



***Special Session (SS02) on:***

***Exploring the potential of small and medium order settlements in achieving sustainable urbanization in the global South***

**Organizers:**

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**The aim and scope:**

Contemporary urbanization is a process associated with the countries of the global South, where population and infrastructure remains concentrated in and around certain large cities. This to some extent is an outcome of government initiatives to maximize on the economics of agglomeration in the large cities. This concentration not only leads to congested amenities (both natural and manmade) in large cities, but also to underdevelopment of small and medium order settlements, as the funding from small and medium settlements is diverted to large cities.

In the coming up decades, urbanization in the global South will be dominantly due to rural to urban migration and rural to urban reclassification adding more urban dwellers to the urban areas. It remains a challenge for the policy makers to accommodate this predicted growth with adequate amenities in large cities, which have already ceased to provide both natural and manmade amenities for the current population.

The role of small and medium order settlements in contributing to regional and rural development is well established. Especially, small towns constitute a vital link in the settlement hierarchy. They act as centers and markets of agricultural production, as concentrated centers of non-farm activities, and as access points for education, health care and other facilities. Small and medium order settlements are attractive to rural migrants from surrounding areas because of their demand for non-farm labor. In this regard, small and medium order settlements provide a potential alternative to house the future rural migrants. Although, the relevance of small and medium order settlements in achieving balanced growth is well recognized by the researchers and policy makers, these have drawn little attention in urban research and policy making compared to large cities.

This session focusses on the potential role of small and medium order settlements in steering the urbanization process towards sustainable development in the global South. All relevant submissions are invited, covering both theoretical and empirical contributions to the topic.

**SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT**