



# **NETWORK ELEVEN**

## *Terms of Reference*

### **DRAFT**

#### **I. Purpose/Mission of the Global Network**

The Digital Technologies for Sustainable Urbanization Network (Network11), co-chaired by Dr. Joan Clos, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat, and Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman and Founder of the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization, aims to promote sharing experiences and good practices in the use of digital technologies to deliver sustainable urbanization, and to contribute to the discussion towards the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and the New Urban Agenda, as well as the digital and urban dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This innovative global network is an initiative emanating from the 2014 UN Economic and Social Council's Integration Segment on Sustainable Urbanization.

#### **II. Objectives of the Network**

Network Eleven will contribute to the achievements of the following main objectives:

1. Provide a forum for collaborative activities that can add value to existing initiatives;
2. Help develop capacities of countries and cities for using digital technologies in policy-making and planning for sustainable urbanization;
3. Develop knowledge sharing platforms and collaborative training on digital technologies being used in the development of cities;
4. Strengthen public-private partnerships in cities to deliver sustainable urban development activities;
5. Provide recommendations and ideas for achieving the objective of sustainable urbanization, including the SDG11 to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable", as a follow-up to the 2030 Agenda adopted in September 2015;
6. Propose priorities and key elements for the digital dimensions as contributions to the discussion towards the Habitat III Conference and the New Urban Agenda.

To be effective in its work, the Network must produce results, promote end-to-end solutions and develop activities through multi-stakeholder cooperation, involving national

and local governments, the private sector, development and financial institutions, civil society, academia, foundations and UN system.

### **III. Organizational structure and working methods**

#### **Membership**

Membership is by invitation. The network will be composed of stakeholders, experts in the field and partners from the following sectors; national, regional and local governments, intergovernmental organizations and bodies, academicians, IT community, private sector, non-governmental organizations, media and civil society, with attention to regional and gender balance.

Members will be expected to commit to volunteer the required time and effort. They will also be expected to ensure appropriate communication and coordination with their constituencies, to ensure wide engagement and consultation.

Although membership is voluntary and non-remunerated, members of the Network are expected to actively participate, attending conference calls and meetings, as well as providing substantive inputs in the review of specific documentation.

Membership is for the duration of the Network and divided into the three following levels:

#### Advisory Board Membership

The Network will be supported by an Advisory Board—which in close coordination with the Secretariat and the co-chairs—will provide overall strategic guidance and advice on the Network’s direction. The Advisory Board will be comprised of a group of 30-35 members, representing national and local governments, UN system, private sector, development and financial institutions, civil society, women and youth-led organizations, foundation and academia, taking into account the criteria of stakeholder, gender, geographical and institutional balances.

The Advisory Board members will be designated by the Co-Chairs, for a two-year renewable term. The key functions of the Advisory Board would be as follows:

- ❖ Provide overall strategic guidance and vision to the Network, in particular by identifying priorities and themes to be addressed;
- ❖ Provide expertise in defining the functions and working activities of the Network;
- ❖ Bring to the Network relevant development in theory and in practice in the field of digital technologies in urban development and management;
- ❖ Promote and raise awareness and undertake advocacy campaigns for the Network and the use of digital technologies for sustainable urbanization, in close cooperation with the Secretariat;
- ❖ Contribute to the dissemination of the activities and results of the functions of the Network to policymakers, practitioners and to wider stakeholder constituencies, including their own partners and members;

- ❖ Promote multi-stakeholder and particularly public-private partnerships improving collaborative activities with existing initiatives and coordination with strategic partners;
- ❖ Review the annual report on the activities of the Network as well as the financial report.

The Advisory Board will hold virtual meetings periodically, according to the availability of the members, to ensure solid coordination between members and smooth progress of the development of the Network. In addition, bilateral virtual and in-person meetings will be also held when possible. Each organization will be asked to designate a focal point to facilitate contact and follow-up. The Secretariat of the Global Network will be in regular contact with the Advisory Board to exchange information on the process and to share those documents in which the guidance and inputs of the Board is requested.

### Task Force Membership

The task forces will form in order to work on different dimensions of digital technologies for sustainable urbanization based on expertise. They will also attend meetings and communicate proceedings to the general membership.

