



SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



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Rapid urbanization and its impact on communities is one of the most pressing global issues today. In thirty years, two thirds of the world's population will live in urban areas. In the next few decades, the world will need to double the space occupied by cities and towns to accommodate the population growth and shift from rural to urban. Most urban growth will take place in Africa and Asia, continents which already experience major social, political and economic development challenges.

Unplanned urbanization fuels the continuous growth of informal settlements. Inequality is a universal concern both within cities and across territories. Poverty, migration, humanitarian crises, climate change related challenges and disasters as well as conflict are becoming increasingly urban phenomena.

However, this also presents a unique opportunity to bring the benefits of urbanization to all. Cities and towns are major catalysts of economic growth and development and can help drive an overall transformation of territories, connecting rural and urban areas.

The adoption by the international community of both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which includes the goal to make cities safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable (SDG 11) along with the New Urban Agenda, positions urbanization at the forefront of international development policy. As a focal point on sustainable urbanization, one of UN-Habitat's key roles is to localise the SDGs.

UN-Habitat has over forty years of experience working with a wide range of partners on sustainable urbanization to give people a better quality of life. It has transformed into a knowledge-based organisation where critical support for local and national level policies and UN-Habitat's wide range of impactful projects in the field are intrinsically linked.

I hope this booklet will give you a brief glimpse of the challenges and possibilities posed by urbanization and the exciting progress being made globally.

Overview of Urbanization and Current Situation

There has been a phenomenal shift towards urbanization in recent years, with over half the world's population currently living in cities. Many cities are facing serious challenges in managing rapid urbanization. Almost 1 billion people currently live in slums. By 2030, UN-Habitat estimates that 3 billion people will need access to adequate and affordable housing.

The negative effects of rapid, unplanned urbanization include lack of proper housing and growth of slums, inadequate and out-dated infrastructure, escalating poverty and unemployment, safety and crime problems, pollution and health issues, as well as poorly managed natural or man-made disasters and other catastrophes.

At the same time, sustainable urbanization can be a key contributor to poverty reduction. It has contributed to lifting more than 700 million people out of poverty in the last 15 years, more than 70 per cent of them from rural areas. Cities generate around 70 per cent of global GDP and the growth of cities and urban areas can be turned into opportunities that will promote equality and leave nobody behind.

Over half of the SDG targets have an urban component and cities are well positioned to take the lead in addressing many of the global challenges including air pollution, climate change, poverty, inequality, unemployment, crimes and environmental degradation.

Partners working on the urban related SDGs produced the 2018 SDG 11 synthesis report for the High Level Political Forum with detailed information on the baselines, challenges and opportunities for urban monitoring along with a review of the efforts and issues surrounding the implementation of Goal 11- at local, national and global levels. The report found mixed progress.

Millions of people have been moved out of substandard living conditions and given adequate housing. Between 2000 and 2014, the proportion of the world's urban population living in slums declined by 20 per cent to 22.8 per cent. However, population growth and migration meant those living in slums increased from 807 million to 883 million during that time. In 2018, conservative estimates place the population in slums at 1 billion.



Housing at the Centre

In responding to housing challenges and harnessing opportunities, UN-Habitat promotes the Housing at the Centre approach following the endorsement of Member States in 2015. Housing at the Centre provides guiding principles for holistic policies and strategies both for national and local governments to achieve transformation on the ground.

In the past two years, more than 35 countries counted on our support to strengthen their housing policies and institutions as well as to design solutions to improve the sustainability and affordability of housing.

Equally important, housing affordability has become a global crisis affecting people in low and high income countries. Over the past 50 years, housing prices in high income countries increased three times more than the prices of other basic services.

Critical challenges around housing such as affordability, slums and inequality have negatively affected people's lives and the sustainability of cities. UN-Habitat has advised housing practitioners across the world on how to shape housing policies that are inclusive and that target low-income groups and people in vulnerable situations.

Urban sprawl continues, with the physical expansion of cities increasing at a rate 1.5 times that of population growth in 2017. This is a negative trend as a city that uses land more efficiently is in a far better position to provide lower cost public goods and basic services, consumes less energy, manages waste better, and can maximize the benefits of agglomeration.

