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# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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**POLICY, LEGISLATION AND GOVERNANCE SECTION**

**URBAN PRACTICES BRANCH**

**GLOBAL SOLUTIONS DIVISION**

**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

PLGS Annual Report 2021

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## POLICY, LEGISLATION AND GOVERNANCE SECTION

### URBAN PRACTICES BRANCH

#### GLOBAL SOLUTIONS DIVISION

**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

## CONTENTS

Foreword	1
PLGS 2021 in Brief	4
Key Highlights 2021	5
Introduction	12
Urban Policy	17
Urban Legislation	48
Urban Governance	69
Metropolitan Management	76
Urban-Rural Linkages	88
Financial Overview	98
Endnotes	101

## FOREWORD

Within UN-Habitat's Global Solutions Division, the Urban Practices Branch (UPB) is the normative nerve-centre of the Agency, responsible for development of normative guidance, knowledge, methodologies and tools to advance sustainable urbanization and localization of the global agendas. Since the United Nations Habitat Assembly adopted the organizational Strategic Plan (2020-23) in May 2019, we have been able to strengthen our role as a global catalyst for sustainable urbanization and a centre of excellence, through continued normative leadership and cutting-edge technical expertise. As a branch and agency at large, we continue to hold ourselves to our guiding principles of competence, accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness, and to achieve strong results with a view to leaving no one and no place behind. Recent global challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, continuing and expanding climate change effects and increasing threats to global security, have exacerbated inequality and vulnerability. Yet, these conditions have also demonstrated the importance of UN-Habitat's mandate, as well as the robustness of the Strategic Plan.

The Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS) is one of five sections of the Branch and supports national and subnational governments and other partners through the development and dissemination of knowledge, capacity building, conducting policy dialogues and providing advisory services on, inter alia, urban policy, legislation, governance, metropolitan management, and urban-rural linkages. This report shines a light on the work of the Policy, legislation and Governance Section, its partnerships inside and outside the organisation, and its contribution to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda. It also outlines the planned outlook for 2022.

In 2021, the branch made significant strides in enhancing the five sections' Communities of Practice. The Community of Practice (CoP) sessions brought out innovative thinking and capabilities for more impact, enhancing the linkages between the normative and operational parts of our work. The PLGS CoP sessions held in 2021 continued to facilitate agency-wide learning, information sharing and collaboration to harness the collective wealth of knowledge and experience to design transformative interventions related to policies, legislation and governance.



**Shipra Narang Suri**  
Chief - Urban Practices Branch

This PLGS Annual Report 2021 builds on the activities and achievements reported in the 2020 Annual Report, demonstrating the results of the section's collaborations within and outside UN-Habitat. Going into 2022, the Branch aims to advance the achievement of the SDGs and accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, by focusing on the Executive Director's three priorities: adequate housing; cities and climate change; and localizing the SDGs. The work of PLGS will be extremely important in driving these priorities forward.

Much has been achieved in this year; however, much more needs to be done in this second year of the Decade of Action. Let us redouble our efforts, together, to achieve a better future for all, in an urbanizing world!

The year 2021 continued to be challenging, with recovery efforts from COVID-19 ongoing globally. However, the Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS) had an impactful year, supporting the advancement of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2023 as well as contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. Our adaptive and resilient capacity enabled us, as a section, to continue advancing many important areas of the agency's work.

During this year, PLGS had more than 37 projects running in 25 countries, up from 34 in 24 countries in 2020, supporting national and subnational governments in various development interventions, which include: developing their urban policies; improvement of legislative and governance frameworks; enhancing urban rural linkages; and integrating metropolitan and regional management frameworks into national and subnational development plans.

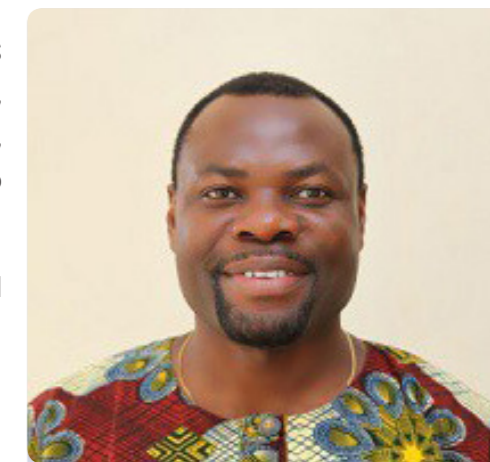
We know that data, knowledge, ideas, good practices and innovative solutions are our best tools to understand and anticipate the challenges of sustainable urbanization in a rapidly changing world. Collaboration with internal and external partners led to the development of global reference materials, which are a key source of knowledge on sustainable urban development, and which also report the progress and status of various thematic topics related to sustainable urban development. Some of them include a chapter on UN-Habitat's flagship report "Cities and Pandemic Report" and the second edition of the Global State of National Urban Policy.

PLGS also collaborated with a wide array of partners to organize and hold advocacy events at global, regional and national levels to advance UN-Habitat's mandate on policy, legislation, governance, metropolitan management and urban-rural linkages.

I am pleased to share this PLGS Annual Report 2021 with you, which details the above and more results we achieved with our partners, cities and communities through 2021. All our achievements were realized due to the year-round support of our donors and development partners, Urban Practices Branch and Global Solutions Division and senior management, as well as the concerted efforts of the 48 members of the PLGS team.

With these achievements, there is more demand for PLGS work and much more to do in developing and enhancing policy, legislative and governance frameworks for more inclusive, safe, sustainable and resilient cities, and other human settlements, to leave no one and no place behind.

Thank you for your interest in our work. I encourage you to read on and share widely.



**Remy Sietchiping**  
Chief - Policy, Legislation and Governance Section



## PLGS 2021 IN BRIEF

This is the second Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS) Annual Report, reporting progress and achievements for 2021, which contributes to UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2025. This report demonstrates the Section's catalytic role in implementing initiatives to contribute to UN-Habitat's mandate as well as the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. It also shows that the Section has been advancing many important areas of work, using effective and innovative approaches, and working progressively with strategic partners to deliver technical and operational support to national and subnational partner authorities in 2021.

The report features projects at global, regional, and national scale, new and innovative normative tools, knowledge products, as well as advocacy and awareness raising, in the PLGS thematic workstreams of Policy, Legislation, Governance, Metropolitan Management and Urban Rural Linkages.

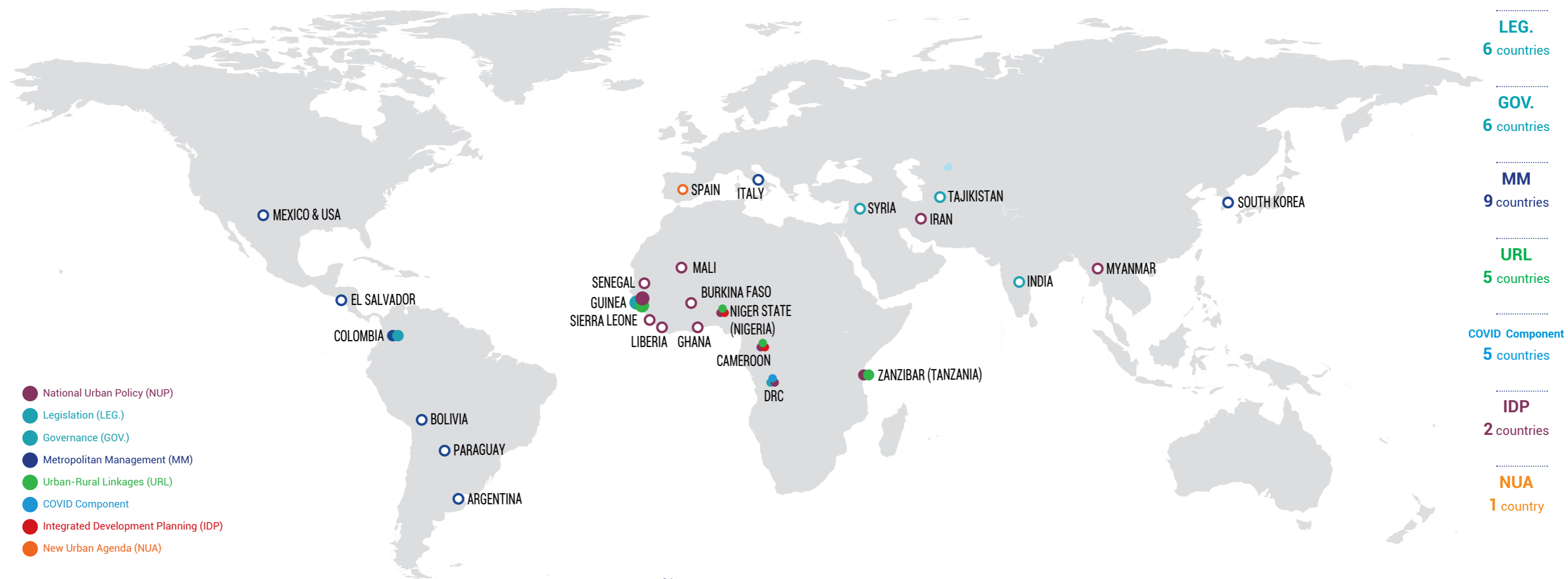
The executive summary contains key highlights from the PLGS workstreams and highlights on the PLG Community of Practice. The second part of this report provides details about the projects, normative products and advocacy efforts of each workstream, as well as outlines briefly their outlook for 2022. The final part presents the Section's financial performance.

### PLGS IN 2020 AND IN 2021

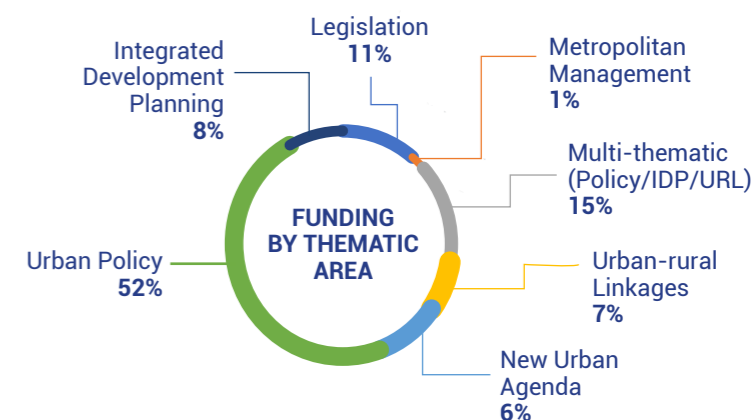
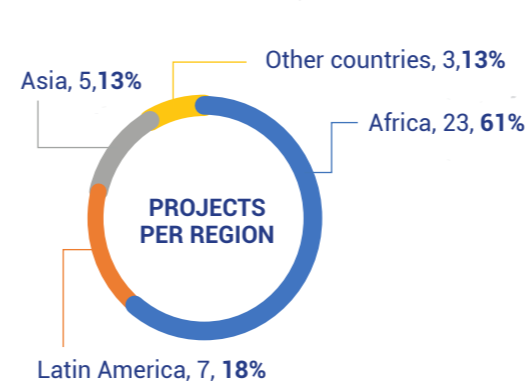
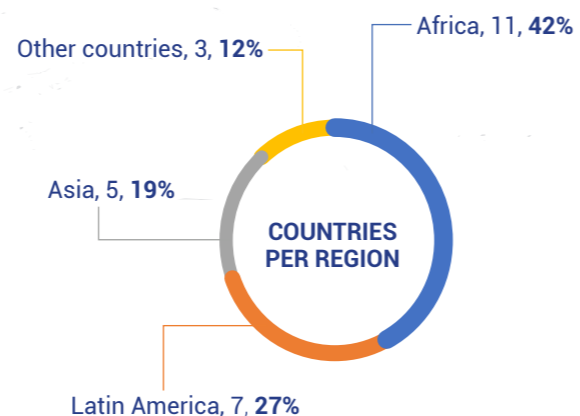


# KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2021

## PLGS GLOBAL FOOTPRINT



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



## Urban Policy

### Projects



Supported development of  
**14**  
National & Subnational  
Urban Policies in 2021

#### NUP PHASES

- Feasibility** 3
- Diagnosis** 1
- Formulation** 6
- Implementation** 2
- Monitoring & Evaluation** 2

### Integrated Development Planning projects

#### CAMEROON



**2**  
IDP projects  
in Yaoundé  
and Douala



**100+**  
Stakeholders involved  
in workshops

#### NIGER STATE (NIGERIA)



**1**  
Minna & Suleja  
IDP project

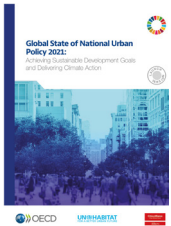


**10**  
Participatory  
workshop



**50+**  
Participants

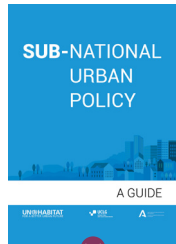
### Normative tools & knowledge products



Global State of  
National Urban Policy



Views: 2,482  
Downloads: 1,428  
Likes: 167



Subnational  
Urban Policy Guide



Views: 1,142  
Downloads: 732  
Likes: 699



NUP e-learning course



### Advocacy



**NUPP MULTI-COUNTRY  
KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE  
WEBINAR**

DEC 2021

- I.R. IRAN
- MYANMAR
- NIGER STATE (NIGERIA)



## Urban Legislation

### Projects



Supporting INCLUSIVE and EFFECTIVE urban legislation in:

- ▶ Colombia
- ▶ India
- ▶ the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
- ▶ Syria
- ▶ Guinea
- ▶ and Tajikistan

### Advocacy



3 URBAN LAW DAYS held in 2021

### Normative tools & knowledge products



UrbanLex Database



**2,269**

Number of laws in the database

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NON-PROFIT HOUSING LEGAL FRAMEWORKS IN 5 COUNTRIES

2021

UN HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Comparative Analysis of Non-Profit Housing Legal Frameworks in 5 Countries



## Governance

### Advocacy

#### 2-day Expert Group Meeting on Governance



**200+**  
Participants



Cross-cutting insight

**The need for people-centered approaches** in urban governance.

#### Urban Digital Governance Lab-Cameroon



**16**  
Participants



**+9** additional events on Governance  
Co-organized and participated by PLGS

### Normative Tools & Knowledge products



[Leveraging Multi-level Governance Approaches to promote Health Equity: A Guide](#)



Views: 363  
Downloads: 230  
Likes: 215



[Multi-Level Governance for Effective Urban Climate Action in the Global South](#)



Views: 39  
Downloads: 281  
Likes: 105



## Metropolitan Management

### Projects

EL SALVADOR



Metropolitan Legal Assessments

USA & MEXICO BORDER



Binational Metropolitan Management Project

METROHUB GLOBAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



**300+** students trained on courses such as Urban and Metropolitan Management, Spatial Analysis and Metropolitan Governance



Argentina  
Colombia  
El Salvador  
Italy  
Paraguay  
and South Korea

### Advocacy



31 DAYS OF PROMOTING A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

**WORLD METROPOLITAN DAY**  
7th October



**25+**  
Events and activities



**30+**  
Participating Cities



**METROPOLITAN & REGIONAL MANAGEMENT NETWORK**

**40 members** registered from different countries, organizations, and academic sectors

### Normative Tools & Knowledge products

COMPREHENSIVE METROPOLITAN MANAGEMENT: THE CASE OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF SAN SALVADOR

2021 UN HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Comprehensive Metropolitan Management: The case of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador

Guide on Decision-making Models in Metropolitan Management

2021 UN HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Guide on Decision-making Models in Metropolitan Management. In alliance with the Barcelona Metropolitan Area

## Urban-Rural Linkages

### Projects

CAMEROON | DRC | GUINEA | NIGERIA (NIGER STATE), TANZANIA(ZANZIBAR)



**9+**  
Workshops held



**220+**  
Experts + Participants' enhanced knowledge in data collection, analysis and reporting on Urban-Rural Linkages

URL POLICY REVIEWS



Senegal, Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of the Congo

### Advocacy



**SECOND INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES**

Songyang County LISHUI CITY, ZHEJIANG PROVINCE, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA | 19th - 20th October, 2021



**5** main sessions



**2-day** period

**THEME**  
Integrating Health and Territorial Development for Sustainable Livelihoods



**28**  
Guest speakers



**19**  
International Organizations



**300+**  
Participants

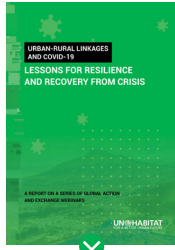


**43**  
Countries





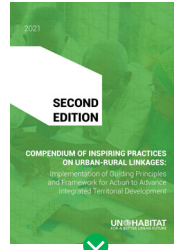
## Normative Tools & Knowledge products



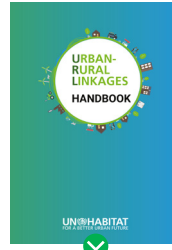
Urban Rural Linkages and COVID-19: Lessons for Resilience and Recovery from Crisis



Urban-Rural Linkages Newsletter March 2021 | Issue 3



Second Compendium of Inspiring Practices on Urban Rural Linkages



Urban Rural Linkages Handbook 2021



URL e-learning course

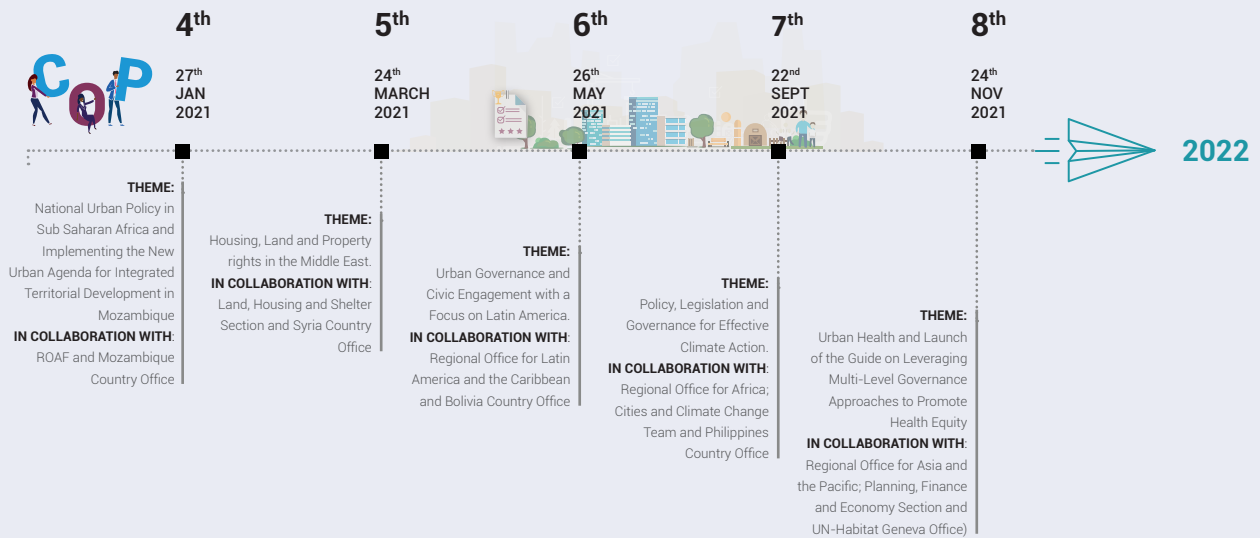


### PLGS Community of Practice

1. Comprehensive Metropolitan Management: The case of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador:
2. Developing the Guide on Decision-making Models in Metropolitan Management in alliance with the Barcelona Metropolitan Area

## URBAN RURAL LINKAGES:

### Projects:



➤ Our social media presence



PLG UNHABITAT

Followers: **490**

Connections: **260**

Profile Views: **90**



@PLG\_UNHABITAT

Followers: **1,307**

Impressions: **82 K**



UNHabitat PLGS

Connections: **28**

Interactions: **25**

Tags: **34**



PLG UNHABITAT

Views: **2,250 views**

Watch time: **138.8 hrs**

Subscribers: **+34**





# INTRODUCTION

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UN-Habitat's Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS) plays a pivotal role in implementation of the agency's Strategic Plan, contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs), and the New Urban Agenda. The Section fosters collaboration with other sections, branches, regional and country offices and with external partners, to develop innovative, cutting edge and relevant normative tools, knowledge products, technical cooperation projects, policy dialogues and advisory services to national and subnational governments to ensure they positively impact the most vulnerable.

The Section serves as the Agency's focal point and global solutions center of excellence on Urban Policy, Legislation, Governance, Metropolitan Management and Urban-rural Linkages. These five thematic areas are the main workstreams through which PLGS develops and implements its projects, normative tools, and knowledge products.





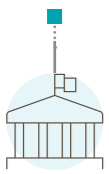
The **Policy** workstream supports national, subnational, and local governments to develop, implement and monitor their urban policies.

Working closely with partner governments to identify development priorities, the workstream customizes the technical advice, normative tools, and knowledge products to support development of urban policies, which address the identified national and subnational development priorities.



The **Legislation** workstream supports governments at all levels, to review and improve legal frameworks as well as in the development of new legal instruments to support sustainable urban development, according to the partner countries development priorities. This is done through provision of expert advice on legislation, capacity development as well as using updated/cutting-edge/bespoke normative tools.

The **Governance** workstream supports local and national governments to effectively advance the implementation of the global goals and global agendas by providing tailored expertise on urban governance. The workstream has four sub-areas which work in tandem to enhance governance frameworks globally.



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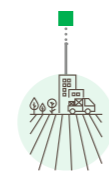
The **Governance** workstream supports local and national governments to effectively advance the implementation of the global goals and global agendas by providing tailored expertise on urban governance. The workstream has four sub-areas which work in tandem to enhance governance frameworks globally.

1. Local governance
2. Multi-level governance
3. Multi-stakeholder partnerships
4. Digital governance.



The **Metropolitan Management** workstream works with governments at all levels to review and improve as well as develop new metropolitan and regional management frameworks. UN-Habitat's approach to metropolitan management utilizes an integrative approach which provides support in several thematic areas through technical advice, capacity building and operational support. The workstream also engages in global advocacy events such as the World Metropolitan Day annual commemoration.

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**Urban-rural linkages** workstream: Implemented within the framework of the UN-Habitat Assembly Resolution HSP/HA.1/Res.5/ on Urban-rural linkages, this workstream supports national and subnational authorities to address challenges and priorities in the lens of urban-rural linkages by developing and implementing policies, plans and strategies that support urban development and linkage of the rural-urban continuum.

Implemented within the framework of the UN-Habitat Assembly Resolution HSP/HA.1/Res.5/ on Urban-rural linkages, this workstream supports national and subnational authorities to address challenges and priorities in the lens of urban-rural linkages by developing and implementing policies, plans and strategies that support urban development and linkage of the rural-urban continuum.

