



## Action Plan for Universities to maximize impact of higher education in the sustainability of urbanization

**Thursday, 20 of October 2016**  
**1-2.30pm. ROOM B - ONE UN PAVILION**

### Objective

This event focuses on the role of higher education for sustainable urban development within the framework of the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI). HESI is a UN multi-stakeholder mechanism that was launched in the lead up to Rio+20 by a group of several UN agencies: UN-DESA, UNESCO, UNEP, UN Global Compact's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative, UNU and UN-Habitat (since 2016). As of July 2016 close to 300 higher education institutions from around the world have made voluntary commitments towards sustainable development under HESI. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdinaction/hesi>

This event draws on the conclusions of the Working Group of Higher Education for Urban Sustainability held at the Habitat III Europe Regional Meeting in Prague on March 18, 2016, the conclusions of the Roundtable of Universities in WUF 7, the work and university commitments for HESI on SDG 11. It is also based upon the recommendations from the Position Paper: "Capacity Building and Knowledge Form the Foundation of the New Urban Agenda" presented to the Habitat III Bureau for PrepCom III. <http://uni.unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2015/06/Capacity-Building-in-New-Urban-Agenda-HABITAT-III.pdf>

Finally, this event also complements a number of priority areas of the Global Action Programme (GAP) on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), particularly on "Accelerating Solutions at local level" for the implementation of SDGs #4 and #11.

The meeting seeks to define the role and capabilities of higher education, research institutions and think tanks should have in order to better respond to the urban needs so as to effectively support the implementation of the 2030 agenda and New Urban Agenda. For this purpose, the event will feature the presentation of an Action Plan for higher education.

**Event structure.** The event will be organized around two sections, a Learning Section and an Action Response one.

### Part 1. Learning section.

Universities and city officials will highlight the skills that are currently driving successful practice in the sustainability of cities. Three main questions will be discussed;

1. In what ways are universities contributing and supporting cities and municipalities in achieving sustainable urban development? How can these initiatives be sustained?
2. How are cities making the most of academic resources and practice to improve their own sustainability goals?
3. What and who are the drivers for sustainable urban development and how are universities learning from good practices that occur outside the academic world.

**Part 2. Action response**

Discussion on the action plan for universities: The objective is to identify paths for the academic work to contribute to better and sustainable cities, in a way that is measurable and leads to concrete impacts, in relation to the New Urban Agenda. The Action Plan draws on propositions by university members and draws on successful practices shared by UNI members. It aims to provide solutions to the topics discussed earlier.



## AGENDA

13:00 – 13:15

### Opening remarks

Sahar Attia – Chair of UNI Steering Committee –World Urban Campaign  
*Academia commitments for the New Urban Agenda*

Martina Otto – Head, Cities & Lifestyles Unit, UN Environment  
*The role of education in enhancing sustainable urban development*

Claudio Acioly – Head of the Capacity Development Unit at UN-Habitat  
*Why universities are relevant for UN-Habitat and the New Urban Agenda*

### Part 1. Learning section

Universities and city officials will highlight the skills that are currently driving successful practice in the sustainability of cities-

13:15 – 13:25

### Opportunities and gaps. UNI survey for successful practices of university-city collaboration

Prof. Dory Reeves - University of Auckland

*Competencies of researchers and educators of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to respond to the issues of urban agenda – what is missing, what is there and how to develop it further.*

*Modalities of engagement between HEIs and local urban communities – what new interesting modalities exist and how to employ them in a most effective manner.*

13:25 – 13:50

### Panel discussion

Prof. Seneshaw Tsegaye – University of South Florida

Prof. Carolyn Whitzman – University of Melbourne

Prof. Circe Monteiro – Universidade Federal de Pernambuco / INCITI

Michel Max Raynaud, Ph.D. - Université de Montréal

Prof. Fernando Murillo – University of Buenos Aires

Kevin Hsu and Caroline Nowacki- Stanford University

TO BE CONFIRMED

Prof. Reinhard Goethert

**Part 2. Action response**

Discussion on the action plan for universities: The objective is to identify paths for the academic work to contribute to better and sustainable cities, in a way that is measurable and leads to concrete impacts, in relation to the New Urban Agenda.

The audience will be invited to share their experiences, particularly regarding effective implementation mechanisms, monitoring and support required to realize the Action Plan towards urban sustainability goals.

13:50 – 14:10      **Presentation of the UNI Action Plan for Universities**  
Ms. Lilia Blades – UN-Habitat

Mr. Alexei Trundle - Research Associate with RMIT University  
*Bridging the knowledge gaps in cities and capacity development initiatives.  
Lessons learned from experience with UN-Habitat and Climate Change plans.*

*TO BE CONFIRMED*

Ed Panintuan, Mayor of Angeles City. The Philippines  
*How do we prioritize sustainability in cities through education?*

Ms Gabrielle Guimarães, Chief Advisor for International Relations. Mayor's Office,  
Municipality of Rio de Janeiro.  
*What can cities do to sustain successful collaboration with the Academia*

Prof. Philippe Poullaouec-Gonidec - Université de Montréal  
*Experience as a UNESCO chair and other policy frameworks that enable  
effective engagement of HEIs and sustainability issues under urban agenda.*

14:10 – 14:25      Open discussion

14:20 – 14:30      Closing remarks