



ESTADO PLURINACIONAL DE BOLIVIA



Guiding Principles for Urban-Rural Linkages  
to Advance Integrated Territorial Development

## Expert Group Meeting

in La Paz, Bolivia, 19-20 June 2018

Summary Report



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# Guiding Principles for Urban-Rural Linkages to Advance Integrated Territorial Development

## Expert Group Meeting

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### Summary Report



Group picture participants of the Expert Group Meeting on the Guiding Principles, 19-20 June 2018, La Paz, Bolivia © UN-Habitat

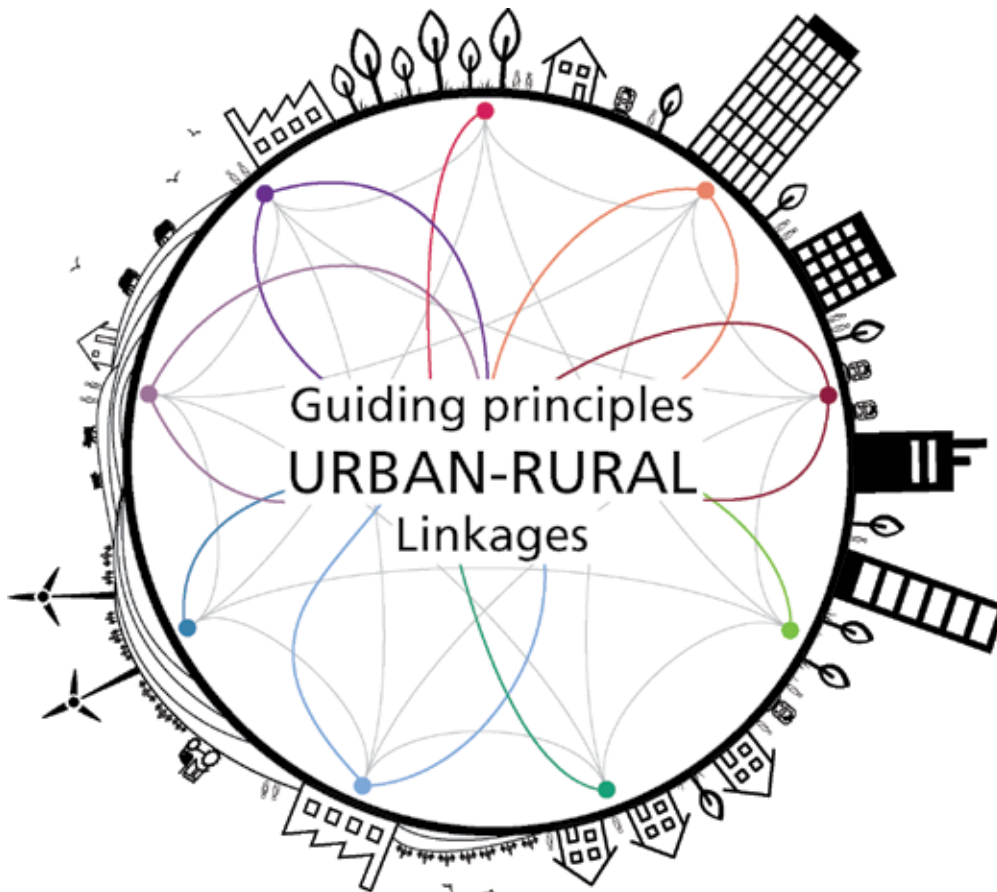
## OVERVIEW AND ORGANIZATION:

UN-Habitat has partnered with Cities Alliance, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Food Programme (WFP) and World Health Organization (WHO) among others in a participatory process for developing "Guiding Principles for Urban-Rural Linkages" to advance integrated urban and territorial development.

The Guiding Principles will serve as guidance for governments at national and sub-national levels and

to other urban and rural stakeholders to collaborate towards a more integrated territorial development while reducing inequalities across the urban-rural continuum.

The process began in February 2018 with a working session and expert consultation parallel to the World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Inputs to a zero draft of the Guiding Principles and Framework for Action led to a first draft shared in April and May with over 125 stakeholders in a global online consultation process. A second draft incorporating inputs from stakeholders was prepared in advance of the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) in La Paz, Bolivia (19-20 June 2018).



This report summarizes the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) hosted by the Bolivian Ministry of Public Works, Services and Housing (MOPSV) and supported by the Government of Sweden and GIZ. It was organized by UN-Habitat's Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit (RMPU) with strong support of UN-Habitat offices in Bolivia and Colombia and took place on 19 and 20 June in La Paz, Bolivia.