## Why a PLGS Report?

The purpose of the PLGS Annual Report is to disseminate the section's annual progress and contribution towards implementation of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan as well as the section's contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. It demonstrates a clear connection of the section's projects and programmes to the overall Organization mission of promoting sustainable urban development.

This PLGS Annual Report 2021 demonstrates the section's progress from 2020 by reporting achievements in 2021 and also provides insights on planned work for 2022. This report is beneficial to PLGS personnel and UN-Habitat at large, implementing partners and more particularly, partner national and subnational governments where PLGS continues providing its technical expertise, knowledge, and tools in the development of programmes and projects that address country-specific priorities in the journey towards sustainable urban development.

## Progress on PLGS Community of Practice:

**PLGS Community of Practice Newsletter 2**

**Aim**  
Agency-wide learning, information-sharing, and collaborations

**Products**  
**5** CoPs in 2021

The Policy Legislation and Governance Community of Practice (CoP) facilitates agency-wide learning, information-sharing, and collaborations to harness the collective wealth of knowledge and experience for transformative interventions on matters related to policies, legislation and governance.

This is done through inviting all divisions, branches, and offices of UN-Habitat to share practices, lessons, tools, and knowledge products under the themes of policy, legislation, governance, integrated development planning, urban-rural linkages, and metropolitan management.

The CoP facilitates engagement in substantive discussions as well as development, peer review and application of normative tools and products and aims to provide high-quality services and mutual support to various colleagues, projects and programmes on policy, legislation and governance being implemented across the Agency as well as contribute to staff professional growth and skills set through continuous learning and training.

The PLG CoP has continued to demonstrate innovative capabilities and agility for more impact especially enhancing the normative and operational nexus. In 2021, PLGS held five CoP sessions with partners stemming from across the organization.

4

27<sup>th</sup> JAN  
2021

The fourth CoP session took a thematic and region-focused approach. It offered an insightful perspective on UN-Habitat's work on national urban policies in Sub-Saharan Africa and a case study of Mozambique. Some of the key achievements noted on urban policies in Sub-Saharan Africa include: validation of Cameroon's NUP at the Prime Minister's office; finalization of the feasibility and diagnosis stage of Liberia's NUP; and completion of the formulation stage of Zambia's NUP. In addition, the session demonstrated that UN-Habitat has made significant progress on development of NUPs in Guinea, Zanzibar (United Republic of Tanzania), Senegal, Mali, Ghana and Sierra Leone as well as offering specific policy interventions related to COVID-19 response and resilience. The Mozambique case study featured a presentation reporting progress on implementation of the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) in the country.



National Urban Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa and Implementing the New Urban Agenda for Integrated Territorial Development in Mozambique (with Mozambique Country Office)

5

24<sup>th</sup> MARCH  
2021

The fifth session, themed **Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights in the Middle East**, and attended by 60 participants, provided an opportunity to review UN-Habitat's progress and impact on enhancing HLP rights in **Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria**.

A key opportunity from the session was the need to map out on the ground experiences and validate the tools against global norms and encourage implementation of the tools by Member States; b) Continue promoting replication of the work in other areas (countries) or by other entities.



Housing, Land and Property rights in the Middle East. (with the Land, Housing and Shelter Section and Syria Country Office)

6

26<sup>th</sup> MAY  
2021

Urban Governance and Civic Engagement with Focus on Latin America. (with the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Bolivia Country Office)

The sixth PLG CoP session took place under the topic of **Urban Governance and Civic Engagement with a Focus on Latin America**. With examples drawn from various countries in Latin America, it was clear that civic engagement has a significant impact on the success of urban governance initiatives. Participants also agreed that **social innovation** could be a tool to build a bridge between community participation and decision-making and therefore, improve Urban Governance. Some key outcomes and opportunities that were displayed include:

- Development of **principles of effective governance** which can be looked at as the reference point, and promoted globally.
- UN-Habitat can populate a vade mecum of tools of different specific governance solutions
- Continuous engagement in innovative approaches to urban governance.

7

22<sup>nd</sup> SEPT  
2021

Policy, Legislation and Governance for Effective Climate Action. (with Regional Office for Africa; Cities and Climate Change Team and Philippines Countries Office)

The seventh session was held in collaboration with the Sub-Programme on Climate Change and Environment, themed **Policy, Legislation and Governance for Effective Climate Action**. The discussion showcased country experiences and efforts in climate action where policy, legislation, and governance have been integrated. The session also presented the guide '[Multi-Level Governance for Effective Urban Climate Action in the Global South](#)'. Country case studies from the Philippines and Colombia on climate action from the perspective of legislation, policy, and governance were also presented to show an in-depth overview of actions that have been made.

Several participants agreed that climate action and urban policies should be the main entry points as they reinforce each other. However, some argued for using climate change as the entry point to facilitate sustainable urban development as it would be more effective. Practical examples from Malawi and Arab States were raised to highlight how climate change can be mainstreamed into urban policies.

A key takeaway raised by participants was the importance of communication on climate change. Communication beyond "experts" is a huge gap in advocating climate change issues not only on policy but also project implementation.

8

24<sup>th</sup> NOV  
2021

The eighth and final PLGS CoP of 2021, themed **Urban Health and Launch of the Guide on Leveraging Multi-Level Governance Approaches to Promote Health Equity**, featured four insightful presentations;

- Global perspective on how policy, legislation and governance frameworks can be utilized to address or anticipate future health threats;
- Regional Perspective on the challenges and opportunities the Asia-Pacific region is facing on policy, legislation, and governance to achieve healthier and equitable urban spaces;
- Practical experiences on how Multi-Level Governance can benefit health outcomes through urban and territorial planning and;
- a discussion of UN-Habitat's report on **Cities and Pandemics: Towards a More Just, Green and Healthy Future** on how urban policy, legislation and governance frameworks contribute towards the New Social Contract and a healthy urban future.

Some outcomes and opportunities arising from this session include:

- It is important to make more of the innovative or value-added aspects of UN-Habitat's work on Urban Health and to **state clearly the novel and different approaches from other leading agencies**.
- UN-Habitat can provide expertise in spatial mapping vis-à-vis urban health.
- It is important for UN-Habitat to demonstrate how it is connecting and using new partnerships and technology to promote **urban integrated multi governance approach to health**.
- UN-Habitat needs to continuously engage in **innovative approaches to urban health**.



Urban Health and Launch of the Guide on Leveraging Multi-Level Governance Approaches to Promote Health Equity (with Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Planning, Finance and Economy Section and UN-Habitat Geneva Office)





# URBAN POLICY

## LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

1.1 1.3 2.1 2.3 4.1 4.3



People-focused Smart Cities



(11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.7 and 11.a.1, 11.b) +



High COVID-19 relevance



Capacity development

SP OUTCOME AREAS

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES

SDGs







The urban policy workstream supports national and subnational governments in the government-led process of developing inclusive, innovative, and transformative urban policies, in conformity with their national and subnational development priorities. National Urban Policy (NUP) is a key tool for the implementation and monitoring of global urban agendas, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). The New Urban Agenda underscores the need for governments to effectively implement national urban policies when determining urban governance structures.



Urban and peri-urban areas face a wide range of challenges associated with urbanization, many of which are seen globally, such as increased social segregation; exacerbation of climate change, unchecked and unplanned urban sprawl, inequality, and growing pressures on urban infrastructure that is rapidly deteriorating.

As government at all levels continue collaborating to address challenges arising from COVID-19, the pandemic has prompted a paradigm shift that has demonstrated the potential of urban policies to effectively, inclusively, and sustainably plan and design cities and other human settlements to ensure they are more resilient, green, and inclusive, with better opportunities for all.

UN-Habitat's contribution to urban policy development includes:

-  country assessments;
-  technical advice on setting up of national processes and stakeholder participation;
-  documentation of good practices to support national processes;
-  analysis of urban planning policies and instruments;
-  facilitation of local-national dialogues/forums;
-  dissemination and capacity development on the urban policy across the full range of actors.

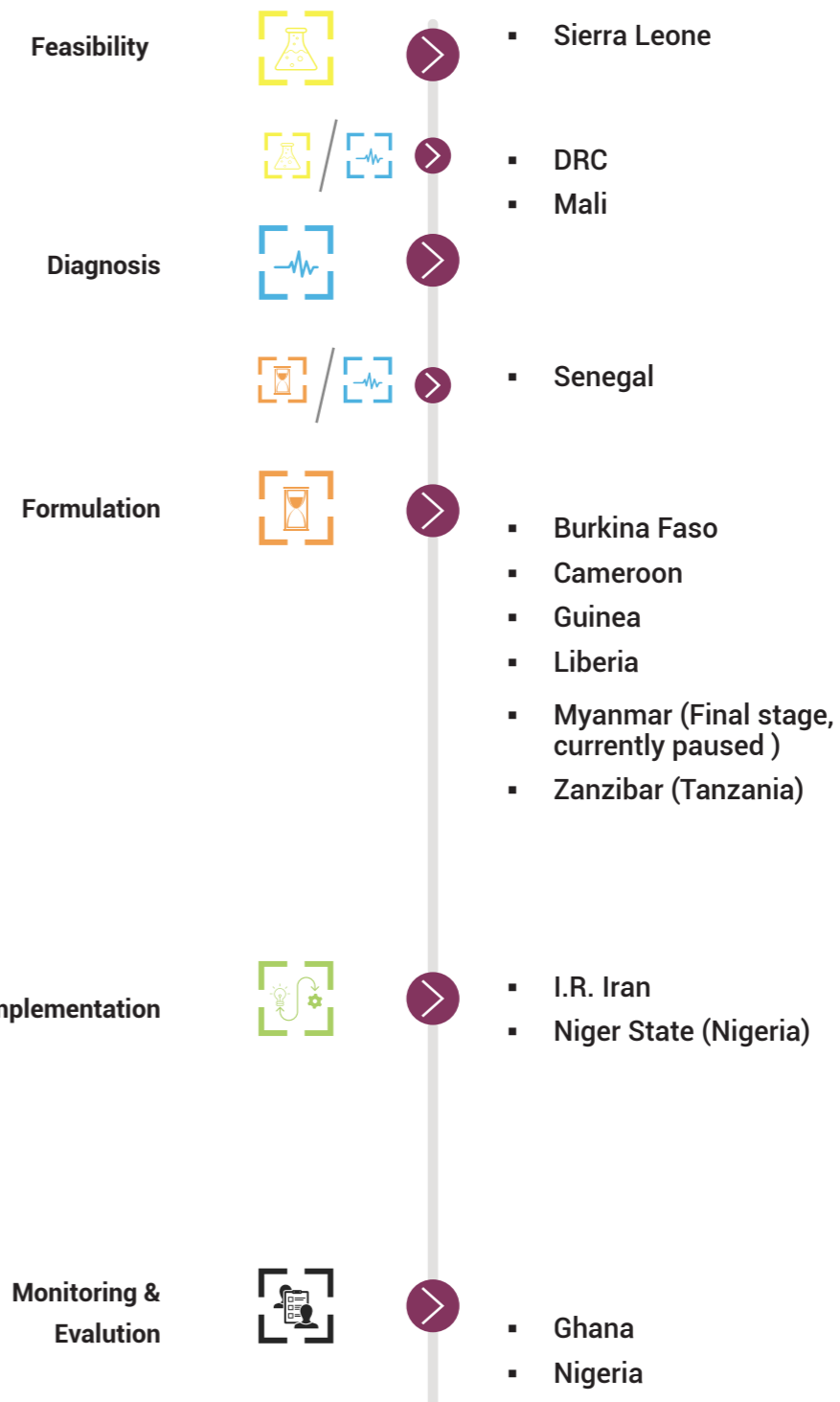
#### NUP EVALUATION



In 2021, the RMIT University carried out an evaluation of UN-Habitat's National Urban Policy Programme. The evaluation reaffirmed the importance of urban policy and the core focus of the National Urban Policy Programme: that it is important to for nation-states to 'get cities right' to achieve social, economic and environmental outcomes. The overarching question that the evaluation raises is whether new tools and mechanisms for knowledge transfer and capacity development could enable better policy outcomes.

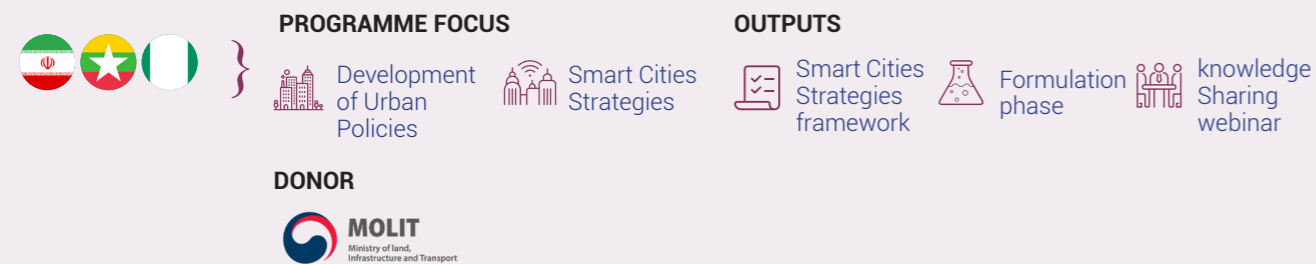
The evaluation assessed that the NUPP is highly relevant to contemporary urban challenges and has been effective in raising awareness of the need for national level policy to manage urbanisation. However, varying political will and ensuring policy continuity at the national level were highlighted as the major challenges for the NUP programme, while recognising it has limited direct influence over national responses.<sup>1</sup>

#### NUP Phases



## PROGRESS ON PROJECTS

### I.R. Iran, Myanmar and Niger State, Nigeria



Funded by Republic of Korea's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT), the pilot phase of the National Urban Policy Programme continues supporting I.R. Iran, and Niger State, Nigeria in development of their Urban Policies and Smart Cities Strategies.

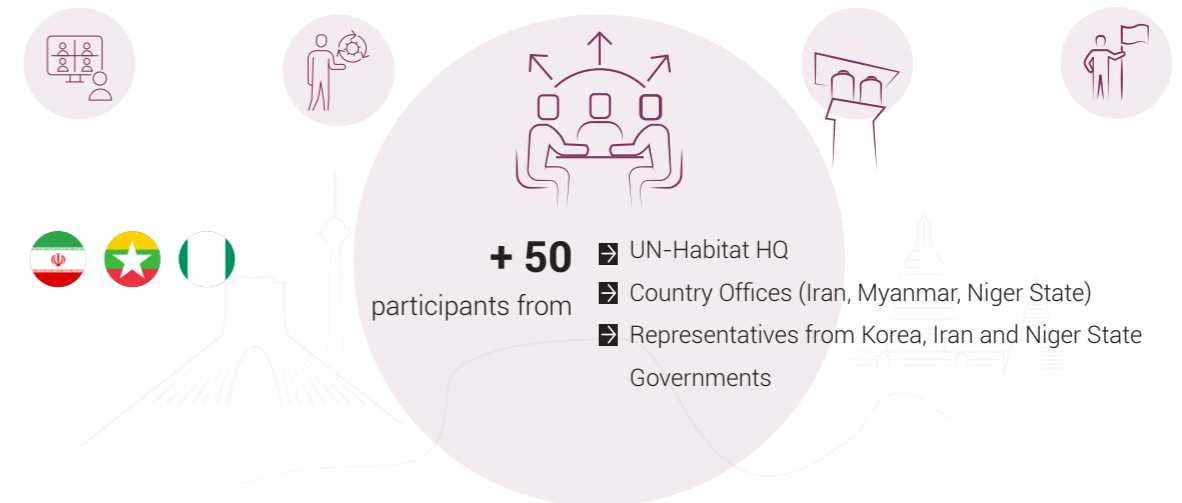
To note, the NUP support to the Government of Myanmar was put to pause since the political change following the military take-over of power in February 2021. This programme has three strategic expected accomplishments that are aligned to the three pilot countries:

- i. Enhance capacity of sub-national and national governments in the three pilot countries to develop, implement, and monitor and evaluate national urban policy (NUP and SUP) and develop smart city strategies;
- ii. Increase centralization of knowledge and tools on the development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of urban policy (NUP and SUP) and smart city strategies;
- iii. Provide augmented opportunity for knowledge sharing and peer learning activities on urban policy (NUP and SUP) and smart city strategies.

The programme has continued building on innovative approaches, strengths, lessons learned and efforts initiated by the pilot countries and other key stakeholders.

In 2021, PLGS supported I.R. Iran and Niger State (Nigeria) to finalize the formulation phase of Urban Policy development as well as their Smart Cities Strategies framework. As part of the finalization process, a knowledge sharing webinar was organized.

Other development partners such as Korea Institute of Human Settlements (KRIHS) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) also participated in the half-day session to share knowledge, borrow ideas, share best practices, approaches, ideas for funding for implementation avenues, areas of collaboration, and possibilities of aligning with other global agendas.



➤ NUPP Knowledge Sharing Webinar: presenting progress and results of the three countries' Urban Policy processes

### I.R. IRAN

I.R. Iran's NUP project was developed to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda through national urban policy and there was some progress in 2021. UN-Habitat's PLGS and the country office, in collaboration with national and local authorities, held

two key multi-stakeholder workshops to strengthen their capacity and brief the participants on the progress in the ongoing urban policy and smart cities strategy development.

- **31 August 2021**
  - **27 October 2021**
- 1. Fourth Session Steering Committee Session:** with the participation of 16 members from I.R. Iran's Ministry of Roads and Urban Development (MoRUD), Steering Committee members and UN-Habitat project team, the session provided an opportunity to report progress on NUP development, introduce the new expert team and share the workplan, including proposals on the layout and methodology, of the NUP document. Participants appreciated the demonstration of progress and provided valuable recommendations to improve the NUP and smart cities strategy development process.
  - 2. National Urban Policy Workshop:** This workshop, which involved all stakeholders of the NUP development process, was attended by 19 members from diverse backgrounds, including the Iranian Ministry of Roads and Urban Development (MoRUD), and affiliated deputies, members of the Urban Planning and Architecture Supreme Council of I.R. Iran and its affiliated committees and other related governmental bodies, local government and municipalities, academia, private or non-governmental organizations, professionals such as consulting engineers groups and members of the civil society.



The successful mobilization of all the stakeholders, despite the pandemic, provided an opportunity to introduce the NUP programme and to demonstrate the progress made in NUP development process. This included: developing the layout and methodology; presentation of results of review and content analysis by UN-Habitat; preparation of technical

reports on urban planning, policy making and smart cities; results of interviews with key stakeholders, which informed the prioritization of Iran's urban development issues; and planning the way forward. Participants' input featured questions, comments and recommendations for improvement of the draft policy.

## MYANMAR

The Government of Myanmar and UN-Habitat had made significant efforts and built a strong collaboration in the development of Myanmar National Urban Policy and the Smart City Strategy since the inception of the programme. However, the NUPP in Myanmar has been put on pause since the political change following the military take-over of power in February 2021. Thereafter, NUP support to the Government of Myanmar has been subject to UN engagement guidelines.

## NIGER STATE

In **Niger State**, the Secretary to the Niger State Government and UN-Habitat established the Niger State Urban Support Programme comprised of three major components, and started a state-wide process:



Formulation of Niger State Urban Development Policy



Preparation of Integrated Development Plan for Minna and Suleja



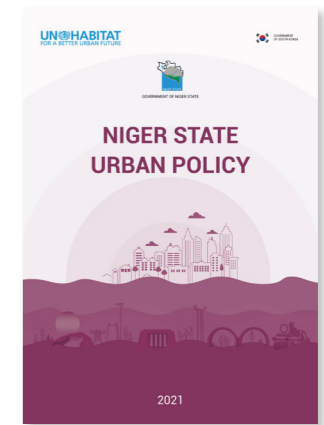
Development of Pilot Smart City Strategy for Suleja

In support of the Niger State Urban Policy development, a wide range of participatory policy-making processes were carried out state-wide and involving all stakeholders, as the policy underwent feasibility, diagnosis and formulation phases. UN-Habitat developed several tools, guidelines and technical materials to strengthen capacity of all stakeholders to develop the urban policy. Between mid-2020 and early 2022, the Niger State Urban Policy was formulated based on the 10 issues prioritized by Nigerites, and included integrated and balanced territorial development; inclusive, productive and

competitive economy; effective land governance; urban security and safety; strengthening urban-rural linkages; resilient infrastructure and services; sustainable transport and mobility; urban resilience; climate change mitigation and adaptation; effective urban governance and coordinated management; and smart city strategies. In order to keep all actors informed of every stage of the formulation process, the final draft of Niger State Urban Policy was circulated in February 2021, to all the ministries, departments and agencies in Niger State.

A **key milestone** in 2021 is that, the policy document was transmitted to the Niger State Executive Council. Following high-level reviews, in June 2021, **the Niger State Urban Policy was approved** by the Niger State Government Executive Council as a **framework for guiding urban and territorial development** in the state.

The result is that Niger State now has a state urban policy that includes all cities, towns and communities to ensure they benefit from sustainable urban and territorial development and contribute to national development.



✔ NUP COVID-19 demonstration project: Officials from Korea Government and Niger State Government inspecting the solar powered borehole and water tank © UN-Habitat



✔ The solar-powered borehole and water tank have provided daily access to clean water for the general hospital in Minna and the local community © UN-Habitat



### OUTLOOK 2022:

At the programme level, some key expected accomplishments for 2022 include:

#### 2022

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES IN I.R. IRAN & NIGER STATE (NIGERIA)



- » The 3<sup>rd</sup> Korea Exchange Visit to share experiences and learn from the three countries and from Korean counterparts
- » Following approval and commitment to funding by Korea, the second phase of the national urban policy programme will begin in 2022. The programme will be implemented in 5 countries in all the regions.

At country level, here are some of the planned results for the year 2022:

#### 2022

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES IN I.R. IRAN



- » Preparation of the National Urban Policy and Smart City Document will be finalized and transmitted to the High Council of Architecture and Urban Development for review, validation and adoption.
- » Two demonstration projects have been designed and will be implemented

#### 2022

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES IN NIGER STATE (NIGERIA)



- » Fast-tracking of the legislation process of the policy by the Niger State Government. It will then be a reference for ministries, local authorities, and other government agencies as well as other stakeholders and will provide the needed direction and framework for sustainable urban development
- » Continued capacity development workshops on the strategic approach in implementing the policy framework.
- » Implementation of four demonstration projects to demonstrate the policy's potential.

### Francophone Countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, DRC, Guinea, Mali, Senegal)



#### PROGRAMME FOCUS



Normative tools



Advisory services



Capacity building to national and subnational governments

#### THEMES



Changing demographic dynamics



Spatial dynamics



Economic growth



Social prosperity



Environmental sustainability

Funded by the Andalusian Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AACID) (Burkina Faso, Senegal, DRC and Mali), the Government of Cameroon (Cameroon) and the European Union (Guinea), the national urban policy programme in Francophone African countries supports the improvement of national policy frameworks, integrated development plans and other national development plans to address urban issues and to strengthen linkages of the urban-rural continuum. The programme provides normative tools, advisory services and capacity building to national and sub-national governments on how to best respond to changing demographic and spatial dynamics among other issues, and transform their cities and communities into inclusive centres of dynamic economic growth, social prosperity and environmental sustainability.

