



Urban-Rural Linkages Conference 2025

CONCEPT NOTE



Urban-Rural Linkages Conference 2025

Advancing Urban-Rural Linkages: Culture, Housing and Basic Services

I. Background

In May 2019, the People’s Government of **Songyang County, China**, participated in the **First Session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly**, whereby a **Letter of Intent on Cooperation** was signed with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). Songyang was one of three entities from China, and the **only county-level government** represented at the Assembly. Since then, Songyang County has convened the *Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages* on a biannual basis - in 2019, 2021, and 2023 - providing an international platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and partnership building.

These forums contribute to the advancing of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, and UN-Habitat’s strategic plan priorities- by showcasing inspiring innovative practices that align with the Guiding Principles

for Urban-Rural Linkages, and strengthening partnerships to foster more balanced and inclusive territorial development.

In recent years, guided by China’s leadership and vision, Songyang has fully implemented national and local policies. Following the strategy of “making full use of eight advantages and implementing eight major measures,” Songyang has advanced development and modernization, and promoted the concept of “*a people’s city built by the people and for the people.*” Songyang has made ceaseless efforts to establish itself as a model county for “harmonious integration of heritage and modernity,” narrated compelling stories about its people-centered urban development, and created the image of “*Mystical Songyang: Homeland of Ideals.*”



a **Letter of Intent on Cooperation** was signed between UN-Habitat & Songyang county

May 2019



Forums on Urban-Rural Linkages

IFURL 1

Nov 2019

IFURL 2

Oct 2021

IFURL 3

Oct 2023



78 villages

in Songyang have been listed as Traditional Chinese Villages *through Saving Old Houses to Empower Rural Revitalization initiative*



ABOUT SONGYANG

Geographic location southwest of Zhejiang Province, China, under the administration of Lishui City

*Songyang has established itself as a **model county for Harmonious integration of heritage and modernity***



Songyang has been designated as a provincial pilot city for urban renewal, a national pilot county for cultural industry-driven rural revitalization, a pilot county for intelligent and connected transportation within Zhejiang’s modern transportation industry, and a provincial demonstration county for attracting university students back to work in the county. A total of 78 villages in Songyang have been listed as Traditional Chinese Villages, and the county has made outstanding progress in implementing the initiative of “*Saving Old Houses to Empower Rural Revitalization.*” The Urban-Rural Linkages Conference 2025 will showcase Songyang’s inspiring success in modernization to an international audience.

Through field visits and case studies, the conference will demonstrate the region’s efforts on reducing urban-rural disparities with a focus on culture, housing and basic services, to illustrate settlement patterns in one of China’s mountainous areas.

Ultimately, the conference aims to contribute to coordinated, sustainable county-level urban-rural development while fostering cross-regional cooperation and exchange, thereby amplifying the global understanding of Chinese-style modernization and the concept of shared prosperity.

Theme
Advancing Urban-Rural Linkages: Culture, Housing and Basic Services

Date
November 3-6, 2025

Location
Songyang County, Lishui City,
Zhejiang Province, China

Organizers
UN-Habitat
CICG Center for Europe and Africa

II. Participants



1. International: Representatives from international and local organizations; international experts and scholars (around 35 participants)



2. Domestic: Leaders from national ministries and commissions, provincial and city governments; domestic experts, scholars, and media representatives (around 40 participants); Officials and staff from Songyang County (around 10 participants)

Total: Approximately 80-100 participants.



III. Agenda

Time	Details
November 3	
All day	Guest Arrival Location: Tianyuan Mingyue Hotel, Songyang
17:30-20:00	Welcome Dinner Location: Songzhou Hall, Tianyuan Mingyue Hotel

November 4: Morning | Plenary sessions

08:00-09:00	Depart from the hotel to visit the “Window of Songyang” exhibition
09:00-09:15	Return to the Opening Ceremony venue at the hotel
09:30-10:15	Opening Ceremony & Songyang Rural Revitalization National Architectural Design Competition Award Ceremony Location: Mingdu Hall, Tianyuan Mingyue Hotel <i>(Promotional video to be shown before the ceremony)</i>
10:30-12:00	Plenary Session Location: Mingdu Hall, Tianyuan Mingyue Hotel <i>There will be five speakers in total - three international and two domestic. The international speakers will be representatives of international organizations and will be recommended by UN-Habitat and CICG. Each speaker will give a 15-minute thematic presentation followed by a 15-minute Q&A session (total 90 minutes). The session will be moderated by Remy Sietchiping- UN-Habitat</i>
12:00-	Lunch (at the hotel)

