



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Annual Report
2021





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Cover photo

Workshops and 'women safety audits' were undertaken in eight cities in Pernambuco, Brazil to promote safety and inclusivity for vulnerable groups such as women and children © Renato Mendonça



UN-Habitat organized the 2nd Mosul Old City Citizens Consultation Forum to develop a consensus from stakeholders on the ownership and redevelopment of Mosul, Iraq's debilitated Al Maidan riverfront and to discuss its revival © Anna Soave

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Foreword

In 2021, conflict, pandemic and climate emergencies continued to shape the challenges faced by human settlements. UN-Habitat was able to strengthen its efforts to help Member States to respond to new vulnerabilities and risks. Our normative guidance combined with demonstrated projects succeeded in creating conducive conditions for sustainable and inclusive recovery and resilience at the local level.



Local is where the global crises [climate, COVID-19, inequalities, migration] converge. The scale of the problem and the urgency to act are becoming bigger, requiring a wider mobilization.

Antonio Guterres
United Nations
Secretary-General

Working with a network of over 1,400 cities representing more than one billion citizens, UN-Habitat was able to convince city managers and community leaders to embrace the notion of public health by rethinking public space and improving access to basic services. Over five million slum dwellers gained access to basic services directly through UN-Habitat's global strategic policy interventions.

UN-Habitat's mandate has evolved and expanded over the last four years following the adoption of the New Urban Agenda in 2016 and the related General Assembly Resolutions. UN-Habitat's role in helping Member States provide adequate and affordable housing, and developing adaptation methods that are inclusive when tackling the climate challenge, promises to be an exciting new phase in its role as a champion of sustainable urbanization.

The engagement and mobilization of urban stakeholders continues through the World Urban Campaign, the World Habitat Day and the World Cities Day celebrations. Expanding awareness of the transformative potential of sustainable urbanization is key to the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals. Some 20 national urban forums were organized which broadened the dynamic engagement of urban stakeholders to help Member States translate urban development policies into practice.

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif
United Nations Under-Secretary-General
and Executive Director

Reporting on the SDGs and SDG11 in particular, including through the United Nations Secretary-General's Quadrennial Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda, was slow. At the time of publication, only 28 Member States have submitted their New Urban Agenda reports. Although more than 50 per cent of Member States have national urban policies and the rest have addressed urbanization in their national development plans, UN-Habitat needs to redouble its efforts to promote integrated planning approaches.

Last year, UN-Habitat introduced innovative ways to diversify its funding sources and establish new strategic partnerships. This included advocating for a feasibility fund that would support the creation of "bankable" project proposals to attract financing at the local level. To complement Member States funding for the implementation of UN-Habitat's mandate, the idea of a third-party endowment was floated. A feasibility study was carried out, and the Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation was registered by Blenheim Capital in June 2021.

The comprehensive reform that has made UN-Habitat more fit-for-purpose to advance its revised and expanded mandate has paved the way for better connections between UN-Habitat and that of other United Nations entities within the framework of recent global agendas – all of which delivered positive results in 2021.

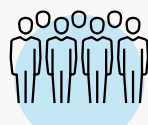


UN-Habitat in 2021



Supporting a just and green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

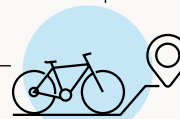
Over 1 million people have directly benefitted from **34** COVID-19 projects in **11** countries.



12 distinct resilience action frameworks were developed in Sub-Saharan Africa.



Over 58 million people are estimated to have access to improved services through Water Operators' Partnerships.



20 cities were supported in efforts to improve their urban mobility systems through public transport planning, street design and non-motorized transport, and electrification or digitalization of transport.

UN-Habitat and partners used innovative digital technologies to involve girls and young women in urban planning in **280 cities** through the Her City digital toolbox. **100 independent projects** in **90 countries** are now registered as users.



UN-Habitat has been active in **90 cities** and helped **more than 2.32 million people** enjoy safe access to **more than 137 upgraded public spaces** through the Global Public Space Programme. In 2021, interventions helped **42,500 people** access safe and inclusive public space and **470,000 people** were supported with capacity development initiatives.



UN-Habitat has extended slum upgrading implementation and strategic policy interventions to **over 190 cities** in **40 countries**. Since 2018, **5 million slum dwellers** worldwide have benefitted from UN-Habitat's Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme and **over 800,000 slum dwellers** have been helped with improved tenure security.

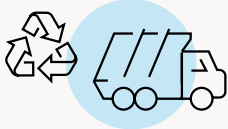
Strengthening the capacity of cities



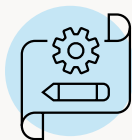
UN-Habitat Learn is UN-Habitat's first online learning platform and management system within which the New Urban Agenda crash course was developed. By December 2021, the UN-Habitat Learn page had been viewed by users from **181 countries** demonstrating the potential for multiplying outreach and dissemination of learning products. These include a series on monitoring urban Sustainable Development Goal indicators.



Over 35 cities in 18 countries have used the City-wide Public Space Assessment tool. Three cities in Latin America – Montevideo, Santo Domingo and Monteria – completed public space assessments to inform spatial and non-spatial strategies. Six cities in Ethiopia validated public space assessments.



Over 30 cities worldwide applied the Waste Wise Cities Tool and can now collect baseline solid waste data to close gaps, make evidence-based decisions and action planning.



357 cities are using participatory planning methodologies and collecting spatial data to increase quality and ownership of local plans, foster sustainable urban development and enhance cohesion between displaced and host communities in countries like Colombia, Ethiopia and Kenya.



16 cities enacted legal frameworks for low-emission development strategies.

Setting the global discourse

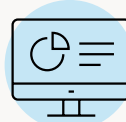


UN-Habitat led the coordination of the United Nations Secretary-General's second Quadrennial Report on progress in implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

UN-Habitat led the process of developing the global urban monitoring framework in collaborations between a range of United Nations entities, city networks, representatives, and partners working with urban indicators within the private sector, civil society and academia.



As part of the global monitoring for COVID-19, the UN-Habitat-CITIIQ COVID-19 tracker for cities was expanded to cover **2,800 cities** globally and enhanced to cover more aspects on local response and performance to better inform local policies.



UN-Habitat developed the most updated online platform on Voluntary Local Reviews.

UN-Habitat with the Global Covenant of Mayors and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change organized the Cities and Climate Science Innovate4Cities Conference with almost 200 sessions and nearly **7,000 participants** from **159 countries** to accelerate knowledge and innovation for urban climate action.



Partnerships and funding

- UN-Habitat's 2021 total revenue was **USD 215.3 million** representing **94 per cent** of its target income.
- To complement Member States funding for the implementation of UN-Habitat's mandate, the Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation was registered by Blenheim Capital in June 2021.

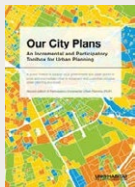
Publications



The New Urban Agenda Illustrated – one of the most frequently downloaded publications with over 20,000 downloads.



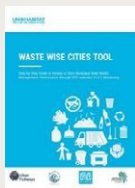
Cities and Pandemics: Towards a More Just, Green and Healthy Future – analysis and bold measures that could deliver lasting and sustainable recovery from COVID-19 with over 6,000 downloads.



Our City Plans: An Incremental and Participatory Toolbox for Urban Planning – allowing local governments and urban actors to implement projects, plans and planning processes with over 10,000 downloads.



Her City – a guide for sustainable and inclusive urban planning and design together with girls – guiding actors to implement projects through a step-by-step methodology providing an open and digitally accessible platform with over 4,000 downloads.



Waste Wise Cities Tool – 7 steps to collect data on municipal solid waste generated, collected and managed in controlled facilities with over 1,600 downloads.



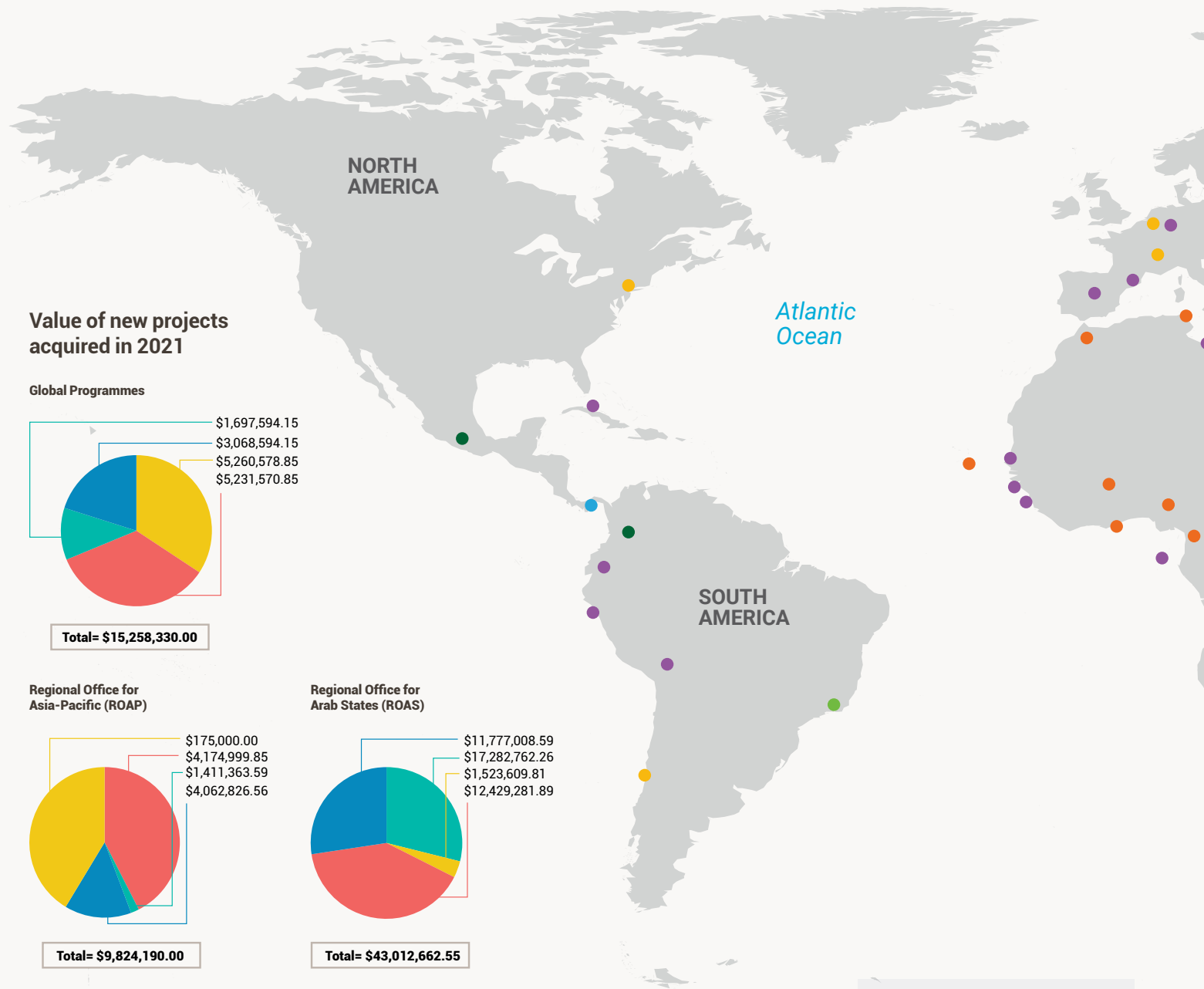
Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews Volume 2: Towards a New Generation of VLRs: Exploring the local-national link provides an analysis of the strategies and possibilities to bridge the gap between implementation of the SDGs at the local level and national level with over 1300 downloads.





