LOCAL CHALLENGES, GLOBAL IMPERATIVES: CITIES AT THE FOREFRONT TO ACHIEVE EDUCATION 2030

CITIES AND EDUCATION 2030

Research programme

Concept note and research proposal

Contents

Concept note

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end poverty, improve health, promote education, and preserve the environment, among other objectives. The urgency of these imperatives calls for their promotion on a global scale. Yet, it is at the *local* level that the consequences of these efforts are most felt, and where strategies are emerging. The contextualization of these objectives is necessary to ensure communities' ownership as well as their translation into concrete action plans, tailored to local needs. Like the other SDGs, the achievement of SDG 4 on quality education will require both global and local commitments.

Education, to the extent that it brings together a range of stakeholders within a given territory, is a local issue. It concerns individuals – learners and teachers – and takes place in multiple environments: within family, community, and classroom. In order that it properly reflect its local dimensions, education has increasingly undergone decentralization reform. As responsibilities are transferred and new mechanisms developed to properly delegate power to regional and local authorities, cities have gained an ever more important role. Countries have adopted varied decentralization frameworks, ranging from deconcentration and devolution – the transfer of some degree of autonomy to local elected authorities – to school-based management.

Since 2002, the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) has paid specific attention to the impact of decentralization policies on the role of local actors in the field of education. In particular, IIEP-UNESCO has explored these issues through research in schools and district education offices across fifteen countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This research led to policy advocacy and training on how to improve implementation of said policies, with a focus on critical management resource challenges.

IIEP-UNESCO envisions giving continuation to this research by investigating the role of cities in advancing education via local elected bodies. Focus must be given to cities because they are playing an increasing role in the implementation of national and local education policies, in partnership with ministries of education and other local actors. Furthermore, they are responsible for ensuring the provision of and access to equitable and quality education for their respective populations, while framing this responsibility within their overall sustainable development. The role of cities has been highlighted in Agenda 2030, in particular through SDG 11, with its call for "sustainable cities and communities".

This research will consider the advantages as well as major obstacles that cities face when carrying such responsibility in the field of education. Major concerns include: planning inefficiency, lack of professional expertise, and insufficient financial resources. Deepening the existing understanding of local-level educational planning will help to identify the most effective strategies in use and provide implementation recommendations to strengthen policy reforms in the future.

Defining a city

To understand the role of cities in educational planning and management, it is essential to first define a city. On a basic level, cities are defined as highly populated places where people live, work, and have access to government, commerce and transportation (United Nations, 2016).

Depending on the country, the criteria to define a city may rely on population size and density, existence of a local government structure, local history, and other factors. As a result, the terminology ranges from the usage of the word *cities* to *counties, municipalities, districts,* and *towns*.

> 'City proper is defined as a locality with legally fixed boundaries and an administratively recognized urban status, usually characterized by some form of local government' (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017, p. 280).

Although population size is the most common criterion upon which to base the definition of a city, there is no universal agreement on the size a settlement must reach in order to qualify as a city. For instance, Canada considers cities to have at least 1,000 inhabitants, while France requires a population of at least 2,000; meanwhile, Japan and the United States only consider settlements with over 50,000 people as cities (Haub, 2009). This difference in definition undermines 'the comparability, and thus also the credibility, of cross-country analysis of cities' (Dijkstra and Poelman, 2012).

To overcome this challenge and to allow for international comparisons, the United Nations (UN) has created categories of cities based on population size: *megacities, large cities, medium-sized cities, cities*, and *small cities*.

> Megacities: 10 million or more inhabitants
> Large cities: 5 to 10 million
> Medium-sized cities: 1 to 5 million
> Cities: 500 000 to 1 million
> Small cities: smaller than 500 000
> (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014, p. 13)

According to this categorization, Tokyo is the largest *megacity* in the world with 38 million inhabitants in 2014 (see graph 1). Although 'notable for their size and concentration of economic activity,' megacities are 'home to only about one in eight of the world's urban dwellers' (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014, p. 13). Therefore, megacities are not representative of the majority of the urban population in the world.

Large cities account for 8 per cent of the world's urban population. In 2014, they represented 300 million inhabitants and are expected to account for more than 400 million in 2030. Most megacities and large cities are located in southern regions.

One in five urban dwellers worldwide lives in a *medium-sized city*. The global population living in such cities nearly 'doubled between 1990 and 2014, and is expected to increase by another 36 per cent between 2014 and 2030, growing from 827 million to 1.1 billion' (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014, p. 13).

The number of people living in *cities* (with 500,000 to 1 million inhabitants) is also expected to grow from 363 million in 2014 to 509 million in 2030, but is expected to represent only 10 per cent of the global urban population. In contrast, *smaller cities* account for one half of the global urban population.

Graph 1: Urban population in large cities, 2014
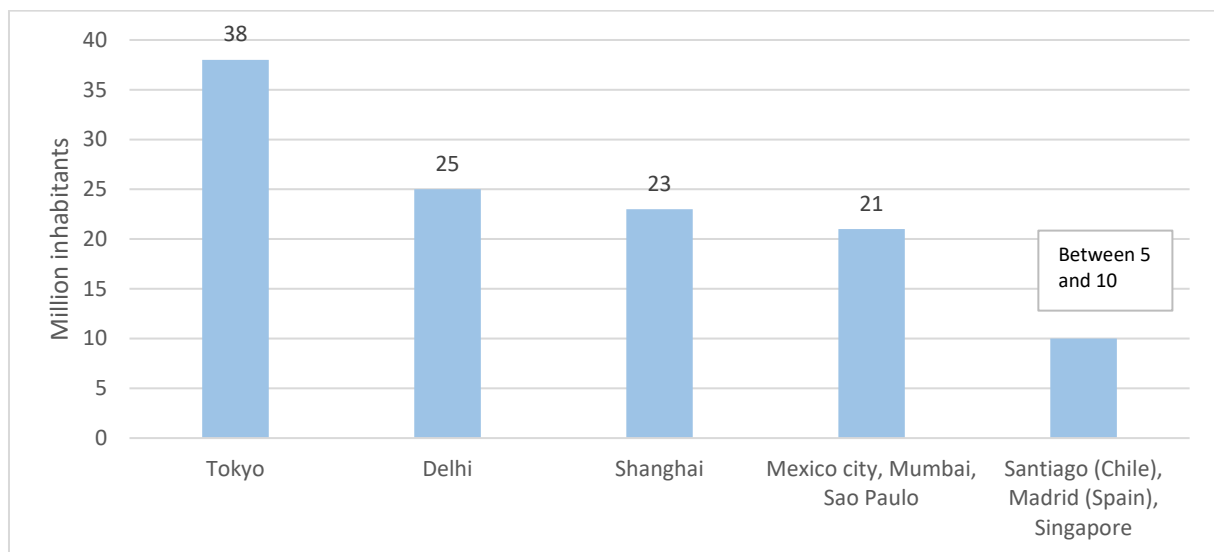
Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014, p. 13

Overall, large and megacities do not 'represent the major share of the urban population […] The fastest growing urban centres are the small and medium cities […], which account for 59 per cent of the world's urban population and 63 per cent of the urban population in Africa' (UN Habitat, 2016, p. 9). Such cities are mostly based in Asia and Africa. Specific attention should thus be paid to educational planning and development in these areas.

