

TIME TO THINK URBAN

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

April 2013 >

TIME TO THINK URBAN

United Nations Human Settlements Programme
Nairobi 2012

UN  HABILITAT



UN-HABITAT LEADING TOWARDS A NEW URBAN AGENDA

UN-Habitat, the urban agency of the United Nations, was created when two-thirds of humanity was still rural.



For more than forty years, UN-Habitat has been working in human settlements throughout the world. The efforts of UN-Habitat have been focused on building a brighter future for developing villages, towns and cities of all sizes, which are most in need to support in guiding the process of urbanization.

UN-Habitat has developed a unique position supporting urban development and the planning and building of a better urban future for next generations. This key process supports economic growth and social development, and reduces poverty and inequalities.



“Urbanization is a source of

We need a holistic approach to urban development and human settlements which provides for affordable housing and infrastructure, and prioritizes slum upgrading and urban regeneration. We are committed to improving the quality of human settlements, including the living and working conditions of both urban and rural dwellers. We believe on this will reduce poverty, and increase access to basic services, housing and mobility.

As we move ahead to the third 20-year Habitat III summit in 2016, UN-Habitat's priorities will focus on seven areas:

1. Urban Legislation, Land and Governance;
2. Urban Planning and Design;
3. Urban Economy;
4. Urban Basic Services;
5. Housing and Slum Upgrading;
6. Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation;
7. Urban Research and Capacity Development.

“Governments want us to promote an integrated approach to planning and building sustainable cities and urban settlements. We are tasked with supporting local authorities, increasing public awareness and enhancing the involvement of local people, including the poor, in decision making.”



Time to Think Urban

UN-Habitat's vision of "urbanization" encompasses all levels of human settlements, including small rural communities, villages, market towns, intermediate cities and large cities and metropolises, i.e. wherever a stable community is continuously located and there are housing units together with permanent social and economic activities, common public space, urban basic services, and a local governance structure.



© UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu

Joan Clos

United Nations Under-Secretary-General
and Executive Director of UN-Habitat

development, not just





URBAN LEGISLATION, LAND AND GOVERNANCE

Urban law is the collection of policies, laws, decisions and practices that govern the management and development of the urban environment.

➤ UN-Habitat believes that urban legislation should be a priority area for sustainable urban development. Cities and local authorities must legislate to manage land, planning, financing, including taxation, housing, basic services, infrastructure, transport, economic development and social exclusion.

Obsolete, inappropriate and poor regulatory frameworks are among the major obstacles for urban management and governance. This gives rise to an informal economy and parallel systems to circumvent the system of governance. Good laws and institutions are therefore the basis of effective urban governance, management and planning.

➤ an outcome of it. We must

UN-Habitat can help cities identify and recommend reforms and strategic actions which can help urban expansion, while strengthening decentralisation and local democracy. The production of large scale serviced land can accommodate rapid urban growth, create more public space, and in some cases enable development cost sharing through land value capture.



PILaR - Participatory and Inclusive Land Readjustment

UN-Habitat has developed Participatory and Inclusive Land Readjustment (PILaR), which emphasizes inclusive community ownership and participation in projects and aims pro-poor results. PILaR also encourages the development of clear benchmarks and transparent and predictable processes designed to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable groups, such as women, youth and the poor. These participatory and inclusive priorities help develop appropriate governance, legislative and regulatory mechanisms. The methodology is currently being tested in a pilot process in Medellin, Colombia.



Safer cities

The Safer Cities approach embraces a holistic, integrated and multi-sectoral approach to improving the livability of cities and quality of life for all urban residents (especially the most marginalized), predicated on the confidence that good urban governance, planning and management can improve the safety of neighborhoods. The Safer Cities initiative supports cities and other urban stakeholders to develop and implement city-wide crime and violence prevention strategies via a network hub (the Global Network on Safer Cities - GNSC) and a design service.



Global Land Tool Network

Conventional approaches to land administration and management have largely failed to deliver tenure security for poor and vulnerable populations. The technical solutions that are being used are often too expensive, inappropriate for the range of tenure options found in developing countries, unsustainable financially or in terms of available capacity. The Global Land Tool Network develops and pilots normative approaches to sustainable urbanization in regard to access to land and tenure security, innovative residential tenures, affordable land administration and information systems, land policy, land-based financing, land management and planning, land-related regulatory/legal frameworks and tolls, particularly for women.