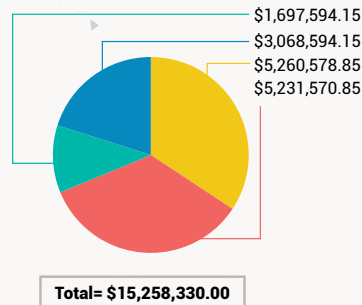
Young women in Nairobi use the Her City toolkit to analyse challenges and create a joint vision for a more inclusive, safe and sustainable industrial area © Godown Arts

UN-Habitat's presence and portfolio

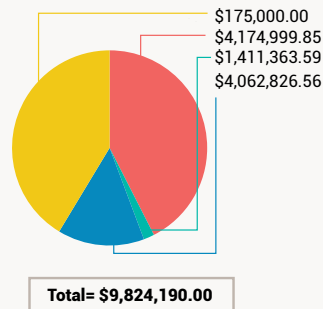


Value of new projects acquired in 2021

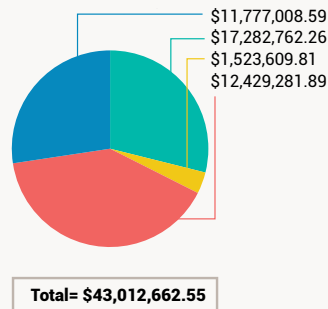
Global Programmes



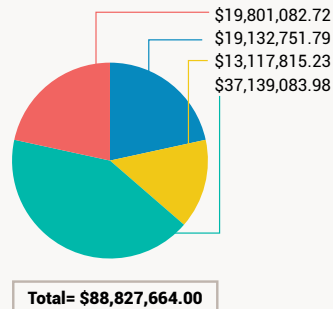
Regional Office for Asia-Pacific (ROAP)



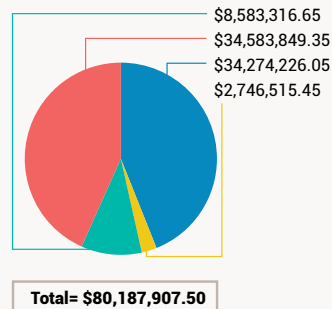
Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)



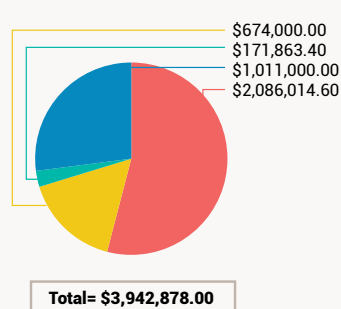
Regional Office for Africa (ROAF)



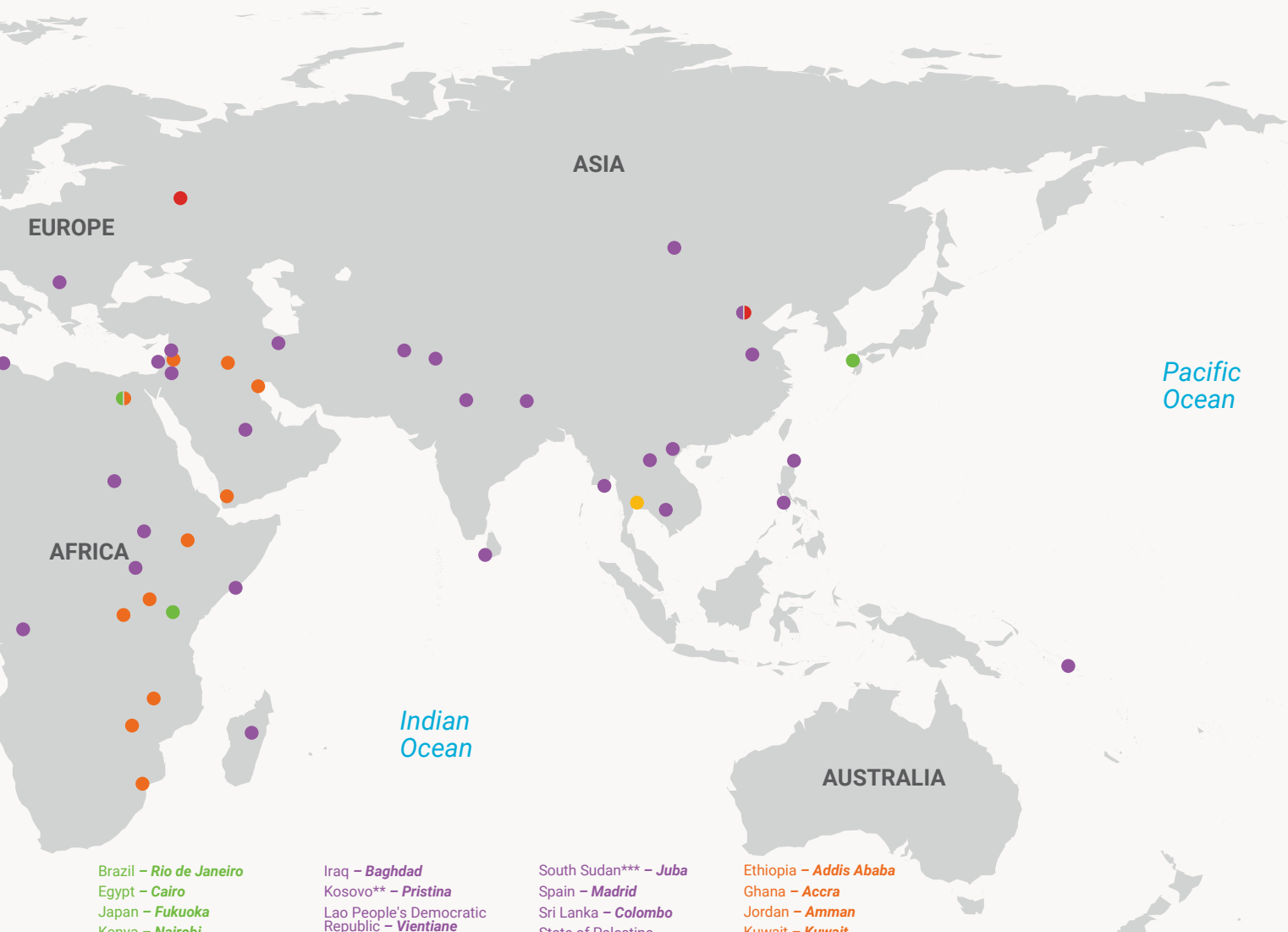
Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC)



Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States



- **Subprogramme 1.** Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban rural continuum
- **Subprogramme 2.** Enhanced shared prosperity of cities and regions
- **Subprogramme 3.** Strengthened climate action and improved urban environment
- **Subprogramme 4.** Effective urban crisis prevention and response



Brazil – *Rio de Janeiro*
 Egypt – *Cairo*
 Japan – *Fukuoka*
 Kenya – *Nairobi*
 Afghanistan – *Kabul*
 Bolivia – *La Paz*
 Cambodia – *Phnom Penh*
 China – *Beijing*
 Comoros – *Moroni*
 Cuba – *Havana*
 Democratic Republic of the Congo – *Kinshasa*
 Ecuador – *Quito*
 Fiji – *Suva*
 Germany – *Bonn*
 Guinea – *Conakry*
 Guinea-Bissau – *Bissau*
 India – *New Delhi*
 Islamic Republic of Iran – *Tehran*

Iraq – *Baghdad*
 Kosovo** – *Pristina*
 Lao People's Democratic Republic – *Vientiane*
 Lebanon – *Beirut*
 Libya – *Tripoli*
 Madagascar – *Antananarivo*
 Mongolia – *Ulaanbaatar*
 Myanmar – *Yangon*
 Nepal – *Kathmandu*
 Pakistan – *Islamabad*
 Peru – *Lima*
 Philippines – *Manila*
 Sao Tomé and Principe – *Sao Tomé*
 Saudi Arabia – *Riyadh*
 Senegal – *Dakar*
 Solomon Islands – *Honiara*
 Somalia – *Mogadishu*

South Sudan*** – *Juba*
 Spain – *Madrid*
 Sri Lanka – *Colombo*
 State of Palestine
 Sudan – *Khartoum*
 Syrian Arab Republic – *Damascus*
 Vietnam – *Ha Noi*
 Belgium – *Brussels*
 Chile – *Santiago*
 Switzerland – *Geneva*
 Thailand – *Bangkok*
 United States of America – *New York*
 Bahrain – *Manama*
 Burkina Faso – *Ouagadougou*
 Cape Verde – *Praia*
 Cameroon – *Yaounde*
 Egypt – *Cairo*

Ethiopia – *Addis Ababa*
 Ghana – *Accra*
 Jordan – *Amman*
 Kuwait – *Kuwait*
 Malawi – *Lilongwe*
 Morocco – *Rabat*
 Mozambique – *Maputo*
 Nigeria – *Abuja*
 Rwanda – *Kigali*
 Tunisia – *Tunis*
 Uganda – *Kampala*
 Yemen – *Sanaa*
 Russian Federation – *Moscow*
 China – *Beijing*
 Colombia – *Bogota*
 Mexico – *Mexico City*
 Panama – *Panama*

●	Regional Office
●	Project Office
●	Liaison/Representation Office
●	Global Programme Office
●	Country Office
●	Administrative Office
●	Information Office
●	Multi-country Office

*There are additional countries where UN-Habitat provided support in 2021 without an office presence.

**Any reference to Kosovo in United Nations documents and United Nations websites, whether to the territory, institutions or population, is to be understood in full compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo. Kosovo is therefore not listed as a country.

***The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.

BASE MAP:
 Map No. 4170 Rev. 19 UNITED NATIONS - October 2020
 Office of Information and Communications Technology
 Geospatial Information Section

Reformed and repositioned

Over the past four years, UN-Habitat has carried out internal restructuring to be aligned with the United Nations Secretary-General's wider reforms. UN-Habitat is now much better positioned within the United Nations system:



At country level, UN-Habitat has engaged with over 50 United Nations Country Teams and Resident Coordinators since 2020 to integrate sustainable urbanization in the Common Country Analyses and in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. This has resulted in strengthened reflection of urban challenges in over 30 analyses and urban priorities in more than 15 frameworks in 2021 alone, focusing on urban, territorial and/or decentralization-related entry points and enabling instruments such as National Urban Policy.



The lack of general-purpose funding has, however, delayed the establishment of the new regional and sub-regional organizational structure, as well as key positions at UN-Habitat Headquarters, severely limiting the ability of the organization to facilitate inter-agency, joint urban programming at country level.

Regionally, UN-Habitat representatives are active members of the Regional Collaborative Platforms (RCP) working as one with the Regional Economic Commissions, representatives of other United Nations entities and the Development Coordination Office that serves as the RCP Secretariat.



Globally, UN-Habitat is now leading the United Nations Task Force on Future of Cities and the Local 2030 Coalition of the Decade of Action, among other initiatives, to implement the United Nations System-Wide Strategy for Sustainable Urban Development. UN-Habitat is an active member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee for humanitarian coordination as part of the Housing, Land and Property subcluster while also promoting engagement of local governments in humanitarian operations.

The main elements of the General Assembly Resolutions that guide UN-Habitat's work are:

- 1 The recognition of the potential of sustainable urbanization to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 2 The role of UN-Habitat as a focal point on sustainable urbanization and human settlements including in the implementation, follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda in collaboration with other United Nations system entities.
- 3 An acknowledgement that over the years, the responsibilities of UN-Habitat have changed considerably in their scope and complexity, and that UN-Habitat has both an operational and normative mandate that needs to be balanced and integrated.

Adjusting our Strategic Plan

An assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the conclusion that the Strategic Plan of UN-Habitat for the period 2020–2023 should be adjusted with three essential priorities to rebalance investment and establish a better connection to knowledge, assets and capacities:

a

Addressing the new geography of vulnerability and risk

Risks of infection and death are increased in cities due to poor living standards. These risks are further consolidated depending on the type of work undertaken and in locations with poor public transport.

b

Integrating programmes to adapt the function and form of cities to respond to crises

Best practice in urban planning and governance shows that sustainable ecological neighbourhoods with adequate public spaces, services and amenities – including health and education – and well-established local or community organizations balance urbanization with protection of biodiversity.

c

Supporting long-term socio-economic urban recovery to overcome spatial inequality and address the climate emergency

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged fiscal health and municipal revenues are shrinking because of reduced economic activity and tax policies. Urban productivity and labour markets have been severely damaged.

Geography of Vulnerability and Risk

Ensure that all new programming responds to higher risks in areas of inadequate housing, higher deprivation and spatial inequalities.

Crisis Responsive Planning

Reorient current urban planning to reshape the urban morphology and support innovation, technology & nature-based solutions for climate resilient cities.

Long Term Planning Strategies

Refocus to increase the economic resilience of cities. Prepare social and economic strategies for infrastructure development, value & supply chains.

An integrated way of working

The proposed recalibration of the strategic plan calls for a strong focus on the interlinkages, rather than a narrower focus on singular outcomes. UN-Habitat developed its assessment and integration of programming for sustainable urbanization in 2021. This allows us to identify how our programmes and projects can be enhanced to ensure that relevant outcomes are targeted in an integrated way. For example, projects targeting the outcome on basic services and mobility have great potential to also deliver results against climate outcomes.

Catalysing innovation

Cities – as centres of economic development, cultural exchange, science and new ideas – play a key role in approaches to climate crises, rapid urbanization and digital transformation, catalysing innovation to achieve sustainable development.

UN-Habitat has made great progress in repositioning itself as a centre of excellence on innovation. In the past year, UN-Habitat launched the first United Nations Innovation Technology Accelerator for Cities (UNITAC); held organization-wide training on innovation; established challenge-driven innovation as a way of working with public and private partners; launched major research collaborations on frontier technologies and digital transformation; and published several technical guides on urban innovation topics.

UN-Habitat also engaged strongly on innovation with the United Nations Innovation Network, the United Nations Technology Envoy Office's work on digital cooperation and the United Nations Interagency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence.

Prioritizing housing, climate and a localized 2030 Agenda

1

The fundamental right to adequate housing

Our Common Agenda, presented by the United Nations Secretary-General in September 2021, calls for a renewed social contract to rebuild trust and embrace a comprehensive vision of human rights. Among the four core elements of the new social contract is the right to adequate housing for all.

UN-Habitat provides tailored technical support to Member States in the process of developing or strengthening legislation on access to affordable housing. Toolkits, guidelines and reports provide cutting-edge knowledge and data on housing with relevance for countries around the globe.