The NUP programme takes a bold, proactive and participative approach that promotes more sustainable planning, design and management of Francophone countries' urban development processes, ensuring that different regions and territories maximize their potential by reducing economic, social, cultural and environmental disparities and improving overall living conditions. In 2021, progress was made in the five Francophone African countries supported with development of their national urban policies: Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal, Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the various phases of developing their NUPs.



#### CAMEROON

#### PROJECT PHASE



Formulation



Governance



Land management



Climate change



Institutional arrangement



Infrastructure



Policy Note

#### WORKSHOPS OUTPUTS

In Cameroon the NUP aims to provide a cross-sectoral framework and coherence in investments planning in urban areas to ensure a better quality of life for all, while protecting the environment from the effects of climate change and the community from social crises and insecurity.



It will promote sustainable development while strengthening its system of cities and human settlements for harmonious urban development. It will be implemented through a shared vision for the cities based on principles and specific pillars that any Cameroonian city should put in place as part of its urban planning.

The project is at the formulation phase. Several workshops and consultations were held in 2020 at regional level to ensure and promote inclusive and participatory approach.

They provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss the priorities; these were governance, land management, climate change, institutional arrangement and infrastructure. The policy note was drafted, addressing these challenges.


In partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, the policy draft was presented to the prime minister's office at the validation workshop of June 2020. The steering committee provided insights and opinions which were taken into account in the final version.


## BURKINA FASO


Having completed the diagnosis phase in June 2020, the national development priorities identified were governance, urban planning, land management, housing and urban basic services. In preparation for formulating the NUP, a capacity building workshop for local elected officials and civil society was held in October 2020 to equip people for their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) by 2036.

In 2021, PLGS fast-tracked the formulation phase of Burkina Faso's NUP, which saw the finalization of the draft policy document, officially known as National Strategy for Habitat and Urban Development (NSHUD). In August 2021, a multi-stakeholder forum was held to review the draft policy document. Participants had insightful recommendations. The final draft NUP for the country has been transmitted by the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing to the National Validation Committee. Going into 2022, a national workshop will be held for a final validation and dissemination of the NUP.

This project's expected result is improved governance through participation of all actors in urban development.

 **PROJECT PHASE**


 Diagnosis phase


 **WORKSHOPS OUTPUTS**

Participants had their knowledge and capacity strengthened in various topics including:

- (i) National Urban Policies, tools for the implementation of NUA; the case of the National Strategy of Habitat and Urban Development (SNHDU) of Burkina Faso,
- (ii) Urban legislation and governance according to the NUA with an emphasis on local governance;
- (iii) Urban-Rural linkages in the implementation of the NUA through the SNHDU of Burkina Faso (the case of Greater Ouaga),
- (iv) The contribution of local elected officials and civil society organizations in the implementation of the NUA,
- (v) The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and its contribution in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

## SENEGAL


 **PROJECT PHASE**


 Formulation

**OTHER HIGHLIGHTS**

Establishment of a technical secretariat & monitoring committee of  
**> 30**  
members

**EXPECTED PRODUCT**

 Diagnostic note


 Regional workshops

The **Senegal** NUP project integrates various sectoral policies to formulate a common and global vision and create appropriate conditions for sustainable urbanization. This can be achieved by supporting the development of Senegal's frameworks which articulate horizontal and vertical coordination and integrate elements of urban-rural linkages.

Despite facing major challenges, including COVID-19 and limited technical capacity, a number of planned activities were accomplished in 2021 as the project finalized its feasibility phase of NUP development. For instance, a monitoring committee and a technical secretariat of more than 30 members from various sectors was set up for the monitoring and smooth running of the project.


Planned deliverables as the project enters the diagnosis phase have already commenced. For instance, inclusive and participatory workshops have been organized in the 8 poles of Senegal to strengthen stakeholders' capacity in topics such as NUP development, the NUA and sustainable urban development. A key expected output is finalization of the Diagnostic Note which signifies completion of the diagnosis phase. Additionally, UN-Habitat plans to support drafting and finalization of the NUP for Senegal in 2022 under the formulation phase. This will be followed by national and regional workshops to disseminate the policy and garner public approval and support.

## MALI AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)




**OBJECTIVE**

Implementation of




+




Capacity development

+



**2** COVID-19 demonstration projects

+



**2** Multi-stakeholder workshops (Beni/RDC)

In **Mali** and **the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, the project advocates for community development and well-being, cooperating in areas of mutual interest related to the implementation of the NUA and the SDGs, strengthening the capacities of local authorities and other partners to respond positively to the opportunities presented by the impacts of urbanization, to transform cities into inclusive centres of dynamic economic growth, prosperity, social progress and environmental sustainability. Demonstration projects are a key NUP pillar to validate the potential results of implementing a national urban policy. A significant part of 2021 was focused on implementation of two COVID-19 demonstration projects through repurposing some of the NUP funds to support UN-Habitat's COVID-19 response.





➤ COVID-19 demonstration project Mali: UN-Habitat (PLGS) supported identification of challenges from COVID-19 from the community and local leaders; a solar-powered borehole and water tank was then provided as a pilot solution, which continues to benefit the community daily. © UN-Habitat



The objective of these projects was to support the efforts of the provincial government of North Kivu (DRC) and the municipality of Senou (Mali) to address the pandemic and to strengthen collaboration between the multisectoral actors involved in the response, strengthen the techniques of prevention, and strengthen the surveillance and alert mechanisms. Regarding the NUP component of the project, the project is currently at the feasibility phase transitioning into the diagnosis phase. In November 2021, UN-Habitat (PLGS) organized a training workshop to enhance awareness and capacity of various stakeholders on urban rural linkages, the NUA and urban policy. Additionally, two consecutive multi-stakeholder workshops were held on the evaluation and implementation of urban-rural linkages around the city of Beni (DRC), and strategies for implementation of the NUA and Agenda 2030.



➤ Focus groups discussing policy and strategy options during the workshop in Beni, DRC © UN-Habitat

As part of the 2022 results framework for Mali, an agreement of cooperation with Government of Mali has been finalized, which will include several components including NUP, urban rural linkages (URL) and development of a strategic framework to implement the SDGs and NUA in Greater Bamako. In addition, several training workshops will continue to be held to strengthen capacity and raise awareness on NUP and URL in both countries.

## GUINEA

The SANITA project funded by the European Union aims to improve the sanitary environment and the quality of life of the urban population in Guinea. It is in this context that the NUP of Guinea has been prepared. A diagnosis was developed by UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Africa (ROAF) in 2017 which revealed that the aspects of urban planning considered in the National Housing Policy developed in 2012 is lacking a coherent vision and a participative approach and it has not addressed the challenges of urbanization in the country. UN-Habitat (PLGS and ROAF) is therefore supporting the country in the formulation and implementation of a new NUP, integrating relevant urban aspects such as land management,

urban-rural linkages, urban governance and institutional strengthening. The NUP will be a guide for the national and subnational government to establish a roadmap working towards Guinea's sustainable urban development through stakeholders' adherence to participatory urban planning requirements. The activities will be to produce a report on urban forecasts to guide options for future policy and to develop a NUP document coupled with its implementation action plan (provisional version). In 2022, the policy note will be drafted and a national forum will be organized to review and validate it.


**PROJECT PHASE**

 Formulation

**FUTURE OUTPUTS**

 Urban Forecasts Report

 National Urban Policy document (PUN)

 Policy Note (2022)





## LIBERIA

The Liberia National Urban Policy development project, funded by the Booyoung Fund and implemented by UN-Habitat (PLGS) in coordination with the Government of Liberia and Cities Alliance, aims to develop a participatory, integrated and evidence-based NUP to support decision making and for sustainable development in the country.

The project covers the entire country and will be implemented under the premise that to develop an inclusive, integrated and evidence based NUP, it is crucial to take a national approach, that will include the Greater Monrovia area, rural areas and other intermediate and small urban centres, and with the participation of wide range of stakeholders from both national and local authorities, urban and rural stakeholders, academia, civil society and private sector.



To initiate the formulation phase of the NUP, in October 2021, a multi-stakeholder kick-off session was conducted, where the project team shared a presentation to strengthen capacity of the participants on what the NUP entails. During the session, the National Steering Committee members led by the Minister of Internal Affairs officially launched the formulation phase of NUP. Following internal review of the first draft NUP, revisions are currently underway, with plans to hold regional consultations to collect more inputs from all stakeholders, scheduled for early 2022. Finalization of the draft with regional inputs is complete, and submission to the lead ministry for a final review and validation is planned for the second quarter of 2022.

Throughout the formulation phase of the NUP, several PLGS normative tools and knowledge products continue to be used to deliver an inclusive, innovative and integrated NUP for Liberia. The project also continues to ensure widespread consultation with key partners and stakeholders to improve the working relationship with the government. The project has also been extensively participatory, including the poor, youth, women, children and disabled groups during the feasibility and diagnostic phase, both at the urban and rural levels, through regional consultations. This has ensured that issues identified and canvassed in the project so far reflect the national priority areas for the country.



➤ National Steering Committee Members taking part in the Initiation Meeting for NUP Formulation in Monrovia, Liberia © UN-Habitat



### OUTLOOK 2022:

Planned activities for 2022 include:

#### 2022

#### CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES IN SIERRA LEONE



- » A capacity building workshop (March 2022) to report project progress and take inputs at national level
- » Finalization of Liberia's draft National Urban Policy
- » Regional Consultations to review the draft and provide inputs
- » A National Urban Forum for final review and validation of the NUP
- » Mobilising additional resources for the policy implementation



## SIERRA LEONE

The overall objective of this NUP project is to support the government of Sierra Leone to develop an inclusive, evidence-based, forward-thinking and participatory NUP that will be integrated into the National Development Plan (2019-2023).

This project provides an effective and enabling environment to develop a sustainable policy framework whilst building capacity required for the development and implementation of a NUP in the country.

Currently at the feasibility phase of NUP, the project adopts the following drivers of change in its implementation:

1. Urban policy and legislation
2. Urban Planning and Design
3. Governance
4. Financing mechanisms (especially on strengthening municipal finance)

PLGS continued advancing its support to Sierra Leone to developing its NUP. On 10 August 2021, in collaboration with the Ministry of Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP), PLGS successfully organized and held a capacity building workshop attended by **28 participants** from the national government, local authorities, professional associations, academia, community-based organizations and the media. The workshop was aimed at strengthening the stakeholders' capacity in NUP development, including introducing stakeholders to the NUP process and informing them of their roles to ensure the NUP is successfully developed, implemented and evaluated through monitoring and evaluation. The session was well received, with participants calling for continued capacity building throughout the policy development to capture all dynamic issues affecting the country, involve a wider scope of stakeholders, to incorporate acupuncture projects and involve regional stakeholders. Participants also made recommendations on priority issues which should feature prominently in the NUP, including poverty alleviation programmes; land-use planning; sanitation; slum upgrading and affordable housing.

Additionally, during 2021, an induction consultation for the National Habitat Committee (NHC) members (made up of ministries, town councils, other government agencies and civil society) was held, which provided an opportunity to report progress on the NUP development.

**PROJECT PHASE**

Formulation

**WORKSHOP (10<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021)**

**28** participants

**IN COLLABORATION WITH**  
Ministry of Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning (MLHCP)

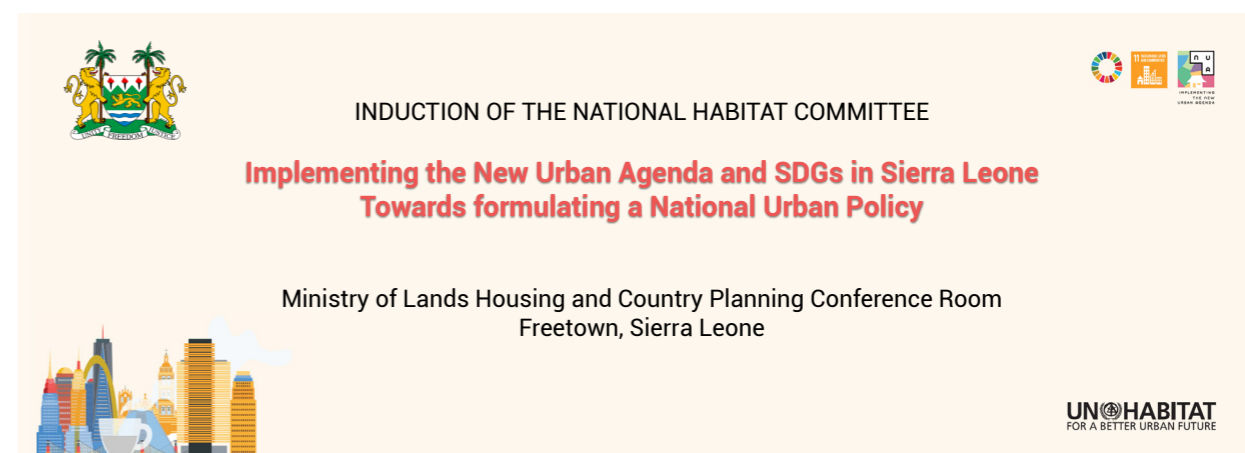
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ☑ poverty alleviation programmes
- ☑ Land-use Planning
- ☑ Sanitation
- ☑ Slum Upgrading
- ☑ and affordable housing

**Feasibility Report PRIORITIES**

- ☑ urban resilience
- ☑ urban rural integration
- ☑ capacity building
- ☑ and urban safety and health

The NHC also endorsed the drafting of the feasibility report which is ongoing, with the first draft already reviewed within UN-Habitat as well as within the leading ministry in Sierra Leone. The feasibility report identifies the priority national issues that need to be addressed by the NUP. These are urban resilience, urban rural integration, capacity building and urban safety and health. These will be synthesized further in additional NUP analysis.



Capacity building session at the induction meeting of the National Habitat Committee © UN-Habitat

Mainstreaming human rights, social inclusion and other cross-cutting issues is a key part of the project. During the workshops, meeting, advisory services as well as during drafting of the Feasibility Report, the issues of environment, women, gender, children and youth, and human rights continue to be mainstreamed into the NUP development process. Going forward in 2022 where it is projected that upon securing funding support, the Formulation Phase shall commence and all of the issues to be included in the policy will continue to be discussed and reviewed further in all document reviews and community engagements.



## Projects on Integrated Development Planning

### CAMEROON

#### a) Development study of the Yaoundé-Nsimalen Highway corridor



📍 A section of the Yaoundé-Nsimalen highway corridor © UN-Habitat

The objective of the study is to provide the municipalities of Bikok, Mfou, Yaoundé II and Yaoundé IV crossed by the Yaoundé-Nsimalen Highway with a planning and development programme to control the unplanned rapid urbanization which causes urban sprawl, among other challenges.



👤 Data collectors being trained to collect data using UN-Habitat's Social Tenure Domain Model. © UN-Habitat



👤 Data collectors reviewing the Yaounde-Nsimalen Highway corridor study zone. © UN-Habitat

Having successfully completed the first two components (Mission 1 and 2) of the project in the preceding years, the bulk of the work in 2021 was centred around Mission 3. This involved decision-making process development selected for the preparation of sector plans in the districts of Yaoundé 3 and Yaoundé 4, Mfou, and Bikok. Based on the development scenario adopted for each of the sectors, town planning regulations that apply the rules to the various zones within the identified territories were drafted.





In June 2021, UN-Habitat (PLGS) held a workshop to validate the outcomes of **Mission 3** reports. The workshop was attended by over **100 people** representing all the stakeholders of the project, including administrative authorities, specialists in urban issues, traditional authorities, civil society, ministerial departments, professional orders and associations. Chaired by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINHDU), the workshop provided a welcome opportunity to strengthen the capacity of the stakeholders on integrated development planning. Using maps, infographics and other visual tools, the project team from UN-Habitat and the *Mission d'Aménagement et d'Équipement des Terrains Urbains et Ruraux* (MAETUR) demonstrated the project progress, particularly regarding **Missions 1 and 2**. The team also used visual reference materials in the main part of the workshop to present the **Mission 3** report. These included the justification report; proposed developments; technical feasibility; economic and financial feasibility; proposed urban planning regulations along the corridor; environmental and social scoping study; and a presentation of the project's evaluation.

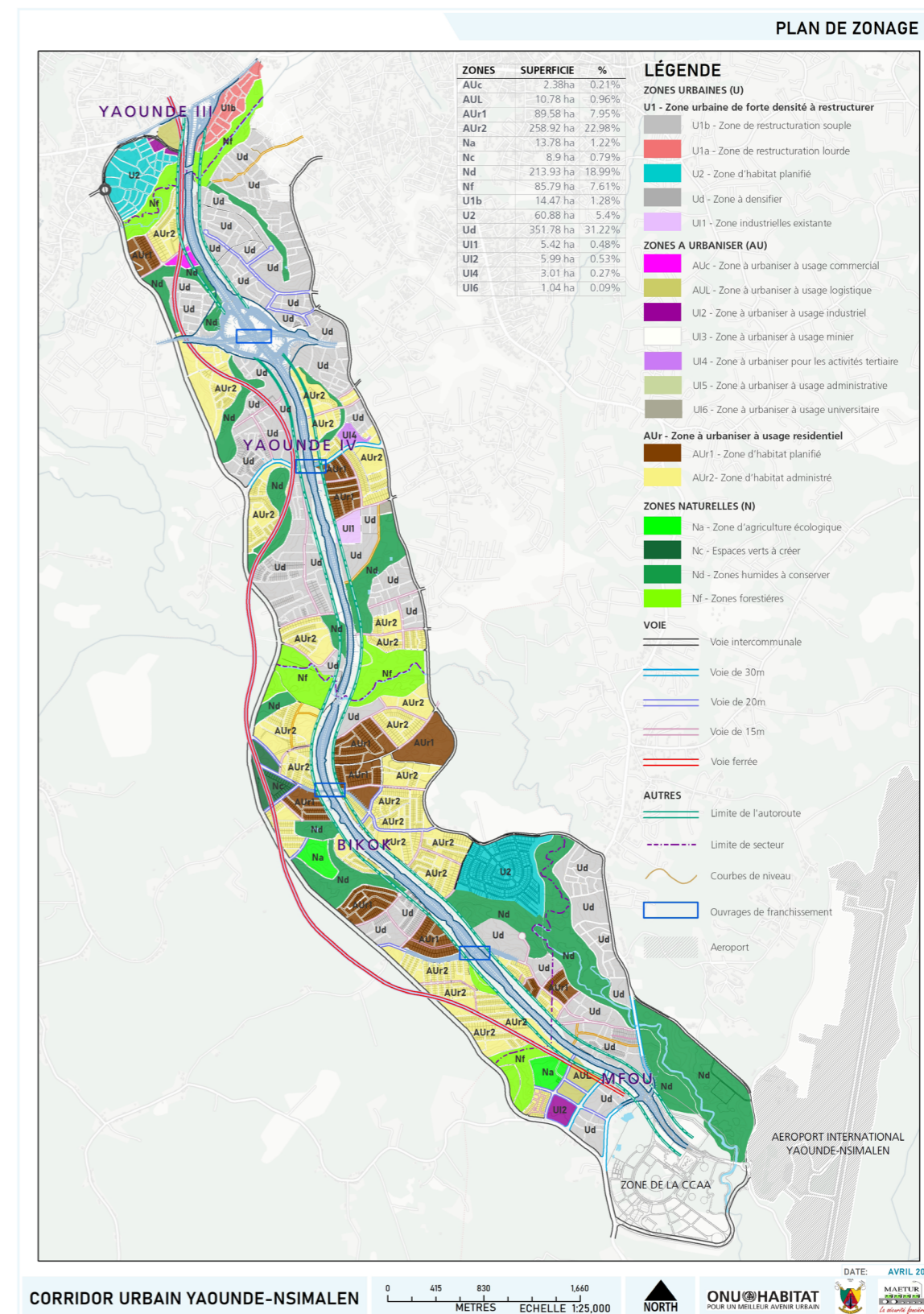
To enhance an inclusive and participatory process of reviewing **Mission 3**, the participants were divided into two working groups; one was responsible for examining the justification report and the other for examining the urban planning regulations and the environmental framework. The discussion was aided by visual reference materials, for example Mission 3 maps were put on the wall which the participants consulted throughout the sessions. The two groups then shared positive remarks about the project and provided relevant recommendations for the improvement of the Mission 3 report.

Further progress was made in October 2021 where **30 members** of the Review and Oversight Committee, chaired by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MINHUD), reviewed and approved the final technical reports submitted as part of the Yaounde-Nsimalen corridor project. The reports were **Mission 1**: the Diagnostic Report; **Mission 2**: the Consensus Planning Scenarios; and **Mission 3**: The Sectoral Plan.



Members of the Review and Oversight Committee following proceedings © UN-Habitat

Figure 3. The adopted zoning plan based on the consensus scenario







### OUTLOOK 2022:

As part of the development of a new integrated support and technical assistance programme between MAETUR & UN-Habitat, a hybrid inception workshop was held in Yaoundé on 17 August 2021, on the creation of a smart and sustainable living environment project in Cameroon.

This workshop, which is part of an integrated programme between MAETUR and UN-Habitat, aimed to develop urban practices that provide a sustainable living environment for city dwellers, with the overall objective of developing a common vision for sustainable urban settlements in Cameroon.

More specifically, the workshop was a platform to explore:

- How innovation can be integrated in the framework for sustainable living
- Smart city principles that could be considered and how they could be embedded into such developments
- Sustainable planning considerations
- How digital governance can be a leverage to improve the project and overall, MAETUR operations.

The new project is expected to begin in early 2022

### Development Study of the Dibamba Riverbanks Corridor in Douala.

The aim of the project is to develop a protection and enhancement framework for the Dibamba River corridor. Through an evaluation of the impacts of urbanization along the corridor, the study proposes a development programme to protect the ecosystem while also encouraging sustainable urban development. The project is in line with the environmental priority axis of the Douala city development strategy running to 2025.

The project has three main components:



**The diagnosis report:** A diagnostic report of the riverbank corridor was finalized in 2021. It presented an area with strong biodiversity and activities along the river that are the main source of income for the population, which is increasing rapidly. Unplanned urbanization continues to threaten the cultural environment and the Dibamba River ecosystem. In this regard, the overall objective is to formulate a development plan that merges peri-urbanization in the Dibamba basin, protection or even revitalization of natural ecosystems and biodiversity, and the maintenance of economic activities and preservation of local lifestyles. An inclusive approach and the participation of all stakeholders is important to build a sustainable development plan for the river.