The EGM brought together 60 participants from 13 countries, of whom one-third of which were female. Participants represented subnational and national governments, international and UN agencies, academia from different countries, civil society and the private sector (see the participant list annexed to this report).

The EGM was designed with three objectives:

1. Discuss and review the second draft of the Guiding Principles and Framework for Action from national and subnational perspectives to explore the process of their implementation in specific local contexts, providing inputs to the next draft of the Guiding Principles;
2. Provide recommendations to the Bolivian Government on the implementation and planning process for establishing a first National Urban Policy with special consideration on including elements such as a "system of cities" and integrated territorial approach in the policy;
3. Deliver key messages for policymakers for advocacy work at global level and prepare an action plan for advancing the Guiding Principles (La Paz Communique). Both documents are to be shared with and validated by all stakeholders in the project.

The Bolivian Vice-Ministry of Housing and Urbanism from the MOPSV, with the support of the Bolivian office of UN-Habitat organized both morning sessions with special focus on the Bolivian context.

The morning session on the first day included keynote presentations held in MOPSV's auditorium with an audience of over 100 invited guests in addition to the EGM participants. The keynotes presented initiatives of the Bolivian Government related to national urban and territorial planning and presentations of five country case studies related to implementation of the Guiding Principles as well as international experiences including Brazil, Ghana, Colombia and Italy among others.



Bolivia's Vice Minister of Housing and Urbanism, Mr. Javier Delgadillo, at the Opening Ceremony © UN-Habitat

In the afternoon of the first day, different working groups developed the action plan (La Paz Communique), key messages and recommendations for the Bolivian Government and stakeholders.

The morning session of the second day brought together Bolivian experts from different research and academic fields related to socio-cultural, economic, environmental and spatial dimensions of urban and territorial realities on the ground.

These presentations informed the afternoon groups

work on the outcomes of the EGM.

The three outcome documents presented as drafts in the final plenary reflect the objectives of the EGM (included as annexes) were:

1. Key messages to policymakers at all levels in all regions
2. La Paz Communique on "Developing the Guiding Principles and Framework for Action: Urban-Rural Linkages to Advance Integrated Territorial Development"
3. Experts' recommendations to the Bolivian Government and stakeholders for the elaboration of a national urban policy



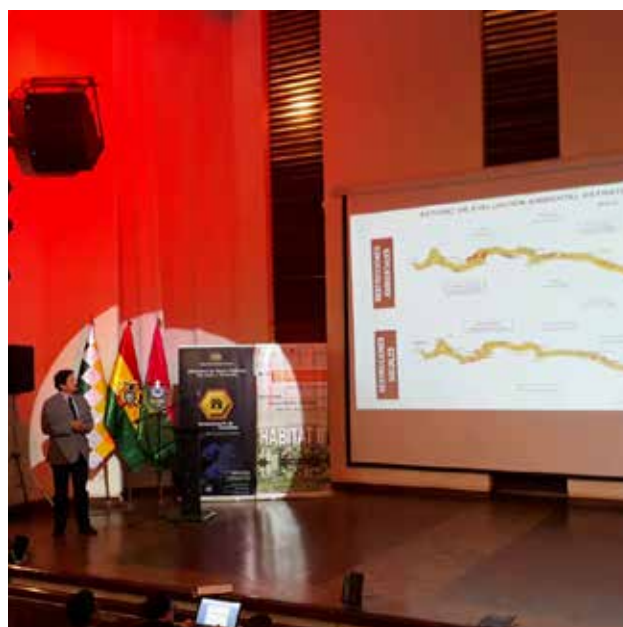
Participants at the EGM in La Paz, Bolivia © UN-Habitat

## NATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND CASE STUDIES (19 JUNE 2018, MORNING SESSION)

The national presentations began with a focus on the EGM host country, Bolivia. The United Nations Resident Coordinator a.i. in Bolivia, Mrs. Maribel Gutierrez, stressed the importance of collaboration between the different agencies for achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and reducing poverty and inequality in Bolivia. Mr. Sergio Blanco, representing the UN-Habitat Bolivia country office underscored that the process of developing a national urban policy (NUP) should be inclusive and incorporate territorial considerations and strengthen urban-rural linkages, building up on the existing, traditionally strong linkages between urban and rural areas in the country.

Bolivia's Vice Minister of Housing and Urbanism, Mr. Javier Delgadillo agreed and underlined that spatial "multilocality" between rural and urban is a fundamental reality in Bolivia, and that different government levels must be included. He highlighted the importance of this EGM for Bolivia in order to learn from the experiences of other countries.