→ The Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus the first resolution on inclusive policies to address homelessness. The resolution, tabled by the African Group, is the direct result of UN-Habitat's advocacy efforts together

with other United Nations bodies and civil society organizations in support of policies aimed at preventing and addressing homelessness.

→ A toolkit to support effective policies for affordable housing in the European region provides key concepts and best practices to promote sustainable housing as part of the recovery and rebuilding plans after the COVID-19 pandemic. *The Role of Land in Achieving Adequate and Affordable Housing* highlights frameworks and policy tools and stresses the impact of urban land governance for improving access to affordable and adequate housing.

Community led upgrading of El Jazzar street in Beirut where workers are renovating, waterproofing and painting the facades of buildings to improve the quality of life in impoverished neighbourhoods © UN-Habitat Lebanon



Since its foundation, UN-Habitat has worked to promote the realization of the right to adequate housing for all as one of the transformative forces that can lead the world to overcome challenges related to poverty, exclusion and inequality, and positively influence cities to embark on a path to inclusive, planned and sustainable urbanization.



Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director

2

Climate – cities as hotspots of climate impacts and risks but also part of the solution

UN-Habitat provides support to Member States on urban and local climate action with an emphasis on Climate Resilient Informal Settlements, multi-level governance and climate change planning in support of the achievement of the Paris Agreement. The support is underscored by innovation in the fields of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

UN-Habitat will further strengthen the integration of low emission development and climate resilience in urban basic services. Financing climate action remains challenging and UN-Habitat will work with climate funds, project development facilities, and national and local governments to increase the access to climate finance for subnational authorities.

→ **Innovate4Cities 2021 Conference:** UN-Habitat, together with the Global Covenant of Mayors co-sponsored by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), hosted the event with over 6,900 participants from 159 countries. The outcomes of the conference, including the updated Global Research and Action Agenda on Local Climate Action, highlight cutting-edge good practices and identify knowledge and innovation gaps. The conference was a key event during Urban October where World Habitat Day drew attention to urban climate change mitigation and World Cities Day focused on climate change adaptation.

Since 2020, the 'Building Urban Climate Resilience in South-Eastern Africa' initiative aims to strengthen urban resilience, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies amongst four cities in Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and the Union of Comoros © Fruzsina Straus



Cities are the frontlines for battles against two of the most pressing global issues today: climate change and global health pandemics. The same concentration of people that make cities vibrant centres of innovation and social development also lead to increased pollution and the rapid spread of viruses. As the number of people living in urban areas grows – expecting to reach 66 per cent by 2050 – these challenges will only compound. Now is the time to take stock of our cities and where they are headed



Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director

3

Localizing the 2030 Agenda

With only 8 years left for the achievement of the commitments set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and just under 15 years for the commitments of the New Urban Agenda, local action has never been so central to achieving sustainable development.

Even if the 2030 Agenda was conceived as an intergovernmental framework and endorsed by Member States, it is widely acknowledged that national governments alone would not be able to meet the Global Goals. Local, regional governments and local communities have a key role to play in a process in which the Global Goals, national frameworks and local implementation need to work seamlessly together.

In November 2021, UN-Habitat's Executive Board mandated UN-Habitat to "Actively advance SDG localization in support of the Decade of Action through normative guidance, technical assistance and strategic partnerships." **UN-Habitat is the United Nations focal point to work with local governments and has developed the most complete approach and set of tools to support national and local governments to localize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).** UN-Habitat is able to provide

tailored support across the whole chain of implementation from data to planning to reporting, project development and financing.

- Together with its partners, UN-Habitat leads the international support to the **Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs)** global movement. UN-Habitat worked with local and regional governments across the globe to provide direct technical assistance for the development of VLRs as a process to accelerate localization of the SDGs.
- UN-Habitat has led the development of cutting-edge knowledge on VLRs and provided opportunities for capacity building and access to advocacy processes within the main international and United Nations-led fora. UN-Habitat also developed the most updated **online platform on VLRs**.
- The **SDG Cities Flagship** initiative supports cities to accelerate implementation of the SDGs.

FIGURE 2
UN-Habitat corporate approach to SDG localization



Source: Launch of the second volume of the UN-Habitat-UCLG Guidelines for VLRs and VLR communique

A child uses a skate park that was designed in a Block by Block workshop in Kosovo. Block by Block includes numerous participatory planning strategies winning 1st place for innovation in the Urban Design Awards 2021 © UN-Habitat



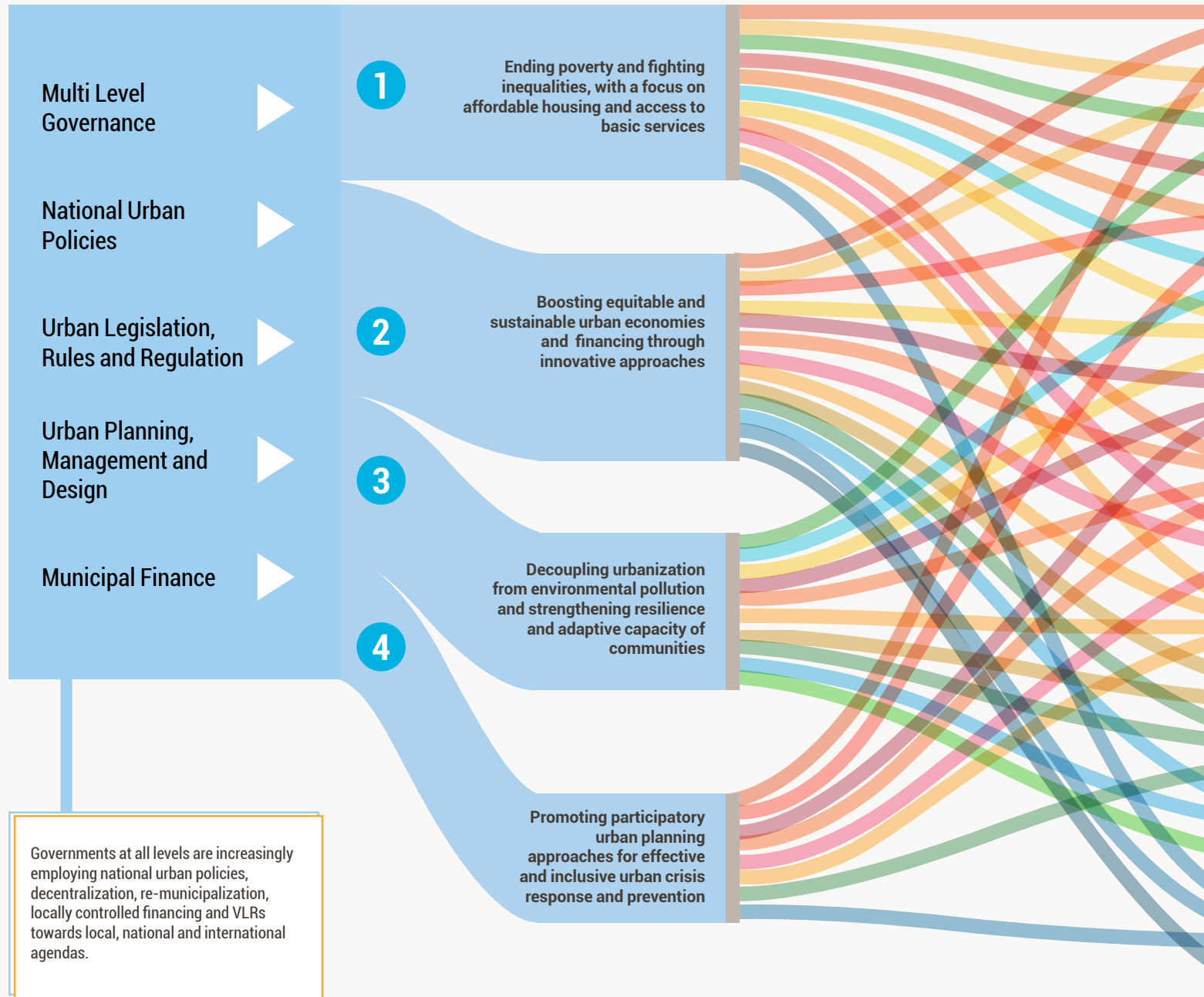
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Contributing to the global agendas

The New Urban Agenda provides UN-Habitat with a toolbox to support countries in making progress towards the attainment and localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Drivers New Urban Agenda

UN-Habitat is promoting drivers in four key thematic areas to support Member States and local and regional governments in their efforts to implement the New Urban Agenda.

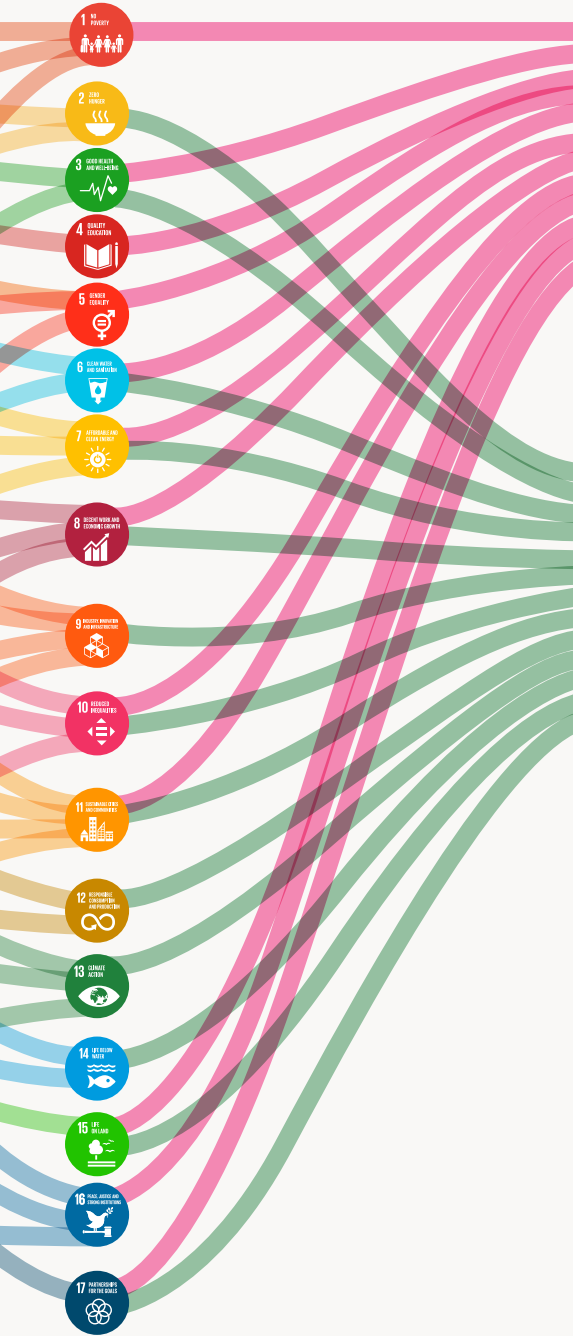


Governments at all levels are increasingly employing national urban policies, decentralization, re-municipalization, locally controlled financing and VLRs towards local, national and international agendas.



Voluntary Local Reviews

Cities and local and regional governments worldwide are using VLRs to track and report on SDG progress. UN-Habitat views VLRs as powerful accelerators of the process of localizing the SDGs.



Global Compact on Migration

Most migrants and displaced persons move to urban areas. Local authorities are at the frontline of providing them with basic services such as housing, water, sanitation, energy, education and health care. UN-Habitat contributes its expertise on urban development and local inclusion in cities as well as empowering communities and local authorities in post-crisis and displacement contexts.

Paris Agreement

UN-Habitat creates a conducive policy environment for local climate action bringing an urban lens to Nationally Determined Contributions, adaptation and resilience plans, and climate policies supporting implementation of low emissions strategies. Training and technical assistance enables municipal governments to access climate finance. Through RISE UP, funding adaptation measures are available for the most vulnerable urban groups. Support to the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities Constituency during COP26 has strengthened Multi-level Climate Governance.

The New Urban Agenda also makes an important contribution to the Global Compact on Refugees (2018), the Global Climate Action Agenda (2016), the Global Agenda of Local and Regional Governments (2016), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015) and the Addis Ababa Agenda for Financing for Development (2015).



Increasing the evidence: monitoring and reporting on the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs



More than 60 organizations engaged in the Writeshop in preparation of the Quadrennial Report. The discussions were captured through illustrations by Josephine Ford.

In 2021, UN-Habitat coordinated the preparation of the **2022 Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on progress on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (Quadrennial Report)**. The report serves as the basis for discussion of the High-Level Meeting by the General Assembly on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda on 28 April 2022 in New York.

Twenty-eight countries have to date submitted National Reports on the New Urban Agenda. To complement the reporting, Regional Reports were produced and a "writeshop" held to draw input from United Nations entities, the United Nations Regional Commissions, United Nations Resident Coordinator's Offices and other major groups in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

Harmonizing and expanding urban data

Great strides have been made to harmonize existing indicators and tools in a Global Urban Monitoring Framework used by United Nations system agencies and external partners to guide sustainable urban development monitoring.