**Training Manual on Urban Health:** A key thematic component of the project is health, which has been mainstreamed throughout the project. Developed in 2020, the training manual aims to enhance knowledge and capacity for the inclusion of health in planning practice by enhancing global awareness of tools, frameworks and practices that employ urban and territorial planning as a means to improve and protect the health of people and the environment. Using the developed *Training Manual on Urban Health* in 2020, recent studies in 2021 have shown significant impacts of urban planning on health, with the study calling for urgent action to reduce its negative impacts.



**Douala Metropolitan Observatory:** In 2021, the Douala Metropolitan Observatory was finalized. The observatory was designed and set up to collect, analyse, disseminate and monitor data and information on various issues and opportunities in Douala. The DMO will be implemented on existing infrastructure and data available in the metropolitan council to design a multi-functional platform and a network for showcasing various types of information on metropolitan development. The platform can also be used by researchers, policy makers, civil society and other stakeholders to communicate, share data and information of common interest for informed decision and actions in Douala.

### NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

### Integrated Development Planning for Minna and Suleja in Niger State, Nigeria



This project is part of the Niger State Urban Support Programme (NSUSP) and provides technical support in the formulation of the Minna Integrated Development Plan (MIDP) and Suleja Integrated Development Plan (SIDP), to support the implementation of the Niger State Urban Policies (N/SUP), and consider findings from the other NSUSP components: capacity building; urban-rural linkages and smart city strategies, as well as the Public Space Global Programme, in Niger State, Nigeria.

and tools, which define the general vision for Minna and Suleja Emirates, and the strategic framework based on priority policies, programmes and projects and explain how to execute them. The MIDP and SIDP are the tangible execution of policies on the ground. The plans seek to integrate solutions to common problems in major cities, small towns and farm clusters and reduce spatial inequalities and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum.

The Minna Integrated Development Plan (MIDP) – Minna 2040, and Suleja Integrated Development Plan (SIDP) Suleja 2040 - are planning instruments

Substantial progress and results were achieved in the project in 2021. To ensure inclusiveness in the plan preparation process, the Niger State Urban Support Programme with the technical assistance of UN-Habitat organized **over 10 participatory workshops** in Minna and Suleja. Each workshop assembled more than 50 participants from various backgrounds including, policy actors, representatives from non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, communities, wards, emirates, ministries, departments, agencies and local government areas to co-develop the plans. The workshops also served as platforms to build a critical mass level of awareness and to understand the needs of the people/residents across different age groups, gender, socio-cultural groups, religious beliefs and political views. This was a view to co-formulate an integrated development plan that will address spatial challenges as well as the needs of everyone in Minna and Suleja Emirate and set a clear direction for an inclusive, sustainable urban and territorial development in the two emirates.

➤ **Inclusive and participatory Integrated Development Plan development process © UN-Habitat**



In September 2021, UN-Habitat organized a three-day Geographic Information System (GIS) training for over **40** trainees drawn from **8** local government areas as well as ministries, departments and agencies of the Niger State Government. This was to build the capacity for the application of GIS tools for data management, effective service delivery as well as making informed decisions on project planning and implementation. The training also offered a unique opportunity for inter-ministerial collaboration on effective planning and implementation of transformative projects, improved service delivery at different MDAs (state and local government level). At the end of the training session, participants had acquired fundamental knowledge on the application of GIS for data management, improved service delivery, sustainable urban development and management. The **Niger State Urban Rural Observatory** (GIS-NSURO) was also launched and handed over to the Niger State Geographic Information System Agency (NIGIS).



➤ **Local actors discussing components of the Minna Integrated Development Plan © UN-Habitat**

Throughout the project's cycle, the MIDP and SIDP integrate cross-cutting and social inclusion aspects such as human rights, resilience, climate change, safety, gender, disabilities and age-group inclusivity. This is to set the foundations for just cities where all citizens have equal access to basic services and opportunities to improve their quality of life. The project also used innovative methods of data collection to develop evidence-based plans.

For instance, Kobotool was used for collection of reliable data for the diagnostic, which was then analysed and demonstrated to stakeholders using maps, infographics and other visual reference materials, showing spatial spread of different topics across the territories. Additionally, QGIS was used for integrative planning and for development of the Niger State Urban Rural Observatory.

**BENEFICIARY TESTIMONIALS**

The Niger State Urban Support Programme has continued receiving public endorsement and broadcasting, including in [websites](#) and on social media. During the occasion of the World Habitat Day 2021, the Honorable Commissioner of Lands and Housing, Barr. Moukhtar Ibrahim Nasale, shared a press release, including several remarks on the programme's progress. The Commissioner called for synergy among relevant stakeholders in human settlement to create sustainable carbon neutral inclusive towns and cities. He also reiterated the government's effort towards achieving the goal of the New Urban Agenda of balanced development across the urban-rural divide, where no one is left behind.





## OUTLOOK 2022

The following are some relevant aspects in project that look to be accomplished in 2022:

2022



### CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

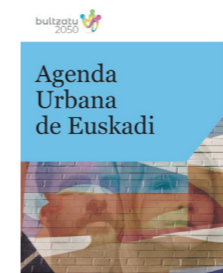


- » Establish a multi-stakeholder collaboration mechanism within the emirates of study and beyond towards formulation and implementation of the two integrated development plans, including with the Abuja Federal Capital Development Agency (FCDA), in charge of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) development (collaboration mechanism)
- » Develop innovative tools to support development of the Minna and Suleja Emirates visions and strategic frameworks, considering online platforms and in-person focus groups and workshops, taking into account public health and pandemics (like COVID-19) and epidemics restrictions (tools)
- » Develop effective mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of integrated development plans, programmes, projects and specific, showcase, pilot projects that link and are relevant to Niger State Urban Policy (M&E)
- » Develop participatory IDP training materials and facilitate learning sessions for the Niger State government among other partners (tools and training)
- » Develop the MIDP and SIDP public launch and dissemination and communication strategy; this is currently supported by online volunteers (advocacy for the IDPs)
- » Support local government authorities in Niger State in the formulation and implementation of the MIDP and SIDP (continuous technical and operational support)

## Support for the Implementation and Monitoring of the New Urban Agenda in Basque Country, Spain

UN-Habitat and Basque Country, Spain, share the objective of contributing to the solidary development of the people and cooperating in areas of mutual interest related to the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in cities. Among others, these are strengthening the capacities of sub-national authorities and other partners to respond positively to the opportunities presented by urbanization, in order to transform cities into practical laboratories of multi-dimensional processes - economic, social and environmental - of sustainable development.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2019 between UN-Habitat and Basque Country Government, Spain, the project is to strengthen the capacities of the NUA partners to respond to the opportunities and challenges of sustainable urbanization in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the NUA. It corresponds to an effort of systematization, strategic orientation and coherence of public policies aimed at improving the potential of the urban territory of the Basque Country to offer opportunities for economic growth, sustainability and social cohesion. This is mainly done in two components:



Urban Agenda of the Basque Country

### PROJECT PROGRESS:

The first phase of the project, which was finalized in 2021, has made it possible to advance in the support for the definition, debate and discussion of the implementation strategy of the Urban Agenda of Euskadi - Bultzatu 2050.

This implementation strategy, carried out under the supervision of the heads of the Environment, Territorial Planning and Housing Department of the Basque Government, was advanced in two of its main pillars:

1. Supporting the implementation of UN-Habitat's mandate and providing added value to its normative work in its relations with the NUA partners through an effective strategy of knowledge generation, exchange of experiences, promotion of alliances and networks, awareness-raising, and advocacy to achieve more socially inclusive, safe, sustainable and efficient cities.
2. Promoting exchange of experiences, promotion of alliances and networks, and support in the implementation strategy of the NUA in the Basque Country.



- **Mapping of actors:** UN-Habitat carried out a mapping of the actors in the territory to identify their competencies and an analysis of the alignment of the strategic priorities of the competent administrations with the lines of action and axes of the urban agenda. This creates a perspective on the coherence of the agenda with other policies and agendas developed in the territory, which makes it possible to detect the synergies to be strengthened and the weaknesses to overcome, and to articulate their implementation in a coherent and coordinated manner with other institutions.

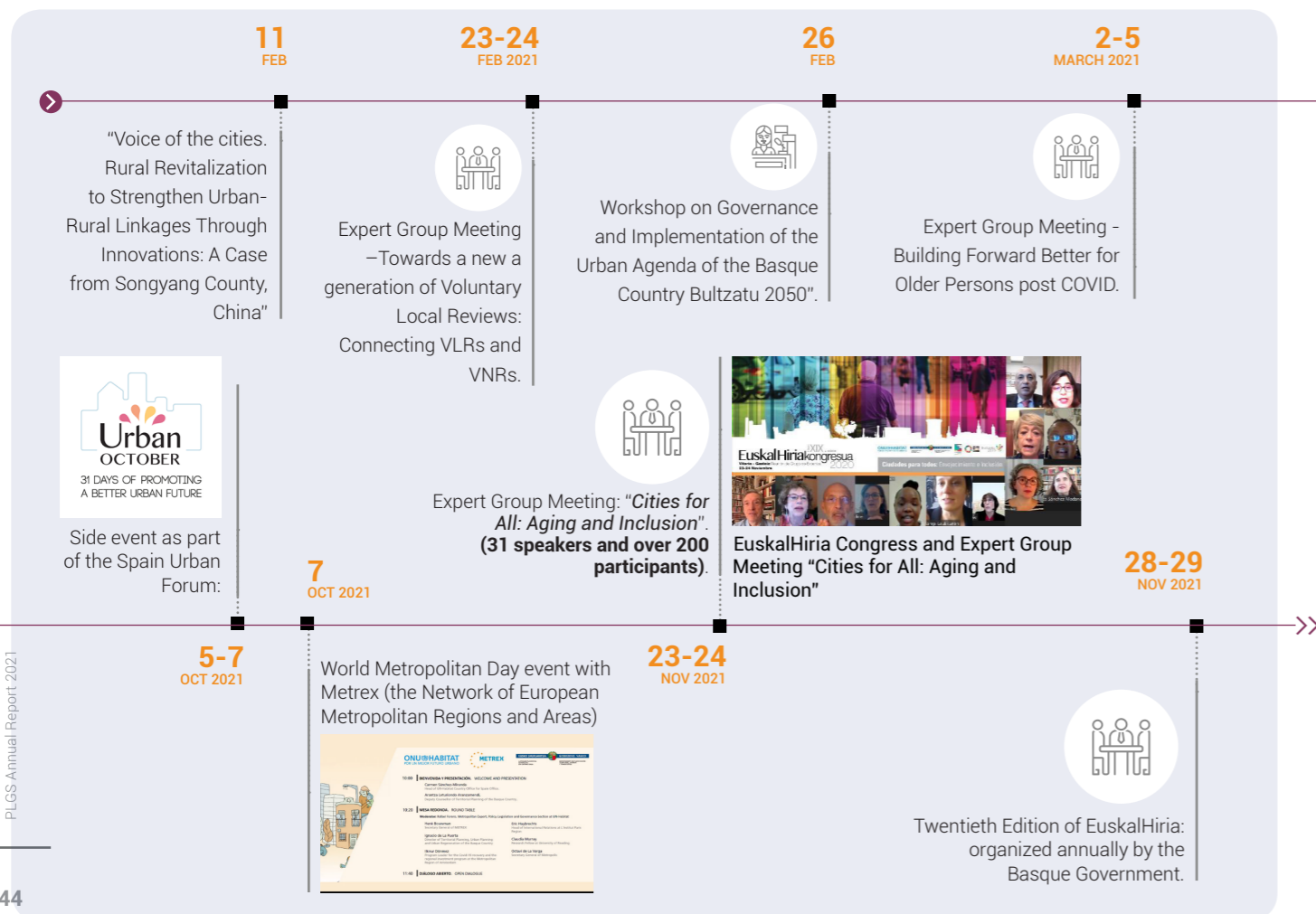
- ▪
**Definition of the governance system:** This contributes to defining the framework of action shared with all agents that have potential intervention capacity in its implementation, in which the role of each of them is defined, generating joint work and meeting spaces to build the implementation process in a shared and consensual way, thus allowing their appropriation of the agenda.

## INCLUSIVITY

To ensure the processes were inclusive and to gain buy-in of the stakeholders, several consultative workshops were held with relevant actors in the Basque Country, including with the representatives of different departments of the Government of the Basque Country, provincial councils, the Association of Basque Municipalities (EUEDEL), other civil society actors such as the Academy and the College of Architects, as well as representatives of the private sector.

## ADVOCACY

The project has continued using advocacy and awareness to enhance inclusivity and visibility and promote the Urban Agenda of the Basque Country as an innovative urban policy and a case study at a global level. In this sense, among other activities, relevant global events were organized or participated in to promote a better understanding of the urban contexts of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda and the Urban Agenda of Basque Country, Spain. Some of the major events the project was involved in include:



➤ Side event as part of the Spain Urban Forum: Urban Agendas as tools to increase multilevel collaboration



## OUTLOOK 2022

The second phase of the project is currently in the implementation phase. Some of the activities planned in this second phase, include:

### 2022

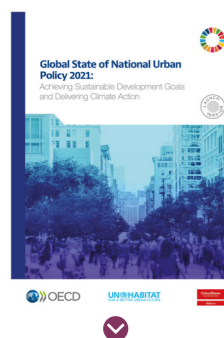


#### CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

- » Conceptualization and definition of the Monitoring Framework for the Urban Agenda of the Basque Country
- » Articulation of pilot projects for the implementation of the Urban Agenda of the Basque Country
- » Definition of mechanisms for mainstreaming the Urban Agenda of the Basque Country in the policies of the Government of the Basque Country
- » Support in the organization of the meeting of the urban agenda and SDG localization working group
- » Organization of an Expert Group Meeting on urban regeneration for a green and fair socio-economic recovery



## NORMATIVE TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS ON URBAN POLICY



### GLOBAL STATE OF NATIONAL URBAN POLICY 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted an opportunity and the potential for national urban policy (NUP) to shape more resilient, green and inclusive cities as part of countries recovery packages. The scale and urgency of pressing and emerging urban challenges has become evident and has given prominence to NUP as a tool to build back better. NUP is increasingly used as an instrument that facilitates achieving sustainable urban development as a shared responsibility across levels of government.

The Global State of National Urban Policy 2021 report reviews the NUPs of 162 countries across the world. Building on the first edition, launched in 2018, the report takes stock and provides analysis

of form, scope and stage of development of NUP for policymakers and urban professionals. As such, this global monitoring aims to unpack how and in what forms NUPs have been developed, implemented and assessed globally.

The report assists national governments in advancing NUP processes, especially in improving links with Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, and mainstreaming climate action into NUP. The report is a collaborative project of the OECD, UN-Habitat and Cities Alliance, and an outcome of the National Urban Policy Programme, a global partnership launched in 2016 at the Habitat III Conference.



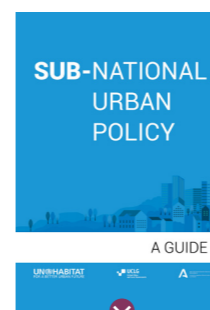
Views: 2,482  
Downloads: 1,428  
Likes: 167

300+ webinar participants (launch)

Total social media impressions -  
200,000

### ➤ APPLICATION OF GSNUP 2021

1. Implementation of the UN-Habitat-OECD and Cities Alliance Partnership
2. The preparation of the National Urban Policy Programme Phase 2 (USD4.2 million)
3. Contribution to UN-Habitat's Annual report
4. Contribution to the OECD Working Party on Urban Policy
5. SDG reporting target 1.1a on National Urban Policy
6. Updating NUP database (<https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/national-urban-policy-database/>)
7. Continuous dialogue towards the Fourth International Conference on National Urban Policy (ICNUP4).



### SUBNATIONAL URBAN POLICY GUIDE

is an instrument to support urban management for governments and stakeholders, especially at the sub-national level. It is based on experiences collected at different levels of sub-national governments and regions around the world. It broadens knowledge and commitment to better understand what sub-national urban policies are, what they are for, who benefits from them and the problems they try to solve. In the guide, readers will find suggestions on how to develop sub-national urban policies, the necessary phases of the process, as well as citizen participation and multi-level governance aspects of sub-national urban policy.

The guide offers governments and stakeholders the conceptual and methodological aspects for the development of sub-national urban policies and sets out the steps for the successful development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of sub-national urban policies through a flexible process that adapts to different contexts.

This guide is a tool for sub-national governments, policymakers and all stakeholders in urban development. It guides the approach to urban policies at the appropriate level to achieve sustainable development objectives and to articulate and coordinate levels of government in this endeavour.



Views: 1,142  
Downloads: 732  
Likes: 699

- The guide has been applied for trainings on Sub-National Urban Policy in three cities in **Thailand**. (Hatyai, Chiang Mai and Khon Kaen)



# URBAN LEGISLATION

## LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

1.1 1.2 2.1 3.3 4.1



Inclusive, Vibrant Neighborhoods and Communities Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor (RISE-UP)



High COVID-19 relevance



Capacity development

SP OUTCOME AREAS

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES

SDGs

Effective urban legislation is an indispensable pillar of sustainable urban development as it provides an inclusive and human rights-based guiding framework. Good quality urban law provides predictability and order in urban development from a wide range of perspectives, including spatial, societal, economic and environmental viewpoints. Through this, it contributes to investment, strong economic performance and wealth creation and supports the process of defining the methods of implementation for all thematic areas of urban development, including but not limited to inclusive access to land, housing, basic services, urban governance, planning and design, and climate change mitigation.



The New Urban Agenda identifies legislation as one of the four fundamental drivers of change for sustainable urbanization, along with policy and governance, planning and financing mechanisms. These drivers are context specific and UN-Habitat is supporting cities and countries to develop their own successful means for deploying them and overcoming any barriers that might prevent their full implementation.<sup>2</sup>

The lack of or inadequacy of inclusive, effective and enabling urban legislation in many cities and countries has continued to exacerbate the negative impacts of rapid urbanization. Growing inequality is common in many developing countries and more people are becoming vulnerable. Ineffective legislation can cause further developmental initiatives to contribute to further inequality in our cities and communities, such as urban planning, public spaces, basic services, land tenure security and economic benefits.

The role of UN-Habitat's work on urban legislation is to support national and sub-national governments to develop and improve inclusive, effective and enabling legislation through the development of technical and operational support, normative tools and knowledge products. In addition, UN-Habitat (PLGS) continues to develop mechanisms for the creation and dissemination of legal knowledge and a network to develop capacity and access external expertise, with the aim of producing:

- an increased awareness of legal systems operating at the city and national levels
- recommendations for more inclusive and robust strategies to reform urban legal systems
- improved capacities of local authorities to design and implement legal reforms

In 2021, PLGS and partners continued strengthening the capacities of national and sub-national governments to develop and improve more inclusive and effective legislation. These improved capacities have enabled them to be aware of the need for improved legislation and equipped them with the capacity to catalyse, initiate, develop and implement legal instruments in their cities and countries.

<sup>2</sup> UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023, pg. 57. [https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-09/strategic\\_plan\\_2020-2023.pdf](https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-09/strategic_plan_2020-2023.pdf)

## PROGRESS ON PROJECTS

### A. Integrated Spatial Plan for Environmental and Socio-Economic Resilience: Legal Assessment of Tajik Legislation

Like many countries, climate change has continued to be the core driver behind the significant increase of natural disasters in Tajikistan. Despite the socioeconomic, spatial and environmental challenges, there are opportunities for the country to shape urban development to increase resilience and foster economic prosperity. However, effective legislation needed to support mitigation of these risks and their impacts remains fragmented, especially in relation to urban planning processes.

In 2018, as part of the Tajik Government's efforts to address the challenges faced in Khorog city, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO), several forums were held, among other inclusive and participatory processes, that identified four development priorities:

- 1. access to safe habitats, which highlights the impact that natural hazards risks have on the community
- 2. improved access to resilient services
- 3. enhanced regional connectivity
- 4. meeting the needs of a changing demographic

The identified challenges indicated that resilience strategies needed to consider the increasing unpredictability of natural hazards and, as a result, the governor of GBAO has actively engaged the international community and the Aga Khan Development Network<sup>3</sup> (AKDN) to support development of a programme to enhance the resilience of Khorog to environmental, social and demographic risks. The AKDN, directly through its Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) and jointly with UN-Habitat, supported the strengthening of the capacity of the local government by providing

technical assistance, issuing a set of spatial strategic plans, guidelines and policies integrated with governance and management plans, to guide the future development of Khorog. Specifically, PLGS contribution to the project's objective was to analyse the legislation of Tajikistan focusing on urban planning and climate change issues and to provide recommendations on the issues of concern.

<sup>3</sup> The Aga Khan Development Network is network of organizations that support development initiatives through in the thematic areas of agriculture and food; security; architecture; Civil society; Culture; Education; Enterprise development; Environment and climate; Financial inclusion; Habitat; Health; Historic cities; Humanitarian assistance; Industrial development; Infrastructure development; Media; Music and Tourism promotion

## Progress and results

### 1<sup>ST</sup> TECHNICAL TRAINING

62% Familiar with SDGs



### KEY FINDINGS

#### CRITICAL URBAN CHALLENGES:

Poverty, Unemployment, Affordable housing, Vulnerability to natural disasters and poor access to basic services etc..

### 2<sup>ND</sup> TECHNICAL TRAINING

15 Specialists



### KEY RESULTS

increased knowledge about the definition of resilience in this context; increased knowledge of the various tools developed by UN-Habitat and; a practical understanding of how the existing tools and concepts can be applied in Khorog

During the diagnosis phase of the project, UN-Habitat prepared a Capacity and Training Needs Assessment Survey where 62 per cent of the respondents mentioned that they are very familiar with the Sustainable Development Goals. Among key findings from the capacity building survey, the critical urban challenges identified were poverty, unemployment, affordable housing, vulnerability to natural disasters and poor access to basic services. The survey also indicated that limited environmental, economic and social impact assessments was a concern that limits Khorog's sustainable urbanization, followed by disjuncture in vertical and horizontal planning integration, and limited enforcement or implementation of master plans.

A second technical training on resilience conducted in-place was attended by 15 specialists in various fields. It strengthened the foundation of knowledge

on the city's existing conditions, challenges and opportunities, to ensure a successful and long-lasting impact from the next stages of the project. Key results included, among others: increased knowledge about the definition of resilience in this context; increased knowledge of the various tools developed by UN-Habitat; and a practical understanding of how the existing tools and concepts can be applied in Khorog.

The online and offline trainings and workshops on PLGS part displayed the results of an analysis and assessment of more than 30 resources of Tajik legislation conducted using the [Law and Climate Change Toolkit](#).

