

# THE ROLE OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT IN SUPPORTING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

Guadalajara, Mexico 3-4 December 2015



With the collaboration of:



Agencia Andaluza de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo  
CONSEJERÍA DE IGUALDAD Y POLÍTICAS SOCIALES







GLOBAL EXPERTS GROUP MEETING

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

About 30 international experts participated in a Global Experts Group Meeting (EGM) “The Role of Metropolitan Development in Supporting the New Urban Agenda”, in Guadalajara (Mexico) between 03-04 December 2015. The participants included representatives of international development agencies, policy makers, academic, national and metropolitan Government representatives, and the private sector representatives from all over the World. The meeting was organized by UN-Habitat, in collaboration with the Andalusian Agency of International Cooperation for Development, the Ministry of Development and Housing of the Government of Andalusia, the Mexican Chamber of the Construction Industry and the Government of the State of Jalisco.

The EGM reviewed and built on the results and lessons learned from the experiences of the speakers to strengthen the role of UN-Habitat to better define its role, focus and impact in supporting sustainable development and metropolitan management. This EGM is the result of the recognition of the benefits associated with sustainable urbanisation. The participants made several recommendations as an outcome of the EGM summarised in form of a communiqué to support the strengthening metropolitan development.

The EGM also offered an opportunity for discussion of preliminary findings and ideas from the background papers prepared by UN-Habitat in the build up to the EGM and created a consensus understanding with regard to the topics and recommendations for UN-Habitat’s future work in metropolitan development. In addition, the findings of the papers and inputs from participants during the EGM pointed to ways forward in reinforcing UN-Habitat’s advisory role to national and local Governments in promoting sustainable metropolitan development, and recommended areas where focus should be, which niche could be explored in view of remaining gaps, and the role of other partners in international development cooperation.

The findings and conclusions of the EGM will serve as a basis for collecting trends, policies, tools, innovations and good practices that can be promoted by UN-Habitat and other organizations focused on understanding the role of metropolitan development in preparation of the New Urban Agenda to be drawn at the Third United Nations

Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) next year in Quito, Ecuador. This EGM will contribute to development of a “road map” for the development of an agenda for UN-Habitat on metropolitan areas to promote more productive and resilient Cities.

## 2. BACKGROUND

Continued urbanization around the world - and natural population growth - are creating larger Cities and local economic areas, particularly in developing countries. The Cities that are currently experiencing 5% or higher rates of growth will expand two-fold every 14 years, which means that a city would have to rebuild itself every 14 years. With improved transportation, people are able to commute over longer distances from villages or towns to larger urban areas, and with current communication technology advances the functional economic areas are becoming larger. As a result, Cities are becoming increasingly economically interdependent with their surrounding settlements and rural areas, constituting what we call metropolitan areas or regions (MR), city-regions, or extended urban regions — each a single economy and labor market, a community with common interests and benefits of some joint actions. The economic links between the core and the periphery may become so close that one part cannot succeed without the other, and thus they are perceived and behave as a single entity. Inter-dependencies characterize the formation and emergence of a metropolitan area.

The jurisdictional boundaries of local Governments tend to have a long history, but the urban growth often change an area’s character over time. Therefore, a metropolitan area usually includes a number of independent local Government jurisdictions. A metropolitan area may emerge or be formed either through outbound growth of a city or through a gradual expansion and integration of various “satellite” settlements that at some point form an interdependent, agglomerated metropolitan area (see box 1). As metropolitan areas emerge and grow, the need for metropolitan planning, governance and finance increases. Metropolitan regions usually need some form of institutional arrangements (formal or informal) to coordinate their development or undertake some joint functions for more efficient and equitable service provision and cost sharing, in addition to efforts by each individual local Government. A lack of such arrangement tends to reflect missed opportunities.

### How Do Cities Grow Spatially?

Cities grow spatially in different ways. Figures 1 through 4 illustrate four types of spatial growth of a city or area. In a monocentric structure, a core city is growing outward from a central core, in more-or-less concentric circles over time, with decreasing population densities the farther one gets from the center. Sometime the spatial extension has instead the character of sprawl, with low-density areas expanding in various directions.



Figure 1 Monocentric Structure



Figure 2 Sprawl

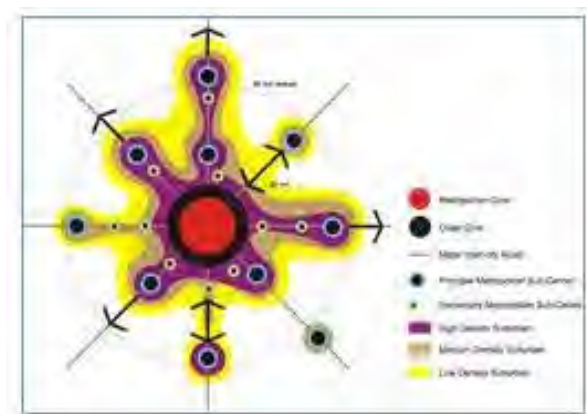


Figure 3 Polycentric Structure

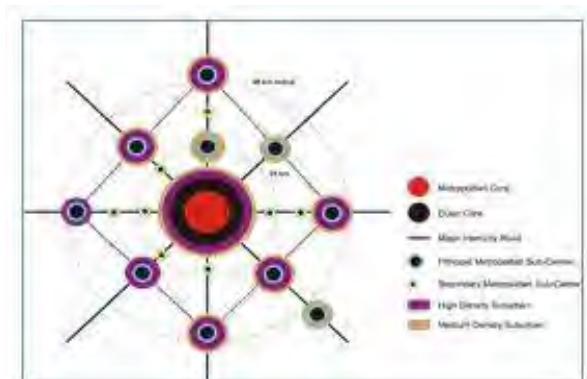


Figure 4 Multipolar Structure

Significant regional differences exist. International experience shows a great diversity of metropolitan models, particularly across Europe and North America (OECD 2006; Slack 2007). In East Asia, China, Japan and South Korea have consolidated metropolitan Governments for their larger Cities (Yang 2009). Many large Cities exist in South Asia, but few effective metropolitan governance approaches have yet emerged. Although Latin America is home to many large Cities, the frameworks for metropolitan governance in the larger Cities are still not fully developed. Sub-Saharan Africa is rapidly urbanizing, but most Cities

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