

Healthy and Just Cities for Children and Youth

Urban Thinkers' Campus

Oct 28th 2015, Geneva



The 3W Approach: Water, Waste and Work

*Transforming individual and
community livelihoods through
water, waste and work*

INTRODUCTION: THE URBAN THINKERS CAMPUS INITIATIVE

In October 2016, the United Nations will convene the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador. The Habitat III Conference will renew the global commitment to, and set the New Urban Agenda for sustainable urban development for the next 20 years.

The Urban Thinkers Campus is an initiative of UN-Habitat conceived as an open space for debate, learning, consensus building and drafting between urban researchers, professionals, and decision-makers engaged in addressing urbanisation challenges and proposing solutions to urban futures. Campus participants are expected to engage in negotiations on principles, policies, and action planning on key issues that need to be addressed at the Habitat III Conference and built up in the New Urban Agenda.

Over 28 Urban Thinkers Campuses are scheduled worldwide on various thematic areas by partners of UN-Habitat's World Urban Campaign. These campuses aim to facilitate comprehensive and diverse feedback from as many groups and perspectives as possible before Habitat III.

Each Urban Thinkers Campus is expected to produce a detailed outcome report on the Campus theme(s), containing the collective position of the constituencies represented at the event. These reports will inform The City We Need 2.0, to be submitted for consideration in the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda.

Event overview:

As a lead partner of UN-Habitat's World Urban Campaign and elected Co-Chair of the General Assembly of Partner's Children and Youth Constituent Group for Habitat III¹, World Vision International is hosting an Urban Thinkers Campus themed "Healthy and Just Cities for Children and Youth" in Geneva, Switzerland on October 28.

The "**Healthy and Just Cities for Children and Youth**" Urban Thinkers Campus will focus on principles, policies and action planning aimed at improving access to water, waste and sanitation within slums and informal settlements, and explore potential business models for engaging young people in safe and dignified employment within these sectors.

The event will feature a series of open discussion sessions, informed by presentations from leading experts, for participants to learn, debate and build consensus on:

- The issues of urban water, waste and sanitation, and its impact on communities, specially children and youth
- The challenge of child labour rampant within the waste sector, and policy changes required
- The role of small medium enterprises and their contribution to promote youth employment opportunities
- Inter-sectoral partnerships required to promote healthy and prosperous environments
- Children and youth participation and their contribution to sustainable urban solutions

The key recommendations from this Campus will inform a report to be submitted to UN-Habitat for consideration into *The New Urban Agenda*.

¹ The General Assembly of Partners was established during the second UN preparatory committee meeting for Habitat III to provide a mechanism for stakeholder consultation and contribution to The New Urban Agenda. Within the General Assembly of Partners, 14 constituent groups have been formalised including the Children and Youth Constituent Group.

ABOUT WORLD VISION'S CENTRE OF EXPERTISE FOR URBAN PROGRAMMING

The changing face of poverty

Cities and towns are engines of power and growth - they are seen as positive signs of development and opportunity. With over half of the global population living in cities and towns the 21st Century is the first urban century. Although this has provided opportunity and success for many, it is also leaving a vast population behind. It is conservatively estimated that almost one billion people live in slums today and the UN has projected that the slum population could increase to one third of humanity within 30 years.

These fragile urban pockets are characterised by dense and fragmented neighbourhoods, which exacerbate the health, protection and safety risks for residents – especially children. More than one billion children, almost half of the world's children, live in cities (UNICEF, 2012), and millions of these children are living in slum conditions. Because children are the first casualties of urban poverty, it leaves them highly vulnerable to trafficking, child labour, violence, and living on the streets.

Urbanisation and World Vision

This 'urbanisation of poverty' and the density, diversity and dynamism of cities has presented non-government organisations (NGOs) with largely unexplored territory. While traditionally NGOs have focused their attention on rural areas, mainly because of the assumption that services and facilities are easily accessible to urban residents, it is now evident that many poor residents are being left behind.

With over 40,000 staff working in over 90 countries, World Vision (WV) is already present in the world's most rapidly urbanising countries and regions. However only an estimated 20-25% of WV's total investment in is in urban areas and, like many other NGOs, most of this programming has been essentially designed for stable, cohesive communities - found predominantly in rural contexts.