Mr. Remy Sietchiping, leader of UN-Habitat's Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit (UN-Habitat headquarter, Nairobi, Kenya) emphasized the importance of including urban-rural linkages when developing Bolivia's NUP, as the NUP will serve as a policy for spatial transformation in the country. He also underscored that urban-rural linkages are an important topic when considering interlinkages of the SDGs. He referred to country experiences including China, the Philippines, Cameroon, the Netherlands and Uganda with entry points such as the flows across the urban-rural continuum, the role of small and intermediate cities and urban-rural partnerships. He then introduced the work on Guiding Principles for Urban-Rural Linkages that UN-Habitat launched in early 2018, building on prior work and convening a participatory process that includes governments at all levels, UN agencies, civil society, the private sector and academia.



Mr. Ariel Torrico presenting the "Bi-oceanic Integration Railway Corridor" in the Opening Ceremony © UN-Habitat

Continuing with Bolivian presentations, Mr. Nicolayeb Brun, Director of Territorial Planning from the Ministry of Development Planning described the recently (2016) implemented multi-level national planning system SPIE (Sistema de la Planificación Integral del Estado) fostering collaboration across different levels of government and across sectors and institutions. Mr. Ariel Torrico, the Technical Unit Coordinator for the "Bi-oceanic Integration Railway Corridor" (CFBI) described the proposed new rail corridor connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through Brazil, Bolivia and Peru. This corridor is conceived as a major economic development project connecting 113 Bolivian municipalities in 4 departments including the main urban areas of the country. The CFBI will help in the creation of a "system of cities" in Bolivia and support nodes of development and increased productivity across the country. It will remarkably reduce the transport time of goods and people from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific.



Stephen Blighton, representing Ghana © UN-Habitat

Turning to international case studies, Mr. Stephen Blighton, the Regional Economic Planning Officer for the Ghana Western Regional Coordinating Council described a project for improving the governance and planning capacity of 13 metropolitan and municipal associations. With support from the World Bank, Danida, the Swiss Development Corporation and other donors, this programme incentivizes inclusive governance performance with engagement of social actors and the private sector across the urban-rural continuum. Mr. Helio Vanderlei from the small city of Nueva Iguacu in Brazil emphasized the importance of water and the role of NGOs such as farmers organizations in enhancing urban-rural linkages.

Mr. Rafael Forero, UN-Habitat Colombia, described Colombia's system of cities against the backdrop of increasing urbanization and inequality in the country's post-conflict situation. Colombia has associated 151 municipalities in 56 nodes or metropolitan regions. The six priorities for Colombia's system of cities, connectivity, planning for sustainability, coordinated jurisdiction, financial efficiency, productivity and quality of life, are also designed to support the territorial integration and urban-rural linkages.

Mrs. Antonella Contin and Mr. Alessandro Mussetta from the Politecnico of Milan spoke to examples of urban planning from northern Italy, Chile, Cairo and South Africa. The spaces between rural agricultural production and natural areas, and the peri-urban and urban areas are important buffer zones in which cultural community spaces and rapid adaptations are to be found. Mapping and new tools can help organize the complexity of these spaces so context-specific urban-rural linkages can be better understood in order to protect these spaces in the future.



## URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES IN THE BOLIVIAN CONTEXT (20 JUNE 2018, MORNING SESSION)

Bolivian expert presentations organized by the Vice-Ministry for Housing and Urbanization were divided into three panels:

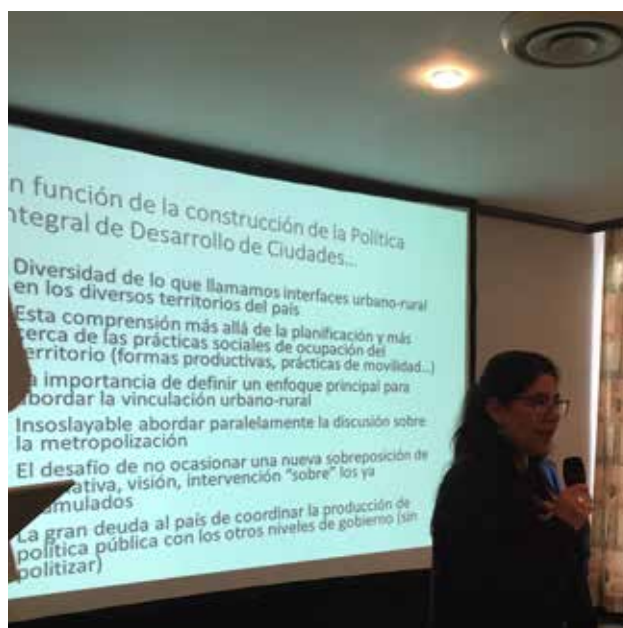
1. Multilocality and reconceptualization of urban areas in Bolivia
2. Bolivia's urban-rural articulation and systems of cities
3. The planning system of the state and re-engineering of territorial organization in Bolivia

