



Concept Note of the COP27 Presidential SURGe Initiative

Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation [WORKING TITLE]

in collaboration with UN-Habitat and facilitated by ICLEI

Draft for stakeholder review

Please kindly note:

- Stakeholder review is open until 22 August 2022, COB Nairobi time (GMT+3) under following link:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MnkIdDGV5shZkYfp4aDxgljNxKLJ-dtU/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109944633097910524626&rtpof=true&sd=true>
- Please express interest to join and support the initiative through the Registration Form. See Annex A.

1. Introduction

Cities are home to 55% of the global population and they are here to stay. By 2050, urban populations are expected to grow by 2.5 billion people to 68% of the world's population. Urbanization is intertwined with several existential global challenges and in urban settings, observed climate change has caused impacts on human health, livelihoods, and key infrastructure. The importance of local and urban climate action has increasingly been recognized as infrastructure and assets have been compromised by extreme and slow-onset events with resulting economic losses, disruptions of services and negative impacts to wellbeing. It is therefore critical that local and national governments must work together and collaborate with other key urban and local stakeholders to simultaneously advance decarbonization efforts while building **resilient urban systems**:

- **Urban areas account for approximately three-quarters of energy consumption** and a similar share of energy-related CO₂ emissions; at the same time an estimated 770 million people worldwide lack access to electricity (most of them in Africa)
- **Buildings and urban infrastructure** are responsible for almost 40% of CO₂ emissions and over one-third of final energy use, while the global building stock is increasing. Investing in more resilient urban infrastructure could save US\$4.2 trillion from climate change loss and damages.
- **2 billion tons of municipal solid waste are generated every year** (and this is expected to grow to 4 billion tons by 2050). Under a business-as-usual scenario, open dumpsites will account for 8-10% of GHG emission by 2025. Poorly managed waste clogs waterways increasing the risks of flooding in extreme weather events.
- **The transport sector accounts for 17% of global emissions** and is the fastest growing source of emissions worldwide. It contributes to increasing urban congestion, road fatalities and air pollution.
- **Only 0.5% of the earth's water is available for consumption**. With urban heat and intensifying drought extremes, the limited access to water will affect vulnerable communities the most, aggravating diseases and inequalities. It is estimated that up to 650 million people in 500 cities will experience decreasing water supplies due to climate change by 2050. At the same time, the sanitation sector is estimated to contribute 2-6% of the global methane emissions, and 1-3% of the nitrous oxide emissions.
- **The adverse impacts of climate change, extreme weather events** including (flash) floods, storms, droughts, and heatwaves affect cities, their infrastructure and the livelihoods and health of their residents. The most vulnerable are hit the hardest. Today, **more than three billion people** live in hotspots that are highly vulnerable to climate change and **more than one billion urban dwellers live in informal settlements**. Climate change impacts exacerbate the underlying socio-economic challenges that come with urbanization.

There is growing awareness that the climate battle will be won or lost in cities. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report has highlighted the role of cities as critical for reducing emissions, addressing climate challenges and the importance of climate-resilient development. Redirecting large-scale investment in urban resilience, urban infrastructure and especially informal settlements is instrumental in tackling climate change and sustainable development. Together, this will be key to redirecting cities to a path of sustainable urban development, while tackling climate change. Action needs to happen immediately, and major emission reductions need to be achieved over this decade. Priority is also to be given to the urban poor, in this context. The climate agenda and the sustainable development agenda go together.

This initiative is building on the recognition of the urgent need for multilevel and cooperative action in the preamble of Glasgow Climate Pact adopted at COP26 in 2021. The initiative also aims to support efforts to strengthen and raise ambition of NDCs by establishing synergies and complementarity with the commitments and initiatives of local and regional governments and with other relevant initiatives, networks and coalitions (see Annex B).

Figure 1. Objectives of the SURGe Initiative



2. Governance

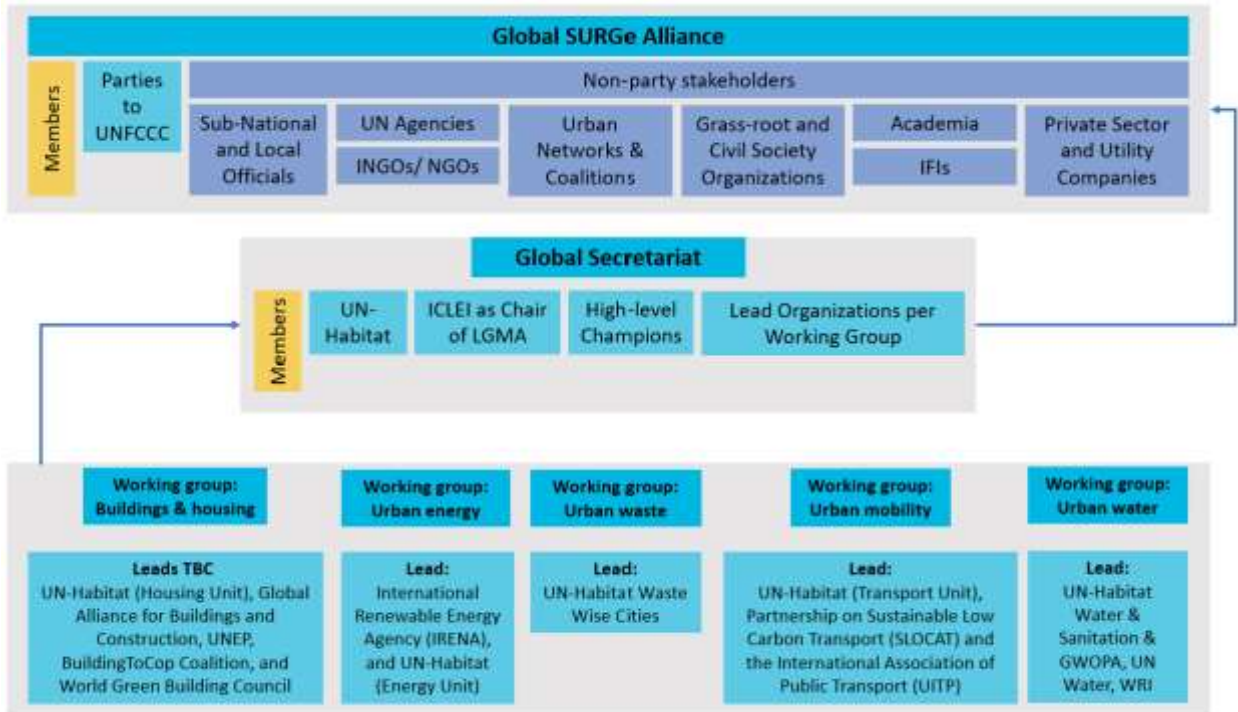
The Initiative's governance structure is three-tiered, made up of the **Global Sustainable Cities Alliance**, the

Global Secretariat, ensuring a balance between developed and developing economies and the **five Working Groups** (see figure 2). This Alliance provides an advisory function and is sought to convene bi-annually at the margins of the World Urban Forum and present an annual progress at the UNFCCC COPs with a view to provide inputs to outcomes of COPs.

The Global Secretariat will meet as appropriate to oversee the operations of the Initiative, ensure alignment of work programmes between the tracks and with COP Presidencies, uphold the overarching principles, keep abreast of implementation progress including monitoring, reporting, and verification, and secure high-level commitment to the Initiative from Members to the Global Sustainable Cities Alliance and external partners.

Each Working Group has lead organization(s) that convene key stakeholders and existing networks relevant to the track. The responsible entities per Track report back to the Global Secretariat and present their progress at upcoming COPs. As the COP27 Presidency envisions launching multiple initiatives, each Working Group will designate a focal point to coordinate with other relevant presidential initiatives.

Figure 2. Governance of the SURGe Initiative



[Note: this governance structure is still under revision; additional supporting organs may be added]

3. Working groups of the Sustainable Cities Initiative

This Sustainable Cities Initiative provides a holistic framework to achieve sustainable and resilient urban systems by maximizing synergies between integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies in cities. This means accelerating an urban system transformation that reduces urban emissions while increasing urban systems to be resilient to the impacts of climate change, supporting the most vulnerable urban communities.

The aim is to build synergies between mitigation and adaptation measures to ensure benefits can be leveraged to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of local climate action for sustainable urbanization. Under the umbrella of overarching principles to build sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban systems, the initiative proposes five working groups. Table 1 below summarizes the approach, with a detailed roadmap for each of the pillars to be developed as a next step.

Table 1. Framework of the Sustainable Cities Initiative

Towards sustainable and resilient urban systems					
OVERARCHING GUIDING PRINCIPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Low-carbon</i>: reducing emissions and benefiting from cost savings from decreased energy use and improved energy and resource efficiency • <i>Resilient</i>: strengthening the capacity of city systems and their inhabitants to maintain continuity through shocks and stresses, while positively adapting and transforming towards urban sustainability • <i>Nature-positive</i>: by taking into consideration resource efficiency and enhancing the resilience of the planet and people to halt and reverse nature loss. • <i>Focus on the most vulnerable</i>: needs to reach the most vulnerable communities to climate change impacts and the ones at risk of being left behind and taking into consideration social dimensions • <i>Local</i>: Customize approaches depending on local contexts for established, rapidly developing, and new cities • <i>Integrated</i>: Leveraging co-benefits of investment in adaptation and mitigation measures • Building on partnerships between Parties and non-party stakeholders, including city governments, intergovernmental institutions, the private sector, and civil society • Identifying the gaps and building on previous initiatives and feeding back into these efforts to ensure continuity and alignment • <i>Multi-level governance</i>: vertical and horizontal integration of climate action, linking local climate action to raise ambitions of the NDCs • Focus on building cross-sector benefits, including for nature, biodiversity, digital transformation, food security • Targeted towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and limiting global average temperature rise to 1.5°C, as stipulated under the Paris Agreement • <i>Circular</i>: promoting a circular value chain in buildings and constructions, but also in supply and disposal infrastructure systems, that aims at reducing both emissions and waste drastically while promoting innovation, affordability, energy efficiency, and local development. 				
	BUILDINGS & HOUSING	URBAN ENERGY	URBAN WASTE/ CONSUMPTION	URBAN MOBILITY	URBAN WATER
GOAL	Advancing energy efficiency, low-carbon materials and processes, circularity, and adaptation measures to deliver solutions at scale for more sustainable and affordable housing, shelter, workplaces, communities, and settlements.	Advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency in cities to provide energy access and tackle energy poverty while reducing municipal energy costs and building urban energy system resilience.	Tackling municipal solid waste management and other aspects of consumption to mitigate climate change and prevent environmental pollution supporting climate resilience, create businesses, employment and livelihood opportunities, and shift towards a circular economy.	Accelerating sustainable, affordable, accessible and safe integrated public transport systems in cities through land use planning and digital innovation, while improving walking and biking infrastructure.	Improving access to year-round potable water, access to and management of water for households and public buildings, and grey and wastewater management.

MULTI-LEVEL CLIMATE ACTIONS	<p>Mitigation: reducing GHG emissions from buildings and housing by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Assessing, planning, and creating strategies that fast-track circularity, decarbonization resources and energy efficiency in the built environment, with a focus on the housing sector (2) In parallel to (1) building capacity for the development, implementation, and enforcement of sustainable policies and regulatory frameworks (3) Enabling SMEs in Africa to deliver low-carbon, resilient construction, and housing 	<p>Mitigation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Develop low-emission development pathways for cities to accelerate the renewable energy transition (2) Develop local renewable energy generation, with a focus on rooftop solar PV and solar thermal (3) Capacity building on implementation of local policies to advance energy and renewable energy in buildings 	<p>Mitigation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Reducing GHG emissions from landfills and dumpsites (2) Deploying the 5R Principle (Rethink, Refuse, Reduce, Reuse/Repurpose, Recycle) for circular resources in cities reducing the GHG footprint of products and energy and water consumption during production and supply 	<p>Mitigation: reducing GHG emissions from motorized transport by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Assessing, planning, and prioritizing national and local plans and investment strategies to ensure integrated sustainable urban mobility that is focused on proximity and accessibility (2) Focusing on shifting to less carbon intensive modes – from private vehicles to public transport, shared mobility, walking and cycling (3) Building capacity for improved transport efficiency through innovative digital tools and resource efficient vehicles (including electric mobility) 	<p>Mitigation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Developing national and local plans and strategies for improved water resource and wastewater management that include opportunities for emission reductions, carbon sequestration and the protection of GHG sinks (2) Reduce carbon emissions associated with water and sanitation service provision through energy efficiency, energy transitions, sequestration and energy production from waste. (3) Support transitions to integrated urban water and sanitation systems that minimize energy and water requirements, focusing on density, decentralization, demand management and reuse
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MULTI-LEVEL CLIMATE ACTIONS	Adaptation (1) Assessing, planning, and creating strategies that fast-track urban planning, design, and management approaches that strengthen the resilience of the built environment towards climate-related hazards (2) Combining grey infrastructure with green and blue infrastructure solutions to improve insulation and thus adaptive capacity to extreme temperatures, and increase the capacity of permeable surfaces to reduce flood risk (3) Integrating climate resilient planning, design, and management approaches into master planning, neighbourhood development, and construction codes, as well as investing in retrofitting existing infrastructure for both the housing sector and buildings and constructions in general. (4) Mobilizing investment for accelerated adaptation efforts for the most vulnerable communities in need of climate-resilient housing and neighbourhoods (5) Promoting and prioritizing financial incentives that accelerate sustainable design ideas such as rainwater harvesting, urban gardens, etc; that promote affordability, clean air, indoor comfort, access to basic services, and improved public health	Adaptation (1) Guaranteeing the access and supply of energy, and balancing production and consumption to reduce energy poverty for the urban poor (2) Focusing on energy-efficient smart metering and climate resilient design for installed energy technology and supply systems to reduce outage and sustain and increase job opportunities and thus the socio-economic performance of cities (3) Diversifying energy supply and increase storage to reduce the load on the grid	Adaptation (1) Increasing access to controlled waste disposal facilities reduces air, soil, and water pollution (2) Developing strategies around the 5R Principle preserves land, increases local biodiversity, and improves micro-climate (3) Developing and enhancing strategies to reduce flood impacts exacerbated by littered and clogged canals and drainage systems (4) Focusing on reducing health risks from inadequate waste disposal	Adaptation (1) Increasing focus on the transport-health nexus and strengthened collaboration between transport and health agencies to tackle air pollution and improve public health and well-being (2) Developing strategies for diverse intermodal transport systems to make them more resilient to climate impacts, improve connectivity for communities and emergency services, and reduce pollution of all kinds (3) Integrating climate-resilient design into road infrastructure and public space design to provide adaptive strategies such as flood and SLR protection, shading and cooling etc.	Adaptation (1) Improving water service delivery, distributing scarce water resources effectively, and increasing community capacity to access potable and household water in the face of climate adversity (2) Reducing outbreaks of water-borne diseases in communities (3) Planning water and sanitation system improvements in coordination with adaptation planning in other sectors, particularly urban planning, agriculture and energy, to ensure sustainability and cross-sectoral adaptation (4) Improve sustainable urban drainage systems to protect against extreme hydrological events, preventing urban flooding while protecting water resources (5) Build capacity and investment for watershed protection and other nature-based solutions to optimize water security (6) Incorporating climate resilience in water and sanitation policies, legislations, plans, budgets, systems and services at national and subnational levels; and increase political commitments for the provision of climate-resilient water and sanitation services for the poorest and most climate-affected communities	
	ORG THAT HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST	UN Habitat Re-think Buildings Programme, Global ABC/UNEP, BuildingToCOP Coalition and WorldGBC [TBC]	UN-Habitat (Energy Unit), IRENA [TBC]	UN-Habitat Waste Wise Cities [TBC]	SLOCAT/ UITP, UN-Habitat/UNEP [TBC]	UN-Habitat (Water & Sanitation Unit and GWOPA), UN Water, WRI [TBC]
		Stakeholders interested to join and/or lead a working group can express their interest in the registration form. See Annex A.				
	SYNERGIES w/ other COP27 initiatives		Just transition initiative	Waste initiative	Sustainable Transport initiative [tbc]	FAST initiative AWARE Initiative
	ENABLERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance, capacity building, and technology transfer as means of implementation Development of strong indicator targets to monitor progress Integrated local climate change and spatial and urban planning Local climate change monitoring, reporting, and verification Incorporating urban system resilience in the NDCs as a demonstration of commitment and a major step towards supporting the mobilization of the financing required at large scale 				

4. Next steps

After a high-level launch during the Solutions Day at COP27, this initiative will:

- Secure high-level commitment from interested Parties and non-party stakeholders
- Develop roadmaps for stakeholder engagement, including for Parties, city government, civil society, and the private sector
- Define the work programme and terms of collaboration of each working group within the overarching framework until 2030. This includes:
 - o Development of a funding mechanism for each working group, in addition to raising funding for the Global Secretariat
 - o How-to guidelines, building on the roadmaps for stakeholder engagement
 - o Roadmap and timeline for implementation including key performance indicators to monitor implementation and progress
 - o Pipeline of bankable projects to help unlock climate finance for cities
 - o synergies with appropriate mechanisms under Art.6 of the Paris Agreement and in synergies with existing initiatives

ANNEXES

A. Call for Expression of Interest



SIGN UP!