The expansion of cities has reduced the share of land allocated for streets and the share of land allocated to open spaces in most cities is insufficient. The proportion of land allocated to streets should be 25 per cent in cities and 15 per cent in suburbs. Most cities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean allocate under 15 per cent in cities and less than 10 per cent in the suburbs. Public spaces are associated with enhanced safety and social cohesion, higher equality and improved health and wellbeing.

Waste generation is growing rapidly in all but high-income regions. In 2010, high-income countries accounted for half of all waste generation but Asia is expected to take the lead by 2030. It is expected that solid waste generation will double by 2025. In large cities, poor waste management leads to poor health due to burning of waste, open dump fill sites and biodiversity degradation. Good

solid waste management practices deliver employment for youth and women, low-cost energy, and improved environments and ecosystems.

Globally, it is estimated that the number of deaths resulting from outdoor air pollution increased from 3.4 million in 1990 to 4.2 million deaths in 2016. In 2016, 91 per cent of the urban population still breathed air that did not meet the World Health Organization air quality guidelines. Timely and inclusive action by public authorities is needed to address air quality in rapidly industrializing countries with large urban populations.

In Asia, Europe, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean the number of people using public transport between 2001 and 2014 rose by nearly 20 per cent. Public transport modes are more efficient than personal vehicles in terms of carrying and moving people around. Investing in smart and green integrated transport systems that are inclusive, safe, accessible and affordable is critical.

To address these challenges, 152 countries have developed National Urban Policies (NUPs) that support sustainable urbanization and nearly half (73) are being implemented. NUPs have been identified as one of the key tools which governments can use to promote sustainable development that cuts across urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

Monitoring and reporting at the city level requires defining new concepts, in addition to developing functional definitions of what constitutes a city or urban or rural areas as distinct units for purposes of global monitoring. With several Goal 11 indicators requiring collecting data at the local level prior to producing national level aggregates, new partnerships and structural and institutional data production and processing systems are needed.

Leaving No One Behind

People are the very essence of cities and reducing inequality is key to ensuring that opportunities offered by the city are accessible to all.

UN-Habitat's research has shown that youth face repeated obstacles in accessing public space due to a lack of planning resulting in disorderly settlements patterns with low provision of public spaces. This results in poorly designed and managed spaces with a lack of adequate infrastructure including lighting and ramps for youth who are physically challenged. Increased privatization of public spaces, insecurity and a lack of proper legislation to regulate the use of public space are barriers to accessibility.

Young women are also disadvantaged by societal and cultural norms and vulnerable to harassment and discrimination, which limit their access to education, health services, employment, and leisure activities.

Working to make lives better for all in cities, UN-Habitat has:

- Constructed One-stop Youth Centres in five African cities with plans to expand to Asia and Latin America. Each Centre supports local services including sports and recreation, job skills and entrepreneurship training, health services and youth-led governance and planning.
- Funded 285 youth-led projects and sponsored credit mechanisms for entrepreneurship and employment through the Urban Youth Fund.
- Trained vulnerable youth from six districts of Mogadishu, Somalia on the core concepts of conflict management, problem-solving, and decision-making.
- Empowered youth from 12 cities in Saudi Arabia raising awareness on the various avenues available for engagement with local and national authorities.



Safer Cities Programme

The Safer Cities Programme approaches urban safety from the prevention perspective, linked to urban planning, management and governance and the reduction of vulnerabilities. It integrates urban safety into the everyday functioning of the city focusing on the coproduction of safety and security for all. Through it, UN-Habitat deploys a range of tools to support the development of municipal-wide crime prevention policies and programmes including analysis, participatory, monitoring and evaluation techniques, networking, advocacy, training and capacity development, conflict resolution and public order. It has also established the Global Network on Safer Cities.

Risk Reduction and Resilience in Cities

Globally, all cities are vulnerable to severe impacts from a range of shocks and stresses. Rapid urbanization, climate change and political instability contribute to further challenges. There is a need for new tools and approaches that strengthen local administrations and empower citizens, while building their capacity to face new challenges and better protect human, economic and natural assets.

Over the last decade, natural disasters affected more than 220 million people and caused economic damage amounting to USD 100 billion per year. Some 4.4 billion people (equivalent to 64 per cent of the world's population), have been affected by disasters since 1992 costing around USD 2 trillion. In 2015, 117 countries and territories were hit by disasters.