© UN-Habitat/Alessandro Scotti

build a political commitment to





URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN

UN-Habitat supports governments at city, regional and national levels to improve policies, plans and designs for more compact, socially inclusive, better integrated and connected cities that foster sustainable urban development and are resilient to climate change.



This global population will grow from 50 per cent urban today, to 70 per cent.

This transition to a predominantly urban world is irreversible and brings with it equally irreversible

changes in the way we use land, water, energy and other resources. How we manage this rapid urbanisation will be the key to our very survival and prosperity.



accommodate a rapid increase of

UN-Habitat's approach to Urban Planning and Design emphasizes: (1) preventive planning; (2) planning at the scale of the problems; and (3) planning in phases, beginning with ensuring adequate physical access and basic urban services, especially water and sanitation, and linking planning with financial capacities.

Combined with modern technology, better urban planning can solve most of the problems that we are facing, and lead cities to prosperity. Cities are engines of wealth and employment, innovation and creativity, and provide the best opportunities to improve livelihoods. Cities give great economies of scale, and opportunities for efficient to infrastructure development.



Los Angeles, USA. © iofoto/Shutterstock



Future urban planning must address five major factors shaping 21st century cities:

1. Environmental challenges of climate change and the excessive dependence of cities on cars using fossil fuel;
2. The demographic challenges of rapid urbanisation, shrinking cities, large youth populations in some parts of the world and ageing in others, and increasingly multicultural cities;
3. Economic challenges of uncertain future growth and fundamental doubts about market-led approaches now endangered by the current global financial crisis, as well as increasing informality in urban activities;
4. Increasing socio-spatial challenges, especially social and spatial inequalities, urban sprawl, unplanned peri-urbanization and the increasing spatial scale of cities;
5. The institutional challenges related to governance and the changing roles of local government.

the urban population, to prevent





URBAN ECONOMY

UN-Habitat promotes urban economic and financial development so that cities and towns (or human settlements) can reduce poverty, be more productive, provide better housing and municipal finance, regional economic development, and community-based initiatives.



Many cities and towns lack the resources to meet the ever-growing demand for more housing, more basic services, new public transport, and new infrastructure and maintenance.

Municipal authorities – with the backing of central government – are looking for new ways of generating resources. They need to be able to

raise revenue with the help of advisory technical and capacity building support, which UN-Habitat and its partners can provide. These mechanisms include land value capture, borrowing and access to capital markets, identifying bankable projects attractive to the private sector, and privatization of municipal and revenue collection. Options to generate income include the



the emergence of slums, to face

issuing of permits to business operators, forming public-private partnerships, privatization of the provision of municipal services or obtaining grants or loans from multilateral financial institutions.

Cities and towns face constant pressure to be competitive and attractive to investors and talent. At the same time, unemployment is a major problem. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, more than 70 per cent of the labour force is vulnerable. Youth unemployment is a particular concern with young people more than three times as likely as adults to be unemployed.

UN-Habitat helps local governments, especially in secondary towns and cities, develop and exploit local assets and urban development opportunities for growth, jobs and increased tax revenue.

UN-Habitat brings expertise and networks in local economic development demonstrated through initiatives implemented with partners in a number of countries, including Canada, Egypt, Liberia, Philippines, Romania, Senegal and Vietnam.

Well planned and designed cities can generate better financing, higher levels of wellbeing, and better employment opportunities. UN-Habitat priorities are:

1. To help cities improve municipal finance;
2. To turn local assets into economic drivers;
3. To promote community empowerment;
4. To focus strongly on youth.



Working with young people

The 1.2 billion young people aged 15-24 is the largest youth population the world has ever known. These youth live, by and large, in cities and towns. It is estimated that as many as 60 per cent of all urban dwellers will be under the age 18 by 2030. UN-Habitat meaningfully engages youth so as to fully realize all the opportunities cities offer and thus create prosperity.

UN-Habitat recognizes young people as the active participants in the future of human settlements, the UN parlance for towns and cities.

UN-Habitat, through its Urban Youth Fund, and new Youth 21 initiative is actively involved with city youth projects around the world.



© UN-Habitat/Alessandro Scotti

climate change adaptation and





URBAN **BASIC SERVICES**

Millions of people around the world still lack access to clean drinking water, basic sanitation, modern forms of energy, sustainable mobility and proper waste management. UN-Habitat works in the area of water, sanitation and drainage, mobility, energy and waste management; with the objective of increasing equitable access to urban basic services, and improving the standard of living of the urban poor.



As the world becomes more urbanised, urbanisation is increasingly viewed at the heart of the climate agenda. With half of humanity living in cities, urban areas now consume 80 per cent of global energy, and are responsible for the emission of more than 70 per cent of greenhouse gases.

Cities also generate more than 70 per cent of the world's waste. Between 30 percent to 40 percent of urban dwellers in developing countries do not have access to modern forms of energy, such as electricity and clean cooking fuels.



to fight against urban poverty

UN-Habitat helps cities exchange views on ways of offsetting these problems, and primarily cutting our reliance on fossil fuels and energy consumption in general. It promotes more efficient, cleaner public transport; energy efficient buildings; and thus less reliance on the automobile; cleaner cooking fuel; access to affordable energy services; and the use of renewable energy sources in urban areas.

UN-Habitat supports efforts by governments in developing countries in their pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for water and sanitation. This is achieved through city-level demonstration projects, institutional strengthening of service providers, and engagement in national policy and reform process.

It also promotes better waste management, drainage, and a range of other strategies whereby smarter and compact cities can deliver better services to their citizens, while at the same time reducing energy demand.

By improving basic services, reducing the urban impact of climate change problems, improving transport systems and using energy more efficiently, UN-Habitat promotes sustainability that is human-centred – cities which improve the relative quality of life of their people, cities geared towards the happiness, rights and fulfilment of their citizens.



Drinking water - good progress

The number of people using improved drinking water sources reached 6.1 billion in 2010, up by over 2 billion since 1990. China and India alone recorded almost half of global progress, with increases of 457 million and 522 million respectively. Yet the work is not yet done. Eleven per cent of the global population—783 million people—remains without access to an improved source of drinking water and, at the current pace, 605 million people will still lack coverage in 2015. In four of nine developing regions, 90 per cent or more of the population now uses an improved drinking water source. In contrast, coverage remains very low in Oceania and sub-Saharan Africa, neither of which is on track to meet the drinking water target by 2015. Over 40 per cent of all people without improved drinking water live in sub-Saharan Africa.



Sanitation – a “global scandal”

Sanitation coverage increased from 36 per cent in 1990 to 56 per cent in 2010 in the developing world as a whole. Despite progress, almost half of the population in those regions—2.5 billion—still lack access to improved sanitation facilities. The greatest progress was achieved in Eastern and Southern Asia, where sanitation coverage in 2010 was, respectively, 2.4 and 1.7 times higher than in 1990. At the current pace, and barring additional interventions, by 2015 the world will have reached only 67 per cent coverage, well short of the 75 per cent needed to achieve the Millennium target. An analysis of data from 35 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (representing 84 per cent of the region’s population) shows that over 90 per cent of the households in the richest urban quintile benefit from improved sanitation, while access in rural areas falls below 50 per cent even among the wealthiest households. In the poorest rural quintile, over 60 per cent of households practice open defecation.