'Despite the demographic importance and potential role of such cities, urban planning efforts in developing countries have focused disproportionately on the problems of large metropolitan areas, thereby contributing to urban primacy. If small and medium cities are to fulfil their potential, then they should form part of the new urban agenda for developing countries' (UN-Habitat, 2016, p. 9).

Education and the city

Local elected authorities and education

Decentralization in education: definitions and actors

Decentralization is a complex political and administrative process through which responsibilities and a certain degree of autonomy are transferred to sub-national actors. Over the last 30 years, decentralization has been a popular reform within public administrations over the world, including in the education sector, and has unfolded in varying configurations.

To understand the concept, it is useful to distinguish decentralization policies according to the level and the kind of actors to which responsibilities are transferred (De Grauwe, no date). The main distinction is made between deconcentration and devolution.
- *Deconcentration*, which is prevalent in France and francophone African countries, refers to the transfer of responsibilities within the education administration, that is, to education experts, at sub-national levels. Representatives of the Ministry of Education in the field are in charge of ensuring the smooth implementation of education policies. In particular, this is the role of District Education Offices (DEOs), as explained below.
- *Devolution* is the transfer of responsibilities from central to local *elected* governments. These entities have been elected by local citizens. In comparison to the deconcentration policy, they do not belong to the Ministry of Education and are not education experts.

Decentralization policies formalize the assigned responsibilities to local level actors, and provide the base for their collaboration and coordination in the delivery of public services. The management of education at the local level brings together a number of local stakeholders:

- DEOs are composed of education experts. They are the technical arm of the central Ministry of Education - or of the local government, depending on the decentralization framework. They monitor the implementation of the national education policy at the local level;
- Local elected authorities participate in the implementation of national education policies at the local level, in the area of the transferred responsibilities from the central government;
- Schools;
- Parents, who are represented at school level by formal structures like Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) or School Management Committees (SMCs);
- Civil society, through associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with an education mission;
- Private companies and the local public administration dealing with education matters (such as sports, health, social welfare).

Since they complement each other in the provision of equitable and quality education in the city, their *collaboration* is crucial (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Actors involved in education in a city
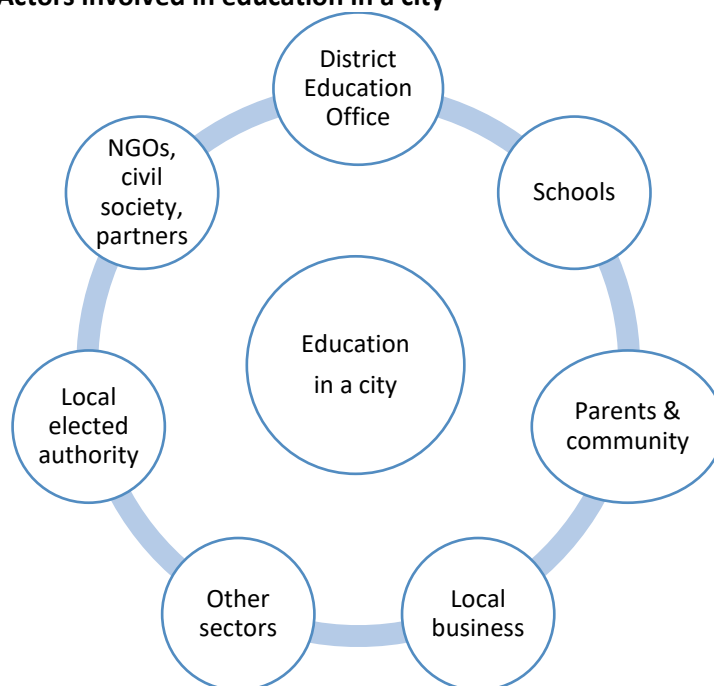
Source: Author

There is a considerable amount of literature devoted to decentralization in education (among others: Bjork, 2006; De Grauwe and Lugaz, 2010; McGinn and Welsh, 1999; Rondinelli, 1981) and to devolution in particular (Honalde, 2001; Kibua and Mwabu, 2008; Sebahara, 2000; Sinare, 2014). It highlights the main motives for transferring responsibilities to local governments, the scope of such responsibilities, as well as the advantages, risks, and benefits of such policies.

Motives for devolution

There are many reasons why a country may choose to transfer responsibility from its central to its local governments. Decentralization efforts mainly aim at an increased effectiveness in the implementation of decisions and a greater relevance of decisions to the local context. For instance, in 2010, the Colombia National Development Plan instituted decentralization measures that transferred greater autonomy to local authorities. The hiring of teachers and administrative staff, along with teacher salary management, and primary and secondary education responsibilities were transferred to the local level. While the General School Act determines 80% of curriculum content nationwide, schools design their own curriculum for the remaining 20% of student learning hours (Figueroa C. *et al.,* 2018).

Decentralization also aims to strengthen democracy, participation and ownership by local citizens, fostering collaboration and partnership with networks of local actors, and increasing funding available for education. Local school districts in the United States are responsible for providing stable school funding, ensuring the provision of effective education in counties, regardless of federal government support. States also play a role in ensuring that each district receives funding commensurate with the number of students they serve, and subsidize funding to districts that do not manage to independently raise enough (Shoked, 2017).

Scope of responsibilities of local elected authorities

The *scope of involvement of local elected authorities in education is potentially wide*, as illustrated by Figure 2. Several countries have entrusted local elected authorities with responsibilities over school building, equipment and maintenance issues, with the foremost goal of preserving a child-friendly environment. This includes questions of accessibility and inclusivity. Local elected authorities can be in charge of organizing student transport, in particular in rural areas. In France, in addition to this mandate, responsibilities of cities extend to hiring and managing the non-teaching staff, organizing extra-curricular activities, and deciding the school timetable. Overall, such responsibilities do not deal with teaching and pedagogy, both of which remain a core responsibility of experts in the education administration and at the school level.

However, in other countries, responsibilities transferred to local governments in education may cover more sensitive areas, including participating in teacher recruitment and management, as in Burkina Faso (Sinare, 2014, p.25), Mali (Lugaz and De Grauwe, 2010) and Uganda (De Grauwe and Lugaz, 2011). Yet in some other cases, cities have a rather full degree of authority in education, as does New York City (Herman, 2013). Similarly, in Sweden, municipalities are the responsible and accountable authorities for the organization of educational services, the allocation of resources and the running of public schools in a manner that leads to the achievement of national goals.