The framework features 72 core indicators distributed across 4 city objectives (safe/

peaceful, inclusive, resilient, sustainable) and 5 city domains (society, economy, environment, culture, governance/implementation).

UN-Habitat supported a pilot of the application of a new city definition methodology in 13 countries using the emerging boundaries to produce data on selected SDG 11 indicators. This support is being implemented in collaboration with the European Commission, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and World Bank to run through 2023. Refinements on various SDG metadata documents were undertaken which has led to an increased number of countries and cities reporting on progress of SDG 11 indicators representing a 10 per cent improvement from 2020.

Urban observatories have become a central focus for many partners due to a growing need for city level monitoring across countries as a result of COVID-19. The Global Urban Observatory Network was reconfigured including reviving the certification process which is aimed at continuously acknowledging the contribution of urban observatories in local urban monitoring activities.

- The **Global Urban Indicators Database** breathes life into the Urban Monitoring Framework especially for secondary cities which seldom have up-to-date data or capacity for monitoring local action and impact. This database also helps inform UN-Habitat's global reports, research and knowledge products.
- The **Urban Agenda Platform** facilitated by UN-Habitat continued to serve as a one-stop-shop for reporting and learning on the New Urban Agenda www.urbanagendaplatform.org
- The **New Urban Agenda Handbook** was released in January 2021 as a global tool to build capacity for monitoring progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda.
- The **Earth Observation Toolkit for Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements** is an award-winning joint initiative with UN-Habitat presenting unique opportunities to collect almost real-time data critical to understanding the planning of cities and urban settlements.

UN-Habitat currently provides training for the urban planning office in Maisí, the easternmost municipality in the Guantánamo Province of Cuba, and has provided computer equipment for daily tasks. These actions are part of the National State Plan for the implementation of the National Urban Agenda in Cuba © Héctor Bayona



Equipping cities at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic

Urban areas have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 crisis: in the first few months 95 per cent of all cases were recorded in cities. Urban areas were faced with a rapidly changing public health crisis along with challenges in safe mobility and transportation, increased water and sanitation needs, critical use of public spaces and the economic consequences of lockdowns.

Despite these pressures, many local governments and community leaders responded quickly and effectively to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate its effects, taking the first steps to accelerate recovery. Urban leaders and planners now need to rethink how people move in and through cities using lessons learned from COVID-19. Patterns of inequality characterized by the lack of access to basic services, poverty and overcrowded living conditions have been key destabilizing factors in increasing the scale and impact of COVID-19.

UN-Habitat's interventions to respond to the challenges that cities and their residents encountered during and after recurring waves of COVID-19 include an increased focus at the local level on planning neighbourhoods and communities that are self-contained and inclusive. By promoting compact, well-planned cities that combine residential and commercial functions with public spaces and affordable housing, UN-Habitat offers solutions for improving public health, the local economy and the environment.

The *Cities and Pandemics* report outlines how a new normal can emerge in cities where health, housing and security are prioritized for the most vulnerable not only out of social necessity but also from a profound commitment to human rights for all.

Building on the findings of the report, UN-Habitat has strengthened its focus on addressing systemic inequalities and exploring opportunities to anchor pandemic recovery in social justice and climate action.

One of the 200,000 beneficiaries from Ward-K in Tamale, Ghana enjoying the water supply and handwashing facilities © UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu

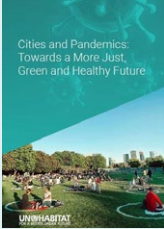
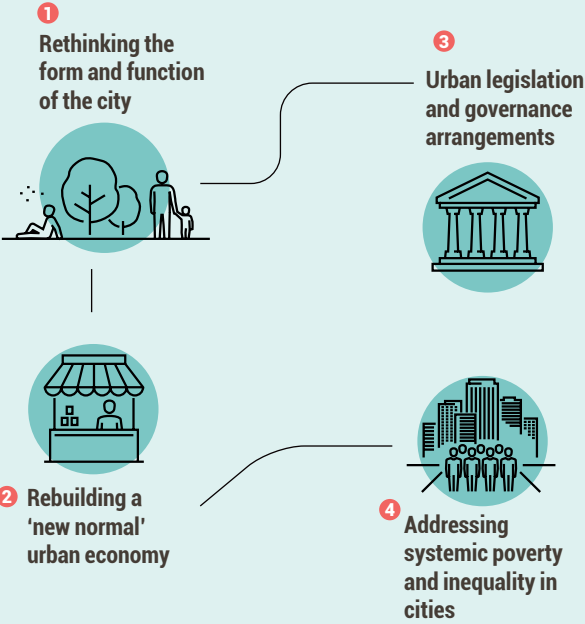


Cities are engines of dynamism and innovation and can help us overcome development deficits. They can spearhead reforms towards a New Social Contract to tackle poverty, strengthen social protection, restore public trust and reach people who are on the margins or who face discrimination.



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in his foreword to the *Cities and Pandemics* report

Cities and pandemics report 2021



The *Cities and Pandemics: Towards a More Just, Green and Healthy Future* report published in May 2021 calls for cities to be at the forefront of moves towards a social contract between governments, the public, civil society and the private sector.

Children from the Vuniivi Settlement in Fiji paint a mural to increase awareness on COVID-19 and the necessity of social distancing © UN-Habitat/Katherine Drakeford



FIGURE 3

UN-Habitat's COVID-19 responses, 2021

Beirut, Lebanon: To provide free and non-discriminatory COVID-19 testing and vaccines to any individual unable to access basic medical services, including migrants and refugees. UN-Habitat supported purchase and operation of the first Municipal Mobile Health Clinic.

Ghor Al Safi, Jordan: As part of the United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Multi Partner Trust Fund, a green public space was designed with the aim to empower women and provide them with a safe and inclusive public space. In a participatory approach, the community engaged in all phases of development.

Palestine: By collecting, transporting and the disposal of 1,882 tons of waste from the 3 refugee camps in the Governorate of Bethlehem, UN-Habitat ensured continuity of solid waste services amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Complemented by an awareness-raising campaign, installation of handwashing units and disinfection of public spaces, this project directly targeted 60,000 Palestinians including 20,000 refugees and 217,400 people indirectly.

Alagoas, Brazil: A documentary produced by young people in informal settlements empowered participants to present their perspectives for a better urban future post COVID-19.

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: The city's Social Territories project proved a major innovative success in geo-processing and assisted 148,000 homes with 420,000 beneficiaries. Data collection informed the city's public policy in the realm of housing, employment, leisure and access to basic services (water, sewage, electricity). The project improved local COVID-19 response by guaranteeing healthcare to vulnerable groups including pregnant women.

Tamale, Ghana: Two handwashing stations with 16 washing points installed, serving 527 men, 682 women, 1,402 girls and 1,243 boys. Awareness campaigns with information materials in the local language were used for a house-to-house campaign, on radio channels and in churches and mosques in the community.

Nigeria: WASH facilities for 100,000 residents (48 per cent women) in 6 communities installed. Hygiene practices taught to urban commuters helped reduce disease burden. The project provides employment to local mechanics and traders maintaining the facilities.



Syria: 613,000 people in densely populated poor areas benefited from the removal of >14,000 m³ solid waste and debris; deployment of 80 solid waste workers; rehabilitation of wastewater networks/branches, house connections and rehabilitation of water supply systems. In Homs and rural Damascus, UN-Habitat supported municipalities with needs mapping, awareness sessions, hygiene campaigns and assessment of municipal capacities in contingency planning and emergency response.

Iraq: UN-Habitat's housing rehabilitation and upgrading of water networks and health facilities in Heet benefitted over 319,000 people directly and indirectly.

Vietnam: A series of webinars during Urban October contributed to creating awareness on sustainable urbanization and harnessing interlinkages between Housing, Urban Management, and Urban Planning and Resilience for an inclusive and green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fiji: Urban farming and art helped 70 communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 Community Awareness and Preparedness in Informal Settlements project surveyed the communities' needs, provided activities and supported container farming.

Sudan: 1,800 displaced and homeless people benefitted from rehabilitation and extensions of 300 shelter units and temporary shelters to reduce overcrowding and mitigate spread of COVID-19. Mobile handwashing facilities installed in 23 girls' and 7 boys' schools in Khartoum.

Somalia: 250 vulnerable families received cash transfers to mitigate the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 and increase community resilience.

Leaving no one and no place behind

High levels of inequality and exclusion are persistent trends in urban areas; income inequality has increased for more than two-thirds of the world's population since 1980. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated systemic inequalities and the urban poor are disproportionately affected due to crowded and underserved environments.

Spatial inequality manifests itself in the different experiences and opportunities that people have and the rights they can exercise. There is a clear link to social exclusion with those living in deprived areas often facing significant barriers to adequate housing, water and sanitation, education, employment and healthcare.

Inclusive urban design and planning plays a role in mitigating spatial inequality by enabling a more equitable distribution of access to public services, social and physical amenities positively affecting economic inequalities. UN-Habitat supports citywide and spatially targeted approaches to improve living conditions in all settlements and reducing disadvantages in specific locations.

UN-Habitat uses a **human rights-based approach** to reduce spatial inequality and poverty through staff training and improved coordination with working groups, multilateral normative frameworks and the Human Rights Council particularly on adequate housing, environment and internally displaced persons developing thematic resolutions and reports. With the Global Land Tool Network and the Geneva Human Rights Platform, UN-Habitat commissioned independent reviews and convened stakeholders for awareness raising and prioritization, aiming to enhance sustainable urban development supporting local governments as duty bearers.

Since its inception, UN-Habitat has prioritized **gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls** using the strategic results framework. In 2021, UN-Habitat completed the revised Gender Policy and Action Plan with guidance from the Advisory Group on Gender Issues. This includes indicators to ensure accurate reporting on gender equality activities, outcomes and impact.



Community engagement in Yaounde VI, Nkolbikok as part of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme. The programme applies a co-creation approach which enables inclusive local engagement, mobilization and action, that has improved the lives of millions in slums and informal settlements all over the African, Caribbean and Pacific States © Kirsten Millhahn

UN-Habitat works to ensure that **young people** of all genders have a voice in local government, access to livelihoods and can enjoy their rights in cities. Youth empowerment is mainstreamed across UN-Habitat's work: all programmes, country-level work and topics engage with youth.

UN-Habitat assists in the development of **age-friendly cities and communities** with policies, services, settings and structures for better environments and healthcare. Older people require supportive and enabling living environments to adapt to the physical and social changes

associated with ageing. When the elderly can access improved settings, health care and more opportunities, they typically become active change agents in their own lives as well as in their communities.

UN-Habitat began developing a comprehensive accessibility assessment and action plan to ensure that **disability inclusion** is mainstreamed throughout projects, highlighting good practice and identifying key areas that could benefit from staff knowledge, capacity development, technical resources and assistance.



The Afghanistan Urban Safety and Security Programme had in 2021 empowered women as community leaders and participants in project planning. Women and men together identified the need for a women's park that now enables them to safely socialize and exercise. Improving road conditions in several municipalities in Afghanistan has had a positive impact on women's and children's access to public space. These interventions have increased women's participation and agenda-setting ability in municipal planning meetings.



In Palestine, UN-Habitat supported urban farming interventions to alleviate quarantine effects amongst older people. The project aims were to enhance mental and physical health and well-being, and at the same time enable self-sufficiency of households through the promotion of home-based farming.



The post-disaster reconstruction of houses and water supply project in Lao People's Democratic Republic completed in 2021 is one of several examples where UN-Habitat contributed to promoting the right to water, sanitation and adequate housing including a recognition of the need for gender-segregated bathrooms.



In Runik, Skenderaj/Srbica municipality in Kosovo,* online mapping tools have promoted shared ownership of cultural heritage and have been recognized as an innovative example to be followed by the Mitrovica Regional Centre for Cultural Heritage in developing similar projects in the region and beyond. The tools have contributed to recognising the positive and cohesive power of shared cultural heritage and values to connect communities.



In Ha Noi, Viet Nam, seven mobile playgrounds were constructed using simple recycled and natural materials in small neighbourhood public spaces. The project aimed to promote physical activities and social interaction for children hampered by COVID-19 restrictions in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, as well as training local residents to set up and manage the playgrounds. Funded by the Block by Block foundation, some 400 children benefited. By building the capacity for local residents to manage and develop the mobile playground model, these communities are now well positioned to provide playing opportunities for children during future crises, including pandemics.



UN-Habitat organizes participatory workshops to design public spaces and conducts gender safety audits as part of the Pernambuco Cooperation: Prevention, Citizenship and Safety project in partnership with the State Secretariat for Violence and Drugs Prevention Policies, UNDP and UNODC. In 2021, these methodologies were applied in 5 out of the 10 selected territories including the neighbourhoods of Pina and Várzea, Recife – the capital of Pernambuco.

* Any reference to Kosovo in United Nations documents and United Nations websites, whether to the territory, institutions or population, is to be understood in full compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo. Kosovo is therefore not listed as a country.



