The goal of the World Resources Report Update is to communicate progress on the World Resources Report (WRR) and facilitate collaboration across the WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities network. This update introduces the WRR core team, and the working papers and lead authors. It summarizes the status and approach of framing the WRR and takeaways from the first Stakeholder Roundtable. It concludes by providing an update on the status of each working paper.

The core WRR team consists of Victoria Beard, Anjali Mahendra and Michael Westphal. All three are writing the framing paper as well as individual working papers. In addition, Alyssa Fischer is leading our efforts at Stakeholder Engagement, Benoit Colin is managing our communications strategy, Sebastian Varela is helping us engage with the country offices and supporting the case studies, Vijay Jagannathan is helping with the water and energy working papers, and Diego Canales is supporting with visual representation and accessing data. We also have a new Project Coordinator, Valeria Gelman.

Currently the work on the WRR revolves around preparing 7 working papers on seminal urban issues. Each working paper will discuss governance, economic development policies, finance, and new technologies as cross cutting themes. The working papers will be reworked into different chapters for the final WRR.

In January, we will start work on case studies. We are aiming to complete 3 cross sectoral, in-depth, city-level case studies focused on urban transformation, and we are also considering case studies about specific service delivery problems related to each of the working papers. For the city-level case studies, we are currently considering Medellín and Surat. We are looking to add a city-level case study from Africa. The case studies are in the early planning stages, so we welcome your input.

**Status and Approach of the WRR Framing**

A Publication Plan for the framing paper was submitted in August. On October 21st the initial concepts for the framing paper were presented to Andrew Steer, Manish Bapna, Janet Ranganathan, and Lawrence Macdonald. On November 5th a working draft of the framing was presented at the first stakeholder Roundtable in D.C. A draft will be ready for the Cities Management Team to review in late December.

In short, the framing analyzes the demographic data and focuses the WRR on those parts of the world where the majority of urbanization will take place and where the majority of the urban population will live in the coming decades. The framing paper notes that these cities are expected to experience an “urbanization of poverty,” implying increasing numbers of the poor in urban areas of many
countries in the global south. The framing prioritizes the urgency of addressing basic human needs and the necessity to prevent unsustainable urban lock-in. As an approach to achieving the three pillars of sustainability (economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and social equity) for all, the WRR focuses on solutions from the perspective of the needs and quality of life of the lower half of the income distribution in cities, with an understanding that this approach requires transformative change at the city-level.

**Stakeholder Roundtable Takeaways**

Below are the key takeaway messages from the Stakeholder Roundtable.

**Framing**

- The framing around the bottom half needs to be strengthened with evidence and a clearer argument of how/why targeting this group brings benefits for the entire city. Emphasize shared responsibility and solutions, including actions upper income people need to take.
- Define transformative change and what it means over time -- where exactly does innovation need to occur? Through cases, highlight the role of learning in achieving transformative change.
- Framing city mayors as agents of change in cities is not ideal; there are many others in cities that affect change, civil society actors, private sector, etc.; also discuss the role of vested interests in hindering change.

**Working Papers**

- How much of what we discuss in the working papers will be based on experience and literature and how much will be new research? Map out where solutions are actually known and where implementation issues remain in each of these working papers.
- Link the approach in working papers to with the framing, highlight links across working papers and across solutions to bring out importance of an integrated, cross-sectoral approach to achieving transformative change with shared benefits.
- Governance in cities is very important and linkage of all topic areas with jobs and economic development is important to highlight.

**Audience and Communication**

- Be very clear about who is the audience and connect this work to the global agenda.
- Think carefully about communications and influence strategy, engaging the mainstream media, and using their language to draft the report, to enable certain ideas to go viral.
- Must leverage strength of our country offices and engage them fully.

**Working Paper Updates**

Presently, Lead Authors are conducting literature reviews, organizing smaller stakeholder workshops, identifying world experts as co-authors, reaching out to the governance team to begin working on cross-cuts. Below is an update submitted by each of the lead authors on the status of their working papers.
URBAN EXPANSION

Current scope of working paper

We decided to split the broad topic of Land Use or Land Management into two working papers, one on Affordable Shelter that Robin is leading and the other on ‘Managing Urban Expansion for Accessible Cities and Sustainable Growth’ that Anjali is leading. This paper will explore 4 research questions: (i) What growth trajectory might different types of cities follow as they accommodate more urban growth? What implications would this have for how the growing populations might be serviced? What is the political economy of land markets that drives unmanaged urban expansion? How can cities coordinate more effectively across metropolitan agencies and jurisdictions as they grow?