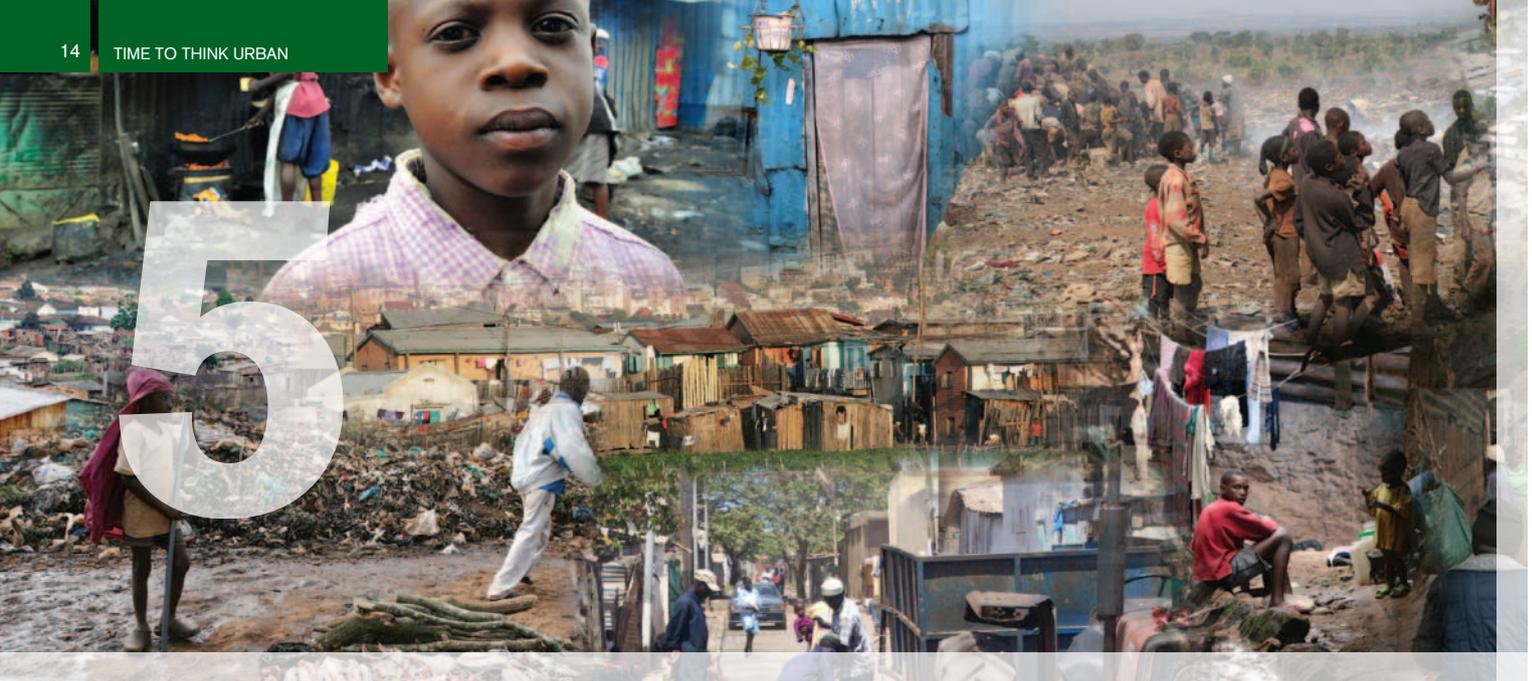
Urban mobility

What we call ‘sustainable urban mobility’ – the ability to move about town easily – is the key to a properly functioning town or city. The success of doing business and conducting productive relationships in towns and cities depends on sustainable, efficient mass transport systems.

UN-Habitat pursues three objectives: First, mobility plans integrated within the overall urban plans for the city; second, how urban investments can decrease the demand for private vehicles and discourage urban sprawl, and third, the need to ensure a political and financial commitment for trunk infrastructure, including high capacity systems, which are environmentally friendly.

and inequality.”





HOUSING AND SLUM UPGRADING

To achieve the goal of adequate housing for all, UN-Habitat has launched a Global Housing Strategy, a collaborative global movement, aiming at improving access to housing in general and the living conditions of slum dwellers in particular. Its main objective is to assist member States in working towards the realization of the right to adequate housing.



Urbanisation has offered both opportunities and challenges. Rapid spontaneous urbanisation has seen the absolute number of slum dwellers increase from 776.7 million in 2000 to some

827.6 million in 2010. Governments in all parts of the world grapple with the same problem: how to provide adequate and affordable shelter for all.



“Urbanization is a source of

This cornerstone of UN-Habitat's relationship with governments, municipalities, its civil society partners; and the financial world, both public and private; as well as with those most in need of shelter, water, sanitation, electricity and other services that make for an acceptable standard of living.

The Global Housing Strategy will (re)position housing within the global contemporary debate through a paradigm shift in thinking and practice in housing policy, and will bring a contribution to the global discourse on and definition of the post-Millennium Development Goals agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.



Achieving the target

Improvements in the lives of 200 million slum dwellers bring achievement of the Millennium target even as rapid urbanisation swells the ranks of the urban poor, according to the latest UN-Habitat research carried in the 2012 Millennium Development Goals Report of the United Nations. The share of urban slum residents in the developing world declined from 39 per cent in 2000 to 33 per cent in 2012. More than 200 million of these people gained access to improved water sources, improved sanitation facilities,

or durable or less crowded housing, thereby exceeding the target. This achievement comes well ahead of the 2020 deadline. But despite a reduction in the percentage of urban population living in slums, the absolute number of slum dwellers continues to grow. Fed by an accelerating pace of urbanisation, 863 million people are now estimated to be living in slums compared to 650 million in 1990 and 760 million in 2000. The achievement of the Millennium target does not lessen the need to improve the lives of the urban poor and to curb the increase in numbers of slum dwellers.



