An Overview on Intermediary Cities (I-Cities)

Definition of Intermediary cities (I-Cities)
- cities with a population of between 50,000 and 1.000.000
- generally play an intermediary role in connecting important rural and urban areas
- interacting with bigger cities, towns and other human settlements
- articulating rural-urban linkages.
- playing unique role in providing basic services to both urban and rural populations
- acting as regional market centers or hubs for smaller cities.
- connecting traders and producers with customers and markets in larger metropolitan areas
- not closer than 90-minute commute distance to major metropolises

I-City Categories
- **Regional I-Cities:** Act as sub-national urban centers of administration, manufacturing, agriculture, trade, social and cultural services, combining resources for regional development and cohesion.
- **Clustered I-Cities:** Develop as industrial districts on the periphery of metropolitan or large urban regions, or take the form of new towns, 'spill-over' growth centers, and/or linear cities.
- **Corridor I-Cities:** Develop as growth poles along major transportation corridors, sometimes expanding across borders and countries.

Advantages of I-Cities
- I-cities can take advantage of their characteristics of proximity and 'human scale' to grow more resilient to external shocks, strengthen their social and identity fabric, and mobilize local capacities and assets.
- The human-scale dimension helps provide an identity, a sense of belonging, close networks, the willingness of communities to work together to build a more prosperous environment.

Successful I-City Strategies
- Many I-cities have been able to capitalize successfully on their size, role and unique position and have managed to strengthen their link with their hinterlands.
- They have developed shorter and more efficient economic flows; supported local markets and production; and improved inter-municipal cooperation in service and infrastructure provision.
- They have begun the transition to more knowledge and technology-driven manufacturing and services and have become cultural centers attracting tourists.

I-Cities in the World	I-Cities in the MEWA Region
➢ 8.923 I-Cities	➢ 502 I-Cities
➢ 1.423.000.000 population	➢ 90.800.000 population
➢ %20 of the world population	➢ %26 of the total regional population
➢ %36 of the world urban population	➢ %38.5 of the regional urban population

Thematic Session: Migration Management in I-Cities

The world has been witnessing an unprecedented influx of refugees,. Countries in the MEWA Region, particularly Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan have been hosting the majority of the Syrian refugees. While10% of the refugees are living in camps, the remaining 90% are living in cities, which makes it an urban crisis, among others.

Refugees are not the only newcomers of our cities. The world is urbanizing rapidly, and the Asian continent is urbanizing faster than the world average. Thousands of people are leaving their villages and their rural ways of lives behind, and looking for better opportunities in cities. Metropolitan cities in the MEWA Region are overwhelmed by this extraordinary flow of newcomers, and cannot readily respond to the needs of their new residents, with their limited budgets allocated based on their registered populations only.

Intermediary cities may act as buffer zones in relocation of refugees and migrants. Settlement of refugees in intermediary cities will allow for a better distribution of the responsibilities among different local governments, reducing the stress on metropolitan areas. Likewise, domestic migration policies may take into account the role that I-cities can play to prevent overpopulation in large metropolises.

Points to discuss:
- Domestic Migration (Rural to Urban)
- International Migration (Foreign Migrants)
- I-Cities Functioning as Buffer Zones

Thematic Session: Contribution of I-Cities to the Overall National Development

Cities are the main drivers of development. National development depends on the performance of individual cities and their contribution to the prosperity of the nation. Economies of many MEWA countries are concentrated on major metropolises. Smaller cities have difficulties in attracting investors into their cities, due to lack of sufficient infrastructure and/or transportation facilities.

Intermediary cities, supported by various forms of incentives can become regional attraction spots for entrepreneurs and investors, since such cities can provide labor and energy at lower costs. Intermediary cities-oriented development strategies would make the overall economic landscape a more equitable and balanced one, thus increasing economic resilience.

Points to discuss:
- Provision of Incentives: Local, National and International Aspects
- Empowerment of I-Cities for a more Balanced Wealth Distribution
- Empowerment of I-Cities for Improvement Financial Resilience
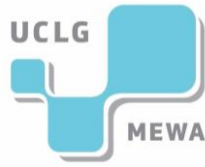
Thematic Session: Branded I-Cities

Intermediary Cities need more recognition than metropolitan cities, which necessitates less effort to promote themselves, as they are known domestically and internationally. In today's world, where cities compete to receive a larger share of tourists and businesses, intermediary cities can survive if they invest in branding. Infrastructure and basic service provision alone cannot make a city attractive. Intermediary cities with particular touristic "added value" should make use of marketing strategies to increase their attractiveness.

Living in a brand city increases the level of ownership of the city among its residents, which, in turn, increases the overall productivity and creativity of the city. Citizens with a sense of belonging to their cities, participate more actively in the local decision making mechanisms and ultimately contribute to the prosperity of their cities.

Points to discuss:

- Increased Ownership of I-Cities by their Residents
- Building Sense of Belonging in I-Cities
- Good Branding Practices in I-Cities

Thematic Session: Localization of SDGs in I-Cities

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will be in the heart of all global development agendas until 2030. With the introduction of the SDGs, and particularly SDG11, cities have been recognized as a major stakeholder and a natural partner in sustainable development, which represent a major breakthrough for the local governments worldwide. Having learnt valuable lessons from the shortcomings of the MDGs, success of SDGs were directly linked to the success in their localization.

Intermediary cities are ideally positioned to ensure a sustainable development, with optimal use of resources, and with limited impact on environment. Yet, in most cases, local populations, local leaders and municipal executives in I-cities may not readily relate themselves to the sustainable development agenda. Awareness raising on SDGs remains a priority to mobilize I-Cities to play a proactive role in localization of SDGs, so that they can make a difference not only in their cities, but also at the global scale.

Points to discuss:

- Raising Local Awareness on Sustainable Development in I-Cities
- Increasing Capacities in I-Cities
- I-Cities Ideally Positioned to Ensure Sustainability