Figure 2: The scope of education at the level of a city
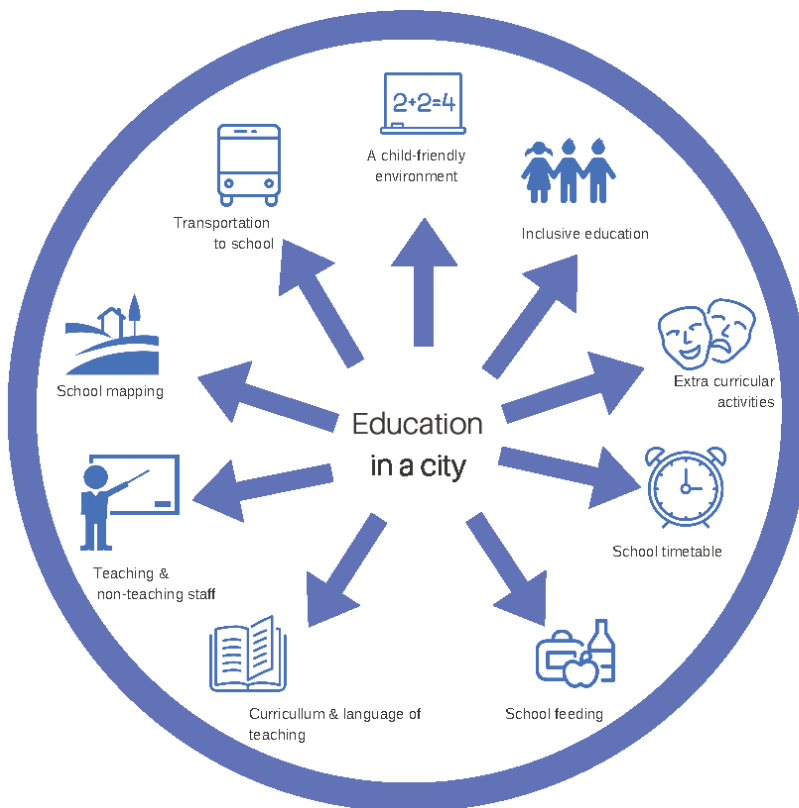
Source: Figure prepared by the author,
with use of icons made by Smashicons and Freepik from www.flaticon.com

Challenges

The devolution of responsibilities in education to local elected authorities may lead to a series of challenges. Research has shown in particular that a lack of clarity and an overlap in the responsibilities shared among experts of the education administration, such as DEOs, and local elected authorities has led to conflicts (De Grauwe and Lugaz, 2010). In Nigeria, for example, there is such an overlap of responsibilities shared between the federal, state, and local governments that functions become duplicated. Although local government education authorities (LGEAs) are entitled to running schools and helping with primary education management, their role is unclear because other federal and state-level authorities take over LGEAs' responsibilities (Gershberg and Winkler, 2004).

Another major challenge related to the division of tasks is the lack of expertise and technical capacity to tackle pressing education issues. In countries where decentralization reforms have not built the capacities of local-elected bodies, handling education responsibilities raises technical capacity issues, hindering stakeholders' ability to develop plans, projects and policies. In Burkina Faso, local elected authorities complain of a lack of technical capacity training to ensure that they are ready to tackle new responsibilities. They mention the need for training programs that will properly equip local staff to adequately take on their new roles (Sinare, 2014). Lack of capacity also leads to *collaboration and partnership issues* with other education actors and sectors*,* as evidenced by hardships experienced in Mali and Senegal while trying to develop school-community partnerships (Lugaz and De Grauwe, 2010).

In addition, a lack of financial and material resources further inhibits local-level authorities' ability to properly address their responsibilities and to implement the tasks and initiatives delegated to them. In some countries, the central government allocates subsidies to local governments to implement the transferred responsibilities. This is the case, for instance, in Senegal. These subsidies complete local resources, which are based on local taxes. However, the ability to collect them varies across cities. Differing levels of resource availability in cities leads to educational disparities, directly jeopardizing students' ability to pursue education on a level playing field. Some countries, like France, have developed an equalization system in the allocation of funds to local governments, so as to mitigate disparities.

Finally, education is but one sector among others in which the city has received responsibilities. It may thus face competing priorities from other sectors. As will be discussed in the following section, the interdependence of city development goals may prove complex to tackle and to advance. It is the responsibility of local elected authorities to recognize the ways in which education affects other sectors of city development, from health to urban planning to welfare services, and to determine how education can best contribute to the prosperity of these other sectors.

Cities as crucial actors to achieve SDGs

Cities: incubators and locations of change[1]

As emphasized by the UN Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 'cities take the lead to address many of the global challenges of the 21st century, including poverty, inequality, unemployment, environmental degradation, and climate change' (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014, p. 29). The OECD (2016, p. 61) suggests that cities may be "the new countries." The Agenda 2030 identifies cities as the main stage where social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development converge, as illustrated in Figure 3.

> 'Local governments and local action are central to the delivery of global goals. What happens in the rest of the world has a direct impact on our city and our citizens and everything we do in Malmö also affects the world around us' (Mayor Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh of Malmö, Sweden, First Summit of Local and Regional leaders, Bonn, 2017) (ICLEI, 2017).

Indeed, cities constitute the most appropriate location where sustainable development can be achieved. Urbanization's potential to promote development and contribute to innovation has been raised by the literature, as underlined recently by UN-Habitat in the World cities report (2016), illustrated in Box 1.

Box 1: The crucial role of urbanization for sustainable development

'Urbanization is vital for delivering sustainable development, not only because the urban areas of the world are expected to absorb almost all future population growth, but because they concentrate economic activities and influence social change. Urban areas also have the potential to reduce ecological footprints, connect rural and natural environments and create system-based solutions'.

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[1] UNESCO, 2016, p.115

'Urban history shows us that cities are the sites of innovation. They are the places where new economic ideas crystallize, where heterogeneous groupings of people learn to co-exist as neighbours, and where democratic experiments emerge to make way for previously excluded social groups to be included as genuine decision-makers. The high density of people in cities facilitates economic growth through better sharing, matching and learning, and as Alfred Marshall famously said, just the sheer concentration of people leads to new ideas because "ideas are in the air." Not only do cities feature high densities of people, but their high densities also force people of different religions, nationalities, ethnicities and sexual orientations to live and work alongside one another, and in doing so, they get to know "the other," leading to a cosmopolitan respect for differences'.

Source: UN-Habitat, 2016, pp. 25 and 71.

Figure 3: A convergence of economic, social and environmental issues at city level

Source: Author.

Education has a multiplier effect in the development of the city. It plays a critical role in eradicating poverty, reaching gender equality, and building a workforce capable of tackling industry and infrastructure challenges, among other objectives (UNESCO, 2016). Box 2 further highlights the positive influence of education on the development of a city.

Box 2: The contribution of education to the sustainable development of the city

'Education encourages productivity and innovation in cities, and can transform them into knowledge economies. It can also support a more prosperous city that accurately reflects its economic activities, for example by including the dynamic informal economy. Education can have positive social effects, such as crime reduction. It can be a primary tool for environmental initiatives, such as sustainable transport'.