© JOSHCO

development, not just





RISK REDUCTION AND REHABILITATION

In recent years, the world has witnessed an increasing series of disasters which have resulted in the dramatic loss of human life, the destruction of homes, property, infrastructure, services and indeed the displacement of entire communities.

- With an estimated 130 international staff and more than 2,300 national staff in crisis and post-crisis situations around the world, UN-Habitat's experience shows that in most post-crisis situations, the sudden disruption of service provision and the destruction of critical infrastructure represent a major threat to recovery for urban survivors and reduces resilience.
- A key area of work for the agency is ensuring prevention, protection and early recovery of basic service provision and critical infrastructure for transport, water, sanitation, waste management

➤ an outcome of it. We must



URBAN RESEARCH AND **CAPACITY** DEVELOPMENT

UN-Habitat helps cities learn, know and understand their own needs.



Good urban policy and planning requires accurate information. From finding out how many people in a given street may have water and sanitation, to what local non-governmental and civil society organizations might think about a city, or how women's views should be taken into account, and helping exchange information and best practice ideas world-wide, the agency

provides the facts, figures and studies that can help decision makers at every level, and even assists local residents make optimum choices.

The agency publishes two biennial flagship reports, *The State of the World's Cities*, and the *Global Report on Human Settlements*. Both are today considered among the most authoritative reports on urban affairs. A set of regional biennial



accommodate a rapid increase of

reports supplement the flagship reports: *The State of African Cities*, *The State of Arab Cities*, *The State of Asian Cities*, *The State of Chinese Cities*, *The State of European Cities in Transition*, and *The State of Latin American Cities*.

UN-Habitat's Global Urban Observatory helps also cities get a bird's eye view of their situation and their needs.

The City Prosperity Initiative has been designed to assist cities in moving towards economically, socially, politically and environmentally prosperous urban futures through clear policy interventions. This is done by using "the City Prosperity Index" that focuses on individual cities and measures prosperity across five dimensions - productivity, infrastructure quality of life, equity and environmental sustainability.

UN-Habitat will continue to offer technical support to institutions for innovative training programmes which target local governments and non-governmental and community-based organizations.



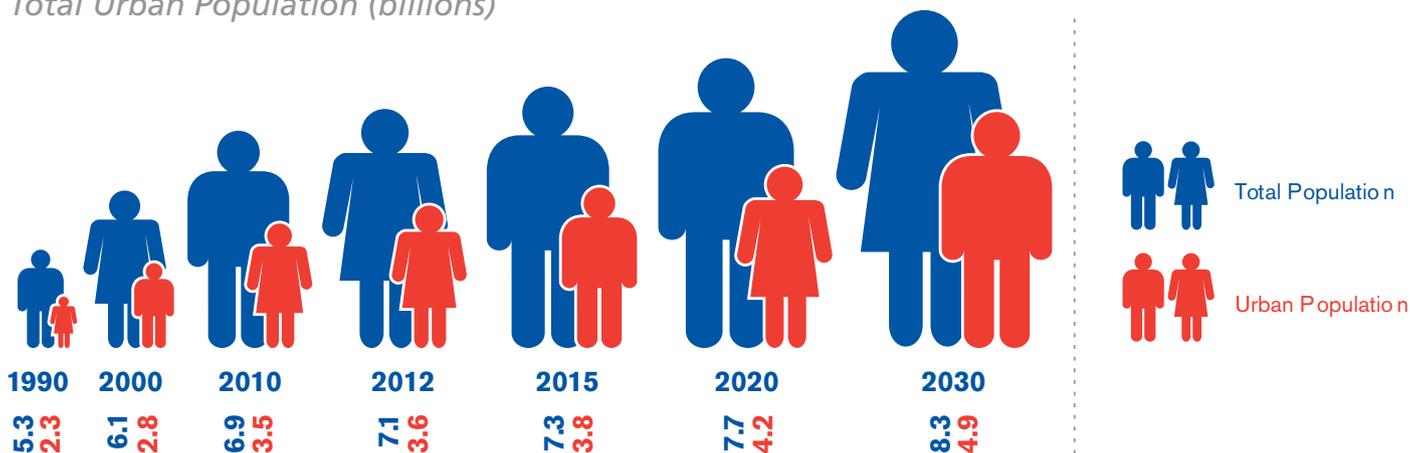
Gender Mainstreaming

The agency strives to broaden gender equality and women's rights into all its activities by supporting and strengthening gender awareness. It seeks to ensure more accountable, participatory and empowering urban development practices through a gender sensitive approach.