The key findings from the rich and varied reflections of Bolivian researchers and academics concerning urban-rural linkages include the following:

- Bolivian urbanization: over the past few decades Bolivia has become nearly 70% urban and has been "andeanized" in the sense that rural-urban flows have strong local component, including the socio-cultural values and character of Andean Indigenous Peoples, among them Aymara and Quechua) who historically have occupied vertical territorial zones for residential and agricultural purposes.
- This historical reality results in the current multilocality of Bolivian settlement patterns and should be the basis for integrated territorial development in the current process of developing a national urban policy.
- The ruralization of urban areas and the urbanization of rural areas is a distinctive feature of urban-rural linkages in Bolivia today.
- The cultural logic of formerly rural areas has taken on urban lifestyles and urban areas have been occupied by rural peoples, while maintaining traditional indigenous styles.
- Planning across Bolivian territories thus cannot work with strict divisions of urban and rural as they fundamentally interpenetrate in environmental, cultural, economic and spatial dimensions.
- Increasing urbanization is accompanied by transformation of traditional smallholder agriculture and the current production and distribution systems of food and other goods must be better understood

to inform infrastructure investment appropriate to residents of multiple locations and municipalities.

- The reconceptualization of urbanization in Bolivia is burdened by the history and mindset that separates urban from rural and over-privileges the urban.
- Terminology such as "regional" can help move beyond urban-biased terms and mindsets.
- The composition of cities in non-industrialized countries such as Bolivia is fundamentally misunderstood.
- Public policy such as the NUP must be based in the specific history/memory of defacto territorial integration that has not been understood by policymakers and planners.
- The urban-rural interface is a complex socio-cultural construction that goes beyond just physical space and includes three components:
  - The interface at a spatial level in the peri-urban margins of urban areas
  - The interface as a social-economic system of dual realities
  - The interface as interaction of urban-rural flows where conflict is intensified and opportunity is also intensified.



Patricia Urquieta providing input on the Bolivian context © UN-Habitat

## WORKING GROUPS AND OUTCOME DOCUMENTS

EGM participants broke into working groups both afternoons to work on the following topics

1. Key messages for policy makers (global/national/local)
2. Framing an action plan for implementation of Guiding Principles for Urban-Rural Linkages (the La Paz Communique)
3. Expert recommendations for considerations for the drafting process and later on implementation of Bolivia's National Urban Policy and inclusion of urban-rural linkages components;

### 1. KEY MESSAGES FOR POLICYMAKERS:

The first round of discussion on Day One centred on criteria and kinds of policy needed for implementation of the Guiding Principles and Framework for Action. The group agreed that policy tools need to respond to different priorities and challenges at different levels of governance. However, national policy was the place to begin, though subnational and local policy messages need to be included, recognizing the need for transversal alignment or coherence between levels of policy.

Three criteria of participation, transparency and collaboration were agreed to be necessary to bring legitimacy to improved policy tools. New forms of intra- and inter-governmental cooperation were deemed essential at the national inter-ministerial level and at the local inter-departmental level. National policy support is needed for cities' support for rural economic development integrated with urban development. Explicit links to finance and budget are critical to deliver results, including links to new international green and climate funding mechanisms.

On the second day a key message draft was reviewed and edited. The edited draft is included as an annex to this report and can be found at [www.urbanrurallinkages@wordpress.com](mailto:urbanrurallinkages@wordpress.com) (after 6 July 2018). It will be finalized before the High Level

Political Forum (HLPF), which is being held to review progress of SDG implementation including the SDG on sustainable urbanization (SDG 11) between July 9 and 18 in New York.

### 2. LA PAZ ACTION COMMUNIQUE:

On day one, the group examined the Framework for Action from a case-led approach to review specific roles for different actions using a draft matrix. From this review a number of key issues were identified:

- The role of conveners or bridge-builders for local governments and actors from civil society and the private sector;
- Challenges of power asymmetry between actors needs to be accounted for;
- Dynamic changes in governance (e.g. changes of administration or jurisdiction) will require flexibility and change in roles and responsibilities of actors;
- Mobility/migration of people is a critical entry point for actors' roles.

Distinction was made between roles across actors (conveners) and roles of actors and the forces that may result in the evolution of roles over time.



Sergio Blanco presenting the group work to the plenary © UN-Habitat

Examples include entry points of sectoral priority areas such as the urban water or rural to urban migration that later evolve to include agriculture and rural development.