Cities hit by large-scale disasters can take more than a decade to recover. Recurrent crises, such as the droughts in the Horn of Africa, require the root causes of crises be addressed. River flooding poses a threat to over 379 million urban residents, with earthquakes and strong winds potentially affecting 283 million and 157 million respectively.

UN-Habitat is collaborating with several cities on resilience and implementing the New Urban Agenda through its flagship tool, the City Resilience Profiling Tool (CRPT). Ongoing work includes:

- Asunción (Paraguay) is committed to building resilience against water-related hazards such as flooding.
- Barcelona (Spain) is co-developing the CRPT through contributions and expertise.
- Maputo (Mozambique) focuses on building resilience in vulnerable informal settlements.
- Port Vila (Vanuatu), is addressing its vulnerability to numerous natural hazards.

UN-Habitat chairs the Making Cities Resilient Campaign, which aims to increase local-level commitment to resilience and currently has over 3,500 signatory cities. This is supported by the Urban Resilience Hub, an online platform hosted by UN-Habitat to exchange good practice, tools and resources. UN-Habitat is a leading member of the Medellín Collaboration for Urban Resilience, a major global community of practice gathering international organizations.

Planning our Cities

The dynamic of urbanization provides a huge opportunity to harness the wealth and creativity of a city's boom to maximize quality of life for as many citizens as possible. Many countries are embarking on developing policies and frameworks to build inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities.

Examples of UN-Habitat's policy and planning impact includes:

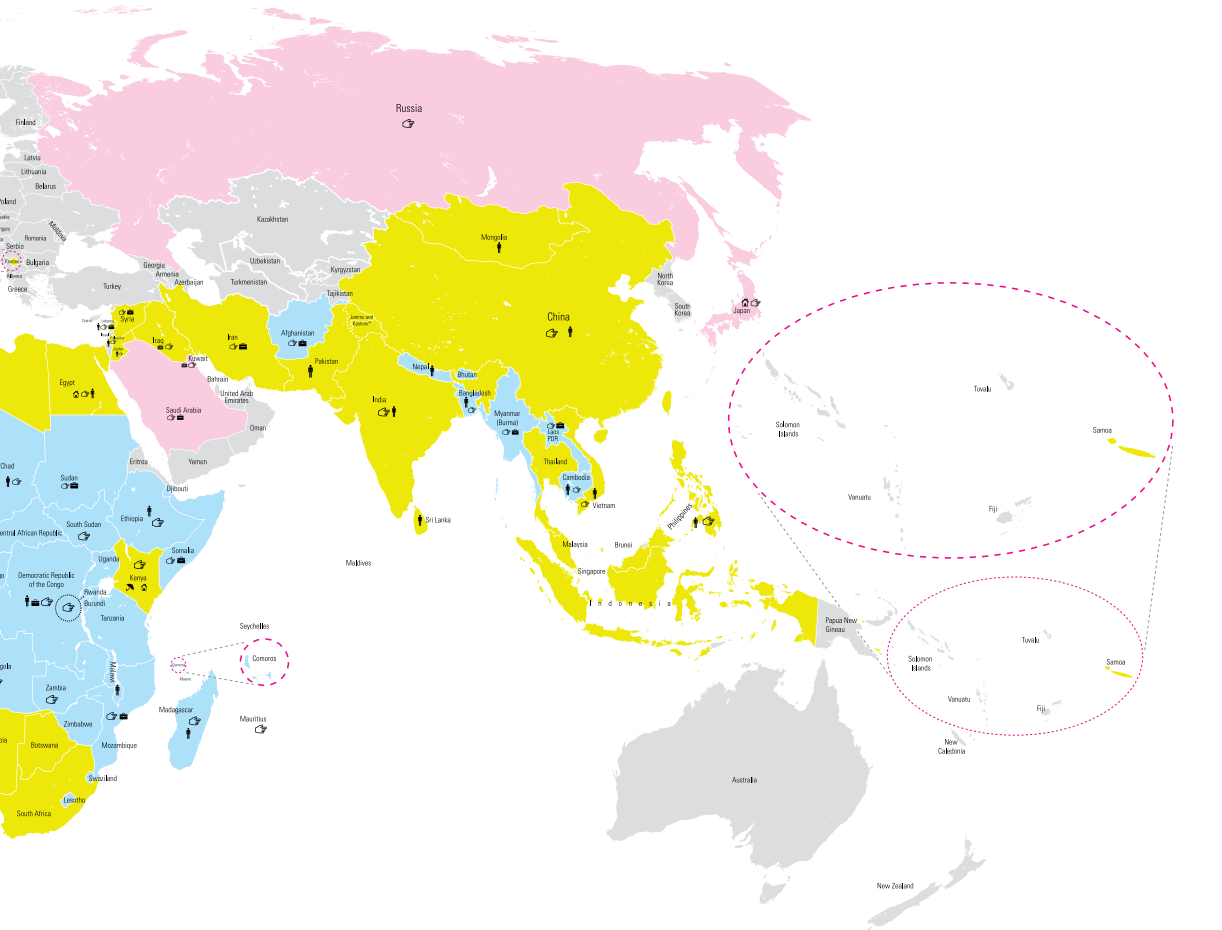
- Enhancing access to energy, and encouraging industrial development for job creation in the Ibadan-Accra Corridor in West Africa, home to 25 million people in clustered settlements spread over 650 km.
- Tackling rapid urbanization and sprawl through planned city extensions in Somalia, Ghana, Rwanda, Egypt and Philippines.
- Observing clear national urban policies in Brazil, China and South Africa, which augment inequality reduction and energise the development process.
- Supporting urban policy development processes in over 40 countries including Afghanistan, Cameroon, Bolivia, Malawi, and Sri Lanka.
- Contributing to MetroHUB in Colombia and Uganda, with GIZ, Politecnico di Milano, MIT and others combining governance, planning and financing with socio-ecological aspects and capacity development.