'Given the complex and holistic nature of urban challenges, education and lifelong learning need to be embedded and integrated in urban planning. They form a critical instrument for sustainable urban development. In turn, urbanization and other processes related to cities create a need for education system planning. Education is pivotal to ensure economic growth, innovation, and improvement in economic inclusion; formal and nonformal education must also be monitored to ensure that they help reduce inequality, not exacerbate it.'

Source: UNESCO, 2016, p. 118 and 129

An international recognition

The crucial position of cities in relation to SDGs has received increased national and international recognition in recent years in several key international fora and agreements:

- The Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (2012) includes a specific section on "Sustainable cities and human settlements" (points 134 to 137);
- The 3rd United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat III) (Quito, 2016);
- The United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, which took place in New York in 2015 and led to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, of which Goal 11 aims to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable".

Several international and regional networks of cities have been created, reflecting the new role cities play in overcoming local and global challenges. For instance, UNESCO has developed a city network specifically dedicated to learning (*see Box 3*), as well as other thematic networks (*see Annexes 1 and 2*). In international negotiations, for instance on climate change, these networks act in parallel with States. Some refer to these initiatives as 'city diplomacy' (Acuto, 2017).

Box 3: The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC)

The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) was created in 2013. Under the overall coordination of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), it 'is an international policy-oriented network providing inspiration, know-how and best practice. Learning cities at all stages of development can benefit greatly from sharing ideas with other cities, as solutions for issues that arise as one learning city develops may already exist in other cities.'

'The Network supports the achievement of all seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 4 and SDG 11. The UNESCO GNLC supports and improves the practice of lifelong learning in the world's cities by promoting policy dialogue and peer learning among member cities; forging links; fostering partnerships; providing capacity development; and developing instruments to encourage and recognize progress made in building learning cities' (UIL, no date).

'Multidimensional challenges associated with urbanization'[2]

Cities will always be 'rife with problems', even when they are 'filled with promise' (Sivaramakrishnan, 1996). Indeed, the growing urban population presents a challenge that cities must address in a number of sectors, including education. As demographic growth continues to explode worldwide, its impact on the sustainable development of cities becomes ever more relevant. In 2007, the global urban population exceeded the global rural population (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014, p. 7). According to UN estimates, 66 per cent of the world population will live in urban areas in 2050, compared to half of the population in 2014 (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014). The challenge is significant, especially as the urban population in Africa is projected to grow by 56 per cent, and in Asia 64 per cent, by year 2050[3].

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[2] UN-Habitat, 2016, p. 5.

[3] The Population Division, at the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, publishes every two years the World Urbanization Prospects report (the latest was published in 2014), as well as of the UN Human Settlements programme (UN-Habitat), which has published the World cities report 2016. Both reports provide a very clear picture of the demographic trends driving the world and urban population growth during the past decades and for the coming years.

As highlighted by UN-Habitat, 'urbanization has relied on a model that is unsustainable in many respects', particularly regarding crucial environmental, social and economic issues (UN-Habitat, 2016, p. 5). The most pressing issues impacting city-level educational planning are the following:

Immigration Booms: The immigrant population has increased in major cities for a variety of reasons. In developing countries, cities are attractive to immigrants for their promise of better living conditions and job prospects, or as refuge from natural disasters or war (UN Habitat, 2016, p. 35). Cities in developed regions like Europe have experienced waves of migrants who are fleeing conflict, poverty, and a dire socioeconomic landscape (UN Habitat, 2016, p. 21). The migrant crises urge them to provide adapted and relevant services to this population, in particular in education. 'The flow of migrants within and between countries, combined with continued growth in local populations, can raise demand for basic education access, skills development and more teachers, and increase the need to foster social cohesion and tolerance of cultural diversity through education' (UNESCO, 2016, p. 116).

> 'Cities face growing difficulties in integrating migrants and refuges so that they equitably share in the human, social, cultural and intellectual assets of the city, and thus have a sense of belonging' (UN-Habitat, 2016, p. 5).

The Growth of Slums: The number of slums has drastically increased over the past decades and is a key challenge for a number of countries and cities: 'An estimated 863 million people, representing nearly one third of urban residents in developing regions, lived in slums or informal settlements in 2012, characterized by housing that is non-durable or overcrowded, or that lacks access to improved water and sanitation or security against eviction' (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2014, p. 2). Access to quality public schools in slums is challenging. Provision of education in such areas is mostly done by private schools because of a lack of availability and quality of public schools, which raises the problem of equal access to education.

> 'Slums' conditions vary greatly within and between countries, but many are characterized by poor and crowded housing conditions, insecurity of land and housing, and poor access to basic services, including education' (UNESCO, 2016, p. 118)

Global Youth Boom: Demographic trends in developing regions are characterized by a decline in infant mortality and high fertility rates. Overall, this has led to the development of a younger population: 88 per cent of the worldwide population aged 15 to 24 is located in developing regions (Africa, Middle East, South America, central Asia and the Pacific islands). In these regions, the youth account for a sizeable portion of the population. Youth are also quite numerous in cities: 'Half of the world's refugees are children and youth, many of whom end up in cities' (UNESCO, 2016, p. 114). This situation calls for appropriate employment strategies, and the wide-ranging implications for education are strong. This is particularly urgent in developing countries, where youth unemployment is 'two to three times higher than adult unemployment (UN-Habitat, 2016, p. 9).

> 'From an economic perspective, the model of urbanization is unsustainable due to widespread unemployment especially among the youth and the existence of unstable and low-paying jobs and informal income-generating activities, which create economic hardship, unequal access to urban services and amenities and poor quality of life for many' (UN-Habitat, 2016, p. 5)

The question of equity is at the heart of this overall challenging pattern faced by cities: how can they provide their growing population with equitable access to housing, education, healthcare, and employment?

This reinforces the urgent need to adapt the urban agenda and to develop integrated urban planning strategies, as explained in the forthcoming section.

> 'The pattern of urban form is one of many factors that affect the ability of the urban poor to access economic opportunities in their cities. Ensuring a spatial match between jobs, affordable retail, public transportation, health and education services, recreational areas, and affordable housing is among the means of fostering such access' (World Bank Group, 2015, p. 48).

Planning for education and sustainable development in the city

Local education plans and policies: emerging issues

Local elected authorities develop *local education plans and policies*, aimed at implementing the national education policy according to local contexts and priorities, exercising the responsibilities transferred to them.

> In France, several cities have developed local education projects ("projet educatif local"), which highlight their priorities for the duration of their political mandate (Direction interministérielle de la Ville, 2001). Such projects promote a participatory approach of all stakeholders at local level, and an integration of the education project within an overall urban development plan. Municipal services have been re-organized consequently to the process of devolution, and specific education units were created that gather the services in charge of schooling and childhood (DIV, 2001, p. 8).

