation's dreams, movements, and governments are created."*³ A central role to be broken down through UNITAR's LPHM training curriculum is LAs' responsibility in providing and/or securing access to basic services for their constituents. An inherent challenge becomes how to do so well within a more complicated context when there are varying needs, and in an economically fragile climate?
2. Part of the answer comes in the form of leadership. The Vice Mayor of Antwerp, Ludo van Campenhout, described a process towards harmonious living by which a collective identity and shared values are fostered through the daily lives of city dwellers, living side by side, regardless of their origins. Such is a process which needs to be cultivated. Many participants contended that leadership and vision play a key role, which in turn can have a multiplying effect if indigenous/community leaders are recruited to support the overall vision, and innovative projects such as those fostering "social confidence" in the new generation are implemented effectively.
3. The issue of context was raised, as were a number of highly relevant observations pertaining to the LPHM's target group, as the types of challenges faced by LAs will vary, depending on:
 - Location: differences between LAs in the global South vs. the North (not least as the process of decentralization is less widespread in particular on the African Continent);
 - Power distribution: differences in the distribution of power in different cities will affect scope of influence of LAs, as will administrations which are cyclical (political) vs. non-cyclical;

¹ See also: *"Crossing Borders: Antwerp-reach anywhere in the world from here"*, Speech given by Cathy Berx on 2 December 2011.

² "Attitudes to Migrants, Communication and Local Leadership (AMICALL)" See: <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/research/urbanchange/amicall/>

³ Saunders, Doug. *Arrival Cities: How the Largest Migration in the World is Reshaping our Cities* (2010), p. 3



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- Scale: differences in perspectives between larger cities with more resources and smaller cities which may be more adept at knowing what is going on in communities.

It was emphasized that UNITAR's LPHM should extend its scope to national delegations which are multi-layered, incorporating municipal, regional, federal governance.

4. The goal in transferring practice should not be duplication but rather how good practices can and should be adapted across differing contexts. Moreover, the focus must be on *"offering alternatives to the standard one-for-all social mix solutions"* for city regeneration; its alternative as presented by experts is the so-called *"design to emancipate (integrate) approach"*.
5. The lack of information and comparable data in particular in cities in the South was frequently cited as an impediment to good policy making. In addition to gathering relevant information through surveys and other methods, participants spoke of the need to assess the impact of capacity development activities through adequate monitoring and evaluation, and the importance of studying different approaches to knowledge retention (beyond communities of practice).
6. For the LPHM, it was recommended that in addition to the four clusters identified, two additional clusters be added for 2012-2013:
 - (5) education & youth development; and
 - (6) access to health & social services.

Moreover and within each thematic cluster, the LPHM should incorporate technical training on topics including: leadership, urban planning, conflict resolution/mediation, organizational change, communications, data processing, language training.

7. The examination of tested methodologies (eg. CityShare-focus on peer-to-peer and 4 stages of impact assessment) was discussed in the context of course development, as were: the formulation of joint objectives; drawing from expertise within network/Platform partners; needs assessment and linking these with research findings; having migrants train; training of trainers; offering courses in relevant languages. Moreover, throughout, attention must also be drawn to terminology. From the dehumanizing "illegal" to "undocumented", the issue of terminology is significant and differences in language were raised: deportation vs. (voluntary) return; integration vs. participation, etc.
8. In terms of orientation, UNITAR's LPHM was summarized as needing to focus on: (i) *vision (e.g. leadership)*; (ii) *rights (e.g. in speaking of 'participation' over 'integration' thereby recognizing rights of people (not their status))*; (iii) *means (how to accomplish)*; and (iv) *evidence (which requires both comparative and longitudinal data)*.
9. On the question of sustainability, participants pointed to both ensuring that projects such as the LPHM be sustained over time, and undoubtedly a greater challenge, how positive change embraced by LAs can come to be effectively embedded into bureaucracies. How can attitudes be shaped over the long-term?; how can positive institutional change remain when administrations are replaced?

On social cohesion & adapting to change: "A City's 'body language'..."

