Global review of the contribution of culture to sustainable cities

Session 3A-c Culture’s contribution to achieve sustainable Cities

Culture: Key to sustainable development
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Content

- Urbanization trends
- Slum trends
- Fresh notion of City Sustainable Prosperity
- Multiple forms of culture
- Culture and Sustainability of City
- Measurement of City Prosperity
Main sources of the presentation

Globalization and Urban Culture

Harmonious Cities (Co-author)

State of the World’s Cities 2010/11– SWCR 2010/11
Bridging the Urban Divide (Co-author)

Prosperity of Cities (Co-author)
Urbanization in the World: from a rural century to a urban century

19th Century: the Rural Century with 98% living in villages at the beginning and 90% at the end of the century

20th Century: the Urban Transition Century with only 10% living in cities and towns at the beginning and 47% at the end of the century

21st Century: the Urban Century with half of the world living in cities at the beginning and 70% by 2050
Generalization of the urban world in the 21st century

Africa

Asia

West Africa

Northern Africa

Southern Africa

East Africa

LAC

1950

1960

1970

1980

1990

2000

2010

2020

2030

2040
Recent Milestones on the MDG Slum Target

In all regions of the developing world, there has been an improvement in the lives of slum dwellers in the last decade.

Proportion of urban population living in slums, 2000 and 2012 (percentage)

Note: Countries emerging from conflicts included in the aggregate figures are; Angola, Cambodia, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan.
The global target has been met, but more people than ever before are living in slum conditions.

Urbanization continues to outpace improvements in slum conditions.

Population living in slums and proportion of urban population living in slums, developing regions, 1990-2012

Improvement of 200+ million slum dwellers: more access to improved water, to improved sanitation, durable housing, sufficient living area.
Unplanned urban growth leading to sprawl

- Endless growth of cities in the periphery
- Growing inequalities between rich and poor
- Serious distortions in the form and functionality of cities
- Grave damage to the environment

Source: UN Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
Unplanned urban growth leading to sprawl

- Unsustainable urban growth
- Growing inequality between rich and poor
- Serious distortions in the form and function of cities
- Problems affecting the environment
- Difficulty of integrating tangible and intangible values

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
NEED FOR A FRESH NOTION OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN PROSPERITY

- Holistic
- People-centred
- Sustainable
- Socially and Culturally Inclusive

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
Culture, key of the wheel of urban Prosperity

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
Culture, key of the Wheel of Sustainable Prosperity

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCP 2012/13)
## Sustainable Prosperity of cities

| 1. Productivity:                                                                 | Contributes to economic growth, generates income, provide decent jobs and equal opportunities…  
|                                                                               | *(Culture’s contribution)* |
| 2. Infrastructure development                                               | Provides adequate infrastructure in order to enhance mobility, productivity, mobility and connectivity…  
|                                                                               | *(Culture’s contribution)* |
| 3. Quality of Life                                                            | Enhances the use of public space in order to increase community cohesion, civic identity… *(Culture’s contribution)* |
| 4. Equity and Social inclusion                                                | Ensures the equitable distribution and redistribution of the benefits of a prosperous city, reduces incidence of poverty and slums… *(Culture’s contribution)* |
| 5. Environmental sustainability                                              | Values the protection of the urban environment while ensuring growth… *(Culture’s contribution)* |

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
Current debates on development and urbanization have led to the rediscovery of ‘culture’ as an important but often overlooked component of urban living. During recent years, with the re-evaluation of indigenous traditions, native religions, ethnic identification and local, it is increasingly being realized that spatial arrangements should be shaped not only by economic development considerations but also by local cultural forces.

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Culture has many meanings. As a practical human activity, it is an inherent part of both individual and collective development, from the education of a single child to the finest artistic expression of entire peoples and nations. Closely related to both the achievements of the past (in the form of history) and of the future (in the form of innovation), culture suggests the capacity to survive, as well as to adapt to change … (UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/2005)
Bi (multi) dimensions of Culture in the urban context

- Material aspects (tangible): physical infrastructure, public spaces, buildings and other artefacts of the urban environment
- Nonmaterial aspects (intangible): such as the values, attitudes, beliefs and lifestyles of urban residents.

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
UN-Habitat SWCR 2004/5 Constitutes the main source of the presentation on culture. For further details, readers are advised to consult the SWCR 2004/5 at www.unhabitat.org
Culture takes material form in the built environment as symbols of local identities

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Culture in the city of the 21th century

Many cities of the 21st century are committed to promoting a symbolic economy that produces information, designs and images, and aims to foster cultural creativity.

Each city wants to sustain itself – its population, buildings, infrastructure and culture, as well as its relative sphere of influence within a larger political territory, from the local state or province to the national state, as well as the regional and global levels.