To participate in the initiative, all stakeholders are kindly invited to express their interest by filling in this [registration form](#). All registered members will receive continuous information and updates on the initiative.

B. Identified relevant global initiatives, networks, and coalitions (in alphabetical order) (provisory list to be updated)

The initiative aims to support efforts to strengthen and raise ambition of NDCs by establishing synergies and complementarity with the commitments and initiatives of local and regional governments under the Marrakech Partnership including Race-To-Zero, Race-Resilience, Human Settlement Thematic Action Pathway. The initiative will also seek for synergies with the Ministerial and Heads of States Communiques of G7, G20, Commonwealth and Belt-And-Road Initiative during 2022 Presidencies. It also seeks to build synergies with relevant initiatives, networks and coalitions.

Global level

- AWARE Initiative
- [BCRUP](#) and [RISE UP](#)
- C40 Cities (Climate Leadership Group)
- [Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance](#)
- [Cities Race to Zero](#) in support of [Race to Zero](#) Campaign
- [Cities Race to Resilience](#) as part of [Race to Resilience](#) Campaign
- [City Climate Finance Gap Fund](#) and other project development facilities
- [Climate and Clean Air Coalition](#)
- Climate Investment Facility ([Smart Cities track](#))
- G7, G20, and Commonwealth
- [Glasgow Climate Pact](#)
- Global Covenant of Mayors [Global Common Reporting Framework](#) and [CDP/ICLEI unified reporting system](#) - [Global Resilient Cities Network](#) (GRCN)
- Global Research Action Agenda on Cities and Climate Change Science ([short](#), [long](#))
- [Innovate4Cities](#) and [update to the Global Research Action Agenda](#) and the [Research and Innovation Technical Working Group](#) (convened by GCoM)
- IPCC Special Report on Cities and Climate Change and Summary for Urban Policy Makers

- Low Emission and Resilience initiatives of [United Cities and Local Governments](#), ICLEI, [C40 Cities](#) and other city networks (in LGMA)
- [Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action](#) – Human Settlements
- [NAPs](#), [NDCs](#), [VNRs](#) and national climate and urban policies and strategies
- [“One billion resilient” programme](#) by Atlantic Council and Adrienne Arsht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center
- [One Planet Cities](#)
- [Resilient Cities Network](#)
- [SUM4All](#)
- [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and in particular SDG 11
- [Transformative Urban Mobility Initiative](#) (TUMI)
- [Urban Climate Change Research Network](#) (UCCRN)
- [Urban Low Emission Development Strategies](#) (Urban LEDS)
- [World Green Building Council \(wGBC\) One Planet Network](#)
- [Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction \(GlobalABC\)](#)
- Global information hub on building materials and products (UNEP)

Regional level

- [African Cities Water Adaptation Fund](#) (ACWA Fund)
- Africa Network for Walking and Cycling (ANWAC)
- [Belt-and-Road Initiative](#)
- [CityNet \(Asia\)](#) - [Clean Air Asia](#)
- Regional Covenants

National Level

Subnational and Local Level

- [VLR](#) and local climate action plans

C. References

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D. Internal list for name suggestions for the initiative

Please add further name suggestions. UN-Habitat will shortlist and select together with the Global Secretariat the final name.

COP27 Preference: SURGe: Sustainable Urban Resilience for the next Generation

Other suggestions:

AL CASU or AL CAUSR: Accelerating Local Climate Action for Urban System Resilience / for Sustainable Urbanization

CURB: Climate Urban System Resilience Breakthrough

IMPACT: Initiative for Multi-level People-Centered Action for sustainable City Transformation

JUST: Just (& Resilient) Urban Sustainable Transformation

MADINA (Arab for city) Initiative: Multi-level Action and Development In National Agendas

Madina initiative: Addressing the global climate emergency in cities

PROUD: People-centered Resilient Net-0 Urban Development

RABAD (Arabic for neighbourhood): Climate Resilient Action for Sustainable Urbanization