

4 February 2021

CALL TO ACTION ON SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION

The Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) warmly welcomes the *Call to Action* issued by the *Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Network* (CSCN) and looks forward to working with the network and other Commonwealth partners to ensure 'sustainable urbanisation' in Commonwealth countries.

The Call to Action states: 'Commonwealth organisations representing cities and local government, the private sector, academia and the built environment professions, are championing this Call to Action on Sustainable Urbanisation across the Commonwealth. This will help ensure that C&HSs are properly equipped to deal with the challenges of climate change and rapid urbanisation, to reduce risk and vulnerability, inequality and informality, while promoting inclusion and capitalising on the opportunities presented by agglomeration to promote social economic and environmental well-being'.

COSW Chair, Sylvia Daisy Romanus (India) commented: 'It is essential that governments and all involved in the rapid development of urban centres, especially in the global south, recognise that planning for sustainable urbanisation requires attention not only to the built environment but also to the social environment. The Coronavirus pandemic has clearly shown that poorly developed urban environments are bad for public health and social development. Social workers are too often expected to respond to chronic social problems which come about because of the poor physical environment (e.g. bad housing and lack of open space)', Sylvia observed.

Charles Mbugua (Kenya)(COSW representative to the CSCN) commented: 'when urban planners and social workers have an effective dialogue, significant improvements to the social environment are possible. This reduces many social problems and health inequalities. COSW welcomes the multi-sectorial approach which is advocated in the Call to Action.'

'COSW looks forward to working closely with the CSCN across the Commonwealth to support sustainable development in urban areas and improve the wellbeing of Commonwealth citizens', Sylvia Romanus concluded.

NOTE FOR EDITORS

The ***Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work*** connects social workers and those supporting social work across the Commonwealth. It is an accredited Commonwealth Organisation, recognised by the Commonwealth institutions and working closely with the International Federation of Social Workers.

Call to Action website: <https://commonwealthsustainablecities.org/calltoaction/>

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