The context in which they operate is constantly subject to change: for instance, specific support must be provided to children from migrant families to ensure their proper participation in education, housing, and learning of the local language, among other crucial needs. Access to education for children living in slums and the growth of private schools in urban areas are particularly problematic issues that cities must address in collaboration with local stakeholders. Cities must develop strong networks with local companies and business actors, among others, to guarantee a smooth transition from school to work for young generations. These are only a few aspects of the demanding context in which cities must fulfil their education responsibilities. Cities must address these topics and incorporate them into their local education priorities.

Cities should therefore develop education plans that are:
- Flexible and capable of adapting within a rapidly evolving context;
- Co-designed by and implemented with education professionals, private actors, civil society and parents;
- Part of an integrated urban planning process that ensures collaboration between education and other local socio-economic and environmental sectors.

> 'Education must be integrated in urban planning to address the consequences on education of characteristics and processes related to urbanization, for example the need for education for refugee, migrant and slum-dwelling populations' (UNESCO, 2016, p. 116)

Concerning the holistic dimension of the new Agenda, much attention is now being given to the concept of integrated planning. This is especially the case at local level, where cross-sectoral planning and synergies between strategies must be ensured. Considering the multiplier effect of education on the overall sustainable development of the city, integrating education planning in this framework appears promising.

<u>Integrated urban planning</u>

The 2030 Agenda promotes a holistic and integrated approach to achieve SDGs at global and local levels and considers the intrinsic interdependence of the three pillars of development (economic, social and environmental). Strengthening planning efforts by sectors and developing the synergies between them must be a priority at all levels of governments, including at the local level.

Integrated planning

According to Persaud (2016), integration refers to an ensemble of 'approaches ranging from few or no linkages on one end of the scale to coordination, cooperation, collaboration and finally, full-fledged incorporation at the other end of the scale. Distinguishing degrees of integration in this way is helpful in refining the discussion on integrated planning, and recognizing that greater or lesser degrees of integration may be appropriate depending on the specific context' (Persaud, 2016, pp. 10-11).

Integrated planning can be developed:
- Horizontally: The education sector is integrated into other development sectors, such as health, social protection or labor;
- Vertically: National, regional, and local levels of governance are linked to collaboratively work on planning;
- Laterally: State and non-state actors, such as civil society organizations, community-based organizations and the private sector, collaborate on planning processes (Persaud, 2016, p. 12).

> 'Integrated planning is an approach to education planning that seeks to recognize, assess and utilize the opportunities offered by multiple sectors, actors and levels in this field' (Persaud, 2016, p. 12).

National urban policies

In line with the integrated and holistic approach of the Agenda 2030, National Urban Policies (NUPs) have recently received greater attention by the international community as a tool to promote integrated planning for city-level sustainable development, as was highlighted at the Habitat III Conference (Quito, October 2016).

NUPs provide an overarching national framework that promotes and guides the development of integrated urban policies in line with SDGs. They do not seek to replace sub-national urban policies, but to complement them, in order to create a holistic vision of systems that integrates cities and regions into the national development process (*see Box 4*).

NUPs have been the subject of the First International Forum on National Urban Policy (Incheon, 2015) and the Second International Conference on National Urban Policy (Paris, May 2017). The National Urban Policy Programme (NUPP) was launched as a joint initiative of UN Habitat, OECD and Cities Alliance[4] during Habitat III. Countries have increasingly been encouraged to develop such policies with the support of the OECD, UN Habitat and Cities Alliance, within the framework of the NUPs, whose role is to strengthen knowledge of national urban policies as well as to support countries through this process.

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[4] Cities Alliance is a global partnership for poverty reduction and the promotion of cities in sustainable development. It includes over 30 full and Associate members. They comprise six constituencies: national governments; multilateral institutions; associations of local governments; international non-governmental organizations; private sector and foundations; universities and knowledge networks.
http://www.citiesalliance.org/

> **Box 4: National urban policies: a definition**
>
> 'A coherent set of decisions derived through a deliberate government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors for a common vision and goal that will promote more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development for the long term' (UN-Habitat, 2014a).
>
> 'The new generation of NUP asserts urban space and territoriality, the positive role of urbanization in national socio-economic development, and provides an overarching coordinating framework to address urban challenges. The NUP aims at maximizing the benefits of urbanization, while mitigating inequalities and potential adverse externalities. The new generation of NUP guides the urbanization process by promoting more compact, socially inclusive, better connected and integrated cities and territories that foster sustainable urban development and are resilient to climate change' (UN Habitat, 2014b).

Therefore, NUPs constitute an overall framework in which local policies are developed. They provide guidance to local elected authorities to develop local policies in line with SDGs through an integrated planning approach. The replication of this national integrated planning framework at the local level, particularly as it relates to education, should be further explored.

Education as part of an integrated urban planning

As shown, there is a close relationship between education and SDGs, which calls for an integration of education in urban planning at the national and local levels. Education can serve as a powerful tool to address and to tackle key urban issues ranging from crime and violence to environmental sustainability.

In spite of these close connections, education is seldom integrated into NUP urban planning processes (Vladimirova and Le Blanc, p. 14). Indeed, an analysis of NUPs reflects that, 'of the five policy sectors (economic development, spatial structure, human development, environmental sustainability and climate resilience), spatial structure and economic development are two sectors which are most extensively covered by NUPs at the global scale' (UN/Habitat, OECD, p. 26). Overall, at present, education is neither mentioned nor recognized as a component of NUPs.

A few cities have put into practice such an integration of education in their local urban planning, including Curitiba in Brazil and Medellín in Colombia (UNESCO, 2016, p. 126). The UNESCO Global Network for Learning Cities promotes such collaboration between sectors in planning for lifelong learning. For instance, in several cities, 'cultural centres serve as learning sites, bringing together culture, art and

> 'Until education is part of urban planning, urban challenges, such as unequal provision of services and discrimination, will never be fixed' (UNESCO, 2016, pp. 113-114).

learning, and hosting projects run jointly by local educational and cultural institutions'. Others have developed 'schemes to align vocational training and skills development with local industries where job opportunities exist' (UIL, 2017a, pp. 13 and 18). Box 5 presents the example of collaboration between sectors in the city of Sorocaba in Brazil, aimed at promoting education and learning.

Box 5: Collaboration between sectors to promote lifelong learning: the example of the city of Sorocaba, Brazil

'Various departments of the city government have developed programmes that contribute to building a learning city. Sorocaba's Municipal Council of Education provides advice on technical, pedagogical and administrative aspects of education. The Department of the Environment publishes educational materials, runs socio-environmental campaigns and offers environmental education in the city in the form of exhibitions, workshops and guided tours of the city's parks. The Department of Culture promotes cultural activities in the city, providing spaces and programmes that allow people to access and learn from these activities. The Department of Social Development promotes social inclusion and provides assistance to vulnerable people, ensuring that they have access to essential services'.

Source: Valdes-Cotera *et al.*, 2015, p. 26.

However, the extent to which education is a component of local urban planning has mostly been left unexplored and calls for further analysis. An in-depth analysis of educational planning by cities would help to identify successful strategies and assess challenges.