Block by Block

Block by Block is an innovative citizen participation methodology that uses Minecraft, one of the world's most popular video games, as a digital Lego or 3D modelling tool, to engage vulnerable communities in the design of public spaces.

UN-Habitat organizes community engagement workshops in which residents use Minecraft to redesign their public spaces and then present their ideas to city officials. UN-Habitat has implemented more than 60 projects in 25 countries, reaching more than 1.5 million people.



- Least developed countries (LDC)
- Middle or upper income countries (MIC)/(UMIC)
- High income countries (HIC)

Country	UN-Habitat Office / Country representation	HQs	Countries with CTAs
India	•		
Indonesia	•		
Iran	•		
Iraq	•		
Japan			
Jordan			
Kenya	•		
Kosovo	•		
Kuwait	•		
Laos PDR	•		
Lebanon	•		
Lesotho	•		
Liberia	•		
Libya			
Madagascar			
Malawi	•		
Malaysia			
Mauritania	•		
Mauritius	•		
Mexico	•		
Mali	•		
Mongolia	•		
Morocco	•		
Mozambique	•		
Myanmar	•		
Namibia	•		
Nepal	•		
Niger	•		
Nigeria	•		
Pakistan	•		
Panama	•		
Paraguay	•		
Philippines	•		
Russian Federation			
Rwanda	•		
Samoa	•		
Sao Tome & Principe	•		
Saudi Arabia	•		
Senegal	•		
Singapore	•		
Somalia	•		
South Africa	•		
South Sudan	•		
Spain	•		
Sri Lanka	•		
State of Palestine	•		
Sudan	•		
Swaziland	•		
Switzerland	•		
Syria	•		
Tanzania	•		
Thailand	•		
Togo	•		
Tunisia	•		
Uganda	•		
USA	•		
Vietnam	•		
Zambia	•		
Zimbabwe	•		

Rules and Regulations

Good laws and institutions are clearly understood, help governments deliver policy, treat citizens fairly and use the most efficient means to achieve their objective. Bad laws are hidden and poorly understood and often promote exclusionary or discriminatory outcomes. Many cities have laws that do not match their prevailing urban reality or that cannot be enforced, discouraging investment and limiting service provision. A multiplicity of rigid laws and regulations can compel citizens to use informal routes for land and property transactions, to do business, to earn a living, or to access basic services.

UN-Habitat's knowledge in legal reform supports cities to overcome these challenges through:

- Comprehensive reviews of law and practice in areas such as physical planning, municipal finance, land management or informal settlements.
- Support and guidance to reform processes in all areas of urban law.
- Rule of Law and human rights impact assessments of legal instruments and processes.
- Project support in innovative areas such as land readjustment, environmentally sensitive development regulation and multi-level governance.
- UrbanLex – a database and partnership for disseminating legal knowledge and creating a diverse network to develop capacity and access external expertise.

