



Side Event at the 2018 High Level Political Forum

The Future of Cities: Leveraging Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development

9 July 2018, 18:30-20:00

Conference Room 4, UN Secretariat, New York City

Governments around the world are exploring “smart” approaches to build and make cities that are competitive, inclusive and sustainable. These approaches leverage information and communications technologies (ICTs) and new knowledge to address evolving needs and challenges of urbanization in the 21st century, and to transform economies, societies, and lives to achieve the cities and world envisioned in the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

There is no universal definition of a “smart city” and the approaches vary around the world. There is general understanding however of the positive impact of the strategic use of ICTs and tactical application of data and new knowledge in urban planning and design, urban governance, disaster and risk management in urban settings, economic growth and poverty eradication in cities, among others.

One challenge linked to the smart city agenda is the primary focus of strategies on adoption of new technologies and the lack of clarity on how these strategies achieve the outcomes envisaged in SDG 11 – “*Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.*” The integrated approach to aspects crucial to building the cities we envision also remain weak in many smart city agendas: urban poverty eradication, governance, finance, urban planning and management etc.

This side event will:

- Explore approaches being applied in various cities and the impact they have on inclusive urban development and the implementation of the SDGs.
- Feature perspectives and experiences from across regions, as well as insights from the private sector, civil society, academia and development partners within and beyond the UN system.
- Showcase models that could be instructive to rapidly urbanizing global South, and offer an opportunity for knowledge exchange between cities that have blazed trails and cities developing plans.

- Understand the key barriers faced by cities in promoting ‘smart city’ approaches that advance inclusion, resilience and sustainability.
- Identify the impact of frontier development issues (e.g. Artificial intelligence, 4th Industrial Revolution, data revolution) on the overall achievement of SDGs and at the city level.

Preliminary agenda:

Panelists and participants will engage on the following overarching issues:

- 1) Experience with applications of the “smart city” agenda, focusing on how the goals of inclusion, resilience and sustainability were incorporated.
- 2) Barriers that cities face in making sure their smart city agenda advance goals of growth and competitiveness with inclusion, resilience and sustainability (with a focus on rapidly urbanizing global South).
- 3) Models instructive to governments and stakeholders, including on cities’ strategic use of big data, new crowdsourced data sources, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, etc. in inclusive and sustainable urban development.

18:30-18:40 – Opening statement to set context and establish motivation for event

- **Abdoulaye Mar Dieye**, Assistant Secretary General and UNDP BPPS Director

18:40-19:45 – Panel discussion on above framing issues, moderated by **Aniruddha Dasgupta**, Director of the WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities

Speakers

- **H.E. Burhan Gafoor**, Permanent Representative of Singapore
- **Norma Munguía Aldaraca**, Director General for Global Issues at the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Mexico
- **Purnima Kapur**, Executive Director NY City, Dept. of City Planning
- **Jonathan Reichental**, Chief Information Officer (CIO), City of Palo Alto
- **Martha Chen**, WIEGO, Senior Advisor and Co-Founder of WIEGO
- **Kala Fleming**, Innovation Advisor AI Team, IBM Watson
- **Emily Mohohlo**, Know Your City, Slum Dwellers International (SDI)

19:45-20:00 – Open Discussion | Comments from the floor

- Emerging technologies and financing: Brendan Freeman, Smart Cities Lead, Leidos/Inmarsat
- Digital rights, citizen engagement, online security: Peter Micek, General Counsel, Access Now
- Youth, women, marginalized groups: Reda Shmait, Representative of the UN Major Group on Children and Youth (UN-MGCY)

20:00 – Closing by **Aniruddha Dasgupta**, Director of the WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities

Bios of speakers



Mar Dieye, from Senegal, is a development expert and a macroeconomist; with an academic background in mathematics, statistics, econometrics, economic policy and planning; he has exercised increasing leadership responsibilities in managing complex development portfolios. He has been appointed since March 2018, the United Nations Assistant Secretary General (ASG); Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in New York. He was, prior to his new appointment, the United Nations Assistant Secretary General (ASG); Assistant Administrator and Director for the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) of UNDP, in New York (2013-2018). M. Dieye was previously Chief of Staff of the UNDP Administrator; and Director of UNDP's Executive Office, in New York (2009-2013). From 2006 to 2009, he was Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Regional Director, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS), in New York.

M. Dieye is Ingenieur Statisticien Economiste (ISE), graduated from the Ecole Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Economique (ENSAE-CESD) of the Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE), Paris, France; He studied Advanced and Specialized Mathematics, (Mathématiques Supérieures et Spéciales) at Lycée National du Parc, Lyon, France; and holds a Masters in Development Studies–Economic Policy and Planning (MDS-EPP) from the Institute of Social Studies (ISS), Den Haag, The Netherlands.







(Ani) Dasgupta is the Global Director of WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities, WRI's program that galvanizes action to help cities grow more sustainably and improve quality of life in developing countries around the world. Ani guides WRI Ross Center in developing environmentally, socially, and financially sustainable solutions to improve people's quality of life in developing cities. Ani leads the program's team of global experts in sustainable transport, urban development and building efficiency, as well as its engagement across low-carbon energy, governance, water risk, and associated areas as well as serves as a member of WRI's global management team. Ani also serves as WRI Director of the Coalition for Urban Transitions, Special Initiative of the New Climate Economy (NCE), a global partnership of eight economic and policy research institutes, of which WRI is the Managing Partner. Prior to joining WRI, Ani served at the Director of Knowledge and Learning at the World Bank, where he provided leadership and direction for the Bank's role in offering knowledge services for development. Ani holds master's degrees in City Planning and Architecture, both from MIT. His PhD work, at the planning school at MIT, focused on services for urban poor. He received a bachelor's degree in Architecture with an emphasis on low Income Housing from the School of Planning and Architecture in India.