As one of the largest INGOs focused on sustained child well-being, especially the most vulnerable, World Vision has recognised an organisational need to learn, respond and adapt its development theories and approaches to address this global urbanisation trend. In recent years World Vision has made substantial investments in urban research, developed a strategic intent to adapt institutional systems and processes, and is scaling-up innovative programs that respond to urbanisation and strengthen child well-being in urban contexts.

Centre of Expertise for Urban Programming

In 2008 World Vision established the Centre of Expertise for Urban Programming (Urban CoE) to lead urban research and development, learning facilitation, capacity building and organisational adaptation. The Urban CoE is investing in developing a distributed network of urban expertise across its field offices.

In its initial phase the Urban CoE applied an action-research initiative in collaboration with six field offices: South Africa, Lebanon, India, Indonesia, Cambodia and Bolivia. Aiming to capture and share the unique characteristics and complexities of diverse urban contexts, the pilots have contributed to the understanding of how World Vision should approach programming that impacts disadvantaged urban communities- especially the most vulnerable.

Using this progressive understanding, the Urban CoE has developed the Cities for Children Framework to address the multi-dimensional nature of urban poverty. This Framework provides a multi-disciplinary approach for addressing vulnerability issues and measuring child well-being impact in urban contexts. It focuses on four interrelated sectoral domains impacting child well-being: Healthy Cities, Prosperous Cities, Safer Cities, and Resilient Cities.

World Vision and the Urban CoE are now applying lessons from the pilot phase and using the Cities for Children Framework to scale up urban programming globally. New 'learning sites' are being established in multiple regions, which will contribute to and promote just and inclusive cities where children thrive.

INTRODUCING THE 3W APPROACH: WATER, WASTE AND WORK

The concept of the healthy and safe cities seeks to improve the physical, social, mental and environmental health of communities through holistic and integrated urban programming approaches. The healthy cities approach moves from improving health-care systems and emphasising access, towards an emphasis on more holistic urban processes and the built environment to promote overall well-being and to improve urban liveability.² Overall, the aim of the healthy cities approach endeavours to promote sustainable urban development through improved environmental services and the eradication of urban poverty, with action required at both government (policy) and community (practice).

To focus on our thematic strengths, World Vision's Urban CoE is framing its future 'Healthy City' interventions around the proposed '3W Approach' which integrates and improved water, waste and work in the urban context, especially for children and youth.

Water: The water domain seeks to advance (i) quality, access and supply reliability of safe and clean drinking water; (ii) hygienic, equitable and financially viable sanitation services; (iii) adequate faecal sludge management; and (iv) improved drainage interventions which, where possible, promote ecologically restorative approaches. All of these urban water considerations are critical for improved urban health.

Waste: The waste domain advocates for the implementation of an economically viable solid waste management program at community, district or city level. This would include waste minimisation programmes, along with resource recovery, and business development and job creation opportunities.

Work: The work domain recognises that importance of decent work for advancing poverty alleviation . It aims to enable economic growth through the value addition within the solid waste stream through waste product collection, treatment and preparation, and then resale as a resource. In this way the work domain improves communities' economic livelihoods.