1. The challenge in transit, gateway or arrival cities, is that one, there is no common past amongst immigrant groups, and two, policies must take into account a much more fluid, circular mobility pattern than traditional immigration patterns (in Europe). By the same token, it was indicated that governments must be fluid and flexible in adapting policy to changing circumstances. In New York (NY) for instance, migration policies must adapt to a migrant population dominated by Latinos



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which 40 years ago, was dominated by Europeans. Further, participants were asked to consider whether the integration approach is still pertinent in cities which are predominantly composed of minorities? As stated: *“The best integration policies are urban policies”*.

2. LAs should be very engaged in promoting diversity, and *“a City’s body language”* can have a determining influence on successful efforts at inclusion. Based on the AMICALL Project, participants were informed that many European cities have adopted branding to espouse tolerance, inclusion and diversity. Among other, this same Project recommends that messaging be geared towards *“telling the story to everyone”* (participation over segregation), and the importance of working with local (over national) media. One expert commented that an important aspect of communication is contact. There should be more efforts geared towards bringing migrants (or migrant representatives) together with LAs: *“what is wrong with getting people together? We should do this with less fear ...”*. The NY experience of gathering various stakeholders on a regular basis—including faith based (or religious) organisations, was elicited as was the City’s growing reliance on such organisations as bridges within the communities. It was suggested that this be done regularly rather than *“only in situations of crisis”*. Among its work in this area, the LPHM must devote providing insights into exchanging experiences in communication strategies to gain public support for innovative policies (e.g. 31 December brunch with community leaders; ‘citizenship ceremonies’, etc.). As stated: *“In this way the UNITAR learning platform (LPHM) could ‘pave the way’ for local policy makers to support and implement innovative policies that have proven their use elsewhere.”* This outlet would be particularly useful in highly charged political contexts in which diversity is still negatively perceived.
3. LAs also have a role to play in building *“intra-community”* social cohesion, strengthening social cohesion, including though not exclusively in fostering links with homeland. Anecdotally, it was suggested that far from contradicting participation within the arrival city, such practices can support a dual identity for the young, and facilitate parents’ acceptance as children embrace another culture.
4. The issue of political enfranchisement is considered highly relevant not least because as was stated, politicians are more likely to be sensitive to the demands of migrants who can vote. Some suggested that LAs have a role in empowering migrants’ by encouraging political enfranchisement when legally possible, and others that community-based organisations should be recruited to assist.
5. Educational delay was cited as a major problem in some cities (e.g. Antwerp), and essential to addressing the marginalization of youth. It was stressed that this social problem of today will become a major labour market problem of tomorrow.

Economic development and entrepreneurship: *“Incentivizing business development”*

1. There was a general emphasis on encouraging entrepreneurship for immigrant groups as an accessible pathway to upward mobility. Examples drawn from policies in NY, included projects geared towards building migrants’ capabilities, offering access to business communities, and how to facilitate rapid business establishment. The value of incentivizing business development was emphasized, by creating *“ethnic corridors”* through facilitated buy-in from ethnic groups. LAs in Antwerp spoke of the need to remove obstacles so that migrants could become financially active, in particular by facilitating and not impeding the establishment of small businesses. *It was recommended that the LPHM should train LAs on fostering wealth creation and entrepreneurship within Arrival Cities/communities.*



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2. The issue of financial literacy as a precursor to successful economic integration was also raised, and it was stated that LAs should work to assist migrants in this regard (e.g. through “banking the unbanked” initiatives).
3. On how migrants and migration processes can assist with development in origin countries, participants learned about the findings from the first phase of the EC-UN Joint Migration and Development Initiative (JMDI) (2008-2011)⁴, which consisted of projects geared towards supporting small scale actors working on development projects in their communities of origin. Among other, it was shared that: diaspora are more likely to contribute successfully in countries of origin *if* they do so in partnership with LAs; LAs provide an important role as intermediaries (for e.g., with banks (thereby providing legitimacy and visibility); there is a need to institutionalize and in certain cases, regularize good practices to ensure their continuity. Moreover, the purview of LAs work on migration and development should be cross-cutting and incorporate health, transport, and other social service-oriented sectors. In the second phase of the JMDI project, it will look at supporting LAs’ work in the area of migration & development. *It was recommended that the EC-UN JMDI and UNITAR’s LPHM will benefit from working together on coordinating capacity development in such a way as to support their mutually reinforcing objectives.*

Urbanisation and the environment: “Placemaking for all City dwellers...”