The implementation of women's rights to land, property and housing remains a formidable challenge facing the world today. The problem persists despite a host of international human rights instruments such as *Millennium Development Goal 3* (Promote gender equality and empower women), and the 2005 *World Summit Outcome*, where women's land, property and inheritance rights are seen as an important indicator of women's empowerment and human development.

In an effort to strengthen gender mainstreaming in its activities, UN-Habitat produces resource materials on gender and post-crisis governance, reconstruction and land administration, gender in local governance, and best practices in gender mainstreaming in human settlements development.

Total Urban Population (billions)



➤ Source: United Nations (2010).

the urban population, to prevent





➤ the emergence of slums, to face



ALL AROUND THE WORLD

UN-Habitat teams work in more than 70 countries around the world.



UN-Habitat is a UN global agency that marries normative work with technical cooperation in the field. As a result, UN-Habitat works in more than 70 countries in five continents, as part of the larger UN team, on the principle of “Delivering as One”.

UN-Habitat’s development work depends on close partnership with national and local governments. UN-Habitat will seek to increase its cooperation based on larger scale programmes delivering results at outcome level, on the principles of replication and scaling up.

At the country level, UN-Habitat helps governments improve the quality of urban planning, so that cities are more resilient against disaster, the impacts of rapid urbanisation and climate change.

The many climate-related disasters, humanitarian emergencies such as the tsunami in Japan,

devastating floods in Pakistan, the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, housing problems in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the continuing reconstruction programme in Haiti, constantly test our resolve and our mission.

UN-Habitat manages this work through its Project Office at headquarters in Nairobi, and its Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Rio de Janeiro, its Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Fukuoka, the Regional Office for the Arab States in Cairo, and the African States in Nairobi.

Our mission as the urban agency is to ensure sustainable, equitable cities of the future able to plan for and manage the world’s growing urbanisation. It is also to help respond with our partners to alleviate the worst of suffering, and help urban communities rebuild and strengthen resilience for the future.

climate change adaptation and



UN-Habitat work in the Region of the Arab States



UN-Habitat has been engaged with the Arab States region for over 30 years, and over this period UN-Habitat has expanded its operation to more than 10 countries in the region.

The urban population in Arab countries grew by more than four times from 1970 to 2010, and will more than double again from 2010 to 2050. As of 2010, they had a total population of 357 million people, 56 percent of whom lived in cities; by 2050, they will have a total population of 646 million, 68 per cent of whom will live in cities. Most of this growth has taken place on the peripheries of the larger cities although, today, secondary cities are experiencing the fastest rate of growth. Across the region, around 20 per cent of residents live under each country's national poverty line, with certain countries where urban poverty at more than 35 per cent. Urbanization in the region has been shaped by the population movements induced by conflict, drought and unequal levels of economic development both within and among the countries of the region. Arab countries have among the scarcest water resources per capita in the world. Desertification and the associated threats of future water and food security for ever-larger urban populations are among the key defining problems of the region.

Within the last three years, UN-Habitat has provided technical support to national, regional and local governments in several countries within the region. The support has included:

1. Assisting the national bodies to prepare national urban strategies, housing policies and legislations related to urban planning, development and governance.
2. Preparing strategic urban plans for towns and cities and detailed plans for cities extensions, land readjustment and upgrading of informal settlements and deteriorated inner-cities.
3. Developing practical solutions for improving the living conditions of Internal Displaced Persons (IDP) communities in conflict areas.
4. Urban recovery for damaged neighborhoods and rehabilitation of urban historical areas.
5. Promoting local economic development and adopting participatory planning, empowering youth and women in decisions making.
6. Improving urban information and databases to support decision making processes through establishing urban observatories.
7. Advocating the agenda for sustainable urban development through regional activities such as issuing the first State of Arab Cities report.



to fight against urban poverty

In 2011-2012, UN-Habitat Arab states portfolio of projects was valued USD 74 million. Direct country project cooperation is currently taking place in Egypt,

Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian territories, Sudan, Morocco, Libya, Iraq, Somalia, Kuwait and Jordan.