UN-Habitat's project on increasing the resilience of cities impacted by internal displacement in Burkina Faso promotes an integrated and area-based approach for improved living conditions for people in vulnerable situations, including strengthening the capacity of local authorities to better manage rapid urban growth © UN-Habitat

01

Fighting spatial inequality and poverty in urban and rural communities

COVID-19 has exacerbated inequalities in both cities and rural areas. Marginalized groups (women, older persons, refugees, migrants, internally displaced persons) have suffered disproportionately from social isolation, domestic violence and insufficient basic services.

Sanitation, hygiene and clean water are critical to prevent and contain diseases. Lack of green and safe public space in disadvantaged neighbourhoods has detrimental effects on the well-being and health of residents, particularly children.

Unaffordable housing is pricing out low-income populations, forcing them into informal settlements. Pre-existing inequalities and discrimination in the realization of human rights have increased, especially regarding basic living standards.

UN-Habitat promotes secure land tenure, adequate and affordable housing, and land and property rights with regards to realization of human rights, poverty reduction, economic prosperity, sustainable development and the empowerment of women. Support has strengthened for increasing and maintaining equal access to basic services, sustainable mobility and public space, and to regenerate urban areas with tailored planning and policy making support.

Fragmented, isolated and low-density living environments are energy-intensive, relying on private and fossil-fuelled transport. Improving public transit and cycling infrastructures is now key to avoiding increased CO₂ emissions from single occupancy vehicles. More compact communities with an accessible mix of housing with resources such as education and employment garner benefits for the environment, health and well-being of citizens. The housing sector accounts for 37 per cent of process-related CO₂ emissions.

As demographic pressure rises, small and intermediate cities generally urbanize faster. Urban regeneration can enhance spatial inclusion and resilience to climate change promoting more inclusive, greener living.

Cities need to identify priorities and develop strategies to adequately address sustainable urban development and to localize global agendas. Planning processes must adapt to the specific context and territory while considering normative and legal frameworks, available resources and needs. Guidelines need to be incremental for technical teams and city leaders to prioritize objectives considering climate change, urban health, digital transformation, culture and heritage. Processes should be participatory, include diverse perspectives and encourage multiple voices to improve planning results and reduce potential conflicts.

↓ Top results



2.9 million people

in slums and informal settlements in 45 countries gained **access to basic services** (2020–2021).



More than 20 cities

improved their urban mobility systems.



470,000 people

gained access to safe and inclusive public space which provides sustainable services, improves health and well-being, and ensures social inclusion and economic exchange.



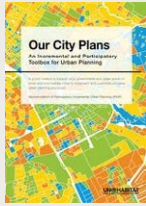
Slum upgrading

implementation and strategic policy interventions were supported in **190** cities in **40** countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Five million slum dwellers benefited from UN-Habitat's Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme with over 800,000 having improved tenure security (2008–2021).



The **water operators** peer partnerships have involved 658 water operators globally, with a strong south-south exchange component. Exchange themes include non-revenue water, operations and maintenance service to low-income areas and asset management.

Publication



Our City Plans was published with a reviewed and updated methodology to support local governments on the New Urban Agenda and to localize the SDGs in urban planning. The methodology develops inclusive, participatory, data-driven and tailored processes from assessment to implementation in capacity-constrained contexts. Dissemination of the toolbox kickstarted a global community expanding to 1,300 members. With 10,719 downloads it is the second most downloaded UN-Habitat publication. Seventeen projects in Angola, Brazil, Cuba, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mexico, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe have been implemented.



As part of SNG 2030 – a post COVID-19 pandemic placemaking project in Reynosa, Mexico – young volunteers enhanced safety and protection for pedestrians by painting access strips and adding concrete bollards. At the Plaza de la Republica near the Hidalgo International Bridge, the crossing area was also increased by 7.5 m © UN-Habitat/Hector Bayona

Impact story

Social, economic and cultural enhancement in the Old City of Jerusalem



UN-Habitat's engagement is aligned with SDG 11 to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Zeyad Elshakra, Head of UN-Habitat Palestine Office

UN-Habitat concluded an eight year renovation and rehabilitation project in the Old City of Jerusalem to enhance cultural and community identity, and provide capacity building opportunities for families and students from Al Quds university. Three training centres were also established to ensure continued capacity development in the area
© Atta Eweisat



Located in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem, Dar Al-Consul is a large ancient historical complex. From 1856 it served as the Prussian consulate with official residence for nearly three decades. The building is still known as 'Dar al-consul' (house of the consul) today. In 1882, the complex was transferred to the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem for community and residential use.

Trapped by political stasis and paralysed by mass tourism, the complex has experienced sustained degradation over time. UN-Habitat intervened to support its renovation and rehabilitation with funding from the European Union, implemented alongside Custodia Terræ Sanctæ and Al Quds University.

Started in 2014, the project has improved the living conditions of Palestinian families enhancing their cultural and community identity. In 2021, a total of 36 residential units were renovated and 5 community courtyards were fully rehabilitated including landscaping and the installation of safety barriers as some are located directly above Khan az-Zeit Street – one of the two busy arteries of the Old City.

"UN-Habitat's engagement is aligned with SDG 11 to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" says Zeyad Elshakra, Head of UN-Habitat Palestine Office. "We focused on enhancing the living conditions and improving livelihood opportunities for local

Palestinians. Our aim was to preserve, rehabilitate and renovate a local heritage site to maximize sustainable urban management through community engagement – especially youth."

Forty students gained on-the-job training and capacity development experience by engaging in the rehabilitation work and operational components of the project. The project also established three interconnected training and capacity building centres for: Tourism, IT and Media; Education and Professional Innovation; and Culinary and Food Experience, designed specifically for Dar Al-Consul to provide opportunities for unique learning, coaching and practical outputs to serve the Old City's future aspirations.

On the cultural side, the project included the excavation and preservation of archeological treasures. Five of the major discoveries are now on display at the site giving life to ruins of cisterns, mosaic floors, private baths and water channels dating back to Roman, Byzantine, Late Islamic and Mamluk eras.

"[The work] was accomplished by leveraging Dar Al-Consul's unique historical, architectural and archaeological features to meet modern, eco-friendly and greenery approaches in support of sustainable development in the Old City of Jerusalem." adds Zeyad Elshakra.

Greatly influenced by Dar Al-Consul's role as a historic, civic and commercial hub, the long-term vision for the complex incorporates a sustainable model that combines economic and urban development with the aim of empowering Jerusalemites, as well as enhancing mobility and investment for Palestinians in the Old City. The Rehabilitation of Dar Al-Consul into a residential and community complex was concluded on 31 October 2021.



Donor: **European Union**
Implementing Partners: **Custody of the Holy Land and Al Quds University**
Duration: **1 January 2014–31 October 2021**

02

Prosperity in cities and regions

Cities generate approximately 80 per cent of gross domestic product through production creating mass economies, and by economic specialization benefitting from and contributing to financial markets through interconnectivity. Urbanization increases wealth but also social inequality. Shared prosperity strengthens economic potential by improving spatial connectivity, productivity and expanding deployment of technologies and innovation enhancing revenue generation for improved living conditions, services and quality of life.

COVID-19 and the climate emergency have highlighted the importance of resilient, green and inclusive cities. The National Urban Policy Programme supports legal, financial and implementation frameworks integrated into government planning, policy and financing through knowledge transfer, capacity-building, and tools on urban and rural planning and design.

COVID-19 reduced economic activity and revenue affecting services. Greater resilience requires improved, equitably distributed services and strengthened revenue. The Rapid Own Source Revenue Analysis tool supports cities by analysing revenue stream against an optimum value to increase it. By focusing on land-based revenue and business licensing, improved services and revenue can enhance creditworthiness and attract external finance.

The City Investment Facility supports finance of city SDG projects through an online portal that shares information with global investors to improve project preparation for finance and investment vehicles.

Government partners are supported on digital platforms, tools and data, smart city governance, capacity building and inclusion through guides including Centring People in Smart Cities, Blockchain for Urban Development and The Digital Rights Governance Framework.

Climate smart solutions were provided for Brazil, Colombia, Uganda and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and partnerships launched with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT), and the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF).

The data centre industry is expanding, facilitating digital transformation and infrastructure while impacting surrounding territories. UN-Habitat and Microsoft are implementing inclusive and participatory planning processes in communities – pilot projects in Sweden and Mexico have contributed to an urban planning playbook.

Top results



56 countries

supported in **National Urban Policy** since 2014 through training, technical drafting, stakeholder mobilization and dialogue, policy review and evaluation.

14 countries were directly supported in 2021.



The first **United Nations Innovation Accelerator for Cities** launched with UN-OICT, HafenCity University and financial support from Germany. UNITAC is currently developing data and artificial intelligence tools for informal settlements management and resilience in Brazil, Jordan and South Africa, and developing a digital transformation tool for African cities.



Enhanced Urban-Rural Linkages **policy development** in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Nigeria (Niger State), Senegal and Tanzania (Zanzibar).

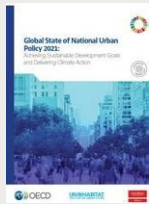


830,000 occupancy certificates and **720,000** municipal service charge invoices issued leading to local revenue collection of USD 30 million from 2017–2020 in collaboration with ministries and agencies.



SDG Impact Projects in **55 cities** were supported by the City Investment Facility.

Publication



Global State of National Urban Policy 2021 and the National Urban Policy database monitors the status in 162 countries.

UN-Habitat's Global Future Cities Programme supports the development of a strategy for Cebu City, Philippines in order to enhance spatial- and evidence-based planning for sustainable development and solidly advance implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals © UN-Habitat.

Impact story

Atlas for shared prosperity and investment in Mexico

Latin America is currently facing massive economic vulnerability exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mexico's gross domestic product is estimated to have declined by 8.5 per cent with a 3.3 per cent reduction in formal employment between 2019 and 2020. Innovative ways to attract foreign direct investment have been devised to allow for the emergence of high value-added industries to stimulate increased levels of employment.

UN-Habitat and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization partnered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to formulate a novel approach where urban and regional territorial planning perspectives stand at the forefront of the country's strategy to attract investment.

In 2021, a geographic Atlas on industrial and territorial perspectives was developed providing a strategic analysis that identifies manufacturing sectors with high potential for future industrial growth. The Atlas also promotes regional corridors that could specialize in economic activity derived from strategic sectors.

By stressing the environmental and social issues observed within those regions, the Atlas proposed a new type of investment which entails the prioritization of sustainable and prosperous development for everyone.



We live in disruptive times caused by the increase in inequality, the effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. This Atlas has the potential to impact gender equality and economic growth. It identifies five industrial sectors with high potential and five regional corridors with clear competitive advantages to attract investments that provide greater social and economic well-being in our country.



Martha Delgado Peralta, Under-Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Launch of the Atlas **Prospectivo Territorial in Mexico**, is an innovative strategy for economic recovery in Latin America that considers economic, social, environmental and urban dimensions of each industrial sector and aims to attract foreign investment in the region. © UN-Habitat



The sectors identified are: wind turbine motors; pharmaceutical products; the aerospace industry; agribusinesses (the production of vanilla and chocolate); and petrochemicals. Each sector is analysed at different territorial scales as well as by a unique territorial-industrial approach that accounts for social inclusion, environmental sustainability and thorough planning.

A methodology explains the industrial performance of the sectors and how they address the social, economic, environmental and urban dimensions within them. The methodology permits the identification of regions that, under certain conditions, could join productive stages within international networks, designing industrial policies that seek to improve the economic and social conditions while promoting and enhancing investment.

The creation of regional development strategies (industrial corridors for economic prosperity) that aim to induce growth at the subnational level were an important policy implication derived as a result of this project. Fully utilizing socio-economic potential has generated a path towards a more complex and diverse industry base.

The severity of the economic crisis demanded a new debate over the strategy for industrial development. This project has provided a novel alternative to successfully cope with the challenges that have emerged in the wake of economic recovery in Latin America as a whole.



Donor: **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Mexico**
 Implementing partners: **United Nations Industrial Development Organization**
 Duration: **20 months**

03

Strengthened climate action and improved urban environment

Cities and towns are the front line in responding to climate change and require cross-cutting approaches that will advance towards zero-carbon, climate resilient and socially-just urban environments. UN-Habitat provides support in normative and operational acceleration of urban climate action such as the direct engagement both in person and online during globally observed events such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), Innovate4Cities, World Cities Day and Urban October. These events have resulted in greater international and local collaborative climate action.

UN-Habitat has continued to support key partners, governments and other United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNDP to aid the synergistic development of evidence-based planning, and informed participatory and multisectoral approaches to decarbonize cities. UN-Habitat has mobilized cities to set targets with strong frameworks to aid mitigatory approaches such as seen in the Urban Pathway Programme.

To facilitate a circular economy, numerous efforts have been made by UN-Habitat in supporting the reduction in energy, waste, materials and land wastage. Tailoring country specific codes and guidelines while extending technical expertise on sustainable management of natural resources has not only increased resource efficiency but also facilitated knowledge sharing between stakeholders.