On day two, this working group returned to the draft matrix of responsibilities for different stakeholder and chose to sections with provisions that had the most relevance for the Bolivian context: “empower people and communities” (section D) and “environmental impact and national resource and land management” (section J). The group wrestled with the complex structure of the provisions that sometimes include multiple levels of governance and different roles of actors, making recommendations for the next draft of the Guiding Principles and Framework for Action (see below).

The working group took up a draft version of the La Paz Communique and discussed the further steps to be taken in the process for developing the Guiding Principles. The La Paz Communique is a process-oriented document that lays out further steps and calls for actions for finalizing, localizing and implementing the Guiding Principles. The draft La Paz Communique, which was shared with all stakeholders for comments and suggestions, is also included as an annex and available on the website from 6 July 2018 on.

### 3. EXPERT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A BOLIVIAN NUP RELATED TO URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES:

The first round of this working group which included staff from the Vice-Ministry of Housing and Urbanization examined all 10 Guiding Principles from the second draft and identified the following challenges for Bolivia’s implementation of the Guiding Principles:

- A lack of connection in Bolivia to the global agendas (SDGs and NUA)
- A disconnect with local realities at the national level

- A need to start with local realities to inform integrated urban-rural planning
- Disparities that exist between urban and rural areas
- Governance responsibilities are scattered and not harmonized

To address these challenges for Bolivia the following approaches were discussed:

- Spatial integration as a focus including multilocality as a key dimension for Bolivia
- Better understanding the complex and overlapping jurisdictions to turn from conflict to shared solutions, starting from what can build trust more easily
- Strengthening financing and collaboration on policy for urban-rural linkages
- Collaborative framework for alliances and partnerships or associations of municipalities in metropolitan regions
- Focusing on the human rights dimensions of urban rural relations in Bolivia
- Aligning policy with real participatory processes

On day two, this working group focused on concrete recommendations for the process of developing the national urban policy for Bolivia. These recommendations underscore an integrated approach that is not limited to just urban or just territorial or rural approaches. They include a call for participatory and inclusive policy formation process appropriate to Bolivia’s demographic and ethnic diversity. A proposal for “regional integrated development” was suggested with emphasis on:

- Management of rural as well as urban spaces;
- Revision of intermediate administrative levels;
- Strengthening of metropolitan areas including surrounding rural areas and their functional interdependencies;
- Revision of territorial boundaries;
- Adoption of a territorial planning approach

and a cadaster system for Bolivia;

- Special attention to internal mobility and migration (multilocality).

The recommendations for the NUP in Bolivia also reference the decentralization process and highlights three dimensions of governance: 1) Instruments, 2) Institutions and 3) actors. The policy should include a “systems of cities” approach and promote small and intermediate cities. Topics such food security, youth employment, protection of the environment and Bolivian heritage and culture are also mentioned. The 36 Bolivian ethnic groups as well as gender considerations find special mention in the recommendations. The recommendations are also included as an annex to this report.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR URBAN RURAL LINKAGES

A number of issues were brought up during the EGM that should be taken into account for the next iteration of the Guiding Principles including:

- Greater emphasis on the protection of human rights in the context of urban-rural linkages;
- More clarity on roles of actors, expanding on the matrix of actors and actions, considering that definition of those roles strongly depends on the different local contexts;
- Simplifying provisions and reduction of provisions that include multiple roles;



Thomas Forster concluding the plenary session © UN-Habitat

## CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS FROM THE BOLIVIA EGM

Remy Sietchiping offered a summary of the EGM and thanked participants, the Government of Bolivian, the government of Sweden and GIZ for their support. He highlighted the importance of concrete work and outcome documents including the key messages for policymakers, the La Paz Communique and recommendations for Bolivian implementation of a national urban policy including urban-rural linkages. Finally he committed to continued support from UN-Habitat and encouraged other UN agencies and development partners to support the next steps. Abraham Walter Apaza Condori, Bolivia's General Director for Urbanism from the Vice-Ministry of Housing and Urbanism closed the EGM, expressing appreciation for the dialogue and learning experience that will influence the work on Bolivia's national urban policy going forward.

Annexes to this report

- Final Agenda
- Participant List
- Draft outcome documents
  - o Key messages to Policymakers
  - o La Paz Communique
  - o Recommendations for Bolivia's national urban policy

Additional information on the Guiding Principles for Urban-Rural Linkages and all above named annexes can also be found at the webpage [www.urbanrurallinkages.wordpress.com](http://www.urbanrurallinkages.wordpress.com).



Video messages from Oliver Hillel (CBD) and Angela Penagos (RIMISP)





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