



UN-Habitat Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif

Foundations and Philanthropy Briefing

Tuesday 30 June 2020

Colleagues,

A very good morning/afternoon and evening wherever you are. And welcome again.

Thank you, colleagues, for finding time to join this call today. Some of us met at the World Urban Forum in Abu Dhabi in February. What a different world that was and I would like to appreciate your positive response to the challenges of COVID-19. I know these are challenging times, and thanks to digital technology, we are all well-connected. I have found these webinars to be very useful in delivering guidance and galvanising support, especially to the frontline as we have done with our network of mayors and civil society partners.

One of the key outcomes of the Foundations and Philanthropies roundtable during WUF 10, was to create a mechanism for sustaining an ongoing forum between foundations and philanthropies. A platform as a point of convergence to ensure we collaborate more to support urban SDGs in the decade of action. Today's discussion is the continuation of that declared action.

As I mentioned earlier, the world has changed very much since WUF10, and one key lesson learned from the UN's perspective is that we need a whole-of-society approach to address the pandemic, including consulting with our partners in the philanthropic community. Philanthropy has a key role to play in devising strategies and solutions to combat the global COVID-19 epidemic and help fulfil the core proposition of the SDGs to "**LEAVE NO ONE and NO PLACE BEHIND**". We can all benefit from collective action and collaborative efforts during these difficult times.

Although there is no return to what the world was before this pandemic, there is every opportunity to address underlying inequalities and renew efforts to build sustainable, inclusive, and safe cities.

Emerging issues such as the COVID-19 can be managed better if we invest in basic services such as water and sanitation, affordable housing, creation of green public spaces, and building resilient communities and economies.

The economic impact will be devastating, yet we must urge developed countries not to lessen their support for the developing world, whose cities and communities will be impacted the most.

You represent diverse parts of the global community at large, that of foundation and philanthropy. Today, I hope to see us activate this platform to achieve three objectives:



One: Can we formalise this partnership around policy and shared values whereby you consider devoting a certain percentage of your giving to supporting SDG 11 and efforts to ensure no one and no place is left behind in an urbanising world.

Secondly, I welcome our collaboration and partnership by supporting the UN-Habitat COVID-19 Response Plan, particularly in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable communities in 64 countries.

Finally, I welcome bilateral discussions between us if there is an opportunity to raise funds together to support UN-Habitat's mandate through contributions to our Foundation General Purpose Trust Fund, whereby we can jointly deliver the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023. Foundations have space to innovate, learn quickly, take risks, and take solutions to scale. This is the engagement that we hope that we can build together around sustainable urban development—during COVID and living in a world with COVID.

Today we welcome you to the table to explore how we can work collectively to fight COVID-19 while advancing sustainable development.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention. I welcome your thoughts/comments and questions on anything I have said.

I would now like to turn it over to Christine Knudsen, the Director of External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge and Innovation who will be moderating our discussion today.