The Waste Wise Cities Tool (WaCT), officially launched in February 2021, was applied in over 30 cities worldwide by UN-Habitat and partners. WaCT enables cities to collect baseline solid waste data to close gaps, make evidence-based decisions and action planning, and monitor progress against SDG indicator 11.6.1. Under this programme, UN-Habitat also developed the extensive course From Data to Tangible Impact: Achieving Waste SDGs by 2030.

UN-Habitat has rigorously analysed and expanded on efforts in pro-poor approaches to build climate resilience particularly in highly vulnerable populations that are unable to withstand adverse climate change shocks and stresses such as surging seas, windstorms, landslides and flooding. To strengthen this, there has been engagement and collaboration with multilevel governance to integrate these systems to achieve national climate goals.

↓ Top results



The Adaptation Fund portfolio grew to **USD 88.5 million in 2021** supporting adaptation of infrastructure to changes in climate in south-eastern Africa, Cambodia, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Pakistan, Syria and Viet Nam.



Membership to the **Waste Wise Cities Programme** expanded to 223 local governments as members and 53 affiliates in 2021. The African Clean Cities Platform grew to 97 member cities and 42 member countries.



UN-Habitat and ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability supported cities in **accelerating climate action** through the promotion of Urban Low Emission Development Strategies. Covering more than 60 cities worldwide, the Urban-LEDS II initiative uses a multilevel governance approach to urban climate action.



At COP26 UN-Habitat presented original research showing that 84 per cent of updated nationally determined contributions had strong or moderate urban content a rise from 69 per cent in 2016. In particular, strong urban content increased from 16 per cent in 2016 to 45 per cent in 2021 and a stronger emphasis on adaptation and mitigation indicate the important role that national governments accord to local climate action.

The Rise Up programme has engaged over 1,200 households vulnerable to climate change impact in 16 informal settlements in Fiji to raise awareness about disaster risks © Bernhard Barth



Impact story

Flood resilience through local community action, Mongolia

Reduced rainfall, chronic drought and dust storms means climate change is a reality in Mongolia. Heat waves and river flooding is expected to increase with severe impacts on all economic sectors, livelihoods and health. Mongolia's unique ecosystem shaped by bitter winters, warm summers and frequent strong winds is under threat with associated loss in forest cover and species.

The country's vulnerability to climatic change is underpinned by rapid urbanization. Most of Ulaanbaatar's annual growth occurs in areas of traditional dwellings in unplanned locations with no services. Many ger areas are established on low land which has unsanitary conditions that exacerbate public health risks.

The 2019 Flood Resilience Building in Ulaanbaatar Ger Areas project incorporates a wide range of climate change adaptation initiatives that aim to build the resilience of high-risk communities and vulnerable residents through a community-based gender-responsive approach.

Funded by the Adaptation Fund, the project provides indirect benefits to 1 million people – 68 per cent of Ulaanbaatar's population – and direct services for 27,128 people through flood protection and 6,117 people from sanitation improvement.

The project increases resilience through construction of physical flood infrastructure and improved sanitation services; increasing knowledge on flood hazard, risk exposure and vulnerability; and building resilience and adaptive capacity.

Community groups ranging from 10–20 households, are supported throughout all stages of the project sharing an aim to improve their neighbourhoods and maintain community infrastructure.

89 community groups, 50 per cent led by women, have been formed with 1,176 member families. These groups have co-created their own local action plans and are implementing them. Five flood facilities have been constructed including drainage and flood protection channels in Bayanzurkh and Songinokhairkhan Districts: 221.9 hectares of land are now protected from flood risk and 3,419 households have improved resilience. A total of 1,830 people (66.3 per cent female) have benefited



Local group leader, Yungsetseg Manaljav, engages with a community primary group to discuss an incremental approach to building flood resilience in Ulaanbaatar Ger Areas © UN-Habitat



Flood resilience building not only improves infrastructure but also creates a space for vulnerable communities to deliberate on their priority needs in responding to climate risk. Communities have already started practicing flood resilience building and climate change adaptation actions based on their own resources which is a good example for communities in other areas with similar challenges.

Enkhsetseg Shagdarsuren,
National Project Manager,
UN-Habitat Mongolia.

from the implementation of 263 flood-resilient sanitation facilities in vulnerable communities.

The flood risk map developed under the project has been the main knowledge product so far. As a critical planning tool this is benefitting the population of the entire city. Ulaanbaatar is currently revising its land use master plan – a flood risk map and land use recommendations will be integrated into the plan.

By showcasing the success of the project as well as the methodologies applied, the project intends to generate 'demand' for replication across Ulaanbaatar.

Donor: **Adaptation Fund**

Implementing partners: **Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Municipality of Ulaanbaatar City, Target District and Subdistrict Governors' Offices of Songinokhairkhan, Sukhbaatar and Bayanzurkh Districts, World Vision, NGO's and target area communities**

Duration: **2019–2023**

04

Effective urban crisis prevention and response

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how current global crises are increasingly interconnected and difficult to resolve, and densely populated urban areas often bear the brunt of these crises. Sustainability, preparedness, risk management and crisis prevention have become central to both urban planning and reconstruction efforts. To reduce the impact of these crises, UN-Habitat has laid out pre- and post-crisis measures. In the pre-crisis planning phase, a clear focus on social cohesion, potential growth and access to basic services are critical in mitigating the risk of conflict and disaster. Post-crisis, the focus is placed on handling displaced persons, humanitarian assistance and resolving chronic vulnerabilities.

To promote the SDGs, UN-Habitat fosters engagement between governments, urban planners, citizens, the private sector and vulnerable groups whereby a gradual, guided approach to decision-making helps to inform development and humanitarian responses. This use of social capital aims to improve interaction and solve extant root causes of conflict. By focusing on social inclusion as an even wider underpinning theme, the fulfilment of other international agendas such as those related to women, youth and older persons has been an additional benefit.

Cases of urban displacement frequently turn into acute, chronic issues for governments and locals. Increased strain on public services and housing requires broad efforts and careful analyses to prevent the expansion of informal settlements. UN-Habitat and United Nations partner agencies provide technical assistance and spatial, disaggregated analysis of a city's absorption capacity that create strong, coordinated and tailored responses when dealing with vulnerable displaced communities.

The importance and need for improved urban resilience are most clearly highlighted during and after crises. For example, a city's focus on sustainable construction processes and implementing planning restrictions means that any post-disaster reconstruction is more manageable.

UN-Habitat has provided various approaches to quicken recovery and remedy residual vulnerabilities. Through urban-tailored frameworks, mobilization of urban stakeholders, tools, assessments and the profiling of current urban systems, UN-Habitat has been able to present promising approaches to resolving systemic weakness. This aspect of UN-Habitat's work is also key in assisting national-level efforts by development partners such as the World Bank.

Top results



357 cities

used **participatory planning methodologies** and collected spatial data to increase quality and ownership of local plans, and to foster sustainable urban development.

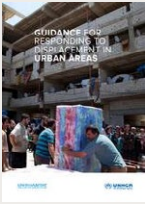


UN-Habitat assisted urban recovery interventions in countries affected by conflict such as Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, the State of Palestine, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, as well as the Sahel region, all which have a high concentration of refugees in urban areas and massive displacements. New interventions have been designed and implemented to address the displacement in Mozambique caused by conflict and climate induced disasters.



In Yemen, housing, job opportunities and vocational training are being provided to over 4,000 people as 600 houses for low-income families are being rehabilitated. The combined effect of housing, jobs and training is increased social cohesion, improved economic recovery and enhanced stability.

Publications



Guidance for Responding to Displacement in Urban Areas aims to ensure coordinated efforts for resilience building upon organizational mandates to protect vulnerable populations through inclusive and sustainable planning, understanding urban contexts and their specific conditions and dynamics.



Urban Planning Responses in Post-Crisis Contexts highlights 10 strategies and lessons from UN-Habitat's Urban Planning and Design Lab guiding practitioners to increase understanding between humanitarian and urban planning communities and the role of urban planning in developing holistic post-crisis responses.

In Harasta, Syria UN-Habitat rehabilitates internally displaced persons returning to their homes by providing urban recovery interventions that also generate numerous jobs © Samer Abo Alway

Impact story ↓

Integrating refugees into host communities in Kenya

Kenya has been hosting refugees from the East and Horn of Africa as a result of conflict – a total of 515,466 people: 461,095 (89 percent) refugees and 54,371 (11 percent) asylum seekers as of 31 March 2021. A total of 225,277 reside in the Dadaab refugee complex, 208,538 in Turkana County Kakuma Refugee Camp (41,388 in the Kalobeyi Integrated Settlement), 2,207 in Eldoret and 81,701 in urban centres.

UN-Habitat, the Government of Kenya, County Government of Turkana, UNHCR and other partners initiated the Kalobeyi Integrated Socio-Economic Development Programme in 2016 to leverage the opportunities and benefits associated with refugees' settlement for local economic development.

UN-Habitat has continued supporting the refugees and asylum seekers living in the Kakuma Refugee Camp and Kalobeyi Integrated Settlement since COVID-19 was first reported in early 2020.

A workshop was conducted to present and validate the findings of a socio-economic survey. The survey showed that the host community suffered more from the effects of COVID-19 in areas such as loss of income, low business revenue and increase in prices than the refugees who are supported by humanitarian organizations. The survey



The issue of lack of health infrastructure uniformly affects both hosts and refugees. Host communities have also become dependent on the health facilities in the camps because of services provided by NGOs.



Ahmed Badel, a refugee living in the camp

Using 3D models, children and youth were invited to design what a public space should look like in Kalobeyi Settlement © Bernard Heng



also found that the host community views refugees as destructive to the environment but appreciates the improved health care and education facilities resulting from their presence. The survey has helped development of a regeneration strategy for Kakuma-Kalobeyi.

UN-Habitat also undertook socio-economic surveys in Turkana West. Results were used to engage stakeholders in validation and dissemination sessions, and to inform proposals of collaborative planning work and implementation of project activities. Technical report publications, research briefings and policy briefs have been developed.

UN-Habitat, Cities Alliance and Kenya's North Rift Economic Bloc (NOREB) organized a virtual workshop on Sustainable Economic Development Along Turkana West Development Corridor through Enhanced Connectivity. Participants represented Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda; regional governments; NOREB counties and Secretariat; urban centres along the A1 Road; the LAPSET Corridor Development Authority; and United Nations agencies plus national government, development and humanitarian partners, business and local organizations. Interest in creating a regional alliance of cities and towns was expressed to address sustainable urbanization and development.

UN-Habitat supported development of spatial and regeneration plans for Kakuma-Kalobeyi and Dadaab camps. A Settlement Profiling Tool was published to guide field personnel in creating cross-sectoral profiles covering Kakuma-Kalobeyi and Dadaab in Kenya; Nakivale in Uganda; and Kebribeyah and Qoloji in Ethiopia.

The Government of Japan donated USD 1,481,263 for the Ensuring Accessibility and A Strengthened Conflict-Resolution Strategy For Refugee-Host Community Integration project.



Donors: **Cities Alliance, European Union, Government of Japan**
 Implementing partners: **UN-Habitat and UNHCR**
 Duration: **3 years**

Resilience and safety in cities

The sustainability of cities and communities has been increasingly jeopardized by natural and human-made disasters ranging from heatwaves, earthquakes and flooding to pandemics, rapid immigration, cyber-attacks, and geopolitical conflicts – making urban resilience building a pressing central issue for the sustainability of people and the planet.

A resilient city can absorb, adapt and recover from shocks and stresses that are likely to happen while positively adapting and transforming toward sustainability. Through its City Resilience Global Programme, UN-Habitat enables local governments to diagnose the resilience of the urban system, identifying opportunities to strengthen it and barriers to sustainability.

Based on the experiences of 16 partner cities across different regions, a *Global Compendium of Practices on Local Economic and Financial Recovery* was published. It provides insights and lessons from these cities and local governments to manage the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic and related socio-economic stresses based on the conceptual framework of urban economic resilience.

Urbanization, particularly in the developing world, has been accompanied by increased levels of crime, violence and lawlessness. The growing insecurity that city dwellers face daily is one of the major challenges around the world. Direct and indirect impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the incidence of crime, violence and insecurity should be understood in light of the fear, trauma, anxiety and heightened conflict experienced by service providers, officials, and community members alike.

Women and children are often the most affected especially when fear hinders their access to services. UN-Habitat and partners have implemented the Safer Cities Programme to improve safety and to enhance urban living conditions, social inclusion and reduction of inequality while eliminating social and territorial exclusion patterns.

The Global Network on Safer Cities brings together over 80 cities globally and advocates for a multi-dimensional approach to safety in cities and generated a prototype Urban Safety Monitor used to strengthen local knowledge management systems within crime, community and governance.



The Global Network on Safer Cities brings together

over 80 cities

globally and advocates for a multi-dimensional approach to safety in cities and generated a prototype Urban Safety Monitor used to strengthen local knowledge management systems within crime, community and governance.