In linking this to our framing, the chapter will explore urban growth models that better serve the bottom half of the income distribution, that help provide accessible, affordable services and housing for them. It will also highlight how cities have used efficient and inclusive land use policies with better coordinated governance across jurisdictions – to enhance productivity and limit their resource footprint in the long term.

Key takeaways from the roundtable

- Land is a major issue and dealing with land issues resonated with all participants. Need to get away from concept of a 20 year master plan
- Solutions we proposed in the presentation seemed on target – (i) Regulate private real estate investment – provide incentives for more spatially efficient development and limit land holding by private developers; (ii) Ensure proper land records and data so that value created through land development within the city is captured and fairly distributed; (iii) Enhance authority of local planning agencies to enforce plans and coordinate across jurisdictions for improved service provision; (iv) Plan for some inevitable urban expansion by managing land acquisition and redistribution in an equitable way; and (v) Reform density regulations within the city and utilize transit oriented development (TOD) to limit expansion
- Additional solutions suggested were taking lifecycle cost of land development into account (taking risks of expansion into account, e.g., in vulnerable areas); proposing short term and long term actions to deal with present and future challenges, and emphasizing what enabling conditions are needed.

Support needed from country offices

- The research for the chapter may include these tasks. Any cases or research the country staff know of on these issues would help.
- Study cases where cities have accommodated substantial urban growth with limited expansion of boundaries
- Assess benefits and trade-offs of different urban growth models (greenfield development, inner city densification, satellite city, corridor-cluster model, etc.)
- Analyze factors leading to urban expansion over time such as perverse density regulations and unregulated private real estate development in a sample of case study cities -- large city, secondary city, etc.
- Find evidence of economic costs of unplanned urban expansion and gaps in services, e.g. costs of self provisioning for basic urban services in cities of the global south
- Analyze how cities have met the coordination challenges associated with a
rapidly expanding urban footprint

- Analyze how land is pooled and acquired and how revenues from land sales are used in a sample of cities

**SHELTER**

**Current scope of working paper**

Our retreat proposal and discussion on TOD neighborhoods as microcosms of a sustainable city needed to be adjusted once the decision to focus on the lowest half of the population in cities, as the neighborhoods in which many of them live are informal settlements. The chapter then took focus around the idea of well-located secure and affordable housing.

**Key takeaways from the roundtable**

The proposed solutions that were discussed during the workshop were:

- Making the economic case for affordable housing in central city locations, set in context of global south;
- Innovative legislation that has provided security to residents of informal settlements;
- More in situ upgrading;
- Well targeted (including location) and implemented financial policies;
- Exploring how rental housing in the city center can represent an important option in the spectrum of possibilities for all market segments, including the poor; and
- Better understanding the sequencing of essential decisions and policies to address this issue.

The importance of these topics was confirmed in the discussion, with participants making a strong case for us to talk about homes, not shelter or even housing, and to find a way to weave the neighborhood story back in around these solutions. We would like to work with Centers to bring relevant cases and experiences.

**URBAN ENERGY**

**Current scope of working paper**

Our retreat proposal was to focus on all urban energy services – lighting, heating/cooling, mobility, sanitation, and our thinking is to still cover all of these services and synergies between them. We will examine solutions that (1) enhance the services for the bottom 50 percent, (2) increase economic productivity and environmental sustainability for the city as whole, and (3) have transformation potential (scalability, replicability)

**Key takeaways from the roundtable**

During the breakout session, we discussed these main themes:

- **Audience:** There was agreement that while city-level decisions makers should be the focus, we need to go beyond city authorities to those who also have levers of power over city-level decisions (e.g. national government actors, private sector) cities.
- **Framing:** The idea of focusing on the bottom 50 percent resonated with some (this is a major issue for electricity utilities), but others thought we should focus more on the issue of shared prosperity.
- **Scope.** There was consensus that we should focus on energy services, not energy per se. Opinions differed as to whether we should constraint the energy services considered, or split the chapter up to cover different services (electricity, heating/cooling in buildings). However, others pointed that this approach would lose synergies across services – e.g. transport and waste, waste and heat, energy and water, etc. There was some discussion as to whether we should focus only on solutions that the city has control over.