Due to the effective and innovative features of the toolkit it was possible to:

- find gaps in legislation in the areas of urban planning and climate change and give recommendations, considering all the specifics, to normalize those processes mentioned
- analyse the powers of governmental bodies related to urban planning and climate change issues and provide the recommendations relevant to their areas of activities.

The policy and legal analyses in Tajikistan have triggered the following results:

- improved understanding of the strengths and weakness of the legal framework by national and local authorities through the initial diagnosis workshop and subsequent technical training, capacity building surveys as well as close cooperation with direct beneficiaries (city dwellers).

- enhanced quality of the work on spatial planning thanks to the integrated approach that combines legal and financial issues, state structure component as well as thematic ones consisting of urban planning and climate change.
- creation of the basis for legal and institutional reforms based on the comprehensive legal analysis using the Law and Climate Change Toolkit (LCCT) that highlighted the gaps and areas for improvement.
- improved understanding of the structural organization of the relevant authorities by analysing their legal mandates and powers, and making proposals to improve their overall effectiveness and quality of their services.
- developed quality recommendations derived from the analysis using LCCT through global best international practices related to urban planning and climate change.



### OUTLOOK 2022

Phase 2 of the project has been approved, following the successful completion of the first phase in September 2021. PLGS's role will be focused on designing climate responsive planning standards and building codes to address most of the recommendations provided during the first phase.

### TESTIMONIES

The project has had positive reactions from its beneficiary, Khorog Regional Government, as demonstrated by the positive remarks published in the local broadcast, websites and in social media.

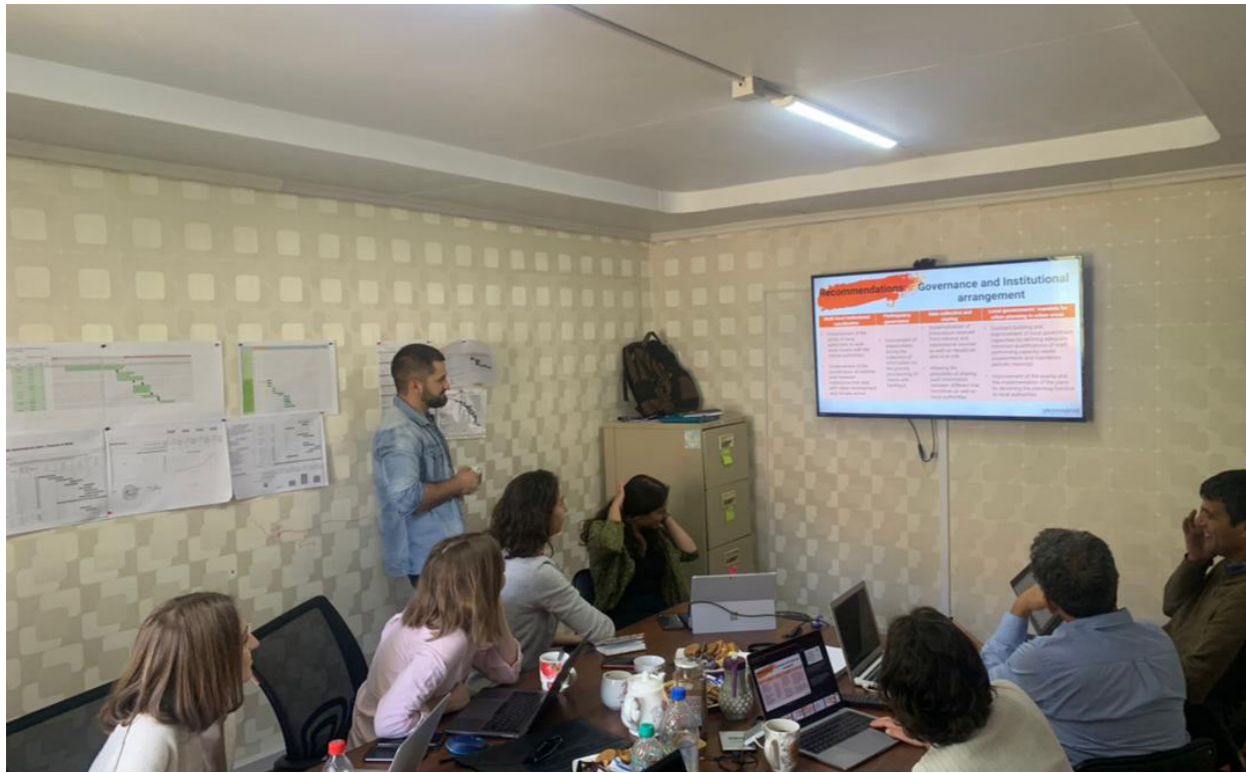
- » Video prepared by Regional Governor's office from the meeting with the UN-Habitat team
- » Social media post by Regional Governor's office from the meeting with the UN-Habitat team
- » Social media post by Regional Governor's office from the steering committee

Article "UN-Habitat's Urban Lab Complete Successful Mission to Khorog, Tajikistan" posted on UN-Habitat's official website.

Commenting on the recommendations made by UN-Habitat, the Governor of GBAO, Yodgor Fayzov, noted: "The urban analysis, findings and recommendations presented here are incredibly important and need to 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."

The Chief Executive Officer of Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH), Hadi Husani, thanked UN-Habitat for the results of various studies and outcomes, stating: "This was a tremendous exercise and you have been able to visualize and give us a sense of Khorog, which, in many ways, has not been seen before...giving us a sense of the analytical tools that will inform the town planning - the ultimate output of this exercise."





Internal session of UN-Habitat and AKAH in Khorog, Tajikistan, May 2021



Meeting of UN-Habitat and AKAH teams with the Lead Architect of Khorog, April 2021

## Strengthening Capacity of the National Government to Develop an Effective Legal Framework for Urban Planning and Development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As part of the implementation of its urban sector strategy, and funded by the World Bank (IDA), the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) requested UN-Habitat, through PLGS, for technical assistance in the process of elaborating and validating the draft Urban Planning and Construction Code of DRC.

Therefore, the objective of the project is to provide technical assistance to DRC's Ministry of Urban Planning and Housing to strengthen the capacity of the national government to develop an effective legal framework for urban planning and construction in consultation with stakeholders.



The expected accomplishments are:

1. Improved capacity of the government to design and draft effective laws to implement policies.
2. Improved quality of stakeholder participation in the development of legal documents.
3. Improved development of the draft law on the Urban Planning and Construction Code in the DRC

### Project progress:



In 2021, PLGS carried out an in-depth analysis of the DRC's policy and legal frameworks. Using UN-Habitat's tools, such as the **Planning Law Assessment Framework** and the **Slum Upgrading Legal Assessment Tool** and other diagnostic tools, PLGS identified the legal framework strengths and weaknesses and provided suitable recommendations.

The legal analyses conducted and the capacity building programme put in place will support strengthening the capacity of institutional actors in legal drafting and will improve the draft law on urban planning and construction. Some of the policies and legal frameworks analysed include:



- The first and second drafts of the urban planning and construction code.
- Institutional analysis and legal baseline mapping.
- Mapping of the processes (elaboration of urban planning documents, urban planning authorizations).
- Evaluation of the legal instruments' effectiveness, focusing on consistency of policy objectives and the capacity needed to fulfil these objectives.
- The framework for the improvement of informal housing and access to basic services.
- The fundamental rules in terms of urban planning and construction.

Following the detailed analysis of policy and legal frameworks, PLGS and the UN-Habitat Country Office provided **10 recommendations** to aid improvement of the draft urban planning and construction code. The recommendations covered a wide range of aspects, including on the form; structure; measurability of outcomes; citizen participation; human rights and coordination mechanisms for the draft code.

As part of the next expected accomplishment on institutional capacity development, UN-Habitat (PLGS) developed a **capacity building strategy**, among other knowledge products. The strategy will be implemented in 2022 to provide applied knowledge and skills on participatory law making to support the law reform processes that will take place on the ground.

The topics covered by the planned trainings are **urban law reform; effective participation in the legal drafting process; dividing lines between policy and legislation; and legislative drafting.**

## 2022

DEVELOPPING AN EFFECTIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR URBAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO.

- » Following development of the capacity building strategy in 2021, PLGS and partners will conduct trainings to strengthen the capacity of national and local government actors among other stakeholders in participatory legal drafting processes.

## Urban Development and Sanitation Programme in Guinea (SANITA)

The legal framework for urban development in Guinea is characterized by unchanged or outdated legal texts and their inadequacy and lack of application in a context of increasing demographic changes, increased inequality, and a need for basic services and infrastructure as well as access to decent and affordable housing. The functioning of the institutions provided for by the laws is also subject to several constraints such as the lack of human, financial and material resources.

The Urban Development and Sanitation Programme (SANITA) in Guinea, supported by the European Development Fund, was established by the government to address urban development challenges, including sanitation and quality of life of urban populations in Conakry and Kindia cities. The process to improve the health situation encourages an integrated territorial approach while promoting inclusive and sustainable urban and territorial policies.

It has two specific objectives namely:



i. Strengthening of urban governance at the local and national levels under the responsibility of UN-Habitat



ii. Better access to basic sanitation services for urban populations in Conakry and Kindia neighbourhoods with the support of the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel).



UN-Habitat's objective to *strengthen urban governance at the local and national levels* also has two secondary objectives:



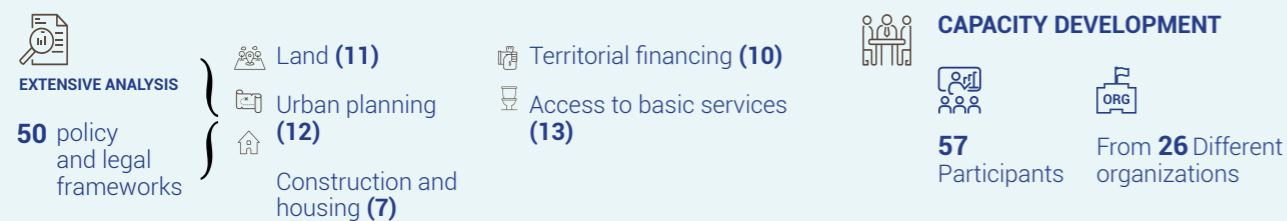
**Secondary objective 1.** To improve, in a participatory manner, the legal, regulatory and institutional framework of urban development at the national level, in particular in the city of Conakry.

For this secondary objective, progress made includes the finalization of the assessment of the legal framework for urban development, the preparation of the preliminary report on the national urban policy and the organization of a validation workshop.



**Secondary objective 2.** Strengthen the institutional capacity and skills of stakeholders in the development and implementation of urban and territorial policy and planning documents through a participatory, gender-sensitive approach. For this objective, a capacity development strategy has been developed and the training workshops to enhance capacity of stakeholders will be carried out in 2022.

## PROJECT PROGRESS



The year 2021 saw the completion of the assessment of the legal framework for urban development in Guinea. Using UN-Habitat's diagnostic tools, the "Planning Law Assessment Framework" and "Slum Upgrading Legal Assessment Tool", PLGS carried out extensive analysis of **50 policy and legal frameworks related to land (11), urban planning (12), construction and housing (7), territorial financing (10) and access to basic services (13)**. Following the analysis, a **synthesis report** was developed, which outlines strengths and weaknesses (in areas of land, urban planning and public space, housing, build-ability rights and building codes, access to basic services, and land-based finance) of the current urban legal framework of Guinea,

with recommendations for better implementation and enforcement of the regulatory frameworks and urban plans.

To enhance an inclusive and participatory approach in the legal analysis, workshops were held in December 2020 and July 2021. These made it possible to mobilize several actors from the administration, civil society, public institutions and community groups. **Attended by 57 participants from 26 different organizations**, the workshops provided a fitting platform to validate the outcomes of the analysis and provided insightful reviews and recommendations to improve the legal review processes. Some of the recommendations from participants include:

- Proposal to translate the different codes into national languages for a better accessibility to the population
- Increased participation of academia members to share their expert reviews and input
- Proposal on affordability of housing
- Improvements on land administration

**2022**

**URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND SANITATION PROGRAMME IN GUINEA (SANITA)**

- » The outcomes and recommendations of the legal analyses thus carried out will support the broad objectives of the project which are capacity building, the development of the National Land Use Plan, the Urban Master Plan for Greater Conakry, the development of the national urban policy and pilot projects in precarious neighborhoods.



➤ Participants and stakeholders following proceedings during the validation workshop in July 2021 © UN-Habitat



The SANITA project has been featured in the local broadcast as well as on social media



[Journal 20H, DJOMA TV](#)



[Projet SANITA Villes Durables : rencontre des acteurs, en vue de l'amélioration du cadre juridique du secteur de l'habitat](#)



[Un cadre juridique de l'analyse de la construction et de l'habitat en cours de validation à Conakry](#)

#### TESTIMONIAL

"Today, we are focusing on the entire legal framework of the construction and housing sector (...). These questions, we ask ourselves, we will provide answers together dear participants. The results of these analyses will allow us to pinpoint the positive and less positive points of the legal framework for urban development in our country, to make suggestions for its improvement."

Mr. Ibrahim Momo Camara, National Director of Land Management and Urban Planning (DATU), during the validation workshop of July 2021

### Syria Joint Programme on Housing, Land and Property Rights

Over the past decade, the conflict in Syria has caused immense devastation to the built environment of countless cities, towns, and rural communities. The conflict has resulted in the greatest case of forced migration witnessed in the modern era, with millions living both as refugees and internally displaced persons. This situation has resulted in several key issues: *Displacement and return; incoherent law and policy; incapacitated housing, land, and property HLP institutions; damage to housing and insecure housing and land tenure*. Under these conditions, majority of Syrians' (HLP) rights have been violated and neglected.

The Joint Programme on Housing, Land and Property (HLP) in Syria, funded by the European Union, is made up of several organizations, including UN-Habitat, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Programme and the Norwegian Refugee Council. The programme supports United Nations actors, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and, indirectly, the government entities to restore pre-conflict HLP rights and establish a path for urban rehabilitation and development that respects the HLP rights of all Syrians.

One way the Joint Programme works to achieve this is by providing contextualized analysis, primarily in the form of analytical legal papers, reports and technical guidance notes, on a series of legal issues related to housing, land, and property rights in Syria.

This knowledge-building work is intended to integrate the restoration and protection of HLP rights into all peacebuilding efforts in the country and, as such, the ultimate goals of the programme can be categorized into three areas:



**1. Increase knowledge** of the HLP institutional and legal framework, including risk identification and treatment options, via research and reporting



**2. Support a process for HLP legal reform** via legal review and recommendation.



**3. Build capacity** of government institutions and international actors via knowledge sharing, legal consultation and advice.

In 2021, several achievements were realized to improve HLP rights of all Syrians. As part of the legal analysis and technical guidance, the Joint Programme finalized nearly 40 outputs, with UN-Habitat responsible for half of these. Some of those that were fully developed during this period include:



1. An international comparative analysis of Syrian HLP law and international best practices (co-developed with UNHCR); it provides recommendations to strengthen Syria's existing and future legal framework surrounding six key cross-cutting housing, land and property issues that pose significant challenges and opportunities in the post-conflict environment: (1) property restitution, (2) cadastral reconstruction, (3) dispute resolution, (4) compensation for damaged property, (5) urban redevelopment, and (6) expropriations and evictions.



2. A guidance note on secondary occupation: The guidance note identifies **six predominant typologies** of secondary occupation in Syria and provides legal guidance and operational recommendations for responding to these select number of secondary occupation scenarios that have been reported in Syria over the past decade. Furthermore, the guidance note sheds light upon the international and national legal frameworks pertinent to secondary occupation and identifies the major challenges to resolving instances of secondary occupation.



3. A report on security of tenure in informal settlements, and;



4. A comparative assessment of HLP-related laws issued prior to and after the start of the conflict in 2011 (co-developed with NRC and UNDP).

In addition to the reports, the knowledge gathered from the Joint Programme was also used to develop an urban governance case study on Syria included in the recently finalized publication on urban governance case studies from 10 countries (**Afghanistan, Cameroon, Guinea, Niger State, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria, Tajikistan and Uganda**). The publication will support an assessment of existing gaps in urban governance as well as the identification of best practices and potential areas of intervention. The findings of this research will also serve to inform public officials and other stakeholders working to protect the rights of urban populations on possible actions to improve urban governance for sustainable development.

Human rights and social inclusion among other cross-cutting issues have been central in the implementation of the project. The outputs of the Joint Programme have identified several issues related to social inclusion and made recommendations on how the system can and should be reformed to protect the housing, land and property rights of vulnerable groups. Recommendations include extended rights claiming periods (from 30 days to one year, for example), flexibility in evidentiary standards (alternative proofs of HLP rights accepted in rights claiming procedures) and third-party representation (broadened family representation allowances), removal of security clearance for power of attorney appointments, public awareness campaigns on digital and social media, and gender-sensitive legal clinics.

In an effort to further reinforce the two countries' response to climate change, UN-Habitat, in collaboration with urban planning and architecture graduate students and professors from the University of Michigan used the [Law and Climate Change Toolkit](#) (LCCT) to carry out a comprehensive analysis of over **100 legal** and policy frameworks in relation to urban planning and climate change. The tool is comprised of several thematic modules, including the Urban Law Module, which was developed in recognition of the close nexus between urbanization and climate change.

This module is comprised of five sections which, in its totality, facilitated the review of laws at the national level in **Colombia** and **India** as well as regional (**Rajasthan**, India) and local (**Manizales**, Colombia and Jaipur, India) levels. The toolkit provided a distinct opportunity to analyse synergies between climate change laws and policies and multi-level planning instruments. More specifically, the project focused on the importance of **territorial planning instruments** and **multi-level governance** to promote low-emissions urban development and ensure that vulnerable communities adapt to climate change and flourish.

The Law and Climate Change Toolkit is an online and open database developed by a partnership between the United Nations Climate Change secretariat, United Nations Environment, and the Commonwealth Secretariat working in close collaboration with partner countries, other international organizations and research institutions. The toolkit provides a global resource to help countries put in place the legal frameworks necessary for effective domestic implementation of the Paris Agreement and their nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

UN-Habitat specifically developed the urban planning and land-use module of the toolkit.

For instance, in Colombia, working closely with the Colombian Ministry of Environment Development and Ministry of Housing, the legal assessment focused on five key domains: (i) governance and institutional arrangements; (ii) planning instruments; (iii) planning for adaptation; (iv) planning for mitigation; and (v) financial and economic instruments. The findings of the legal analysis underscored Colombia's priorities as: reducing greenhouse gas emissions through urban planning and form; making use of green spaces for climate services; ensuring that development approval processes are related to mitigation; prioritizing, as well as incentivizing, strategy development for planned areas that are vulnerable to climate change.

This in-depth analysis in Colombia and India helped identify key areas of strength and opportunity in planning for climate change, with the aim of increasing cities' resilience to climate risks and vulnerabilities through sustainable urban development. The analysis also provided key inputs, such as recommendations for legal adjustments and best practices, to strengthen urban and climate planning policy and legal frameworks at the national, regional and local level, which were shared with the national and local authorities.

### Accelerating Climate Action in Colombia and India

LOCAL AREA	PROGRAMME EMPHASIS	RESULTS
 <p>Rajasthan (Manizales) India (Jaipur, India)</p>	 <p>Territorial planning instruments</p>  <p>Multi-level governance</p>	<p>Comprehensive analysis of over <b>100 legal and policy frameworks</b> by the University of Michigan</p>

The impacts of climate change can be traced all over the world. Countries keep facing such challenges as continuous rise in greenhouse gas emissions and overall temperature, shifts in rainfall patterns as well as a rise in the sea level. Adaptation to their effects together with mitigation actions have become a priority for many countries. Effective urban legislation plays a pivotal role in enhancing the resilience of cities and communities to manage climate change. It provides frameworks to guide urban development in a sustainable manner, laying rules for decision making, and sets the context within which national and local authorities are expected to fulfil their role in addressing the emerging climate challenges.


Colombia and India have been addressing climate change at the broadest level in their legislation through the development of climate change-friendly regulations in various spheres as well as including them in their development plans, such as state action plans on climate change.

It is also expected to help improve responsiveness to climate change, enhancing their cities' resilience and sustainability and to allow the countries to better align with their international commitments to climate mitigation and adaptation, and implement their nationally determined contributions (NDC).

In carrying out analysis of policy and legal frameworks of Colombia and India, the participatory, integrated, comparative, inclusive, "learning by doing" features of the toolkit have triggered:

- improved understanding of strengths and weakness of the legal framework by national/regional/local authorities
- establishment of close cooperation relations with national/regional/local authorities
- enhanced quality of planning work thanks to the integrated approach that combines legal, financial issues, state structure components and thematic ones consisting of urban planning and climate change
- creation of the basis for reforms conduction in the areas affected by the LCCT
- structural definition of the powers of relevant authorities and improving the quality of their services
- developed quality recommendations through introduction of best international practices
- developed quality of recommendations through introduction of best international practices.

In July 2021, the Michigan Association of Planning, the Michigan chapter of the American Planning Association, selected the project "Accelerating Climate Action in Colombia and India" for the Outstanding Graduate Student Project for the 2021 Planning Excellence Award.



**Michigan Association of Planning**  
 A chapter of the American Planning Association

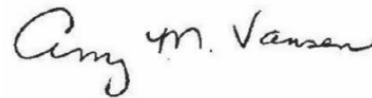

On behalf of the Michigan Association of Planning, the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association, I am pleased to inform you that *Accelerating Climate Action in Colombia and India* has been selected as a recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Student Project award for the 2021 Planning Excellence Awards.

A jury of APA Michigan Chapter professionals reviewed and selected your project, and they included the following comments in their recommendation:

"The comprehensive scope of the project is impressive, particularly because it involved assessing and providing recommendations for legal systems outside of the United States. The UN-Habitat Law and Climate Change Toolkit, used by the students to evaluate national, regional and local policies in Columbia and India, could be used as a framework in this country as well."

**Congratulations on this prestigious award!**

Sincerely,

Amy M. Vansen, AICP  
 Director of Information and Programs

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Publications on Issue:**

- **Accelerating Climate Action in Colombia. A review of planning and climate law framework** prepared in collaboration of Michigan University and UN-Habitat;
- Publication "Accelerating Climate Action: India" (**Part 1** and **Part 2**)

**Links to additional information on the project:**

- **A video-message** from Juan Sebastian Herrera Zapata, Coordinador Ciudades, Ministerio de Vivienda, Colombia;
- **A video** on the process and findings using Law and Climate Change Toolkit prepared by students of the University of Michigan.



## NORMATIVE TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

### UrbanLex Database



UrbanLex is a free global database which aims to improve access to the legislation that regulate the urban environment. The database is UN-Habitat's principle means of collecting and openly sharing information on urban laws from around the world. In 2021, the database continued to be updated regularly with laws globally, with 212 urban laws from South Africa and Syria uploaded, bringing the total to **2269**. Additionally, to enhance its effectiveness, visibility and wider reach, the database is now accessible in 5 UN languages. UrbanLex also underwent a major revamp in 2021 and will be launched in early 2022.