Some examples include:

- Supporting the Government of Haiti to review the feasibility of pro-poor land management and planning interventions.
- Supporting the Government of Saudi Arabia in the development of a national physical planning system
- Advising the Government of Afghanistan on the development and implementation of pro-poor property registration and local taxation.
- Advising the Government of Egypt in the reform of planning and constructions related laws.
- Developing regional and global assessments of the effectiveness of physical planning laws in cities.



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Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)

UN-Habitat is a partner of the GLTN which has ensured an inclusive understanding of land and tenure security is included in global and regional frameworks. It has strengthened regional land policy platforms and encouraged inclusive approaches to land including by initiating the first land conference in the Arab region (2018). It also provides stakeholders with practical tools to understand different groups' and individuals' relationships to land. It has helped resolve land disputes and resettlement in post conflict contexts and provided fit for purpose technical support to national and city governments to develop national land policy frameworks and gender strategies to improve women's access to land and tenure security.



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Generating Finance

A fundamental problem confronting most local authorities, especially those managing cities in developing countries, is the widening gap between financial resources available and municipal expenditure needs. This increasing fiscal gap is partly due to the rapid growth of urban populations, creating an ever-increasing demand for public services and infrastructure.

Most municipal governments find it very hard to raise adequate revenues from their own sources. While more financial resources need to be shared between the central and local governments, sources available to local authorities to generate revenue should be fully exploited. Urban authorities should also explore the use of non-conventional instruments for generating additional financial resources.

The ability of local authorities in developing countries to mobilize adequate financial resources will determine the outcome of SDGs 8 and 11 and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

UN-Habitat helps build the technical and institutional capacity of local authorities, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America, to improve the efficiency of revenue generation from local revenue sources. It assists local authorities to introduce institutional and legal reforms needed to generate additional financial resources.

Other services include helping to design local revenue enhancement tools and plans, selecting appropriate financing mechanisms for services and infrastructure projects, developing strategies to implement public-private partnerships, undertaking municipal credit ratings, and enhancing the ability to issue municipal bonds. Capacity-building support is also provided to national governments.



Somalia

In Somaliland and Puntland, automated financial management systems are being used to capture all local government financial transactions. Districts continued to experience rapid growth in revenue generation. For instance, Hargeisa property tax collection increased from around USD 384,000 in 2008 to USD 1.1 million in 2017. Support was given to improve expenditure management and internal control mechanisms in Somaliland and Puntland and internal audit units in four towns were supported.

Urban Poverty

Today, 25 per cent of the urban population – around 1 billion people – live in slums, characterised by poverty, population density, contaminated environments and a lack of formal land tenure, which limits access to water and sanitation, energy, solid waste management and mobility. Some 2.1 billion people lack safe drinking water at home and double that number do not have safe sanitation. Up to 132 million people in cities have no electricity and many spend up to 30 per cent of their income on transport.

Despite being important contributors to the informal economy, many living in slums have limited opportunities to contribute to decision-making and participation. A people-centred approach linking communities with local authorities, private sector is vital for long-term socio-economic transformation.

Slum upgrading, urban basic services, accessible mobility and safer cities are all aspects of improving the lives of urban residents globally. UN-Habitat has engaged more than 40 countries and 200 cities in participatory slum upgrading resulting in 50 National Polices becoming slum upgrading responsive and legislation adapted for participatory slum upgrading in 30 countries.

UN-Habitat's projects have built the capacity of over 1,200 partners with 4 million slum dwellers engaged in the process. Some 800,000 slum dwellers were supported with secure tenure agreements and avoided eviction. UN-Habitat targeted 268,000 women to lead the implementation of the Community Managed Funds creating sustainable livelihoods and employment.

Other projects include:

- Supporting cities such as Addis Ababa and Nairobi in planning for Bus Rapid Transit systems benefitting an estimated 1 million people.
- Providing 2 million people with safe drinking water and sanitation in 36 countries.
- Ensuring 1.5 million people live in open defecation free environments in Nepal.
- Supporting over 200 water operators serving over 1.5 million customers in Fiji, Australia, Morocco, France, Argentina, and Brazil.
- Constructing 765 schools and 134 health centres in Iraq.