UN-Habitat work in the Region of Latin American and the Caribbean



Latin America and the Caribbean is the most urbanised region in the world, with 80 per cent of its population in towns and cities. Despite economic advances and initiatives to combat poverty, there have not been significant improvements of equality. Latin American and Caribbean cities often remain strongly divided, and segregated spatially and socially. This division is expressed in high urban inequality coefficients and the persistence of informal settlements.

UN-Habitat has been engaged in Latin America and Caribbean for many years. This engagement was consolidated in 1996 with the establishment of our regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

This region has often been referred to as a global laboratory for many innovations related to urban planning and management. UN-Habitat launched last year its first report on the region, The State of the Latin American and the Caribbean Cities 2012. This report brings together current and varied information

about the main urban centres in the region, resulting in a useful tool to approach public-policy making and allowing us to move towards cities that enjoy a higher quality of life.

UN-Habitat has offices in nine countries: Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Haiti, El Salvador, Bolivia and Brazil. UN-Habitat's portfolio of projects in more than 20 countries in the region for the period 2005-2012 is valued at USD 49 million. Sixty-two per cent of this focuses on three main programmes: Reconstruction in Haiti, projects under the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund and participation in nine Millennium Development Objective Funds Projects.

The portfolio in Latin American and the Caribbean is characterized by strong partnerships with local governments, providing support in municipal governance, urban planning, urban safety, cities and climate change, and public-private partnerships for local development. Recent activities in the region are concentrated

and inequality.”



on capacity development for intermediate cities as well as urban sprawl of metropolitan areas. Private sector activities in these activities has also witnessed an upward trend.

UN-Habitat key accomplishments in the region in the past decade include: the formulation of

urban sector policies; advocating participatory urban and strategic planning; promoting good urban governance; local economic development; land regularization and policies; slum upgrading and prevention; disaster management and reconstruction and improvement of basic urban services and housing.

UN-Habitat work in the Region of Asia and Pacific



The dynamic and populous Asia-Pacific region is home to 3.7 billion people and represents 56% of the world's population. The region is perhaps the most diverse in terms of economy, society, culture, environment and human settlements. Half of the world's urban population now lives in Asia. Over the next two decades, this region will come to account for 60% of the demographic expansion of all urban areas across the world. UN-Habitat is currently active in 28 countries with a robust portfolio of projects amounting to USD 328 million, representing 45 per cent of the current total global portfolio of the organization, expanding from USD 50 million in 2000 as the result of our response to the climate-related disasters, humanitarian emergencies, violent conflicts and economic turbulence experienced by the region. More than 47 per cent of the current portfolio is concentrated in Afghanistan, followed by

significant engagement in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Mongolia, Japan, Indonesia and Vietnam. While post-disaster and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction are a predominant feature, UN-Habitat's coverage of the region is diverse and its engagement with countries spans an entire spectrum of human settlements issues, increasingly strengthening city climate and disaster resilience as well as linking cities to green infrastructure financing. Its implementing partners are also extensive, ranging from civil society organizations, to government departments, regional banks, academic institutions and regional networks.

UN-Habitat's activities in the region are driven by three forces: the first, and probably largest and most powerful is recovery and reconstruction after disasters, whether natural or human-made; the second is those that are a consequence and driven



by global or regional agendas, such as climate change or regional watershed management; and the third is providing or improving basic services at the settlement level. Most of the work is also descriptive rather than normative and by-and-large applying lessons and practices which are tried and tested to new locations.

While the region's over-all economic dynamism over the past decades have been at a scale and speed that are impressive, even greater challenges have arisen for UN-Habitat to look into it, such as: addressing economic disparities and poverty reduction, managing the regionalization of cities and towns, preventing the proliferations of slums and informal settlements, addressing environmental challenges, and re-building communities ravaged by wars and conflicts. Most importantly, we are also endeavoring to support the region to enhance and link urban planning and development to support and sustain the rapid economic development in the region, and

integrating innovative approaches into ongoing and new project development and implementation.