### Comparative Analysis of Non-Profit Housing Legal Frameworks



UN-Habitat has conducted a comparative analysis of the non-profit housing sector in five countries (Austria, Brazil, England, Netherlands and South Africa), which serve as best practice legal frameworks for a robust and sustainable social housing sector. Through this assessment, UN-Habitat seeks to promote the participation of the non-profit sector in the provision of social housing to meet the demand for urban housing needs and to bridge the housing affordability gap.

This document is intended to not only help countries create or strengthen their legal frameworks to support the participation of non-profit organizations in the housing sector, but also proposes new governance frameworks to facilitate this.

The primary purpose of this analysis is to provide a framework for the successful development, support and sustenance of a non-profit housing sector in any country that seeks to adopt this approach to diversifying the housing stock.

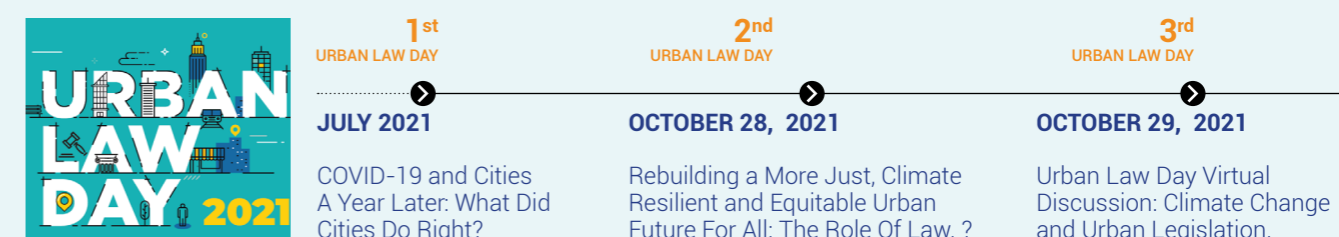
Naturally, its application depends on development priorities. To capitalize on the best practice available, a country must first conduct an internal assessment on its housing needs, existing policy and legal framework, and financial means. Given this backdrop, UN-Habitat has developed three components of the assessment framework, which contains a further ten elements that can be adapted to a country's objectives:

- a. **Government and NGOs relationship** - Requirements for licensing, registration and internal governance; cooperation and partnership frameworks and business plan and financing instruments.
- b. **NGOs and housing provision mechanisms** - Access to land and housing provision/acquisition; planning, housing standards and approval process; maintenance and operation systems.
- c. **NGOs and beneficiaries' relationship** - Beneficiaries' criteria; housing tenure options; rights and duties; and community participation.

As part of the package, the tool contains a checklist covering the three components of the assessment framework which contains a group of questions to be answered with a yes or no - that would illustrate the lack or presence of a requirement. Based on the gaps identified, users can easily engage in discussion on the necessary legislative reforms for robust social housing systems.

## ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS ON URBAN LEGISLATION

### Urban Law Days



The [Urban Law Day](#) continues to serve as a vital platform for stakeholders to exchange views, network, present new research findings, emerging issues and better understand the role of urban legislation in sustainable city development. In 2021, three Urban Law Days were co-organized by UN-Habitat and partners, covering various thematic topics related to urban law.

The partners include University of Witwatersrand, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS), Fordham School of Law and the South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability (CLES).

The first Urban Law Day held in **July 2021** was themed "Covid-19 and Cities A Year Later: What Did Cities Do Right?" Organized by the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies in collaboration with UN-Habitat.

This 8th Urban Law Day sought to reflect on the past year, evaluating policies, plans, regulations and actions that were adopted by or operated in cities with the objective of assessing their success or otherwise.

The discussion was aimed at promoting learning, knowledge sharing and exchange of information and experiences which will better inform the creation of “future-ready cities” that are better prepared to deal with similar crises.

**SOME OF THE KEY LESSONS LEARNED ARE:**

- Systems of multi-level governance helped cities to be more resilient during the crisis
- Adaptability to use budgets and shift resources was key to find tailored solutions and provide emergency support
- In times of emergency, safeguarding human rights is imperative
- Clear and transparent communication between government and the public is crucial to create compliance and build trust
- Building city resilience for future crises requires holistic approaches to public problem solving

The second Urban Law Day was held on 28 October 2021 and was organized by the South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability (CLES) and the Wits School of Law in collaboration with UN-Habitat. Its title was “Rebuilding a More Just, Climate Resilient and Equitable Urban Future for All: The Role of Law”.

The event took the form of an interactive virtual panel discussion. The Urban Law Day cast light on a couple of areas still in need of further deliberation, research and conversation in the law and cities discourse:

- ▶ Multilevel, multiscale, and multidisciplinary interventions (e.g., for implementing the SDGs) are required.
- ▶ Legal principles give us a normative framework but the nuts and bolts on standards and requirements etc. are most important to effect real change
- ▶ Cities should be bold in terms of taking innovative legal and policy action towards transition and change
- ▶ Law is to create a public good
- ▶ Information on and from, and legally relevant challenges in the urban environment are complex and not always in the control of the state

The third Urban Law Day on 29 October 2021 was organized by the Fordham School of Law in collaboration with UN-Habitat. The theme was “Urban Law Day Virtual Discussion: Climate Change and Urban Legislation”. The event provided a platform to share experiences and lessons on climate change and urban legislation.

The session was also used to introduce UN-Habitat’s Climate Change Initiative, which develops tools and initiatives to support cities and lawmakers in their efforts to reduce the impact of climate change. Additionally, the findings from a case study of climate change and urban legislation in Colombia were shared and discussed by the participants.

**Participation at the European Consortium for Political Research: 8<sup>th</sup> Group on Regulation and Governance**

The European Consortium for Political Research is the leading scholarly society for political scientists in Europe. The organization currently has over 300 institutional members in nearly 50 countries and it bring scholars together across its global network to develop research and grow the discipline through events, publications and research groups.

On 24 June, during the 8th Group Meeting on Regulation and Governance, PLGS gave a presentation on the importance of effective law for development and achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda.





# URBAN GOVERNANCE

## LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

2.1 2.3 3.3

SP OUTCOME AREAS



SDG Cities



People-focused Smart Cities



RISE-UP Cities



SDGs



High COVID-19 relevance



Capacity development




UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2023 establishes governance as one of the four fundamental drivers of change for sustainable urbanization along with policy and legislation, planning and financing mechanisms. These drivers are context specific and UN-Habitat continues to support cities and countries to develop their own successful means for deploying these mechanisms and overcoming any barriers that might prevent their full implementation. Governance is a pillar for planning, financing, and managing cities and communities. However, the limited capacity of governments and weak accountability mechanisms can undermine urban governance initiatives. The lack of, or inadequacy of, inclusivity and community engagement in governance processes also further strains the success and acceptability of governance initiatives.





The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to highlight the crucial role of local governments as front-line responders in crisis response and recovery. Equally, it has demonstrated that national and sub-national governments could promote more inclusive, collaborative and responsive governance to effectively address COVID-19<sup>4</sup> and future crises through establishing multi-stakeholder and multi-level collaboration which would be beneficial to all.

The New Urban Agenda and the SDGs call for institutional coordination at all levels through new governance arrangements, improved multi-level governance structures and multi-stakeholder partnerships. UN-Habitat is tasked with assisting national and local governments to effectively capture domestic revenue, improve fiscal decentralization, manage urban displacement, and use frontier technologies. UN-Habitat continues to focus on developing four sub-areas of governance, which are:

-  i. Multi-level governance and,
-  ii. Multi-stakeholder partnerships.
-  iii. Digital governance

<sup>4</sup> UN Secretary General's Policy Brief on COVID-19 in an Urban World: <https://unhabitat.org/un-secretary-generals-policy-brief-on-covid-19-in-an-urban-world>

## PROGRESS ON PROJECTS

### Pilot Digital Governance Laboratory in Cameroon



People-focused Smart Cities



The Lab is a center of reflection dedicated to innovation, and technologies to improve urban governance in Cameroon cities through digital-based solutions



**PROGRESS: PILOT LAB (MARCH 2021)**  
16 participants

UN-Habitat recognizes the role of national and local governments in achieving sustainable urban development through innovation approaches. Through the flagship programme “People-focused Smart Cities”, UN-Habitat promotes the deployment of technology and other innovative methods to ensure sustainability, inclusivity, prosperity and human rights in cities.

In line with this vision, and as part of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) funded project “Leaving No Place Behind: Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in Selected African Countries”, PLGS and the Cameroon Government collaborated and set up the Cameroon Digital Urban Governance Lab. This pilot project aimed to support Cameroonian cities to move forward with their digital transformation for better urban governance while empowering youth and making them actors of change. Moreover, the Digital Urban Governance Lab is in line with the joint actions of UN-Habitat and the Government of Cameroon in their commitment to build more resilient, inclusive and sustainable human settlements using technology and innovation. The lab is a centre of reflection dedicated to innovation and technologies to improve urban governance in Cameroon cities through digital-based solutions.

It intends to enlighten the various actors on the opportunities of a digital market based on the technology at the service of Cameroonian cities.

In March 2021, PLGS, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and other agencies brought together 16 participants from various backgrounds to be part of the first pilot studio of the Cameroon Digital Urban Governance Lab. The lab provided a platform for participants to develop innovative solutions that address urban challenges in the country. The participants were grouped into teams where they brainstormed and developed innovative proposals to address urban challenges along the themes of participatory financing, basic services and land tenure. The four teams then presented their proposals to a jury made up of officials from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, the United Cities and Towns of Cameroon, the Computer Science Department at the National Advanced School of Engineering of Yaoundé, and UN-Habitat.

Their proposals were then evaluated based on the efficiency of the solutions, the feasibility and sustainability of the proposal and the potential impact of the project. The participants were issued with certificates and the best projects awarded.



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## NORMATIVE TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS



### A GUIDE: LEVERAGING MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE APPROACHES TO PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY

This guide provides knowledge and resources on the multi-level governance strategies and tools that government at all levels (national, subnational and local) can use for emergency health preparedness and the achievement of health equity.

This can be done by incorporating a “health lens” into urban development, drawing lessons from the current COVID-19 pandemic to support vulnerable groups, understand health threats, map epidemics and implement evidence-based public health interventions through use of data and digital technologies. These objectives resonate with the SDGs’ overarching principle of leaving no one and no place behind and its moral imperative of social justice (equal distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society).



[Download](#)

Views: 363  
Downloads: 230  
Likes: 215

- Has been launched and presented for plenary sessions during PLG COPs and during several events co-organized or participated by UN-Habitat (PLGS)



### MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE FOR EFFECTIVE URBAN CLIMATE ACTION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

This guide offers an understanding of how to improve horizontal and vertical coordination among different levels of government as well as leveraging the contributions of non-state actors such as the private sector, civil societies, community organizations and academia, among others. The guide first provides an overview of the nature and magnitude of climate change impacts and risks that developing countries face, then it lays out some key enabling conditions for effective urban-climate action in developing countries that aim to offer guidance to non-state actors and policymakers at all levels of government.



[Download](#)

Views: 39  
Downloads: 281  
Likes: 105

- Has been presented as a learning material for plenary sessions during several events co-organized or participated by UN-Habitat (PLGS)



## ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS RAISING ON URBAN GOVERNANCE

### UN-Habitat Expert Group Meeting on Governance



#### 2-DAY EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON GOVERNANCE

**200+**  
Participants

Cross-cutting insight  
**The need for people-centered approaches** in urban governance.

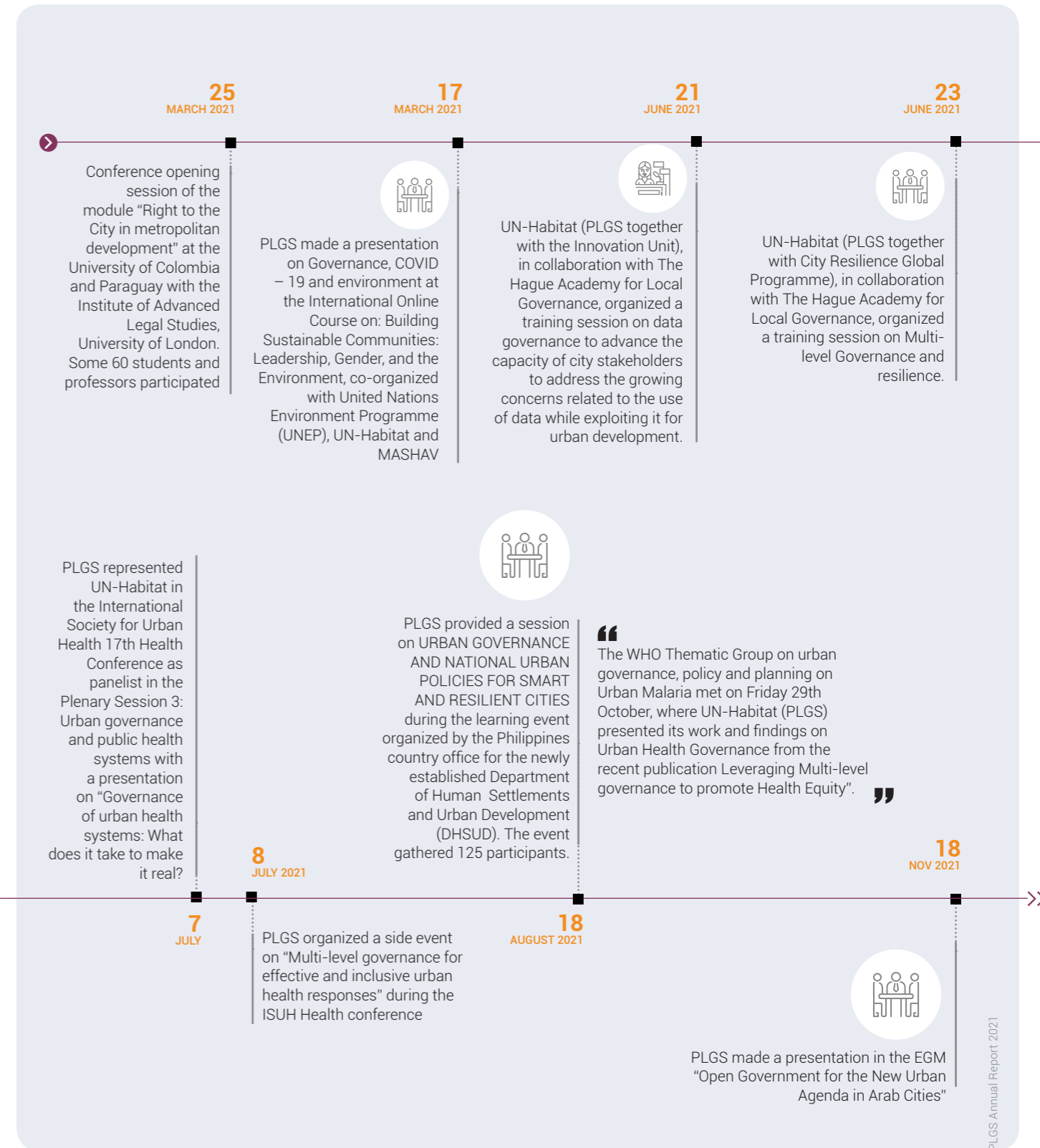


Governance has been a long-standing area of work within UN-Habitat as it is key for achieving sustainable urbanization. To create a shared vision for how governance can be strengthened for a sustainable and inclusive urban future, UN-Habitat's PLGS hosted a two-day Expert Group Meeting (EGM) in 2021 with more than 200 participants from diverse professional backgrounds, all regions and representing a wide array of countries with different socio-economic development levels, governance arrangements and policy/legal traditions, but all facing different challenges and devising unique solutions. The meeting shared global, regional and country perspectives and insights on governance challenges and opportunities, captured key trends and defined some niche areas of intervention for UN-Habitat, as well as synergies and areas of collaboration with external partners. The meeting called for a renewed partnership with academia and other research institutions. In light of this, UN-Habitat is looking into the existing Habitat UNI initiative to revive and re-establish the collaboration with interested academic and local partners on governance issues.

A key insight from the regions was that realities and dynamics on the ground are changing and governance approaches need to be adaptive to these new processes by having locally relevant interventions that respond to the real needs of the people to avoid a loss of trust in public institutions. This requires fostering a dialogue between citizens and the government by treating people as co-creators and harnessing the power of social networks for knowledge exchange.

The cross-cutting insight that stood out across all thematic areas during the meeting was the need for people-centred approaches in urban governance. This is embodied by public engagement in decision-making; co-creation of solutions; equitable access to digital technologies; promotion of human rights; and multi-stakeholder partnerships that are driven by and focused on real needs of urban populations. Cities work for people and urban governance needs to reflect this reality. Strengthening the social contract between governments, the public, civil society and the private sector is essential to ensure that indeed, no one and no place is left behind.

PLGS also organized and participated in other advocacy events through various forms such as moderation, presentations, and representation on panels and plenary sessions. These include:







# METROPOLITAN MANAGEMENT

## LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

1.1 2.1 3.2 4.3

SP OUTCOME AREAS



SDG Cities

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES



SDGs



Capacity development

A distinctive feature of urbanization in the recent past is the exponential growth of urban populations and the built environment well beyond the city limits, resulting in metropolitan areas. Metropolitan areas have now become “the new normal”. This is owing to cities and towns expanding, and in turn become spatially, economically, socially, and functionally inter-reliant with their surrounding peri-urban and rural areas. As such areas emerge and grow, the need for metropolitan-level management increases.

Metropolitan areas also face several challenges associated with rapid urbanization. In many cases, metropolitan and local governments do not have the technical, financial, and operational capacity to address these challenges, paving the way for dysfunctional problems of the metropolis. This could lead to deepening the existing social inequalities, poverty, insecurity, and lack of efficient transport systems among other problems.



The key metropolitan characteristic of interdependencies on economic, social, and environmental perspectives needs to be managed in an integrated way, based on functional territories and across both jurisdictional boundaries and the urban-rural continuum.

UN-Habitat's integrative approach for metropolitan management involves local, sub-national and national governments participation in metropolitan governance, metropolitan policies and legislation, metropolitan planning, and metropolitan finance and economics.

During the first year of the COVID-19 crisis these metropolitan management approaches were highly relevant, as pointed out in the UN-Habitat Cities and Pandemics Report<sup>5</sup> which highlights that **“metropolitan and regional governance partnerships have been especially valuable during the pandemic (...) evidence suggests that metropolitan areas with institutionalized governance frameworks are more likely to coordinate their actions.”** (UN-Habitat, 2021: 128-129)



➤ UN-Habitat and local actors during a field mission in South East Mexico

5 Digital version of the report available in: <https://unhabitat.org/cities-and-pandemics-towards-a-more-just-green-and-healthy-future-0>

## PROGRESS ON PROJECTS

### Metropolitan management project: San Salvador

The Planning Office of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (OPAMSS) and its Metropolitan Mayors Council (COAMSS) have more than thirty-years of institutional work and are recognized by UN-Habitat as an inspiring and innovative experience on metropolitan management. Its advances on legislation, territorial planning, governance schemes and strategic projects must be strengthened, systematized, and internationally shared with other metropolitan areas in order to distil the lessons learned and promote balanced territorial development worldwide.

In 2021, UN-Habitat and OPAMSS entered into an agreement to provide technical support during the review process of the Law of Development and Land Use of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (LDOT-AMSS), as well as strengthen, systematize and share internationally the advances of OPAMSS/COAMSS in legislation, territorial planning, governance schemes and strategic projects, to extract the lessons learned and promote balanced territorial development across its metropolitan territory.

In this regard, in 2021, some of the key achievements made in strengthening metropolitan and regional management in El Salvador:

- Developed a detailed case study of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador assessing its territorial, policies and legislation, planning, governance and finance mechanisms dimensions.
- Provided technical and operational support for developing a reform proposal of the Law of Development and Land Use of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (LDOT-AMSS).
- Facilitation and methodological support during the participatory process for the reform of the LDOT-AMSS.

In 2022, to continue strengthening metropolitan management in El Salvador, PLGS will update of the "Metropolitan Policy for Environmentally Sustainable Territorial Development" of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador.

## Global Network of Metropolitan and Regional Management

Within the framework of MetroHUB, the Global Network of Metropolitan and Regional Management is currently being promoted, as a Platform for cooperation, knowledge, innovation, and international action for metropolitan and regional development.



The main objective of this project is to mobilize and articulate in one shared international platform, all actors interested in metropolitan development to strengthen metropolitan management through innovation and the promotion of metropolitan diplomacy at three levels, in the decade of action for the accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals:

- Metropolitan Diplomacy for global action to guarantee better leadership, more resources and smarter solutions for the territorialization of SDGs at the metropolitan scale.
- Metropolitan Diplomacy for local action including the necessary transition in policies, budgets, institutions and regulatory frameworks to strengthen metropolitan management.
- Metropolitan Diplomacy for action from the economic sector, civil society, academic circles, media and other interested parties in generating a movement that impulses the necessary transformations for sustainable metropolitan development.

A key milestone is that UN-Habitat and the Valle de Aburrá Metropolitan Area organized the launch of the Latin American chapter of the Global Metropolitan Management Network, in Medellín, Colombia. It was an opportunity to take stock of the first five years of implementation of the New Urban Agenda

and the ongoing territorialization of the SDGs, both at the metropolitan level. Representatives from metropolitan areas of eight Latin American countries and guests from Africa and Asia participated in the event as observers of the network.

### Latin American Chapter of the Global Metropolitan Management Network

8 Countries	40 Members	Territorial Scope
México	Metropolitan Institution	Metropolitan
Paraguay	Public institution	National
El Salvador	government authorities	Regional
Bolivia	Guild Sector	Municipal
Brazil	Social sector	
Ecuador	Academy	
Perú	Urban and Metropolitan Observatories	
Colombia		

From the forum, some of the key outcomes include:

- The areas of interest for the Metropolitan Diplomacy were identified
  - A formal representation in international bodies such as the United Nations, regional Commissions in America, Europe, Africa, Asia, in processes of negotiation and implementation of international agreements in different areas of impact at the urban level;
  - Proposed constitutional changes that provide the metropolises with greater capacities at the competence and fiscal level, in relation to:
    - » Multi-level and multi-stakeholder legitimate governance,
    - » Recognition of the metropolitan scale in territorial planning,
    - » Regulation of metropolitan management in binding regulatory frameworks
    - » Assignment of funding sources for metropolitan development
- Themes for the exchange of knowledge and experiences were established.
  - » Infrastructure and services projects
  - » Urban and sectoral policies
  - » planning instruments
  - » governance models
  - » Financing Mechanisms
  - » Regulatory Frameworks.