H.E. Burhan Gafoor, the Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, was appointed in August 2016. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Gafoor served as Singapore's High Commissioner to Australia from 2014. He also served as the country's Ambassador and Chief Negotiator for United Nations Climate Change Negotiations from 2010 to 2014.

Between 2007 and 2010, he was Singapore's Ambassador to France, and from 2004 to 2007 he served as the country's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva. Having joined the Singapore Foreign Service in 1988, Mr. Gafoor has held several other positions, including that of Press Secretary to former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong from 2002 to 2004. He represented his country as President of the Diplomatic Conference of the World Intellectual Property Organization in 2006 and as Chairman of the Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Development, World Trade Organization, from 2006 to 2007.

	<p>Norma Munguía Aldaraca, Director General for Global Issues at the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Mexico</p> <p>Ms. Munguía is Director General for Global Issues at the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Mexico. Previously she held different positions within the Federal Government as well as an environmental legal Consultant. Among her posts are Director General for Primary Sector and Natural Resources at the Environment Ministry, Chief of Staff to an Environment Vice Minister, and Environmental Attachée to the Mexican Embassy in Washington DC. She has wide expertise in international environmental negotiations. Among the latest ones Climate change, Biodiversity Convention and its protocols, and the Environmental Chapter of the TPP Agreement. Among her latest achievements has been to be appointed as an expert to the Compliance Committee of the Nagoya Protocol.</p> <p>Norma Munguía Aldaraca has an LLB degree from the National Autonomous University of Mexico; in 1992 she received an LLM degree from King’s College London in the UK.</p>
	<p>Purnima Kapur, Executive Director NY City, Dept. of City Planning</p> <p>Purnima Kapur was appointed in June 2014 as the Executive Director of the NYC Department of City Planning (DCP), among other key personnel appointments and promotions that he said would enable the agency to advance a comprehensive, ground-up, community-based approach to planning in order to help achieve the Mayor’s ambitious housing objectives, accelerate economic growth and foster livable, resilient neighborhoods. Weisbrod said the appointments are the initial steps in a reorganization of DCP to ensure the provision of the most efficient customer service to applicants, communities, and the public. Kapur is currently the director of City Planning’s Brooklyn office, where she has spearheaded several large scale planning efforts and overseen a period of unprecedented growth and development in the borough. Kapur was also instrumental in increasing the proportion of affordable housing in the Domino project, a private application for the Williamsburg waterfront.</p>
	<p>Jonathan Reichental, Chief Information Officer (CIO), City of Palo Alto</p> <p>Dr. Jonathan Reichental, currently the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the City of Palo Alto, is a multiple award-winning technology leader whose 25-year career has spanned both the private and public sectors. In 2017, he was named one of the top 100 CIOs in the world and in 2016 he was named one of the top 20 most influential CIO’s in the United States. Dr. Reichental is also recognized as a global thought leader on a number of emerging trends including urban innovation and blockchain technology. In 2013 he was recognized as one of the 25 doers, dreamers, and drivers in government in America. He also won a best CIO in Silicon Valley award and a national IT leadership prize. His innovative work in government has also been recognized by the White House. Dr. Reichental works with his teams to apply technology innovation in organizations to create new value and to enable work to be more meaningful and fun. He is a popular writer, including recently co-authoring The Apps Challenge Playbook and he is a frequent public speaker on a wide range of technology and business-related topics. He co-hosts the popular podcast, Drinking Wine Talking Tech..</p>
	<p>Martha Chen, WIEGO and Harvard Kennedy School</p> <p>Martha Chen is a Lecturer in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, an Affiliated Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, and International Coordinator of the global research-policy-action network Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). An experienced development practitioner and scholar, her areas of specialization are employment, gender, and poverty with a focus on the working poor in the informal economy. Before joining Harvard in 1987, she had two decades of resident experience in Bangladesh working with BRAC (now the world’s largest non-governmental organization) and in India, where she served as field representative of Oxfam America. Marty received a PhD in South Asia Regional Studies from the University of Pennsylvania.</p>



Kala Fleming, Innovation Advisor AI Team, IBM Watson

Dr. Kala Fleming is an innovation advisor, research scientist and engineer with a distinguished 10+-year career. She is known for designing and implementing initiatives that drive adoption of next generation technologies across government, startups and the private sector. In her current role, she manages IBM's internal investments into blockchain, predictive analytics and IoT. Previously, she was based in Nairobi, Kenya, with IBM Research, leading teams to deliver AI and IoT solutions for water, agriculture and healthcare. Her corporate experience is anchored by engineering and management roles at American Water and Campbell Soup. She has provided global consulting services to organizations such as the World Bank, USEPA, USAID, and NOAA, working across North America, South East Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. Dr. Fleming is a frequent speaker at entrepreneurship, agribusiness and economic development events.



Emily Mohohlo, Know Your City, Slum Dwellers International (SDI)

Emily Mohohlo was born in Mafikeng, South Africa. She is a member of Ithuseng Savings Group, a regional leader of the South African Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP), and chairperson of the provincial joint working group on partnerships between the municipality, provincial government, and the Federation.

She is also a member of the Slum Dwellers International (SDI) Management Committee, and supports the SDI affiliates in Lesotho and Swaziland on federation building. Her goals are to foster, raise citizen empowerment and improve women's rights in the rural and poor communities.