The rapid and consistent growth of middle income countries (MICs) in Asia-Pacific also requires UN-Habitat to work with national and local governments institutions, civil society partners and the private sector in providing key strategic advice in coping with challenges of sustainable urbanization.



The "People's Process"

UN-Habitat's philosophy and principles in providing support to countries in the region are founded on the belief that people are at the center of development. It has established various mechanisms that activate community-based responses to addressing various issues in different contexts. Support to post-conflict reconstruction and post-disaster recovery programmes in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Indonesia are examples of operational projects founded on the people's process, which promotes seamless transition from recovery to development, forming resilient communities as a result. This has also been proven effective in urban poverty reduction context such as Myanmar, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Mongolia.

UN-Habitat work in the Region of Africa



UN-Habitat has worked in many African countries for the past 37 years. UN-Habitat's portfolio in Africa is very diverse in terms of geographic coverage and development partners. It is attracting support from various countries and multilateral

organizations interested in promoting sustainable urban development and recovery in the continent. The portfolio of ongoing projects in Africa is valued at USD 137.9 million. More than 20 per cent of this portfolio is concentrated in the East Africa, primarily



for the Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Initiative. UN-Habitat also has a significant portfolio in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the area of land reform and management; Somalia for post-crisis recovery and rehabilitation, and Egypt and Libya in planning and capacity building.

UN-Habitat's key accomplishments in the region in the past decade include, among others: urban safety; good urban governance and improvement of housing; addressing post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, slum upgrading, water, waste management and urban services; supporting decentralization programmes; land tenure and spatial planning.

As the urban population almost doubles in the next two decades the imperative of steering and guiding the growth process through urban planning becomes a priority undertaking. Equally urgent is the need to improve liveability and increase productivity of the city through expanding access to basic services. Indeed, Africa's increased urban population is a powerful asset for the continent's overall transformation. However, it can only attain its full potential when cities are properly planned and

managed. A major change is needed in the course of Africa's urban development - a re-examination of the planning process and the delivery of basic services.

UN-Habitat remains committed to Africa. With the support of the African Development Bank and other development partners, UN-Habitat is keen to strengthen positive collaboration and partnerships with all levels of governments, non governmental organizations, private sector and regional economic communities such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), etc. to eradicating urban poverty and in transforming Africa's urban development agenda.



Urbanization and economic growth

Despite the turbulent global economic environment in recent years, growth in Africa remained robust at around 5 per cent. Excluding South Africa, which accounts for over a third of the region's GDP, growth in the rest of the region was even stronger at 5.9 per cent, making it one of the fastest growing developing regions in the world. Urbanisation in Africa is providing vital opportunities for positive economic development such as industrialization and entry into exports markets, as well as social and human advancement. Cities generate economies of agglomeration important to sustain economic growth and generate jobs and opportunities.



» WORLD URBAN CAMPAIGN

The World Urban Campaign is a global advocacy platform to promote a positive vision of cities in the twenty first century. Coordinated by UN-Habitat and driven by a large number of partners. It is designed as an essential platform for partners to propose solutions towards a better urban future and to build synergies, knowledge, and consensus on sustainable urban development.



» WORLD URBAN FORUM

The World Urban Forum is one of the most open gatherings on the international stage. It brings together government leaders, ministers, mayors, members of national, regional and international associations of local governments, private sector, media, non-governmental and community organizations in open dialogue and exchange.

The Seventh session of the World Urban Forum will take place in Medellin, Colombia from 5 - 11 April 2014



» **WORLD HABITAT DAY**

On this day the agency brings urban matters to the international agenda each year. The United Nations has designated the first Monday of October every year as World Habitat Day. This is an occasion to reflect on the state of our towns and cities and the basic right of all, to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat.



» I'M A CITY CHANGER

'I'm a City Changer' is the raising-awareness initiative of the World Urban Campaign. 'I'm a City Changer' is about giving the voice to people and cities to propose positive solutions to urban challenges. 'I'm a City Changer' local campaigns and National Urban Campaigns engage citizens in actions towards sustainable cities. Become a City Changer for a better urban future.



I'M A CITY
CHANGER

imacitychanger.org

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



“Join us”

UN-Habitat needs your support to continue improving the quality of life of millions of citizens around the world.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme
P.O.Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
Tel: +254-20-7623120
infohabitat@unhabitat.org
www.unhabitat.org

UN  HABITAT

www.unhabitat.org