## Binational Metropolitan Management project



UN-Habitat has identified that the management of metropolitan territories and urban agglomerations located on transnational borders face special challenges because, being the border a politically separated space in two countries, in fact it constitutes a common territorial unit where interactions take place every day. social, economic, political, cultural, urban and environmental, not only relevant to the border area itself, but also of national interest to both countries.

In Central and Latin America there are **50 binational urban agglomerations** of different sizes and characteristics that require inspiring experiences to improve governance and joint action in favour

of sustainable development and to improve the opportunities and quality of life of the inhabitants.

In the case of border metropolitan areas, supranational actions are required to achieve adequate governance to meet the challenges of articulating and harmonizing planning, regulatory frameworks, and financing of border projects in the context of binational political systems.

Therefore, it is necessary to promote binational metropolitan management to promote territories of peace and prosperity, reducing the inequality gaps that prevail in border cities.



### ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021

The first “Binational Forum for Metropolitan Management, VISION” was organized on the border of **Mexico** and the **United States**, with the aim of promoting the transformation of the binational border, with a metropolitan vision.

The dialogue was focused on:

- Metropolitan Governance for Binational Cooperation.
- Strengthening of binational metropolitan collaboration as a catalyst for competitiveness.
- Urban interventions and housing for border territorial integration.
- Challenges and opportunities for the harmonization of urban and environmental regulatory frameworks in the binational border area.



➤ Launch of the Laredo-Nuevo Laredo Binational Metropolitan Management project

### DECLARATION OF THE TWO LAREDOS

Declaration of the Two Laredos on Binational Metropolitan Management, Mexico – United States of America:

On December 1, 2021, the mayors of the city of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico and Laredo, Texas, United States of America, together with UN-Habitat, national, subnational, local authorities, leaders and social actors of the Mexican Republic and the United States of America signed the “Declaration of the Two Laredos”, expressing the will to:

1. Strengthen Binational Metropolitan Management based on multilevel, multiactor, and multisectoral cooperation, within the constitutional and legislative framework of each country, the Binational International Agreements in force on matters applicable to metropolitan management in the border area, as well as the Objectives of United Nations Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda
2. Develop a binational metropolitan vision through cross-border municipal collaboration and between different levels of government as a catalyst for sustainable urban development.
3. Promote a formal binational metropolitan governance scheme, establishing in the Nuevo Laredo – Laredo metropolitan area, with the support of UN-Habitat, a global laboratory for binational metropolitan management, with a short, medium and long-term action plan.

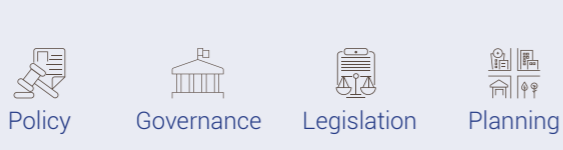


➤ Officials of Laredo and Nuevo Laredo on the border of Mexico and USA, following the signing of the "Declaration of the Two Laredos"

## MetroHUB Global Capacity Development

**MetroHUB**

### PROGRAMME EMPHASIS



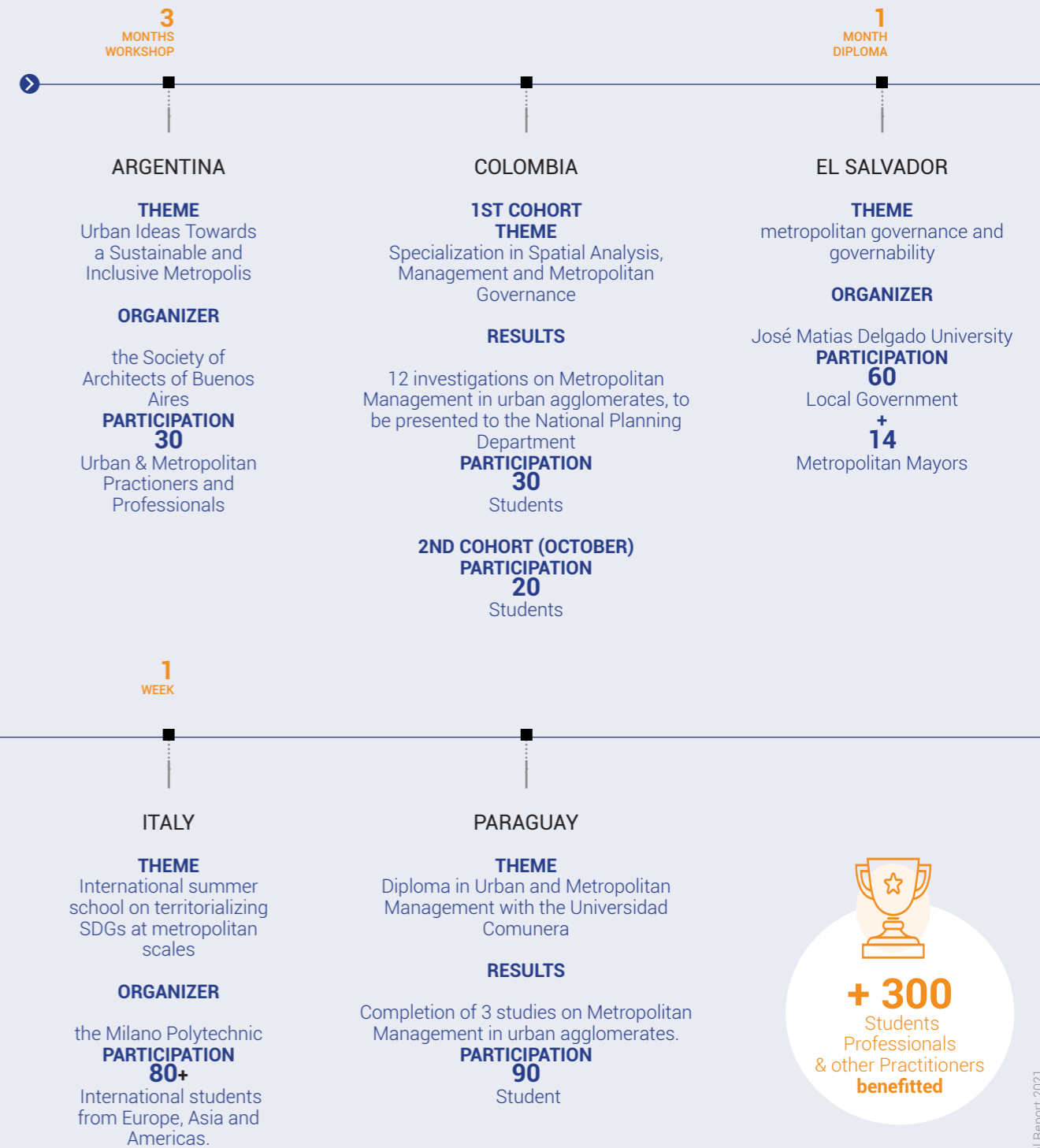
### PARTNERS

Universities and academic institutions in Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Italy and Paraguay

The MetroHUB Global Capacity Development programme supports development of capacities for metropolitan management, through training with an emphasis on policy, governance, legislation, and planning at metropolitan scales. It enhances the knowledge of urban leaders, local actors, and public servants to manage metropolitan areas and develop instruments and tools that allow better governance, financing and planning of metropolises. This programme focuses on all target groups in UN-Habitat's capacity building strategy, namely local, sub-national and national governments, as well as private, academic, community and civil society sectors.

MetroHUB, in partnership with several universities and academic institutions have provided numerous learning sessions, trainings, field visits, knowledge exchanges, studies, and other capacity development related services. In 2021, UN-Habitat engaged with universities and academic institutions in **Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Italy** and **Paraguay**, through developing and delivering several courses on Metropolitan Management. To this end, more than **300 students, urban and metropolitan practitioners, and professionals** have strengthened their capacity in thematic areas related to Metropolitan and Regional Management.

### Recent examples of MetroHUB Global Capacity Development programmes





## NORMATIVE TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

### COMPREHENSIVE METROPOLITAN MANAGEMENT: The case of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador

**GESTIÓN METROPOLITANA INTEGRADA**

**PROGRAMME BENEFICIARIES**  
 14 Municipalities

**PROGRAMME FOCUS**  
 Legal frameworks, Public policies

**RESULTS**  
 Coordinated governance, Planning, Financing mechanisms

EL CASO DEL ÁREA METROPOLITANA DE SAN SALVADOR

COAMSS OPAMSS, ONU HABITAT

The case of the Metropolitan Area of **San Salvador** (AMSS) is considered inspiring by UN-Habitat due to the joint work carried out by its **14 municipalities**, which has allowed the AMSS to advance in legal frameworks and long-term public policies that enable integrated and coordinated governance, planning and financing mechanisms. At the same time, its international cooperation agenda is a clear example of how diplomacy between cities translates into the exchange of knowledge and the implementation of joint projects transforming the territory and increasing people's quality of life. The AMSS experiences and lessons shared in this publication are an important example for the **Central American and Caribbean region** of how metropolitan management is an engine that accelerates the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the fulfillment of the SDGs during the Decade of Action.

### Guide on Decision-making Models in Metropolitan Management: in alliance with Barcelona Metropolitan Area.

This is a MetroHUB Tool for the authorities and actors interested in strengthening the governance of metropolitan territories through democratic, equitable, transparent and informed decision-making mechanisms, based on a study of the regular trends in the regulatory frameworks that contains analysis on:

- The decision-making body
- The representativeness of its members
- The voting model defined by the Law or the Statutes
- The binding level of decision acts
- decision making issues
- Citizen participation mechanisms
- Mechanisms for informed decision making

## ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS ON METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL MANAGEMENT

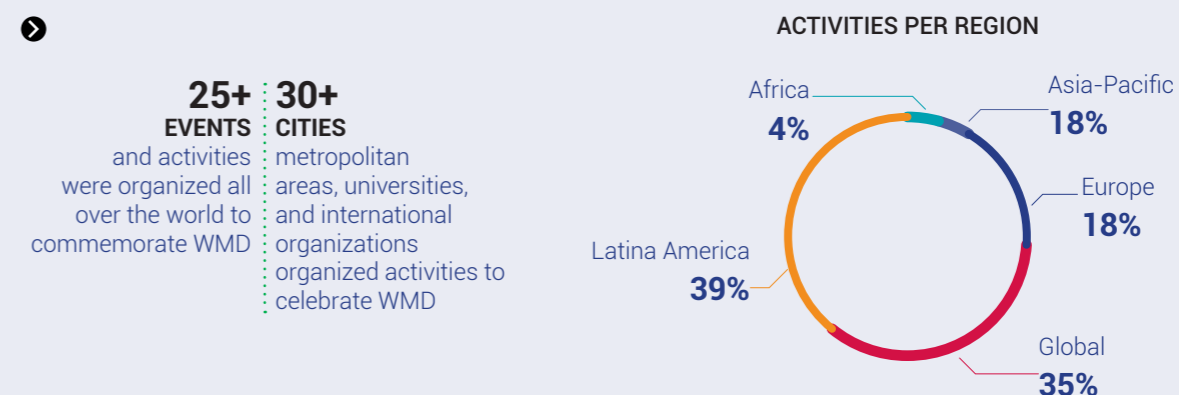
### World Metropolitan Day 2021

The World Metropolitan Day (WMD) is the leading global campaign led by Metropolis and UN-Habitat that promotes collective action to build more equitable, resilient, and prosperous metropolises. It commemorates, on October 7, the adoption of the Montreal Declaration on Metropolitan Areas.

In continuing its partnership, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, UN-Habitat and Metropolis co-organized and held the 2021 commemoration of World Metropolitan Day, themed **"Resilience for all: creating caring metropolises beyond COVID-19"**.

The event virtually brought together participants from various backgrounds, including government, civil society, academia, and international organizations. The event provided a platform to engage in open dialogue to share knowledge, experiences and lessons learned along the theme of resilience beyond COVID-19.

The commemoration of World Metropolitan Day also continued in various other locations all through Urban October:



Most events had a global perspective and engaged organizations, local and metropolitan governments, civil society, and urban thinkers from all over the globe





## Voices of the world Metropolitan Day



### Valérie Plante, Mayor of Montreal

"Economic relaunch needs to be green and inclusive. We need cities designed for and by citizens, cities that leave no one behind and Montreal is fully committed to taking action in this direction".



### Ricardo Nunes, Mayor of Sao Paulo

"The effects of the pandemic are the greatest obstacle to be overcome by cities & metropolitan regions across the planet. Events, such as World Metropolitan Day, are essential to face local & metropolitan challenges".



### Mario Duran, Mayor of San Salvador

"It is time to restructure metropolitan territories, promote the SGDs and the New Urban Agenda to globally end poverty & face the climate emergency".



### Carolina Cosse, Mayor of Montevideo

"Urban resilience implies transforming the challenges of our cities into opportunities that guarantee inhabitants' rights, based on tolerance, solidarity and respect for diversity".



### Pablo Javkin, Mayor of Rosario

"To create more caring & resilient cities. We need a community that connects all levels of government and integrates diverse actors. We also need a holistic approach to care that includes all people".



### Laura Pérez Castano, Deputy Mayor of Barcelona

"Metropolitan spaces are fundamental for guaranteeing social rights and care for all. Now more than ever. It is time to build caring and feminist metropolises".

## IN THE NEWS

**El País:** [Día Mundial Metropolitano: que la ciudad nos cuide](#)

Octavi de la Varga, Secretary-General of Metropolis and Laura Valdés, Research & Policy and Communications Officer of Metropolis



**Paudal:** [World Metropolitan Day: let the city take care of us](#)

**Deia:** [Día Mundial de las Metrópolis](#)

Idoia Postigo, Director Asociación Bilbao Metropoli-30

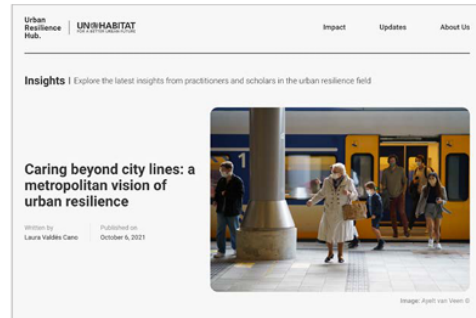
**El Correo:** [Metrópolis cuidadoras](#)

Idoia Postigo, Director Asociación Bilbao Metropoli-30

**Urban Resilience Hub:**

[Caring Beyond City Lines: A Metropolitan Vision of Urban Resilience](#)

Laura Valdés, Research & Policy and Communications Officer of Metropolis



**Urban October:** [World Metropolitan Day](#)

[Decentralisation and Global Governance: World Metropolitan Day](#)

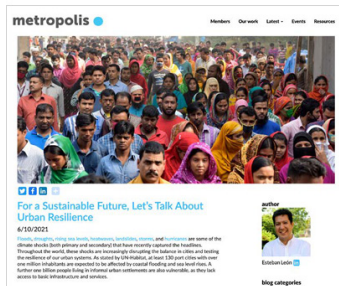
[Urban Policy Platform: Be part of World Metropolitan Day](#)

[City 2 City Network: World Metropolitan Day 2021](#)

[City 2 City Network: World Metropolitan Day](#)

**Metropolis Blog:** [For a Sustainable Future, Let's Talk About Urban Resilience](#)

Esteban León, Head of City Resilience Global Programme, UN-Habitat



**Urban Agenda Platform:** [World Metropolitan Day](#)

**Intendencia de Montevideo:** [Intendencia Cosse participó en actividad por el Día Mundial Metropolitano](#)

**Mendoza:** [La Ciudad participó en la conmemoración del Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021](#)

**Municipalidad de Corrientes:** [Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021. Tassano, con Rodríguez Larreta y otros líderes locales del país](#)

**San Salvador de Jujuy:** [Día Mundial Metropolitano](#)

**República de Corrientes:** [Corrientes, presente en el encuentro por el Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021](#)

**Buenos Aires Ciudad:** [La UCPE participó del Día Mundial Metropolitano](#)

**Cadena de radios:** [Día Mundial Metropolitano 2021. Tassano, con Rodríguez Larreta y otros líderes locales del país](#)





# URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES

## LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS

1.1 2.1 2.3 3.3

SP OUTCOME AREAS



People-focused  
Smart Cities

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES



SDGs



High  
COVID-19  
relevance



Capacity  
development

UN-Habitat defines Urban Rural linkages as the as non-linear, diverse urban-rural interactions and linkages across space within an urban-rural continuum, including flows of people, goods, capital and information but also between sectors and activities such as agriculture, services and manufacturing. In general, they can be defined as a complex web of connections between rural and urban dimensions.

As the world continues urbanizing, the gap between the urban and rural areas widens, and rural areas have been left behind across several aspects of development and become more vulnerable to challenges including food insecurity, climate change and limited economic opportunities. The inequalities between urban and rural areas, like other social and spatial inequalities at different scales, have been exacerbated and many territories' vulnerabilities are clearly exposed and demand a response.

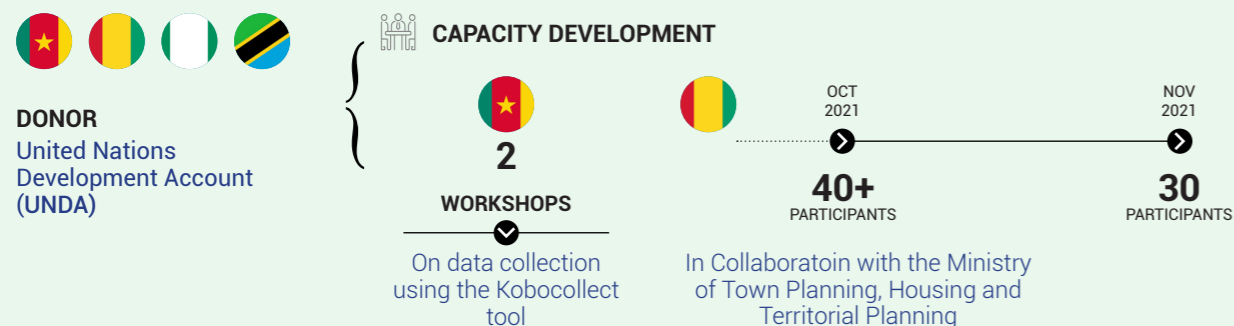
The COVID-19 crisis has also shown the importance of integrated territorial approaches to address inequalities and confirmed the heightened role of territorial systems and urban-rural linkages in the planet's sustainability and resilience. The role of UN-Habitat's PLGS on urban-rural linkages (URL) is to support national and subnational governments to develop and implement policies and strategies that ensure inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development across the urban-rural continuum.





## PROGRESS ON PROJECTS

### Leaving No One and No Place Behind: Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in Africa



Funded by the United Nations Development Account, this project supports Cameroon, Guinea, Niger State (Nigeria) and Zanzibar, Tanzania to strengthen their urban-rural linkages and bridge the urban-rural divide by enhancing capacities of policy makers and change agents at all levels to collect and use evidence for fostering cross-sectoral, multi-level frameworks, strategies, and action plans for integrated and inclusive territorial development. In 2021, progress was made in each country to enhance urban rural linkages for inclusive and integrated territorial development.

In **Cameroon**, two training workshops were conducted in 2021 to strengthen the **over 40** participants' capacity in data collection using the Kobocollect tool. Data collection is the other major activity conducted in Yaounde through various methodologies as traffic counts, interviews and focus group discussion.

The outcomes from the data collection will be validated in 2022 including recommendations for policy. Additionally, in another session, the technical secretariat were equipped with detailed training on policy review to enhance urban rural linkages in the country.



Cameroon: Data collection to enhance urban rural linkages in Cameroon © UN-Habitat.



Cameroon capacity development workshop



Top: Participatory focus group sessions

Right: The focus groups then presented their findings and recommendations.

© UN-Habitat



In **Guinea**, UN-Habitat and the Ministry of Town Planning, Housing and Territorial Planning organized and held an awareness raising workshop in October 2021. Attended by more than **40** participants from diverse backgrounds, the forum provided an opportunity to raise awareness on urban rural linkages and for participants to identify priority areas of development which include infrastructure and transport, basic social services, economic activities, and the environment.

Following the awareness workshop, in November 2021, a two-day training workshop was held, where more than **30** participants from academia, government ministries and other agencies strengthened their capacity on urban rural linkages and were equipped with the technical and methodological tools to ensure the success of data collection. The national institute of statistics will adopt the data from the study to inform other decisions in the contexts of data collection.





➤ Data collection on urban-rural linkages was also conducted in Guinea followed by a validation workshop to review the outcomes of the project © UN-Habitat

In Niger State (**Nigeria**), having held data collection workshops, data collection was completed in five locations including a market center. A validation workshop, attended by over 20 diverse participants, was then held where the project's outcomes were validated and recommendations adopted.



➤ Data collection to foster enhancement of urban rural linkages in Niger State (Nigeria) © UN-Habitat

➤ Validation workshop: Stakeholders deliberating strategies to strengthen urban-rural linkages in Niger State (Nigeria) © UN-Habitat





In Zanzibar, (**Tanzania**), the project took a similar approach. Up to seven workshops were held in Pemba and Unguja, which were attended by all stakeholders. Two of the workshops involved training on data collection, amassing over **50 participants** who were equipped with detail knowledge on urban rural linkages and on data collection. Following the data collection activities, analysis and reporting of results, five validation workshops were held in Zanzibar, which were attended by over **115 participants** from diverse backgrounds, including government

ministries, departments and their agencies, local governments and municipalities, NGO's, Civil Societies, and academia. The stakeholders shared insightful reviews and comments to the project outcomes, including making recommendations for the Zanzibar urban policy that is currently under development. The validation workshops were conducted in all the five regions in Zanzibar, namely: North Unguja, South Unguja, Urban West, North Pemba, and South Pemba.



► UN-Habitat conducted field visits and data collection for evidenced-based enhancement of urban rural linkages © UN-Habitat



► A final multi-stakeholder workshop was held to validate the outcomes of the project, following workshops held in the five regions in Zanzibar (Tanzania) © UN-Habitat

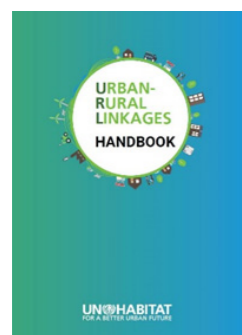
#### TECHNICAL MATERIALS PRODUCED

In 2021 several technical materials were developed as an outcome from the activities of the project for each

CAMEROON	GUINEA	NIGER STATE	ZANZIBAR
Urban-rural linkages status report in Cameroon	Policy review report and context of URL in Guinea	Policy review technical material	Urban-rural linkages status report in Zanzibar
URL Policy review report	Stakeholder awareness workshop report	Data collection outcomes report	Policy review report
Two Data collection training workshops reports	Data collection training report	One validation workshop report	Data collection outcome report
Technical secretariat training on policy reviews	Data collection report		Awareness on URL workshops report
			Training on data collection workshop report
			Validation workshops report



## NORMATIVE TOOLS AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS



[Download](#)

### Urban Rural Linkages Handbook

The handbook provides substantive knowledge on urban-rural linkages, including the background, URL implementation strategy and the current Urban Rural Linkages projects.