Research proposal

Rationale for a research project

As explored in the concept note, local elected authorities have become key players and indispensable partners of ministries of education in achieving SDG 4. Depending on the context, the scope of their responsibilities in education may be large, ranging from building schools to recruiting teachers. Planning for education is a key component in the overall plan for the city's development. It is conducted in collaboration with other sectors and in coordination with a number of stakeholders, namely school staff, parents, children, civil society, private companies, and local administration.

While a number of studies have been carried out on urban planning, there is a dearth of comparative and global studies on how local elected authorities conduct educational planning and management in different contexts, taking into account factors such as the location of cities, their size, or the responsibilities received as a result of decentralization. One reason for this may be that, in the wake of recent reforms towards devolution, more attention has been paid to assessing the overall effectiveness of the *state* in the context of decentralization, as well as to its new roles and responsibilities at the different levels of the education system.

As these reforms become more prevalent in various countries, it is increasingly important to examine the ways in which local elected bodies manage their responsibility and autonomy over education.

In countries that have implemented decentralization of education reforms, the education planning processes implemented by local elected representatives has the following characteristics:
- The officers in charge of planning and managing education belong, not to the ministry of education, but to the local government administration;
- Planning and management in education by local elected authorities focuses on the devolved responsibilities in this area, and must contribute to the implementation of the national education policy at the local level;
- Local elected authorities must coordinate educational planning with representatives of the ministry of education at local level, e.g. district education offices (DEOs);
- Educational planning is part of the overall city planning process, in conjunction with other sectors (health, transport, culture, employment, etc.).

It is therefore crucial to examine and learn from the ways local elected authorities conduct educational planning and management in different contexts, and to identify challenges and devise strategies to strengthen their effectiveness.

This new programme is in line with IIEP's 15-year-long research programme on the implementation of decentralization policies and their implications for the roles and challenges of local-level actors. Having previously focused on professional experts in the education sector, it is now essential for IIEP to build on and deepen this expertise by examining the role of local elected authorities in the design and implementation of education strategies within their territory.

Objectives

This proposed research programme will aim to:

- Deepen knowledge of the roles of local elected authorities in planning and managing education in their territory, in different contexts;
- Analyse how educational planning and management is carried out by local elected bodies;
- Examine the priority given to educational planning in a city-integrated planning process;
- Highlight the main challenges faced by local elected authorities when planning and managing education in cities;
- Suggest strategies to improve cities' effectiveness in in this regard, paying specific attention to the role of the ministry of education in this process;
- Stimulate knowledge sharing and strategic thinking among cities and countries on how to successfully plan for SDG 4 at the city level.

A Theory of change (ToC) has been developed and it demonstrates how IIEP expects this project to lead to a positive change in planning for SDG 4 by cities (see Annex 3).

Research questions

To achieve these objectives, one central research question will guide this research programme: How can cities ensure successful planning to achieve SDG 4?

A set of secondary research questions will help deepen the analysis:

- What are the responsibilities of local-elected authorities in planning and managing education in the city?
- Who is in charge of planning and managing education in the local government administration? What are the profiles and capacities of these officers?
- How do local-elected authorities coordinate with local education professionals (DEOs, school staff, etc.) in charge of planning and managing education? How do they collaborate with local citizens, parents, civil society and private companies?
- What are the characteristics of educational planning and management cycles in cities? What are the resources (human, material, financial) available? What are the sources of funding (local or central)?
- What are the coordination mechanisms between planning for education and planning for other sectors in cities?
- How is integrated planning promoted in cities? What is the place given to educational planning and management?
- What challenges do local-elected authorities face when planning and managing education in their territory?
- What level of support (technical, human, financial, material) does the ministry of education provide to local-elected authorities to successfully uphold the transfer of responsibilities?
- How does the ministry of education monitor the implementation of responsibilities by local elected authorities, and potential disparities between cities?

Below is the analytical framework underlying the research programme, illustrating the links between these main research questions and the overarching themes of analysis.

Figure 4: Analytical framework
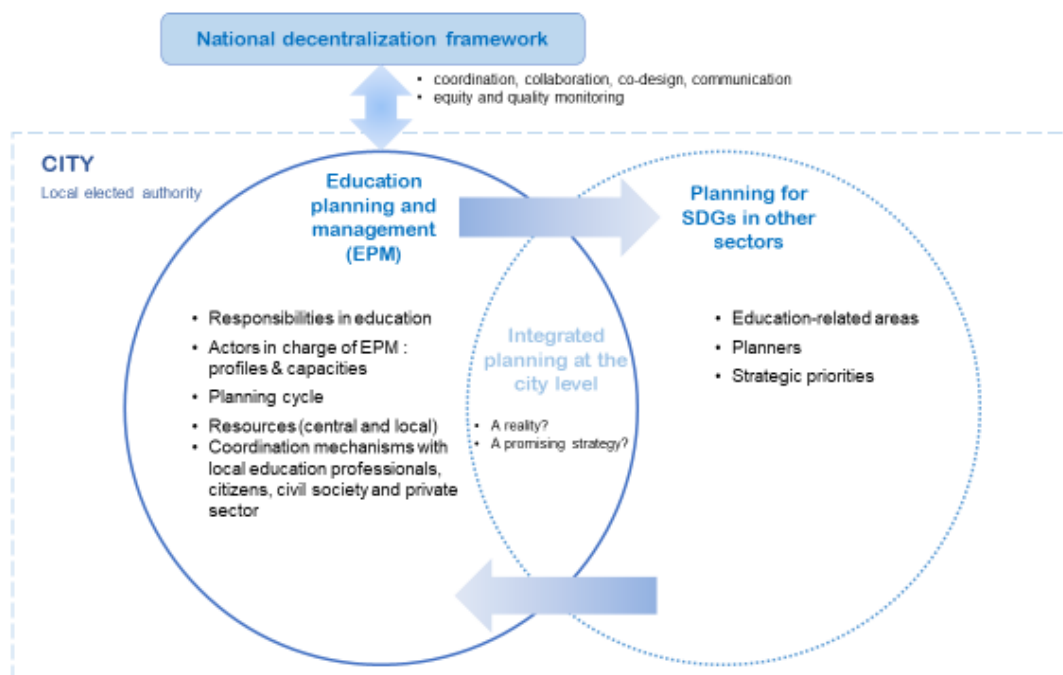
Source: Author.

Methodology

This research will be exploratory and descriptive with applied policy and institutional recommendations provided by IIEP based on the research findings. Considering the dearth of comparative studies at global level on this topic, this programme aims to draw from the experience of cities in planning and managing education in varying geographical and decentralization contexts. Therefore, this research will mainly analyse a combination of primary and secondary sources of information, based on qualitative and quantitative data.

The programme will rely on four complementary components:

i) A quantitative survey

In 2019, a quantitative survey will be conducted in dozens of cities, with the goal of collecting information on the responsibility of cities in terms of education, planning cycles, profile of planners, and resources. The purpose will be to learn from the experience of cities of different sizes and in different regions of the world. The survey will serve to gather preliminary insights that will then be deepened during fieldwork.

ii) Field research

A set of case studies will be conducted to learn from the experience of local elected authorities about how they plan and manage education. Considering the lack of literature on this topic, cities and local actors will be the main source of information.