Slum upgrading program

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Program (PSUP) is a joint effort of the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, the European Commission and UN-Habitat. Since 2008, the programme has worked with 40 countries and 190 cities to improve the lives of at least 4 million slum dwellers.

There are 1 billion slum dwellers in the world today and without action, there will be 3 billion in 2030. The program influenced the inclusion of slum dwellers' needs in over 50 national development plans and policies and 90 citywide development plans.

Learning, Capacity Building, Monitoring and Reporting

Local and national decision makers need the knowledge and evidence to develop well-informed policies to lead cities towards a sustainable, inclusive, safe and resilient path. They must be well-equipped with tools, methods and robust indicators to monitor progress and report on their achievements.

UN-Habitat adopts a comprehensive capacity building approach to strengthen the capacity of technical staff and decision makers to enable cities, local and national governments to plan, implement, manage, monitor and report on the implementation of the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda and other global urban related agendas.

The improvement of quality of life in cities must be captured by sound indicators that help in the monitoring of the policy and development implications of these numbers. UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Initiative (CPI) brings together more than 400 cities worldwide and provides policy makers and decision makers with a tool to assess the performance of public policies and to monitor their outcomes and progress on various aspects such as environmental sustainability, quality of life, infrastructure development, governance, economic competitiveness and social equity.

UN-Habitat aims to provide:

- A global capacity building programme to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and SDG 11 using UN-Habitat's body of knowledge, international experience and technical expertise.
- A dynamic global database with 72 indicators on cities as part of the City Prosperity Initiative to help in assessing the impact and progress of the New Urban Agenda and SDG 11.
- A Global Urban Observatory with expertise, methodologies and capabilities in collaboration with local urban observatories in more than 300 cities worldwide.
- A Global Sample of 200 cities for continuous analysis of urbanization trends.
- Methodologies, tools and technical expertise for the future refinement of the SDG indicators methodologies and capacity development tools and guidelines.



UNI Network

Habitat UNI, the UN-Habitat University Partners Initiative Worldwide, gathers 218 universities and 1700 individual members in several thematic hubs. UNI creates a community of practice, research and education that boosts knowledge exchange and collaborative learning and encourages universities to engage with cities and local governments. UNI aims to create a new generation of urban managers capable of understanding rapid urbanization and equipped with relevant knowledge and skills.

Partnering towards the New Urban Agenda

UN-Habitat partners are national governments with related institutions, subnational and local governments and associations, intergovernmental organisations, UN organisations, major groups and other stakeholders with 16 partner categories. Through the People's Process, multi stakeholder issue-based and cross sectoral partnerships, UN-Habitat facilitates communities and partners to contribute to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. New tools to strengthen stakeholders' engagement in implementation of SDGs and the New Urban

Agenda include the partnership strategy, stakeholders' collaborative framework and UN collaborative framework.

UN-Habitat implements programmes worth some USD 200 million every year which include technical assistance programmes in over 60 countries as well as global programmes to develop norms, policies and tools to advocate for sustainable urbanization. Around 80 per cent of funding comes from central governments with the rest coming from local authorities, the private sector, civil society and collaboration with other United Nations agencies.

The World Urban Forum

The World Urban Forum (WUF) is the world's premier conference on urban issues. It was established in 2001 by the UN to examine rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies. Organized and convened by UN-Habitat, WUF is one of the most open, high-level gatherings for exchanging views and experiences on urban challenges.

The World Urban Campaign

The World Urban Campaign (WUC) is an advocacy and partnership platform to raise awareness about positive urban change in order to achieve green, productive, safe, healthy, inclusive, and well-planned cities. Its goal is to place the Urban Agenda at the highest level of development policy. It is coordinated by UN-Habitat and driven by 136 partners and networks.

Future of Saudi Cities Programme

Saudi Arabia is seeing rapid urbanization due to demographic, social and economic growth. The Future Saudi Cities Program, a joint programme between the Saudi Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and UN-Habitat, looks at enhancement of economic productivity, strengthening urban legislative and institutional frameworks, sustainable urban development, empowering citizens and capacity building. Improved policy implementation, city and regional planning has benefitted 45 per cent of the population.



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 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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