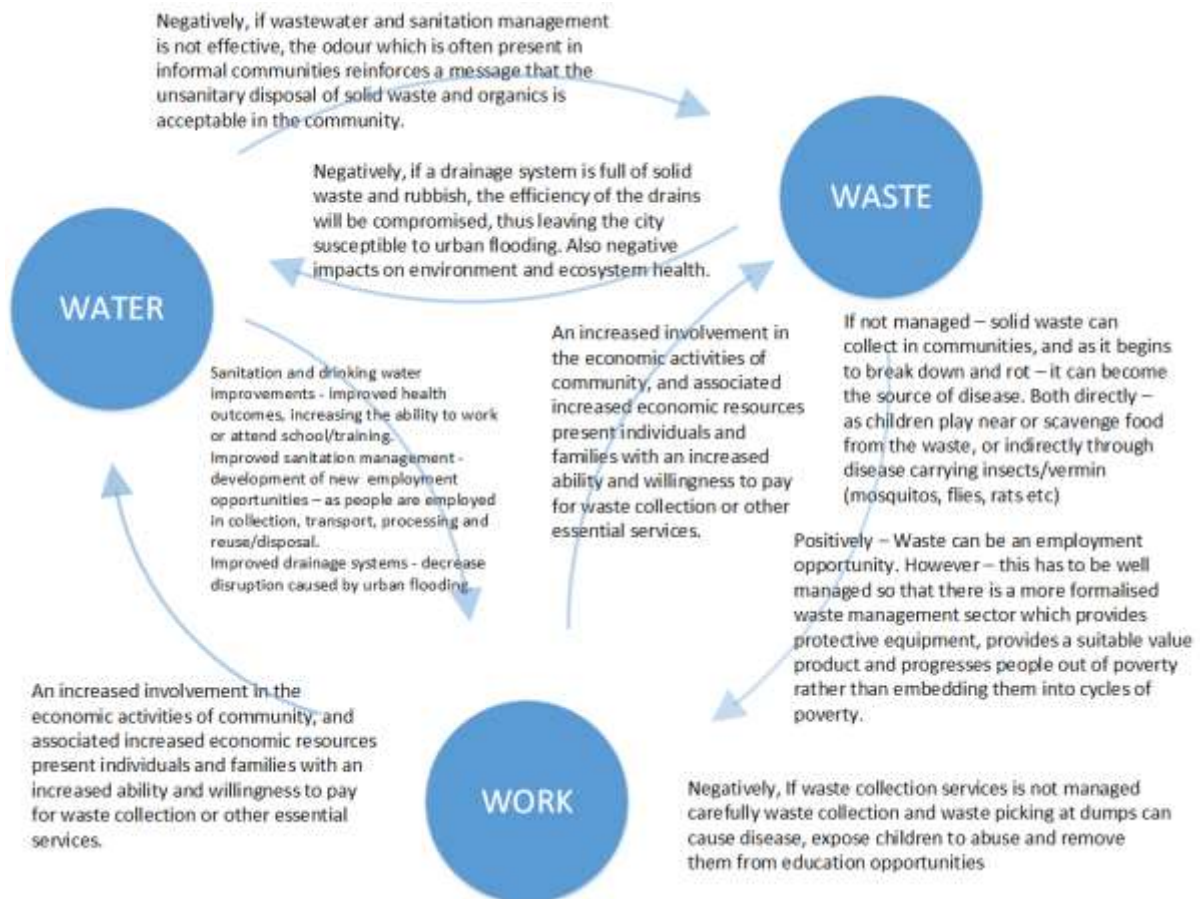
Underpinning this approach is the primary concern of transforming urban policy to ensure the needs of the urban poor are met. This is mobilised through the utilisation of innovative governance approaches which empower processes of co-design and co-management of water and waste service provision between private sectors, community, government and other civil society stakeholders.³

Despite having its objectives aligned to health outcomes, the 3W approach to healthy cities is primarily focussed on the social determinants of urban health and poverty, linking health in with the built environment, governance and planning.

Some of the inter-related linkages of the 3W's are presented on the next page.

² Hancock, T. (1993) "The evolution, impact and significance of the healthy cities/healthy communities movement." *Journal of Public Health Policy*. 14(1):5-18

³ Van Naerssen, Ton, and barton, P, (2002) "healthy Cities as a political process." *Nijmegen Studies in Development and Cultural Change* 38:1-23; and Hodson, Mike, and marvin, S. (2010) Can cities shape socio-technical transitions and how would we know if they were? *Research Policy* 39:477-486



CONCLUSION

Through the Urban Thinkers Campus initiative, World Vision invites you to join with us as we seek to continue to learn how to be more effective in integrating the three critical issues of water, waste and work. We invite you to share case studies, best practices and known research needs as we identify the 'City We Need' and attempt to suggest ingredients for a holistic development approach that will address the 3W issues while helping to empower local authorities, provide employment opportunities for local individuals, provide skills and jobs for youth, and improve children's well-being and livelihood.