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Culture in the redevelopment of urban spaces – *Productivity and Infrastructure*

- Relocation of manufacturing activities
- Conversion of unused spaces into new work–live spaces
- Enacting regulations to protect buildings from demolition and tax incentives to encourage restoration.
- Various examples such as art restoration indicate that urban cultural strategies can generate jobs, and may be accompanied by spatial restructuring of the urban fabric

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Culture in the context of urban renewal

Productivity and Infrastructure - Examples

Local level: Quito, Ankara, Cartagena, Pueblo, Vientiane, Kampong Glam, Bilbao, Florence

National level: pursuit of ‘grand projets’ as seen in France (for example, the Beaubourg) and the commercial ‘branding’ of cities

International: the European Union (EU) established an annual competition to select the European City of Culture that similarly serves to promote economic development through cultural strategies.

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Referenced examples


Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Global branding of cities

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
During the 1960s, governments in Europe began to show an interest in redeveloping the centres of cities around cultural capital. Both the UK and French governments, like the administration in Washington, DC, passed new laws to support artists and historic preservation. The French felt that they needed to do something that would reassert France’s prominence on the world stage – to devise a strategy that would respond to both economic competition with the US and cultural competition between New York and Paris.

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Outstanding museums have been used to market ‘global cities of culture’

The Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain: a global district

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Cultural heritage sites are playing notable roles in the symbolic economy.
The cultural heritage conservation movement has spread all over the world.

The Stone Town is the centre of the greater city of Zanzibar and houses much of the island’s commercial and government activity. It is famous for its traditional coral stone buildings, intricate balconies, massive carved doors and narrow bazaar streets.

Zanzibar, Tanzania: preserving the historic Stone Town

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Culture to promote public space –

Environment, quality of life

Wangari Mathai, Greenbelt movement
Nobel Peace Price, 2004

Uhuru park, Nairobi
Non-material form of culture in the urban context

In earlier years, men, women and children moved between the relatively simple spaces of home, work and neighbourhood, all of which reinforced bonds based on ethnicity and social class. Networks and institutions of sociability, from mothers chatting at the corner grocery store or open-air market to children attending religious school at the local parish or mosque, directly formed local cultures.

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Migration and urban ethnic spaces

the outcomes of international and national migration is the intensification of the multicultural nature of cities, with different ethnic spaces emerging. While this juxtaposition of cultures can be enriching, it can also result in fear and polarization. Cities have to formulate clear strategies for addressing the anxieties of indigenous populations, while highlighting and taking advantage of the positive effects of urban multicultural existence.

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Emergence of urban ethnic spaces: Challenges - Examples

• Restriction of immigrants’ culture

• Most cities do not fully understand how to integrate ethnic ‘minorities’ without fear of losing their historic cultural identity

• One specific issue that has to be addressed in creating peaceful multicultural and inclusive cities is language recognition

Reference: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Symbols of urban ethnic spaces

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Immigrants expose their historic cultural identities in the urban environment

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2004/5)
Planning for multicultural cities – Cultural and social inclusion

The development of planning for multicultural cities that are inclusive of diverse populations takes on special significance. Cultural diversity enriches societies and enhances their capacity for positive transformation. (Example of customary land tenure in African cities, right of indigenous people)

Urban cultures do not seek to eliminate difference, but value and celebrate it. Difference does not divide people in inclusive and liveable cities. Rather, such cities acknowledge diversity as a source of untapped development potential
Inclusive urban planning - *Cultural and social inclusion* -

- Environmental policy
- Historic preservation
- Social justice and equity
- Community development
- Poverty alleviation
OTHER SELECTED BEST PRACTICES ON CULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Festival de Bicicultura "Bicycles for a better life, Bike Culture Festival"; Santiago, Chile

Preservation Initiative of Historical and Cultural Heritage of Zhoucun Ancient Town; Zibo City; Shandong Province, China

Qujiang New District Practice - Sustainable Development of Culture, Tourism and City; China

Sustainable Development through Conservation of the Cultural Heritage; Halmstad; Sweden

A case-study of the Ecclesiastical Pedestrian Walkway Santo Domingo-El Carmen (San Cristobal de Las Casas, Chiapas): A model of self-sustaining urban renewal in culturally diverse historical sites; Mexico

Commerce Design; Montreal Canada

Source: UN-Habitat, Best Practices Database, 2013
Challenges – How to quantify culture’s contribution to sustainable cities

What gets measured gets done
Culturally well-managed cities

- generate jobs
- provide opportunities for investment
- offer more facilities
- are inclusive
- Preserve the environment
- are the drivers of national economies

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2010/11)
The Dimensions of Prosperity

Productivity (Culture’s C)

Sustainable Prosperity of City

Quality of Life (Culture’s C)

Infrastructure (Culture’s C)

Environmental sustainability (Culture’s C)

Equity and Social Inclusion (Culture’s C)

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
Action Plan

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
The City Prosperity Index

• **H**elps to take decisions and formulate policy interventions based on reliable and clear information.

Source: UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
Road mad towards culturally sustainable prosperous city

**Sustainable Prosperity Index (how to factor culture)**

- Adoption
- Adaptation of indicators
- Index Calculation

**Source:** UN-Habitat, SWCR 2012/13)
Thank you