Top results



In 2021, Barcelona, Spain was recognized for its commitment and global cooperation on resilience by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction as one of the first four cities to become a **resilience hub** for climate and disaster risk reduction.



European partners in the Global Network on Safer Cities have developed a self-assessment benchmarking tool as part of their Action Plan on the Urban Agenda partnerships on security in public spaces. Considering almost 200 indicators, this **city safety self-assessment** and benchmarking tool was piloted and tested in six European cities in 2021: Mechelen, Belgium; Helsinki, Vantaa and Tampere, Finland; Vilnius, Lithuania; and Gdansk, Poland.

In 2021, Mexico and South Africa completed their pilot application of the United Nations Systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities in the cities of Guadalajara and Durban, respectively, with institutionalized capacity **frameworks on safety**.



Forty organizations joined the second annual **40 Days Safer Cities Challenge** that ran through Urban October in 2021 by convening networking events or webinars highlighting how the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of prevention evidence and citizens' ability to transform their policies quickly.

Impact story 

Integrating resilience and climate action into strategic spatial planning in Tajikistan

A five-year initiative to transform the mountain settlement of Khorog has been developed under the Integrated Spatial Plan for Environmental and Socio-Economic Resilience project in partnership with the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat. The project, funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, is part of the Khorog Urban Resilience Programme promoting sustainable economic growth and investment.

UN-Habitat used an Integrated Spatial Planning approach with a thematic focus on hazard mitigation and improved resilience which included: 1) a spatial assessment identifying challenges through an evidence-based approach; 2) defining a vision and goals with community participation and developing area-based responses to the challenges under the recommended spatial strategies; and 3) action plans and prioritized zones for strategic investments.

A detailed spatial diagnosis methodology with focus on the impact of natural hazards including landslides, avalanches, rockfalls and flooding was developed. The project looked at facilities including schools, hospitals, public spaces and transport networks to understand how well the city serves its population, as well as how to integrate climate-related challenges to guide development in a sustainable way.



The urban analysis, findings and recommendations presented here are incredibly important and should be prioritized to achieve the goal that we are striving for. It needs multiple inputs, resources, energy, time and lots of investment. And my hope in this regard is that together with UN-Habitat, partner agencies like SECO and AKDN, and with the support of the government, we will be successful in transforming Khorog into a resilient city for future generations. 



Yodgor Fayzov, Former Governor of Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Region

UN-Habitat has been supporting integrated, coordinated city planning, safe and more resource efficient city growth in Khorog, Tajikistan
© UN-Habitat



UN-Habitat participated in a number of community engagement sessions and delivered a training package on global frameworks and technical approaches on hazard mitigation and investment planning to key stakeholders from national, regional and local government, municipal service providers and civil society.

Proposals included utilizing vacant and under-used areas introducing a mix of uses to revitalize economic hubs and endorse job creation, improving existing utility infrastructure to reduce hazard vulnerability, and taking specific actions to mitigate or adapt each hazard type using nature-based solutions and effective planning of social services.

Alongside the spatial planning activities, UN-Habitat assessed current planning law and identified gaps in legislation frameworks to align with climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

UN-Habitat is now launching the second phase to demonstrate how the city-wide recommendations and actions can be implemented. This phase will also include Capital Investment Planning to prioritize and guide finance and revision of existing town plans to increase the capacity of local government.

Feedback received has been very positive leading to the initiation of other programmes such as improving urban resilience in Naryn in collaboration with the University of Central Asia.

Donors: **State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Switzerland**

Implementing partners: **UN-Habitat and Aga Khan Agency for Habitat**

Duration: **12 months**

UN-Habitat flagship programmes have continued to fast-track integration between the normative and operational work of UN-Habitat, scaling and accelerating the impact of the organization. In 2021, UN-Habitat further advanced the following flagship programmes:



Flagship 1: Inclusive, Vibrant Neighbourhoods and Communities focuses on urban regeneration to reduce spatial inequality and poverty by transforming urban areas into connected, dynamic, diverse and vibrant neighbourhoods that incubate development for the entire city and the respective hinterland.

Urban regeneration processes on spatial inclusion, climate action, digital transformation, urban health, culture and urban finance have been developed with three global organizations and 27 national partners from 12 countries.



Flagship 5: SDG Cities supports cities to accelerate implementation of the SDGs through interconnected processes of data analysis, strategic planning, impact project development and financing, and strengthening local institutions.

1,000 cities worldwide supported to accelerate their achievement of the SDGs, currently in its pilot stage working with cities in Bolivia, China, Ghana, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Spain and Tunisia.



Flagship 4: Enhancing the Positive Impact of Urban Migration supports creating inclusive, non-discriminatory urban environments and improving social cohesion between host and migrant/displaced communities, including in acute crisis contexts.

Urban recovery interventions made in all main displacement situations including Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Sahel region, the State of Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen and countries hosting Venezuelan refugees, and new interventions implemented to address the displacement in Mozambique caused by conflict and recurrent climate disasters.

Normative products and tools published to bridge the normative-operational gap and facilitate a stronger feedback loop to improve response programming for displacement/post-crisis/migration contexts.



Flagship 2: People-Centred Smart Cities enhances policy formulation, financing and capacity building, and provides technical support to local and national governments to make smart cities and urban digital transformation work for the benefit of all while contributing to inclusion and sustainability.

Smart city strategies, digital technology implementation and governance frameworks in Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Estonia, France, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda were developed.

Centring People in Smart Cities, Assessing the Digital Divide and Addressing the Digital Divide guides were produced.

Research projects launched on smart city governance frameworks of more than 250 cities, blockchain for urban development and artificial intelligence in local governments in collaboration with CAF, Edinburgh Napier University, Tallin University of Technology and the Quebec AI Institute, Mila.

Flagship 3: RISE-UP. Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor leverages large-scale investments to bring climate adaptation and urban resilience to the most vulnerable settlements addressing spatial inequality globally, combining community-led delivery, analysis and participatory planning.

The Adaptation Fund portfolio expanded in 2021 is further bringing climate adaptation and urban resilience to Malaysia, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

Voices of the most vulnerable brought to COP26, World Cities Day and World Habitat Day through key stakeholders e.g. the Building Climate Resilient for the Urban Poor Network, the 1000 Cities Adapt Now Initiative, Slum Dwellers International and the Government of Kenya.



Accelerating action through partnerships and advocacy

The increasing awareness of the transformative potential of sustainable urbanization and the role of cities to address global priorities captured in global agendas is translating into a broadening dynamic engagement of urban stakeholders which UN-Habitat has been mobilizing over the years through the World Urban Forum, global campaigns and the organization of platforms of different constituencies.

In addition, cities are engaging increasingly with actors that are leading on other global issues such as COVID-19 recovery, climate action, migration and sustaining peace. This is reflected in growing collaboration between United Nations agencies, and cities and their networks.

Collaboration with universities and training institutions has continued through specific projects and through the coordination of the Habitat UNI initiative. An inventory of current partnerships with academic institutions and strategic analysis of good practices and potential for innovative collaboration with universities was initiated in 2021 and is expected to strengthen coordination and engagement both across the organization and during the Eleventh Session of the World Urban Forum.

Top achievements of 2021



World Habitat Day (4 October 2021): under the theme Accelerating urban action for a carbon free-world over 56 events have been reported with the Global Observance in Yaoundé, Cameroon featuring the awarding of the Scroll of Honour and including messages from Turkey's First Lady, the United Nations Secretary-General, a Nobel Laureate, UNEP's Executive Director, UN-Habitat's Goodwill Ambassador for Africa and the Polish Minister working closely on WUF11.



World Cities Day (31 October 2021): under the theme Adapting Cities for Climate Resilience, World Cities Day was celebrated in nearly 50 places and coincided with the opening of COP26. The Global Observance in Luxor, Egypt was attended by the Egyptian Prime Minister.



Engagement at the Conference of the Parties: UN-Habitat's engagement at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Conference of the Parties (COP26) had two main targets: a) the dissemination of knowledge and good practices reflecting its

spectrum of work on climate change mitigation, resource efficiency, protection of ecological assets and adaptation; and b) the engagement with the Local Government and Municipal Authorities constituency and other urban and local government stakeholders, the provision of technical and policy advisory services to Member States in support of overall inclusion of urban issues.



The **World Urban Campaign** is a global platform of **210 partner organizations** worldwide to support key messages and join on specific projects and advocacy activities, organizing physical and virtual policy dialogues under the banner of the Urban Thinkers Campus which engaged **over 6,100 people from 27 events** in 2021. Most Urban Thinkers Campuses focused on climate action.



A **City Innovation Climate Smart Cities Challenge** was held for the first time to harness the creativity and energy of innovators to work with cities to help achieve global net zero. Launched by the United Nations and Sweden, the innovation competition is accelerating the shift to climate neutral cities by empowering innovators, cities and communities to collaborate in designing and demonstrating solutions and reinventing how cities innovate.



The **World Habitat Award** was awarded in 2021 to Introducing Community Land Trusts in Continental Europe, a project run by Community Land Trust Brussels that develops and provides permanently affordable housing for people on low incomes in Brussels; and Housing Monitor, a housing rights project in Beirut run by Public Works Studio that provides an online reporting tool to monitor and respond to housing injustices, including evictions.



1st Africa Forum on Urban Forests: UN-Habitat and FAO co-organized the 1st African Forum on Urban Forests with over 700 participants. The forum was in line with Call for Action and the five standards proposed by Tree Cities of the World which was launched at the 1st World Forum of Urban Forests. The outcome was a road map on urban forests for African Cities.



UN-Habitat Goodwill Ambassador international footballer and 2018 FIFA World Cup winner Blaise Matuidi was appointed UN-Habitat Regional Goodwill Ambassador for Africa. [A video on the launch of the partnership with the Executive Director's and Matuidi's messages was developed and disseminated on social media. The partnership announcement was viewed over 60,000 times and generated over 10,000 'likes' on Matuidi's Instagram account.]

Outlook

As 2022 continues, UN-Habitat is committed to working with Member States to reposition the New Urban Agenda situating it strategically within the Decade of Action and the Paris Agreement to make the political case for sustainable urbanization.



UN-Habitat in collaboration with Catalytic Action, rehabilitates the streets and pavements of Karantina, Beirut, Lebanon to provide safe access to key facilities such as the National HIV and TB Centre – another UN-Habitat project in Beirut © UN-Habitat



The High-Level Meeting offers an opportunity for Member States to take stock and identify ways to revitalize implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The Secretary-General's Quadrennial Report submitted in February will constitute the main input to the High-Level Meeting. All Regional Economic Commissions also transmitted reports adopted by Member States at the respective Regional Forums for Sustainable Development held in March. And just as the General Assembly adopted the Istanbul+5 Declaration at its meeting on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in 2001, it may consider adoption of the Quito+5 Declaration.

2022 is also a year that presents opportunities for alignment. Rather than hosting WUF11 as a parallel meeting to the High-Level Meeting, UN-Habitat is working with the host country Poland to provide an opportunity for constituent assemblies to identify

ways to review the outcomes of the High-Level Meeting and means of implementation.

The theme of WUF11 Transforming our Cities for a Better Urban Future will provide greater insights and clarity on the future of cities based on existing trends, challenges and opportunities as well as suggest ways cities can be better prepared to address future pandemics and a wide range of other shocks. We welcome you all to join us.

The approval of the 2022 Work Programme and Budget by the Executive Board signifies a return of confidence by Member States. UN-Habitat will continue its efforts to diversify its funding modalities to carry on its normative and operational activities and deliver on a recalibrated Strategic Plan so that no place and no one is left behind in our urbanizing world.



Financials

In accordance with rule 303.4 of the financial regulations and rules, the Executive Director is mandated to accept voluntary contributions from donors. Donors continue to support UN-Habitat's earmarked work with a steady increase to a total portfolio of USD one billion (cumulatively from 2018–2021). UN-Habitat has introduced innovative ways to diversify its funding sources including soft-earmarking from Sweden and Switzerland and most recently a third-party endowment – the Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation.

Key results

UN-Habitat's 2021 total revenue was **USD 215.3 million** representing **94 per cent** of its target income. This includes total voluntary contributions accepted amounting to **USD 174.6 million**.



The work programme of UN-Habitat is financed from four main funding sources:

1. Regular budget: allocations from the United Nations' assessed contributions as approved by the United Nations General Assembly. **USD 15.9 million** was received in this category accounting for **100 per cent** of the total budget.



2. Foundation non-earmarked: contributions mainly from Member States to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation non-earmarked fund for core normative activities approved by the Executive Board. Non-earmarked voluntary contributions accepted were **USD 2.9 million** representing **29 per cent** of the total budget.



