



Fifth Pacific Urban Forum

Declaration

Making Pacific Cities and Human Settlements Prosperous, Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable

Nadi, Republic of Fiji

3 July 2019

We, the participants of the Fifth Pacific Urban Forum (PUF5) held in Nadi, Republic of Fiji, from 1-3 July 2019, representing national, sub-national and local governments, academia, professionals, international and regional organizations, civil society, urban poor, women, youth organizations and other stakeholders thank the Government of Fiji for hosting and the co-organizers for convening PUF5 and:

A. Past progress and agreements guiding our 5th Pacific Urban Forum (PUF) engagement:

1. *Recalling* that the Pacific Urban Agenda (PUA) was developed in 2015, with discussions starting at the First Pacific Urban Forum (PUF) in 2003, which was revisited at successive PUFs in 2007 and 2011 and further refined and strengthened at the Fourth PUF in 2015 with the adoption of four thematic priority pillars with corresponding actions;
2. *Recognizing* that since the Fourth PUF, significant multilateral agreements on sustainable development have been made, particularly in 2015 with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and that these agreements set universally applicable frameworks and goals to tackle global challenges, including urbanization;
3. *Recognizing* that the global issue of urbanization was reinforced in 2016 with the adoption of the New Urban Agenda (NUA), which affirms and acknowledges that urbanization is an accelerator for sustainable development, and called for a commitment to promote inclusive decision-making, planning and follow-up processes (NUA para 41) and for new forms of partnerships between governments at all levels and civil society (NUA para 92);
4. *Recalling* the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030, made at the Ninth World Urban Forum (WUF9) in 2018, which encouraged and called for the formulation of NUA implementation frameworks at all levels, the creation and consolidation of inclusive platforms and collaborative agendas;
5. *Further recalling* the Ministerial Statement signed by heads of Pacific Island delegations present at WUF9, stressing the need to remobilize and reinvigorate the Pacific region's

- attention to urban matters, in line with the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, and for efforts to strengthen policy and implementation mechanisms for the PUA;
6. *Recognizing* Small Island Development State (SIDS) specific frameworks such as the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, which agrees on accelerated modalities of action for the resilience and sustainable development of SIDS that face similar development challenges;
 7. *Recalling* regional frameworks such as the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific and reiterating, as recognized in the Boe Declaration, that climate change is the single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and wellbeing of Pacific people, including urban inhabitants;
 8. *Noting* that a PUF preparatory meeting was convened by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in December 2018 and that partners called for stronger actions to be taken to implement the four pillars of the PUA: social equity; environment, resilience and urbanization; urban economy and urban governance, but also including urban infrastructure as an additional key element.

B. Outcomes from our engagement at PUF5

9. *Recognise* that urbanisation is a powerful force for sustainable development and that the Pacific's urban transformation requires an urgent response;
10. *Re-emphasize* that climate change is a crisis for the Pacific region and the world, representing a significant threat for sustainable development, and that reducing the vulnerability and contribution of Pacific cities and human settlements to climate change and natural hazards calls for a reconsideration of the way cities are planned and transformed and the way infrastructure is developed;
11. *Emphasize* that urbanization is a pressing concern for the region and requires a regional response as, like other issues such as climate change and migration, the issue has transboundary implications, and that in the coming decade Pacific urban populations, including a burgeoning youth population, will outnumber rural populations;
12. *Commit to ensuring* social equity and the "right to the city" through urban development, recognizing the positive role women, youth and all people play in the co-creation of inclusive, liveable and prosperous cities;
13. *Re-emphasize* commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (particularly Sustainable Development Goal 11), the New Urban Agenda (NUA para 31) for adequate housing, and the PUA for upscaling the provision of affordable and adequate housing, improving access to housing and land and settlement upgrading;
14. *Acknowledge* that sustainable urbanisation for the Pacific is based on a system of cities approach that promotes balanced territorial development and positive connectivity between islands, rural centres, intermediary and primary cities;
15. *Remain concerned* that accelerated urban growth is leading to growing informal settlements in urban and peri-urban areas with often extremely poor housing conditions, lack of access to infrastructure and basic urban services, and precarious informal employment;
16. *Recognize* that access to land and land governance significantly impact urbanization and that the lack thereof fundamentally hampers the way cities and towns in the region can grow. Land and planning legislation, urban data, and the capacities of urban professionals such as planners and land management specialists have a particular role to play in unlocking the sustainable development potential in the region;
17. *Reaffirm* that an integrated approach to urban planning includes a consideration of diverse, appropriate and accessible housing options, a mix of land uses and incomes, inclusive