Selection of cities

In order to conduct the field survey, a group of cities will be identified based on their level of involvement with local education, experience in planning and managing education, including integrated urban planning with an educational component. Guidance from international networks of cities, such as the Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), coordinated by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), experts and practitioners will be of particular help in identifying these cities. Calls for expression of interest in participating in the research will be launched through these networks.

The purpose is to learn from the experience of a mixed group of cities identified according to the following criteria:
- Cities of different sizes in terms of population, based on the UN's definition (megacities, large cities, etc.);
- Cities in urban and rural areas;
- Cities in countries with different levels of income;
- Cities with experience in integrated planning including education;
- Cities with a significant experience in education.

Approach

Desk reviews on the national decentralization framework and scope of responsibilities of cities in education will be conducted beforehand in order to lay down the overarching institutional framework in which cities plan for education.

Primary sources of data will be collected during the field research in a sample of cities. The focus will be put on qualitative research with semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be conducted in each city with a set of targeted key local actors (local government officers in charge of educational planning and management, DEOs, school staff, and planners in other sectors). Interviews will also be carried out with central-level actors in ministries of education and departments in charge of decentralization. Examining their planning tools, budgets, and strategic documents will help to provide depth to the analysis.

Field research in France

Decentralization of education in France provides an interesting framework from which to launch the analysis. Characterized by a mix of deconcentration and devolution of responsibilities to regional and departmental offices of the Ministry of Education ('Rectorat', 'Inspection Académique'), as well as to local elected authorities ('Conseil régional', 'Conseil général', 'communes'), it offers a ground for coordination between education stakeholders at the local level. French Local Education Projects are one example of coordination mechanism for educational planning.

In order to learn from the French experience and to test the research questions and tools, it is proposed to organize the exploratory mission in a French city in December 2018. Field research will be then implemented in a group of five French cities in 2019. In 2020, the research will be broadened to cities in other countries, selected according to the aforementioned criteria.

<u>iii) Thematic desk reviews</u>

Concurrently, a series of thematic desk reviews will explore specific items of the analytical framework, focusing on the context in which cities plan for education, as well as key issues raised in Agenda 2030. The topics will be identified based on preliminary desk reviews and contacts with practitioners and partners. One such theme might be how local elected authorities have been addressing the challenges of inclusive education and the integration of migrant students into city schools. These studies will rely on document analysis and interviews with key informants, and will be published on the IIEP website as working papers, exploratory notes, and short articles.

<u>iv) Interviews with field practitioners and experts</u>

Lastly, regular interviews with field practitioners and experts will be conducted to further explore some areas of the research. These will be shared on IIEP's website in different formats (audio, video, blog).

Timeframe

The programme will be implemented during IIEP's Medium-Term Strategy (2018-2021), in four phases:

2018	Phase 1: Conceptual analysis, research proposal, and tools Partnerships Preparation of the data collection process: i) Exploratory mission in a French city; ii) Design of the quantitative survey Thematic documentary reviews
2019	Phase 2: Quantitative survey in dozens of cities Field research in France Thematic documentary reviews
2020	Phase 3: Field research in a group of cities (countries and cities to be identified) Thematic documentary reviews
2021	Phase 4: Leveraging knowledge: publications and dissemination (policy seminar, conferences)

Scope and limitations

In this research programme, the term 'city' will refer to local territories with self-governance and responsibilities transferred from the central level[5], according to the national definition of a city. The research will thus examine cities in urban and rural areas, as well as cities of different sizes. The study will not focus on one specific category of cities. The purpose is to learn from the various roles and challenges that local elected bodies face when planning and managing education in different contexts.

In line with the 2030 Agenda philosophy, which highlights the commonality of education issues faced by cities around the world, the research will target cities in countries with different levels of income. While providing a more holistic view of the role of cities in educational planning and management, this raises the issue of comparability between different scenarios and contexts. It is important to note that the programme does not seek to generalize the lessons learned, but rather to increase the knowledge available at the global level on this specific issue.

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[5] The terms « cities » and « local elected authority » will be used interchangeably.

As explored in the concept note, the research programme is also concerned with understanding how cities have (or have not) developed integrated urban planning processes. Although the research will pay close attention to the relationships between education and other local-level sectors, it will not examine at length the nature of the planning and management done in sectors other than education.

Depending on the context, transferred responsibilities to cities can range from early childhood to secondary education or even technical and vocational training. The research will therefore cover the different levels of education, as long as they are within the scope of responsibilities assigned to cities.

Risks

It will be useful to take into account local political agendas, and election calendars in particular, to ensure the smooth running of the research.

Partners

At the start of the programme, potential partner agencies and networks with strong knowledge in city-level planning will be sought to form collaborative partnerships in the implementation of the research. The objective will be to synergize areas of expertise, bringing our knowledge on the topic together. In this regard, IIEP has a strong expertise in educational planning and management, decentralization reforms, in working with local-level actors and national authorities, as well as in conducting research activities in collaboration with partners.

Activities and deliverables

The lessons and policy recommendations of the research programme will be disseminated among main stakeholders in different forms. A policy seminar will be organized, at the conclusion of the research, to discuss the research findings and policy strategies with ministries of education and elected bodies and decision-makers of cities of varying contexts.

A set of products will be prepared and shared with the main target audiences, to include: printed and online publications; interviews with experts in audio, video, or written format; and articles. Depending on available resources, a film presenting the key messages of the research may be producedAn IIEP webpage will be created as a platform for exchanging knowledge on lessons learned from the research.

IIEP's training courses on local education governance will be updated and enriched from the research findings. When appropriate and upon request, training courses will be designed and developed for municipal education advisors to strengthen their educational planning and collaboration skills.

Contacts

For more details on the research programme, kindly contact:
Candy Lugaz, Programme coordinator: c.lugaz@iiep.unesco.org
Chloé Chimier, Research associate: c.chimier@iiep.unesco.org

Annexes

Annex 1: UNESCO Networks of cities[6]

UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), founded in 2004, is composed of 180 cities that consider creativity and cultural industries as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development and thus place them at the heart of their local development plans. The UCCN is meant to foster informational exchange and cooperation with and among these cities.

International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities (ICCAR)

In 2004, UNESCO initiated the creation of a network of cities interested in forming an international coalition in the combat against racism. The ICCAR network provides involved cities with a platform to share their experiences in order to "improve their policies to fight racism, discrimination, xenophobia and exclusion". So as to account for the specificities and priorities of different regions in the world, regional coalitions have been subsequently established, each with an own Ten-Point Plan of Action: Africa (2006), the Arab Region (2008), Asia and Pacific (2006), Canada (2007), Latin America and the Caribbean (2006), Europe (2004) and the US (2013).