- The handbook has been used to carry out URL assessments as well as multiple capacity development sessions in **Cameroon, DRC, Guinea, Niger State and Zanzibar.**

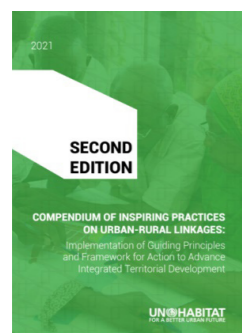


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Views: 241  
Downloads: 174  
Likes: 144

### Urban Rural Linkages Newsletter | Issue 3

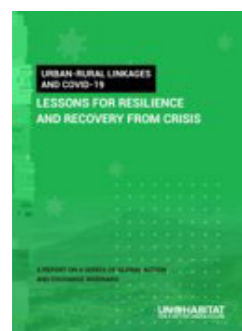
This edition includes insights from nine global webinars organized between May and December 2020. It also contains short articles on urban-rural linkages, such as an experimental framework for new approaches in urban-rural planning and governance from Thuringia, **Germany**, and a short piece on the key role of small and intermediary cities as part of the development of a national strategy in Morocco.



[Download](#)

### Second Compendium of Inspiring Practices on Urban Rural Linkages

This second compendium showcases **17 case studies** with the aim to provide inspiration and guidance to strengthen urban-rural linkages for increased resilience while promoting integrated territorial development.



[Download](#)

### Urban Rural Linkages and COVID-19: Lessons for Resilience and Recovery from Crisis

This report synthesizes results of the **9 webinars** held in 2020 and shares the experiences and lessons being learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in the lens of urban-rural linkages. Over **2,200 people** participated in one or more of the webinars. The series of webinars was instrumental in fostering new relationships and identifying new areas of engagement in coordination with multilateral organizations, national and subnational governments, civil society organizations, research institutions and professional.

## ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS ON URBAN RURAL LINKAGES

### Second International Forum on Urban Rural Linkages



The promotion of urban-rural linkages through functional territories can help reduce regional inequalities and increase resource efficiencies. Formulating and implementing policies, and planning interventions that reduce territorial inequality and strengthen urban-rural territories have the potential to generate better and more sustainable development results that will meet many of the goals and targets in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) among other international agendas.

The International Forum on Urban Rural Linkages (IFURL) serves as a platform to promote urban rural linkages for sustainable development and wellbeing for all across the urban-rural continuum. It also provides all participants with the opportunity to showcase country-specific case studies, innovative approaches and tools, emerging knowledge on rural development and health issues, and to learn from each other.

In 2021, the second edition of the [IFURL](#) was co-hosted and co-organized by UN-Habitat, Zhejiang Provincial Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, Lishui Municipal People's Government and Songyang County People's Government.

The overall objectives of the forum were:

1. To share recent experiences and good practices in the prevention and containment of infectious diseases and the post-outbreak recovery measures in urban, rural and peri-urban areas.
2. To highlight the relevance and importance of urban-rural linkages in public health to promote well-being for all.
3. To discuss ways to promote inclusive development in public health and improve health and well-being for all across the urban-rural continuum.
4. To share and promote innovative tools and methods to integrate comprehensive health approaches in national, subnational and regional planning policies in the context of the implementation of SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.

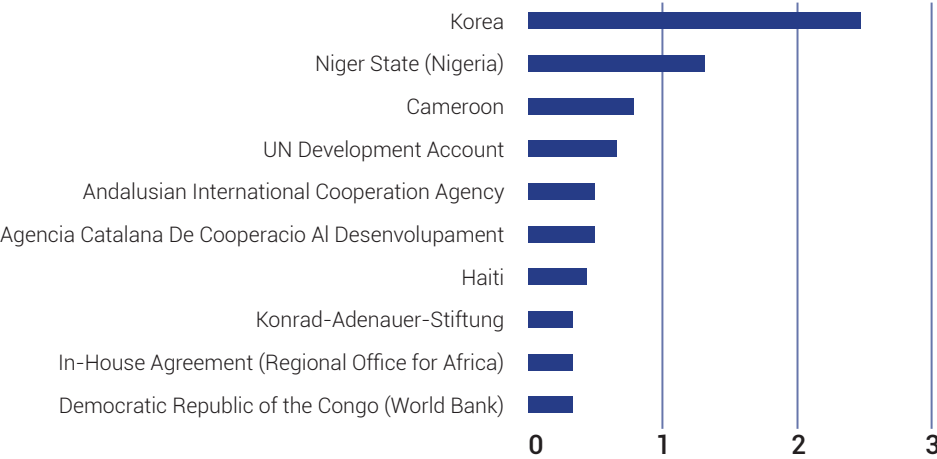






# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

PLGS funding is primarily earmarked, where funds are dedicated to specific projects, advocacy or normative products. In 2021, the Section’s operating budget was at 2.6 million USD, with an implementation rate of 87 per cent. PLGS also continues actively seeking new funding opportunities to complement the existing grants to continue supporting member states to address their sustainable development priorities.



**Figure 8.** PLGS Top Donors and Development Partners



Some of the section's top donors and development partners include national governments (South Korea, Cameroon, Haiti, DRC), sub-national governments (Niger State, Nigeria, Andalusian International Cooperation Agency, (AACID) and the United Nations System (UNDA). The section also received funding through in-house agreements (such as UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Africa) and as well as funding from a foundation - Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

### Funding Distribution by Thematic Area

52 per cent of the total funding was earmarked for projects on national and sub-national urban policy while the legislation thematic area made up 11 per cent. It is **important to note that many of the legislation projects included a governance component**, hence a portion of the funds was allocated to governance activities from the legislation thematic area. Multi-thematic projects (policy, integrated development planning and urban rural linkages) comprised 15 per cent, while metropolitan management made up one per cent of PLGS funding, demonstrating progress from the year 2020. Projects on urban-rural linkages made up seven per cent while projects on implementing the New Urban Agenda at country level made up the remaining six per cent.

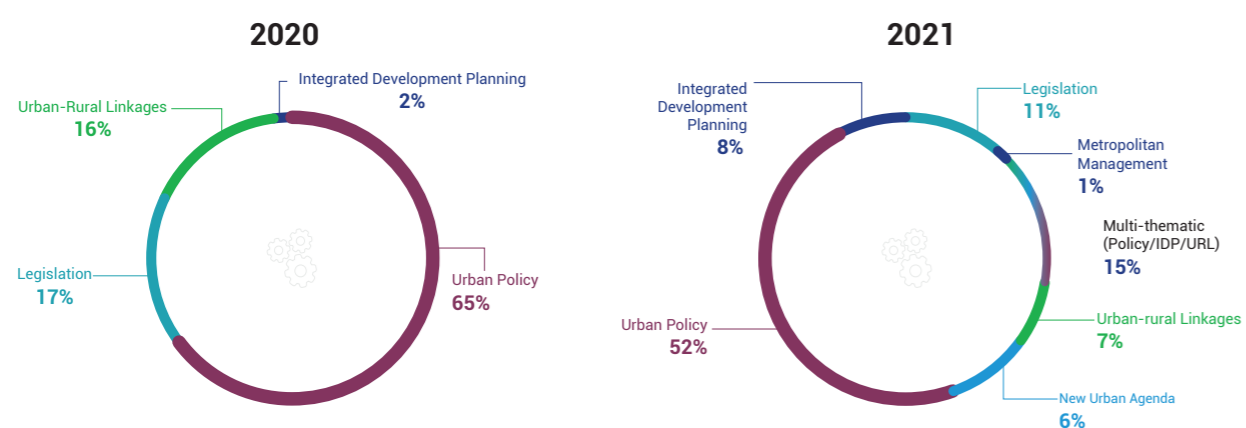


Figure 9. Funding Distribution by Thematic Area

### Funding Sources

The section's top donor is **national governments**, at 60 per cent, followed by **sub-national governments** who funded 21 per cent of the section's projects and normative products. The broader United Nations System's grants made up eight per cent, which continues enhancing inter-agency collaboration within the United Nations to Deliver As One. Three per cent of the section's funding is from a **foundation** (KAS), indicating the section's aim to diversify its portfolio in line with one of the goals of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan and UN-Habitat's Resource Mobilization Strategy. Continuing with UN-Habitat's strong internal collaboration, **in-house agreements** made up eight per cent of the section's funding.

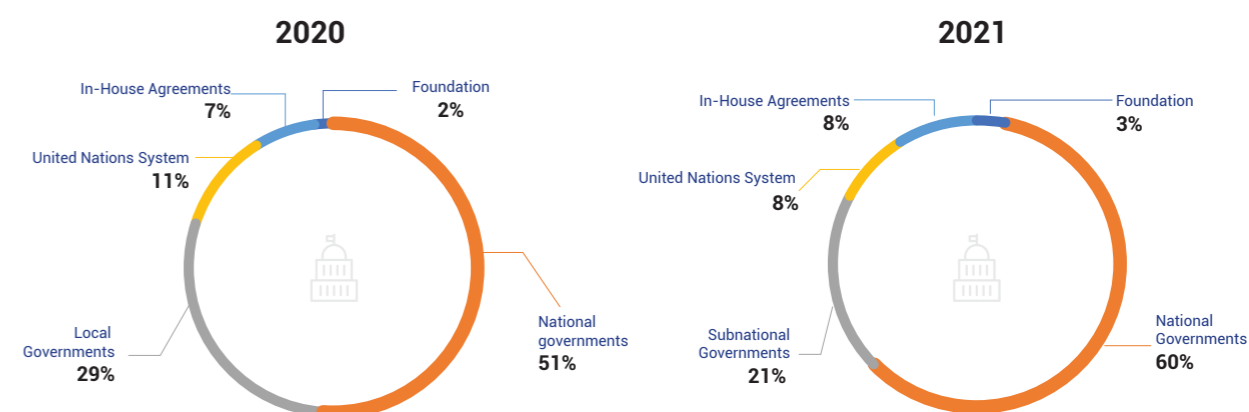


Figure 10. Funding Sources

### New funding acquisitions:

In 2021, the section's resource mobilization efforts advanced through successful funding proposals and also through consultations, where some donors acknowledged the accomplishments made and approved additional funding to extend projects into new phases. For instance, the South Korea-funded pilot phase of the National Urban Policy Programme, which saw the development of urban policies for I.R.Iran, Myanmar (currently paused) and Niger State (Nigeria), will receive additional funding to kick off Phase II of the project, to be implemented in five other countries. The section remains open to facilitating new partnerships with government agencies and foundations who seek advisory services in developing and aligning their policies, legislative and governance frameworks to their sustainable urban development agendas.

Some of the new projects going into 2022 include:

PROJECT	DONOR
Developing an Effective Legal framework for Urb Planning Dev in DRC	DRC
Urban Law For Resilient & Low Carbon Urban Dev In Malawi, Namibia, Zimbabwe	KAS
Child friendly Urban Policy	UNICEF & IOM
Realization of the project of the localization of the New Program for Cities (NPV) in Haiti	Haiti
Second Phase of National Urban Policy Programme	Korea (MOLIT)
Support implementation of the New Urban Agenda in the Basque Country in Spain	Spain
Developing Massive Open online Course on digital governance	EXAF-EPFL
Promoting Digital Inclusion in African Cities and Regions	ITU



## ENDNOTES

### ACRONYMS

<b>AACID</b>	Andalusian Agency for International Cooperation for Development
<b>ACCD</b>	Agència Catalana de Cooperació al Desenvolupament
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>ASOARES</b>	Colombian Association of Metropolitan Areas
<b>CLES</b>	South African Research Chair in Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease-2019
<b>CoP</b>	Community of Practices
<b>DMO</b>	Douala Metropolitan Observatory
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<b>GSNUP</b>	Global State of National Urban Policy
<b>GTF</b>	Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments
<b>HLP</b>	Housing, land and property
<b>HLPF</b>	High-level political forum
<b>IALS</b>	Institute for Advanced Legal Studies
<b>ICLEI</b>	Local Governments for Sustainability
<b>IFURL</b>	International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages
<b>IG-UTP</b>	International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning
<b>INDCs</b>	Intended nationally determined contributions
<b>IUD</b>	Integrated urban development
<b>KAS</b>	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
<b>MAETUR</b>	Urban and Rural Land Development and Equipment Mission (Cameroon)
<b>MOLIT</b>	Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (South Korea)
<b>MoRUD</b>	Ministry of Roads and Urban Development (I.R Iran)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>NUSP</b>	Niger State Urban Support Programme
<b>NUA</b>	New Urban Agenda
<b>NUP</b>	National urban policy
<b>NUPP</b>	National urban policy programme
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation
<b>OPAMSS</b>	Planning Office of the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador
<b>PLGS</b>	Policy, Legislation and Governance Section
<b>PPE</b>	Personal protective equipment
<b>PSUP</b>	Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.
<b>ROAF</b>	UN-Habitat Regional Office for Africa
<b>ROAP</b>	UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

<b>SANITA</b>	Urban Development and Sanitation Programme (Guinea)
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>UPB</b>	Urban Practices Branch
<b>UCLG</b>	United Cities and Local Governments
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UN-Habitat</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNDA</b>	United Nations Development Account
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNSCN</b>	United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition
<b>UNSG</b>	United Nations Secretary General
<b>URA</b>	Urban-Rural Assembly
<b>URL</b>	Urban-rural linkages
<b>VLR</b>	Voluntary local reviews
<b>VNR</b>	Voluntary national reviews
<b>WMD</b>	World Metropolitan Day
<b>WUF</b>	World Urban Forum



## Remy Sietchiping

Chief, POLICY LEGISLATION & GOVERNANCE SECTION  
UN-HABITAT

## END YEAR REMARK

Let me start by conveying to you, your families and loved ones my best wishes for the festive season. Thank you all for your good work, deeds and encouragement throughout 2021 and our collective expectation for a much better 2022.

2019 ended with the COVID-19 outbreak and here we are, ending 2021 with the Omicron variant which comes to prolong the uncertainty we are facing daily. Our working habits have been under constant check and rethinking with the 'traditional' way of working being continually reimagined.. Our (usual) modus operandi, movement, travels, social and family life have been so disrupted but nevertheless, I have not stopped thinking how RESILIENT we have all become and are adapting to the 'New Normal'.

It is this capacity to adapt, reinvent ourselves to be more resilient and learn to live with the virus that I see hope of us finding a way out to an eventual recovery. That said, I am honoured to work with all of you as we continue to advance many important areas of work. In 2021, we have made our work more relevant than ever before and charted new territories including:

**Responding to the Health crisis;** For instance, PLGS's contribution in cooperate endeavours such as the preparation of the [Cities and Pandemic report](#) which was well received. The various normative products, operational activities, and Think Pieces we have produced to demonstrate the relevance of [our work in the context of the ongoing pandemic](#), the COVID19 webinar series, [COVID19 webinar series](#), the COVID-19 demonstrations projects for National Urban Policies programme and much more.

At the **personnel level** (we are now 45 from 35 last year), I am pleased that you have all leant your shoulder to support each other in hard times, especially those who were directly or indirectly affected by the pandemic. You cared for each other. You checked on colleagues who were bereaving and were unwell. The weekly meeting with personnel welfare Check-in tool, the learning sessions, weekly virtual Chai Sessions and other team bonding initiatives have helped us pull through.

You are also there when colleagues have reasons to celebrate a newborn child, get married and much more. You have taken your wellbeing, wellness and duty of care very seriously, which is important. As you know, most of the qualified UN personnel have been vaccinated and about half of vaccinated essential staff were allowed to go back to the office at least three times a week. Feel free to take advantage of that where applicable. I thank you for that and lets all play our respective roles in the months ahead.

You have demonstrated to me that through PLGS, UN-Habitat can indeed be a **center of excellence and innovation**. For example, the five (5) PLGS community of practice webinars held in 2021 have continued to innovate and demonstrate agility for more impact especially enhancing normative and operational nexus. For instance, using the enhanced [NUP database](#), the 2021 Global State of **National Urban Policy** was published in partnership with OECD and Cities Alliance. This report is helping design future projects and programmes on NUP. You will be pleased to know that many other sections have now initiated some form of 'Global Report ...."! The [2020 PLGS annual report](#) also triggered interest from other parts of the agency that are preparing the same to highlight their work. This is a good indication and precedent and we shall keep improving as we prepare the 2021 PLGS Annual Report.

Building on the strong evidence from country implementation with colleagues in regional offices (especially ROAf) as well as the relevant thematic guides, compendium of case studies, newsletters and webinars series, **the work on urban-rural linkages (URL), Territorial development and intermediary cities** has seen a tremendous uptake and global attention. You will recall the case of OECD-UN-Habitat support to the **Italian G20 presidency** (and the launch of the Platform), collaboration with new partners such as the World Union of Wholesale Markets, FAO, Cambridge University, University of Nairobi etc, the Second International Forum on URL in November 2021, contributions towards the UN Food systems summit in September 2021; forthcoming Africities in May 2022 etc .

Many important innovations were also noted at country level such as the recently launch of the NIGER STATE URBAN-RURAL OBSERVATORY. [NSURO](#) as a platform for sharing and visualizing spatial data in Niger State (Nigeria).

I am very pleased that the [legislation workstream](#) has fulfilled 2 important mandates of the Section: Linking to sub-programme and domain of change (climate change) while servicing projects and programmes especially at country level. In 2021 alone, several in house agreements were signed to use our legislation normative tools to deliver on projects in Saudi Arabia, Comoros, Somalia, etc. Other external partners had reached out to UN-Habitat to support on urban legal review. For example, two partners signed contribution agreements to UN-Habitat to seek our services: World Bank for urban planning law review in the Democratic Republic of Congo; *Konrad Adenauer Fondation* -KAS- for climate law review in Malawi, Namibia and Zimbabwe. The two Urban Law Days organised in 2021 brought the focus on the agency work on urban legislation matters and the role of partnerships including within the UN system and academia. This is paying off and more demands are lined up for 2022 !

The **innovation in metropolitan management** is worth highlighting, thanks to our steady work on developing partnerships, normative tools and pilot work. Just three examples to illustrate what we have achieved in 2021 alone. First, using the MetroHUB approach, we had been able to pilot and test capacity building and postgraduate training programmes on Metropolitan Management. This postgraduate programme is having rapid uptake in Latin America and PLGS had been approached by other partners to expand the programme. Not only this is a niche that no other institution had managed to do, but we are receiving demands based on feedback and recommendations from other Universities, Governments and other notable stakeholders. Second, UN-Habitat had pioneered the Binational Metropolitan Management in bordering territories in USA (Laredo) and Mexico (Nuevo Laredo). This is a premier initiative and other cross-border metropolitan entities gaining interest.

Third, we had established a MetroHUB University Network with other 30 universities globally subscribing to this initiative tangible activities which had been successfully implemented in 2021. Some of these achievements were highlighted during the joint Metropolis-UN-Habitat Metropolitan Day on 7 October 2021 which saw over 25 events organised globally. Thanks to your dedicated and hard work, UN-Habitat had become the 'Place To Go' on matter of metropolitan management. Stay tune for more good news and announcements in 2022.

I would like to turn to the very capable personnel in the **communication, finances and administrative department**. I feel very honoured to be working with the communication, administrative and financial team, without whom our work could be stalled. PLGS messages and resources had been timely made available on [websites](#), social media: [LinkedIn](#), [Youtube](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and updated [PLGS catalogue of publications](#) etc. The quality of work in constant improvement with an editor on board and the publications designers available to assist. Despite exceptionally stringent UN procedures (and for good reasons!) and emerging challenges (at time outside their control) I noted a sense of dedication, work ethics, diligence and professionalism that the team portrays.

This commitment and accountability has translated to the successful closure of all pending grants, closed five projects on time and not returning funds to the donors. I am particularly pleased that we had kept a healthy financial balance sheet and the budget of the Section is healthy. The pipeline agreements such as NUPP Phase 2 would give more predictability in funding. The funding predictability would be complemented by other ongoing and up-coming short- or medium-term funding sources, critical for developing, updating, testing, piloting and mainstreaming our normative products while servicing our ever increasing diverse 'clients' with the usual quality delivery.

HAPPY NEW YEAR  
2022

I am pleased that UN-Habitat is now firmly back to setting the benchmark for better [urban governance](#). The outcomes of the two Experts Group Meetings organised this year and the supporting normative products produced are starting to yield fruits. Let me highlight three examples. First, we agreed at our 2021 retreat to prioritise Smart Cities Flagship Programme. The urban governance workstream worked very hard to align and synergise with the flagship team to prepare joint products and to secure two grants on capacity building and services delivery. Work on digital governance has been piloted and is taking shape. Second, the link between [urban governance and the topical issue of health](#) was another worthy contribution that complemented the Cities and Pandemic report. I have no doubt that the urban governance will continue to grow, building on demands, good normative products and more piloting.

Third, the work on Voluntary National/Local reviews had seen a tremendous uptake and interest as demonstrated by the excellent [Guides](#) developed in partnership with key stakeholders such as UCLG, the [VLR platform](#) launched by UN-Habitat, the very impactful webinars and EGM organised and ultimately the three grants secured this year alone will go a long way to advance this important area of work.

In 2022, UN-Habitat will start working in 40 countries across 3 regions on VLRs and SDG localization and a focus will be put on multi-level governance. As human resources had been sought to boost the Urban Governance workstream, the upwards trend will continue and more will be released in 2022.

The 2021 PLGS achievement would have not been possible without the support of the Urban Practices Branch Chief, the Global solutions Director, the senior management and many other colleagues and peers who had trusted PLGS as custodian of several key drivers to implement the 2020-2025 strategic plan. We are all so grateful.

As we look ahead, let's build on the achievements, streamline approaches that are yielding fruits, shelve those that are not productive or efficient, uphold to the UN values, harness our collective power of resilience, creativity and innovation for the people we serve.

I once more, wish you a very happy festive season with your continued duty of care and safety for yourself and others!

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Merry Christmas and Happy 2022



**Remy Sietchiping**

*Chief: Policy, Legislation and Governance*



HAPPY NEW YEAR







## A better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world

This is the second Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS) Annual report on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025, reporting progress and achievements for the year 2021. This report demonstrates the Section's catalytic role in implementing initiatives to contribute to UN-Habitat's mandate as well as the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.

It shows that the Section has been advancing many important areas of work, using effective and innovative approaches, and working progressively with strategic partners to deliver technical and operational support to national and subnational partner authorities in 2021.

Amid another challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the reporting period was result-oriented, with various milestones achieved. The report demonstrates the continued adaptive capabilities and resilience of the Section's personnel as well as the beneficiary national and subnational governments and their cities and communities.

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