1. Designing cities from a social perspective is being “reinvented” in cities such as Antwerp. Urban planning starts with understanding the “competencies”/habits of residents, and the recognition that these are in constant flux. There is emphasis on going beyond classic gentrification tools, which do not work in all neighbourhoods. “Getting it right” in neighbourhoods like Antwerp 2060 is essential, and there has been a fundamental shift in the vision towards “*Placemaking for all City dwellers*”. Migrants should have access to what is needed to prosper: adequate/appropriate housing; viable schools; employment opportunities. If designed with demographic needs’ in mind, incorporating local talent and interests, such services are more likely to yield results. *It was recommended that UNITAR’s LPHM has a role to play in providing technical training on urban planning focused on adapting to diversity.* Further, for migrants new to Arrival Cities, it was stated that City officials must “*prioritize good arrival policies as part of work on social cohesion; it’s a credibility issue for Cities...*”.
2. One challenge is the issue of retention in Arrival cities/communities-such that assets acquired can be passed along to the next generation of migrants.
3. Migration and environmental change (and climate change as one trigger of environmental change), is particularly pertinent in South-based migration. The decision to migrate may be due to secondary forces. As the Foresight Report⁵ indicates, migration should be integrated into adaptation strategies as a result of environmental change. Not least as many in the global South are too poor to be mobile, and must therefore remain in a highly vulnerable situation. Further, there is evidence that once environmental conditions subside, those who return are those with the least amount of resources to rebuild. As an issue which is becoming increasingly pertinent, a number of Ministries of the Environment have already incorporated migration into their work.

⁴ www.migration4development.org

⁵ “Foresight: Migration and Global Environmental Change: Future Challenges and Opportunities”, Final Project Report (2011), The Government Office for Science (UK)



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Human security: *“Working to avoid a culture of fear...”*

1. LAs play a vital role in countering radicalization, and in *“working to avoid a culture of fear”*. The concern in most countries and cities is on extremism (which goes beyond radicalization). Federal authorities “depend” on sub-national government officers so that they can achieve results, and they are increasingly being drawn in to assist. For example, in Belgium, local police are trained on counter-terrorism. As there is an inherent challenge for the security sector in sharing knowledge/data, there is little cross-sharing between security and other sectors (including academia) on this topic. Beyond training law enforcement, and punitive measures against extremists, the lack of a global framework hampers a focused strategy to counter terrorism-not least because of the increasingly trans-national (and multi-ethnic) nature of such threats.
2. In the case of Belgium, local authorities are responsible for executing return orders (for undocumented migrants). A good relationship between federal and local authorities is vital, and evidence suggests that it can have a positive impact on the number of voluntary returns (as oppose to involuntary returns). A “human face” (in this case federal liaison *in situ*) has assisted in the coordination process-as has an approach which casts a wide net in terms of local stakeholder involvement. Effective return policies are generally considered an integral part of migration policy management. Voluntary returns are expected to take place in a manner which respects returnees’ rights.
3. Indeed, for the most vulnerable groups, there is a need to invest in the process of return. As one expert stated: *“There needs to be a conversation on return.....since the question is not whether they will go back, but under what conditions”*. Increasingly, as undocumented migrants see little prospect for remaining, they must be led through an informed and humane discussion on their options.
4. The new ILO Convention 189 offers protections to all domestic workers including migrant domestic workers. Domestic workers in Belgium work under different regulatory status, which has a bearing on the scope of their protections. Generally speaking, domestic workers are regarded as highly vulnerable to human rights abuses, including human trafficking (in Belgium, through Payoke and others’ work, it is evident that trafficking is principally labour driven). In addressing protection challenges, obstacles include: the highly deregularised sector; difficulties in regulating “in the home” work; the lack of information on migrant domestic workers (especially in the informal sector); working permits tied to employers; and the high level of discrimination.