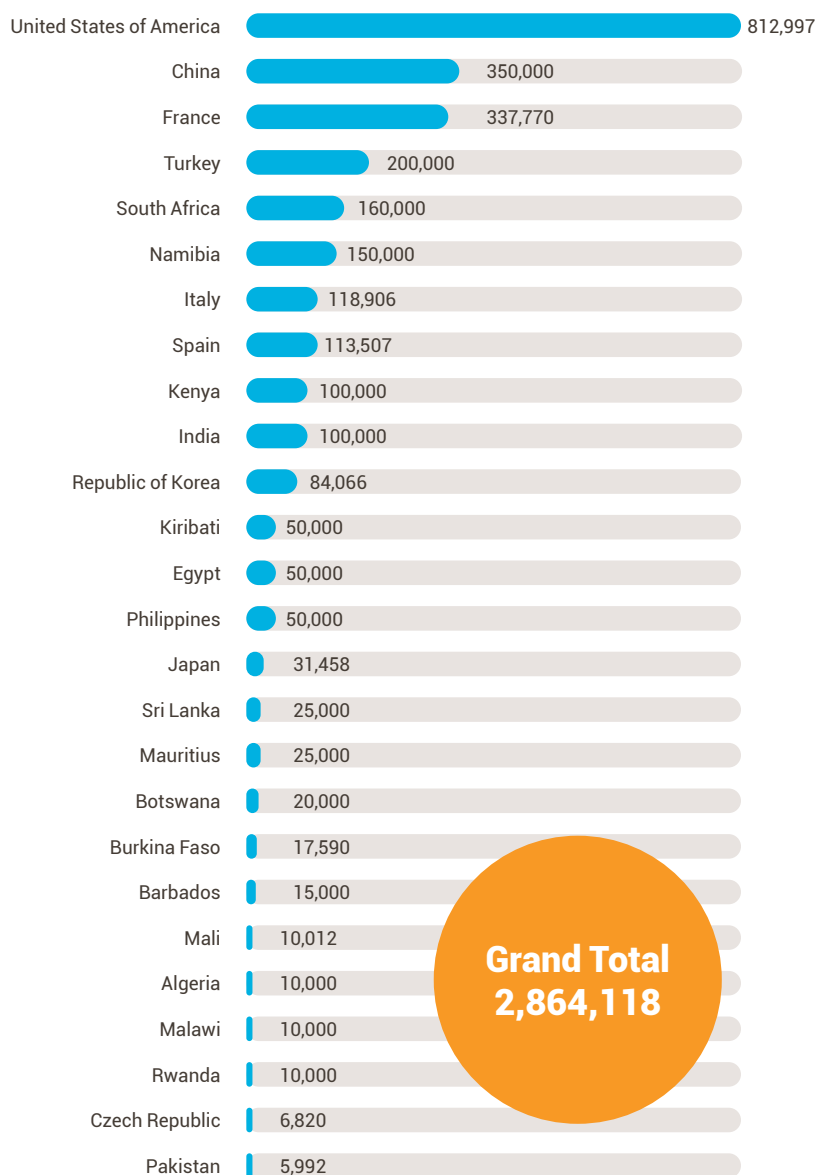
3. Foundation earmarked: contributions for specific programmes that are largely global and normative in nature such as development of global policies, research, publications and advocacy initiatives. Foundation earmarked contributions accepted were **USD 36.5 million** representing **84 per cent** of the total budget.



4. Technical cooperation: voluntary earmarked contributions for specific regional and country programmes. Voluntary earmarked contributions accepted were **USD 135.6 million** representing **89 per cent** of the total budget.

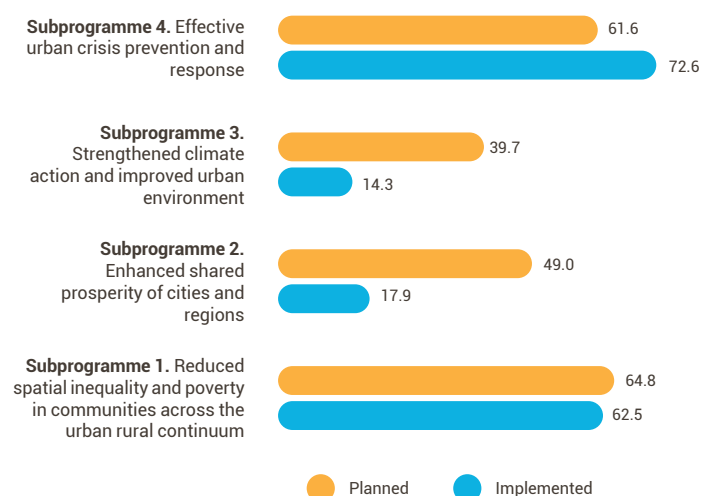


Core contributors in 2021



**Grand Total
2,864,118**

Implementation by domain of change (USD millions)



UN-Habitat continued to work towards strategic relations with development partners to achieve **transformative change** through multi-year programmes funded, where possible, by multiple donors to leverage resources and scale up the impact of joint efforts with Member States. Diversifying the number and types of donors to minimize risk and secure broad ownership of UN-Habitat's mandate is a key component of the Resource Mobilization Strategy. **Thirty-two strategic funding dialogues** led by the Executive Director were held between UN-Habitat executive management and individual Member States and regional groups.

The outcome of the meetings included eight new Member States resuming contributions to core funding (**Egypt, Italy, Mauritius, Mexico, Namibia, Portugal, Rwanda, and Turkey**); increased core contributions from **Kiribati** and the **Philippines**; and the adoption of 'soft-earmarked' funding of **USD 680,000** from **Germany** of which **USD 170,000** was received in 2021 and **USD 3,370,000** from **Switzerland** to respond to resilience and adaptation activities in Central America.

Additional funding included SEK 7 million (equivalent to USD 770,000) from Sweden for domain of change 3 (strengthened climate action and improved urban environment); and a one-time pledge of USD 5 million from Turkey. The structured funding dialogues enabled UN-Habitat to have transparent and critical discussions with Member States to improve funding behaviour making the case for securing adequate levels of flexible and predictable funding to achieve the objectives of UN-Habitat's 2020–2025 Strategic Plan and funding compact.

Throughout 2021, there was sustained demand for UN-Habitat's technical services particularly for global normative programmes where support increased by 16.9 per cent to USD 135.6 million. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the important role of cities in mitigating and responding to new vulnerabilities and the importance of creating conditions for long-term social and economic city recovery.

UN-Habitat's implementation in 2021 totalled USD 183.7 million which represents 80 per cent of the annual budget of USD 230.7 million. Implementation of programmes, particularly of country programmes, were affected by COVID-19 restrictions.

Expenditure on core activities – mainly on staff positions – financed by the foundation non-earmarked fund was higher than the income, highlighting the continuing shortfall in core funds. UN-Habitat continues to operate under austerity measures.

UN-Habitat is making progress on the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy aimed at **enhancing predictable, flexible and long-term funding** to implement the approved activities related to UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan. Financial stability remained a top priority for UN-Habitat in 2021. Special focus was given to core funding where a significant **shortfall exists between the approved budget and actual voluntary contributions accepted**.

To address the objective of diversifying the UN-Habitat donor base, the Foundation and Philanthropy Platform has established a feasibility fund as part of the Cities Investment Facility. Three donors have already committed to contributing to the fund. In April 2022, the Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation will be formally launched during the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the review of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

The Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation

As part of the Abu Dhabi Declared Actions at the 10th Session of the World Urban Forum in February 2020, the Executive Director hosted a meeting with stakeholders in the financial services industry.

Based upon a capital preservation endowment model, Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation, which is a registered charity in Jersey with tax exemption status in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, will provide consistent funding for UN-Habitat starting in 2022. The arrangement was presented to the Controller and the Office of the Legal Advisor in August 2021.

The Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation was presented to the Geneva Group of Donor Countries in November 2021 and the Executive Board of UN-Habitat at its second session of the year 2021 in the same month.

Performance against the domains of change targets

The work programme of UN-Habitat is implemented through four domains of change that are complemented by cross-cutting issues. The four domains of change, also known as subprogrammes were implemented as below. The year 2021 saw an increased demand for activities under effective urban crisis prevention and response which was mostly a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

A call to action

Funding UN-Habitat is the responsibility of all 193 Member States. Currently only 26 Member States contribute to UN-Habitat's foundation non-earmarked fund. UN-Habitat needs everyone's support to deliver the expected mandate in order to close the sustainable urban development gap.

Subprogramme 1. Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban rural continuum: resources totalling **USD 64.8 million** were allocated of which **USD 62.5 million** was implemented accounting for **96 per cent** of the total budget.



Subprogramme 2. Enhanced shared prosperity of cities and regions: resources totalling **USD 49.0 million** were allocated of which **USD 17.9 million** was implemented accounting for **37 per cent** of the total budget.



Subprogramme 3. Strengthened climate action and improved urban environment: resources totalling **USD 39.7 million** were allocated of which **USD 14.3 million** was implemented accounting for **36 per cent** of the total budget.



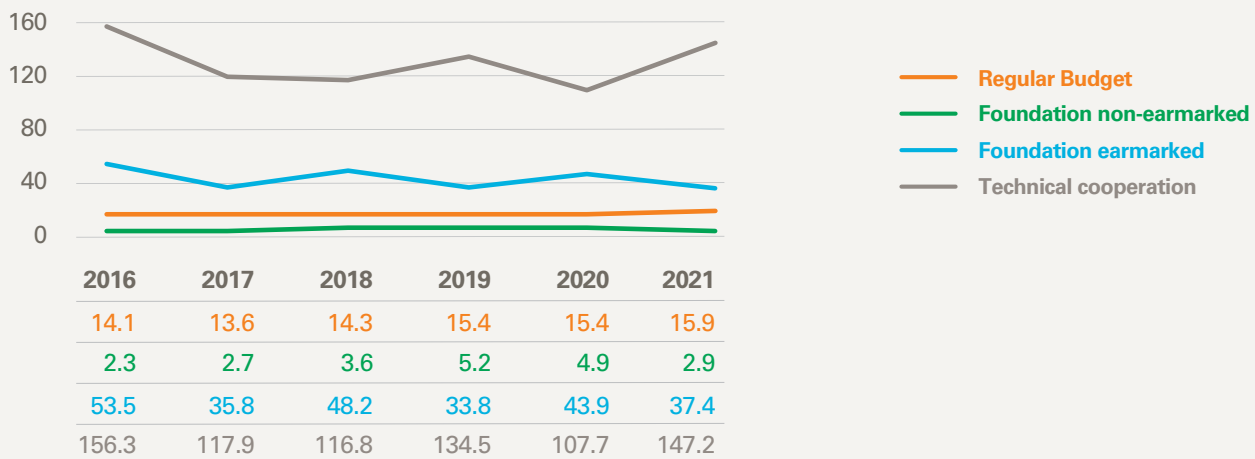
Subprogramme 4. Effective urban crisis prevention and response: resources totalling **USD 61.6 million** were initially budgeted for in 2021. By the end of the year, a total of **USD 72.6 million** was implemented accounting for **18 per cent** above the plan results.



Revenue trends

The chart below shows the trends in UN-Habitat's revenue from 2016 to 2020. Revenue is different from the contributions raised shown in the financial performance above. Contributions raised reflect the full value of contribution agreements signed with donors. Revenue, on the other hand, does not reflect the full value of contribution agreements where these are conditional but only recognizes the amount that has been expended on such agreements in any particular year. The financial statements of UN-Habitat report revenue rather than contributions raised in line with International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

In 2021, contributions accepted for earmarked activities funded by conditional contribution agreements is significantly lower than the revenue recognised due to no new contribution agreements signed with the European Union, particularly for country programmes (technical cooperation) and COVID-19 restrictions. Revenue for global normative programmes (foundation earmarked) performed 34 per cent lower compared to 2020.



Donors

Our work in 2021 would not have been possible without the generous support of our donors*



Algeria	Italy	Netherlands
Barbados	Japan	Norway – Ministry of Climate and Environment
Botswana	Jordan	Pakistan
Brazil	Kenya	Philippines
Burkina Faso	KFW	Poland
Cameroon	Bankengruppe	Republic of Korea
China	Kiribati	Rwanda
Congo	Kosovo**	Saudi Arabia
Czech Republic	Kuwait	South Africa
Denmark	Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development	Spain
Egypt	Madagascar	Sri Lanka
Ethiopia	Malawi	Sweden
European Commission	Mali	Switzerland
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Germany	Mexico	United States of America
Haiti	Mozambique	
India	Namibia	
Israel		

Fukuoka Habitat Institute

Office of the Collector and District

United Nations Agencies, including One UN Fund

* The donors listed above represent those that signed new or expanded contribution agreements with UN-Habitat in 2021 and does not represent the full list of UN-Habitat's development partners. Contributions from the countries listed above include funding from all their government departments such as the Official Development Assistance organizations that represent those countries.

** Any reference to Kosovo in United Nations documents and United Nations websites, whether to the territory, institutions or population, is to be understood in full compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo. Kosovo is therefore not listed as a country.

Diveen Hasan is an apprentice of a vocational training course delivered by UN-Habitat as part of the Reconstruction and Peacebuilding of Liberated Cities in Iraq project. She has painted over 95 houses and is able to support her family through her work in Sinjar © UN-Habitat



Annual Report 2021

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UN  **HABITAT**
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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