

Annex 3: Manila Declaration on Incentivizing Asia's Urban Future

We, the participants present at the Manila roundtable, recognize:

- that urbanization—more and more people living in towns and cities—is the biggest transformation that the world has ever seen;
- and that Asian cities perform an essential role not only in the development of national economies, but also in maintaining the resilience of the global economic system.

We therefore call upon local and national governments to put urbanization and cities at the forefront of the development agenda for economic growth and poverty reduction, based on a clear city vision and holistic planning strategies which will:

- work towards making our cities more inclusive, promoting equitable access to shelter and basic services—water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, mobility, and public safety;
- implement community upgrading and urban renewal strategies to encourage growth and upward mobility of the poor;
- promote the competitiveness and efficiency of our cities by building the needed economic infrastructure and eliminate barriers to the free movement of capital, labor, knowledge, and technology within a country across its regions and cities;
- make our cities more sustainable and resilient, reducing their impact on the environment and improving the quality of life of their citizens by incorporating the basic concepts of sustainable and green cities into urban policies and programs.

We accept that:

- city governance is a multilevel responsibility, requiring strong partnerships and alliances among civil society, the public sector, the private sector, and across tiers of government;
- and, because of the formidable urban challenges, that technical, managerial, and financial capabilities of the above stakeholders must be enhanced.

To make our cities more inclusive, competitive and environmentally sustainable, we need to overcome the major constraints relating to:

- Planning—integrated and holistic planning as a context for investment is inadequate;
- Projects—the lack of bankable urban infrastructure projects available for financing;
- Funding—blockages in the flow of funds from the capital markets, limited government resources, and lack of access to finance by lower income groups; and
- Land—issues of land acquisition, availability and tenure.

And to overcome these constraints at the local, national, and regional levels:

- The Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA) and its National Partner Organizations should support local agencies and financiers in developing credible and bankable infrastructure investment projects.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other development funding agencies should work with national incentive programs such as the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) in India to ensure the effectiveness of national transfers and the efficiency of local resource mobilization.
- ADB and other development financing agencies should work with the public sector to build the enabling environment, with community groups, and with the private sector, to encourage flexible and creative financing for investment in urban infrastructure through linkages to the capital markets.
- ADB and other development agencies, working within the global context set by UN-Habitat, should support national and local governments and civil society to ensure that integrated land use-transport planning, land taxation, regulation, and enforcement measures are taken to ensure that land is available for infrastructure projects.

We therefore recommend that the Cities Development Initiative for Asia and the Asian Development Bank

- further strengthen their partnerships with Asian countries for technical assistance on project development, research, and capacity development;
- substantially increase support to Asian countries and cities for the development of credible projects addressing the challenges of urbanization;
- support continuing high level dialogue to periodically share and exchange experiences, harmonize processes and procedures, disseminate good practices and appropriate technology, and to deliberate on urban challenges and policy initiatives; and
- work towards transforming CDIA into a sustainable regional institution to further the above agenda.