November 4: Afternoon

Field Visits & Parallel event (I)

Theme: Revitalizing Housing and Upgrading Basic Services

Route: Hotel → Hetianling Block → the Former Bus Station

14:00-14:10	Depart from hotel for Hetianling Block
14:10-14:50	Field survey on the organic renewal and cultural heritage preservation achievements in Hetianling Block, with immersive experiences in the historical old street
14:50-15:00	Transfer to the former bus station



15:00-15:30	Field study on the revitalization and adaptive reuse of the old town's housing at the former bus station (project introduction and onsite experience)
15:30-17:00	Parallel event (Leisure Plaza) <i>There will be five speakers in total, three international and two domestic, each delivering a 15-minute thematic presentation followed by a 15-minute Q&A session (total 90 minutes). The three international speakers will be arranged by UN-Habitat and CICG. The moderator for the session will be arranged by UN-Habitat.</i>

November 4: Afternoon

Field Visits & Parallel event (II)

Theme: Preserving Cultural Heritage and Shaping Identity

Route: Hotel → Songyang Old Street → Wenli • Songyang Three Temples Culture Exchange Center

14:00-14:10	Depart from the hotel for Songyang Old Street (South Entrance)
14:10-15:00	Visit the Songyang Old Street, and watch cultural heritage performances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Puppet Show at the entrance of Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum ② Songyang Gaoqiang Opera at the entrance of Yuanpu
15:00-15:30	Visit the Wenli • Songyang Three Temples Cultural Exchange Center (Designed by Pritzker Prize winner Liu Jiakun)
15:30-17:00	Parallel event (Wencang Art Gallery) There will be five speakers in total, three international and two domestic, each delivering a 15-minute thematic presentation followed by a 15-minute Q&A session (total 90 minutes). The three international speakers will be arranged by UN-Habitat and CICG. The moderator for the session will be arranged by UN-Habitat.
17:00-	Return to the hotel for dinner

November 5: Morning

Field visits & Parallel event (III)

Theme: Innovation and Sustainability of Heritage in Traditional Villages

Route: Hotel → Songzhuang Village, Sangdu Township

08:30-09:10	Depart from the hotel for Songzhuang Village, Sangdu Township
09:10-10:00	Visit the Peach Space, the Mountain and Folk Theater, the Wild Grass Lab, and the Weaving Art Museum
10:00-10:30	Weaving Workshop Training Activities



10:30-12:00	Parallel event (Mountain and Folk Theater) <i>There will be five speakers in total, three international and two domestic, each delivering a 15-minute thematic presentation followed by a 15-minute Q&A session (total 90 minutes). The three international speakers will be arranged by UN-Habitat and CICG. The moderator for the session will be arranged by UN-Habitat.</i>
12:00	Return to the hotel for lunch

November 5: Morning

Field visits & Parallel event (IV)

Theme: Green Transportation and Sustainable Urban-Rural Development

Route: Hotel → Highway Operation and Management Center → Transport Service Center of Songyang County → Smart Transport Industrial Park

08:30-08:40	Depart from the hotel for the Digital Highway Operation and Management Center (third floor, Social Governance Center)
08:40-09:10	Operations Showcase
09:10-09:20	Transfer to Transport Service Center of Songyang County
09:20-09:50	Experience autonomous driving - a test ride in WeRide's autonomous bus
09:50-10:00	Transfer to the Smart Transport Industrial Park
10:00-10:30	Visit the Smart Transport Industrial Park (Neolithic, Yuwan, etc.)
10:30-12:00	Parallel event (Main Conference Room, Economic Development Zone) <i>There will be five speakers in total, three international and two domestic, each delivering a 15-minute thematic presentation followed by a 15-minute Q&A session (total 90 minutes). The three international speakers will be arranged by UN-Habitat and CICG. The moderator for the session will be arranged by UN-Habitat.</i>
12:00	Return to the hotel for lunch
Afternoon	
14:00-17:00	Co-Creation Activity Closing Ceremony Location: Mingdu Hall, Tianyuan Mingyue Hotel

November 6	Guest Departure
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