In the end, the breakout session did not provide resolution a number of questions, in particular the on scope of energy services to be considered in the chapter, but there was clarity on a number of fronts, including the need to differentiate cities when considering solutions and the importance of finance, governance, and business models in deriving practical, scalable solutions for cities. Moreover, there was some consensus that the chapter should be relevant for the private sectors and that they should be engaged in stakeholder discussions. Lastly, we invite recommendations from the country offices on solutions and case studies to examine further in this chapter.

### REGIONAL WATER RISK

**Current scope of working paper**

The Water Risk Chapter aims to illustrate the nature of water risks that cities must face, potential solutions (i.e. integrated water resource management, decentralized systems, natural infrastructure), and identify the kind of governance and financial mechanisms that could help cities become more water resilient. Consistent with the framing of the WRR, we will specifically look at how the bottom half of the income distribution is disproportionately vulnerable to water risks (scarcity, flooding), and how solutions considering these populations can benefit the city as a whole. Another chapter is being developed to focus on WASH issues.

**Key takeaways from the roundtable**

- The importance of complex governance and institutional issues in addressing water risk, both in-city and regionally
- The integrated nature of water issues with energy, land issues
- The need to communicate not only the risks of business as usual, but also the benefits (economic, social, environmental) of different solutions

**Support needed from country offices**

As the team moves forward, we appreciate input into the following:

- What cities might provide great case studies of successful water risk management in developing countries?
- What governance and financial mechanisms successfully align city and regional stakeholders?

### TRANSPORTATION

**Current scope of working paper**

The mobility working paper proposes a focus on access and transportation needs of the bottom half of the income distribution. To advance access and
sustainability a three pronged approach is encouraged: compact development (to avoid the need for long individual motorized trips), enhancing the supply of sustainable transport modes and managing travel demand (to shift trips to the most sustainable ways of travel), and advancing low emission technologies and operations management (to improve environmental performance and quality of the transport system). Advancing this agenda still requires profound changes in policy, governance and finance.

We propose that cities pursue a 40:40:40 strategy for achieving this mode split: 40%+ quality public transport, 40%+ safe and enjoyable walking and biking, by 2040. This requires shifting investment priorities, including increased funding for high quality public transport, safe infrastructure, and relatively more compact, mixed use built environments for walking and biking with improved integration across these modes. This opposes current trends of increased share of individual motor vehicles, including low cost motorcycles, and urban sprawl. A 40:40:40 scenario would result in large reductions in traffic fatalities, air pollution, CO₂ emissions, increased physical activity, more equitable access, and societal savings due to reduced need for road infrastructure and parking, energy consumption, vehicles, and reduced injuries, illness, and deaths.

We will advance a model for modal share with associated impacts and will quantify impacts, capital costs and operational investment. We will model different levels of modal shares, and produce graphic outputs. We will also look at the transport budgets in several cities.

Key takeaways from the roundtable

Some key takeaways from the transport breakout session and other meetings with experts:

- Identifying audience is key, who are the agents of change? How to reach them?
- Paying for the investment required is key. We need to look at how urban transport budgets are spent today, and at how the required investment can be paid.
- There is a trade-off between complexity and nuances of some of the issues, and the simplicity required for the working paper.
- Metrics are important on issues such as access, labor markets, equity, emissions, traffic fatalities.
- Case studies are an opportunity to introduce detail on how to get things done, and on successful and unsuccessful cases.

Support needed from country offices

- Ideas for successful and unsuccessful case studies
- Data related to transport budgets of cities and spending on sustainable vs. unsustainable transport.

Monthly Meeting with the Country Offices

The core WRR team will have monthly meeting with the country offices and lead authors. The first meeting with the country offices is scheduled for Monday, November 23rd.