Advisory Board and Task Force Members will be listed on the Network's website and specific communication materials of the Network and will receive invitations to the Annual Global Forum of the Network as well as other thematic meetings and networking events.

### General Membership

All members will receive regular information, such as newsletters, on the activities of the Network. Specific activities and discussions through social media/website would be further determined, to keep the Members active and engaged in the Network's objectives and activities.

## **Working Methods**

### Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Network will be jointly hosted by UN-Habitat and the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination (OESC), UN DESA. During the first year, the activities will be closely linked to the work of the Habitat III Secretariat. The Co-Chairs, supported by the Secretariat, will run and manage the Network with advice from an Advisory Board.

The Secretariat will facilitate communication amongst the members through virtual discussions and teleconferences as required. The Secretariat will be responsible to organize meetings, produce papers, briefs and summaries, as well as follow up activities based on the programme of work adopted by the co-chairs and the Advisory Board.

The Secretariat will support the organization of the Annual Global Forum, as well as thematic meetings, taking place at the local, national, regional and global levels. The launch

of the Network will take place on 16 November 2015, in Barcelona, Spain, in the margins of the Smart City Expo World Congress.

The Secretariat will have the responsibility to provide guidance and oversee the development of any promotional and communication materials, as well as a campaign and website. The design and management of the dedicated website and promotional brochure of the Network will be developed by TAG-Org, with advice from the Secretariat. The Secretariat, under the leadership of the Co-Chairs, will undertake a membership campaign.

### Meetings

The Network will work by:

- Regular conference calls
- Communication via e-mail and web platform
- In-person or webinar workshops and information sessions
- Regional and global meetings, potentially tied to an existing initiative, pending funding.

The launch of the Network will take place on 16 November 2015 in Barcelona, Spain. The objectives of the first meeting will be to officially launch the Network, and introduce the vision of the network, its future activities, deliverables and terms of reference.

Subsequent meetings for the Advisory Board and Task Force members will be organized in the margins of meetings related to Habitat III. Meetings will also take place at the regional and global levels, as part of already scheduled meetings, workshops or seminars organized by the members and their organizations. Some of the meetings could be hosted by initiatives that relate to the objectives of the Network.

### Expected activities

In light of the objectives outlined above, the Network will realize the following proposed main activities:

1. Create a global database by compiling repositories of knowledge, innovative practices and expertise on the digital dimensions of sustainable urbanization to be made available through the website of the Network;
2. Develop information sharing and networking activities for stakeholders, such as on-line forums, webinars or regional workshops, to share best practices;
3. Develop and implement toolkits and standards;
4. Promote focused dialogue on the use of digital technologies for sustainable urban development by organizing multi-stakeholder events and meetings, including an Annual Global Forum;
5. Contribute to the discussion towards Habitat III.

#### **IV. Sharing of Information and Resources**

Information and resources will be shared through the website of the Network. The website will include a password protected area for Network members. The website will be maintained by the Secretariat of the Network.

#### **V. Funding of the Network**

Initial funding to support the launch event has been provided by TAG-Org. For additional sources of funding, it is envisioned that potential donors will be approached for supporting the activities of the Network, through financial and in-kind contributions.

#### **VI. Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The reporting on the work of the Network will be informal and network members will be invited to relevant ECOSOC meetings to report on progress. The Network can also host side-events to transmit its recommendations on digital urban policies, good practices and initiatives to Member States and the UN system.

The activities and progress of the Network will be monitored by the Secretariat and reported periodically to the Advisory Board. While, an external evaluation will be conducted every two years, to assess progress and impact, the Secretariat will evaluate the Global Network on an on-going basis to assess its relevance, impact, sustainability and effectiveness. This could be done through:

- On-going assessment and analysis of the website usage, in particular the global database, including the number and location of visitors, statistics on navigation etc;
- An initial monitoring survey to assess members' feedback on the potential and impact of the Network;
- Ongoing tracking of references to the Network in urban-related meetings, traditional and social media;
- Assessment of participation in training activities through evaluation surveys

The evaluations will help inform the future activities of the Global Network to ensure its sustainability and success.

#### **VII. Timeline**

It is envisioned that the Network will remain in existence until 2030, in view of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.