Alliance of Megacities for Water and Climate (MAWaC)

Initiated by UNESCO and ARCEAU IdF and launched at the COP21, the "Alliance of Megacities for Water and Climate (MAWaC) aims to provide an international cooperation forum for dialogue on water to help megacities adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change." By involving all stakeholders active in the water sector, MAWaC functions as "a forum in which they can learn from each other's experience, exchange best practices, collaborate with technical, academic and financial institutions, and design and implement individual responses to the challenges of climate change and urban growth."

Source: https://fr.unesco.org/creative-cities/content/creative-cities; http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/fight-against-discrimination/coalition-of-cities/; https://en.unesco.org/mawac; https://www.riob.org/fr/documents/megacities-alliance-water-and-climate

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[6] More details on the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC) are provided in Box 3.

Annex 2 : Networks of cities at international and regional levels: a few examples

100 Resilient cities: Developed in 2013, "100 Resilient Cities—Pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation (100RC) is dedicated to helping cities around the world become more resilient to the physical, social and economic challenges that are a growing part of the 21st century. 100RC supports the adoption and incorporation of a view of resilience that includes not just the shocks—earthquakes, fires, floods, etc.—but also the stresses that weaken the fabric of a city on a day to day or cyclical basis" (100 Resilient Cities, 2017).

C40: "C40 is a network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change. C40 supports cities to collaborate effectively, share knowledge and drive meaningful, measurable and sustainable action on climate change. The C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group connects more than 90 of the world's greatest cities, representing over 650 million people and one quarter of the global economy. Created and led by cities, C40 is focused on tackling climate change and driving urban action that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks, while increasing the health, wellbeing and economic opportunities of urban citizens" (C40, 2017).

The Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth: "As a response to the growing gap between the rich and the poor, the OECD launched the Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Initiative in March 2016. Champion Mayors form a coalition of willing leaders who have committed to tackling inequalities and promoting more inclusive economic growth in cities. This initiative has helped governments analyse rising inequalities, monitor material living standards and broader well-being, and design policy packages that promote equity and growth. It is driven by a multidimensional approach to Inclusive Growth, going beyond income to see how people are faring in other areas of life, like jobs and health" (OECD, No date).

Cities Alliance is "the global partnership for poverty reduction and the promotion of cities in sustainable development. (…) Cities Alliance currently has a representative global membership of over 30 full and Associate members. They comprise six constituencies: National Governments; Multilateral Institutions; Associations of Local Governments; International Non-Governmental Organisations; Private Sector and Foundations; Universities and Knowledge Networks. Cities Alliance believes that enabling national policies, strong institutions, well-resourced and accountable local governments, and informed and engaged citizens are essential for local and national prosperity. To achieve this, Cities Alliance support is long-term, programmatic and focused on strengthening local skills and capacity" (Cities Alliance, 2016).

Citynet: "CityNet is the largest association of urban stakeholders committed to sustainable development in the Asia Pacific region. Established in 1987 with the support of UNESCAP, UNDP and UN-Habitat, the Network of cities has grown to include over 135 municipalities, NGOs, private companies and research centers. We connect actors, exchange knowledge and build commitment to establish more sustainable and resilient cities. Through capacity building, city-to-city cooperation and tangible projects, we help our members respond to Climate Change, Disaster, the Sustainable Development Goals and rising Infrastructure demands" (Citynet, No date).

ICLEI: "Local Governments for Sustainability is the leading global network of more than 1,500 cities, towns and regions committed to building a sustainable future. (…) ICLEI was founded in 1990 by 200 local governments from 43 countries who convened for the first World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future at the United Nations headquarters in New York. (…) Our first global programs promoted participatory governance and local sustainable development planning. The Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign was the first and largest program in the world designed to support cities in climate action planning (…). ICLEI's programs and campaigns look beyond mere environmental aspects and embrace wider sustainability issues. In 2003, the ICLEI Council acknowledged this by formally broadening our mandate and adopting the name ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability.
ICLEI envisions a world of sustainable cities that confront the realities of urbanization, adapt to economic and demographic trends and prepare for the impacts of climate change and other urban challenges. This is why ICLEI unites local and subnational governments in creating positive change through collective learning, exchange and capacity building" (ICLEI, No date).

United Cities and Local Governments: "United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) represents and defends the interests of local governments on the world stage, regardless of the size of the communities they serve. The organisation's stated mission is: to be the united voice and world advocate of democratic local self-government,

promoting its values, objectives and interests, through cooperation between local governments, and within the wider international community.

UCLG's work programme focuses on: i) Increasing the role and influence of local government and its representative organisations in global governance; ii) Becoming the main source of support for democratic, effective, innovative local government close to the citizen; iii) Ensuring an effective and democratic global organisation.

United Cities and Local Governments supports international cooperation between cities and their associations, and facilitates programmes, networks and partnerships to build the capacities of local governments. The organization promotes the role of women in local decision-making, and is a gateway to relevant information on local government across the world" (UCLG, 2014).

Annex 3: Theory of change

Theory of change diagram with four stages:

Activities

- Analysis of the roles of local elected authorities in educational planning and management
- Examination of actual practices in educational planning and management by local elected authorities
- Investigation on integrated city planning, including education
- Exploration on the roles of central authorities to ensure successful educational planning by local elected authorities
- Understanding of the main city agenda in planning and managing for education

Research approach:
- Qualitative and quantitative
- Multi-case study design
- Use of primary and secondary sources (desk reviews, interviews, focus group discussions)
- Participatory and practice-oriented
- Quality assured (by practitioners and academics)

Outputs

- Case-studies and synthesis on field research
- Interviews with field-level practitioners and experts
- Working papers and exploratory notes
- Cities informed on specific recommendations to improve planning for SDG4
- MoEs informed on strategies to accompany local elected authorities in planning and managing for education
- IIEP training programme on local-level governance in education enhanced by up-to-date evidence

Relationship between outputs and outcomes dependent on:
- Strong research uptake and communication strategy
- Effective dissemination of outputs through TC work and other IIEP activities (e.g. training, knowledge exchange, communication)
- Strong and smooth cooperation between national teams and IIEP
- Initial technical capacity in the ministries of education
- MoEs and cities willingness to improve practices
- Political leadership

Outcomes

- Education recognized as a priority in city planning
- Local, national and international decision-makers, practitioners and researchers informed about the role played by cities in planning and managing for SDG4
- Skills of city planners and managers improved in education

Impact

- Planning for SDG 4 at city level strengthened

List of graphs, figures and boxes

Graph 1: Urban population in large cities, 2014

Figure 1: Actors involved in education in a city

Figure 2: The scope of education at the level of a city

Figure 3: A convergence of economic, social and environmental issues at city level

Figure 4: Analytical framework

Box 1: The crucial role of urbanization for sustainable development

Box 2: The contribution of education to the sustainable development of the city

Box 3: The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC)

Box 4: National urban policies: a definition

Box 5: Collaboration between sectors to promote lifelong learning: the example of the city of Sorocaba, Brazil

List of graphs, figures and boxes

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