- public spaces, sustainable urban design, safety measures and the integration of land markets;
18. *Recognize* the use of local materials and appropriate building technologies as an essential component of developing adequate, safe and resilient housing;
 19. *Acknowledge* that while all Pacific Island countries are different and that the diversity of our islands is to be respected, we face similar challenges arising from rapid urbanisation and that this similarity provides an opportunity to address urbanisation in a coordinated and integrated regional manner;
 20. *Respect* that existing structures, agreements and frameworks under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, such as the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, the Boe Declaration, the SAMOA Pathway, the Ocean Pathway and the Voluntary National Review mechanisms under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly under Sustainable Development Goal 11, including its positive interlinkages with the urban dimensions of all other Sustainable Development Goals, provide a platform to highlight urbanization issues and to promote broader discussions;
 21. *Acknowledge* that the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) is well placed to coordinate any diagnosis of current regional Pacific governance architecture that seeks to harmonise and elevate efforts to address urbanisation in the Pacific in a coherent and coordinated manner, and that PIFS is equally well placed to support the monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes of such a governance structure as well as the implementation of the Pacific Urban Agenda;
 22. *Advocate* that effective urbanization responses will be made stronger by drawing upon the expertise of a diverse range of stakeholders to build a “coalition of the willing”¹ and that forming action orientated partnerships at all levels should be considered;
 23. *Emphasize* the role of Pacific communities as active and meaningful partners in setting the development agenda in their villages and human settlements, as well as in local level planning and national approaches to urbanization;
 24. *Acknowledge* the need for infrastructure to include resilient, sustainable and inclusive design principles, and local knowledge, including nature-based solutions, to avoid costs to future generations;
 25. *Highlight* that fostering a sense of belonging in cities, including investing in inclusive public spaces for gathering, such as markets, securing land tenure and appreciating the interaction between the urban and traditional settlements, assist in building the social fabric of a city, which complements approaches to building urban resilience.

C. Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned outcomes, we the participants:

26. *Advocate* for a Pacific vision of sustainable urbanisation whereby urban areas are prosperous, inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, and that accord to Pacific history, values and context;
27. *Call* for the integration of traditional knowledge, structures and practices into codes, policies, planning and institutional structures;
28. *Encourage* all Pacific countries to develop national level planning for urbanization through national sustainable development plans, urban and housing policies and sector plans so as

¹ The term “coalition of the willing” emerged from a side event at Habitat III co-organized by UN-Habitat and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) in follow up to the 4th Pacific Urban Forum (2015) and the Pacific Urban Agenda. The term was retained by the co-organizers of PUF5 (UN-Habitat, CLGF, Monash Sustainable Development Institute, Compass Housing, ESCAP and PIFS).

- to effectively harness the positive gains that urbanization offers for the benefit of future generations;
29. *Recommend* that urban development planning and budgeting incorporate the four pillars of the PUA (social equity; environment, resilience and urbanization; urban economy; and urban governance), with additional consideration also being given to urban infrastructure, to achieve sustainable urban development;
 30. *Recommend* meaningful multi-stakeholder engagement, including women, youth, people with disabilities and those in vulnerable situations, so as to leave no one behind;
 31. *Call* for a stronger evidence base and use of evidence, including innovative forms of data collection and analysis, in order to make effective policy, planning and investment decisions;
 32. *Recommend* that the current regional institutional and governance architecture and frameworks are strengthened to elevate and accelerate efforts to address urbanization;
 33. *Emphasize* the need for increased, coherent investment and financing for sustainable urban development at regional, country and local levels to tackle the major urban challenges at scale;
 34. *Call* on our international partners, particularly UN-Habitat and ESCAP, to ensure that the progress in implementing the PUA, and the commitments made at PUF5, are reflected and followed-up at occasions such as the Seventh session of the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum to be held in Penang, Malaysia, and in the Tenth session of the World Urban Forum to be held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates;
 35. *Request* the incoming Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum to table this Declaration at the upcoming Pacific Island Forum Leaders meeting in Tuvalu and for the Forum to favorably consider its recommendations for action within appropriate regional architecture and processes;
 36. *Commit* to building and strengthening our partnership to accelerate efforts, and to increase resources and commitments towards the implementation of this Declaration and the Pacific Urban Agenda.