

The second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly

Against a backdrop of global crises that are having particularly severe effects on cities, the Second Session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UNHA2) convened around the theme of a sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism. This theme was operationalized into five sub-themes addressed by the Assembly: universal access to affordable housing; urban climate action; urban crises recovery, localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and prosperity and local finance.

The Assembly addressed the need for a sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism and **adopted 10 resolutions** covering: international guidelines on people-centered smart cities; accelerating the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030; World Cleanup Day; biodiverse and resilient cities; enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience; localization of SDGs; adequate housing for all; urban planning and sustainable infrastructure; creation of a human settlements resilience framework; and equitable financing and effective monitoring of the implementation of UNHA2 resolutions, five decisions, and a Ministerial Declaration to further the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

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Rescuing SDG 11 for a Resilient Urban Planet

SDG 11 SYNTHESIS REPORT
HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM 2023



UNITED NATIONS



Rescuing SDG 11 for a resilient urban planet

"Delivering on SDG 11 matters because humanity's present and future is urban. Now is the time to think, plan and act urban", UN-Habitat Executive Director, HLPF.

UN-Habitat launched the global **SDG 11 synthesis report** presenting progress to date. The report concludes that the possibility of not achieving SDG 11 by 2030 is high. It thus calls on the global community to significantly scale up action for sustainable urban development and secure a better quality of life for everyone, everywhere. The report does highlight that change is possible and happening through innovative solutions championed by local, regional and national governments. Transformative shifts that depart from status quo responses are proposed to realize SDG 11, including to tackle the global housing crisis. Housing was recognized as part of the right to an adequate standard of living in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 75 years ago. Yet billions remain without adequate housing. In their deliberations during the launch of the report, member States made a resounding call for scaled action on adequate housing. There is also wide recognition at the HLPF that getting the fundamentals of cities and human settlements right can unlock better outcomes across the SDGs ensuring no one or place will be left behind.

[Read the report](#)

Towards Urgent Energy Action

Ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy presents the potential to transform lives by creating fresh economic prospects, jobs, empowerment for women, children, and youth, improved education and healthcare, and fostering equitable, inclusive, and climate-resilient communities. Despite advancements, global progress toward SDG 7 falls short. As of 2021, approximately 675 million lacked electricity access, and 2.3 billion lacked clean cooking facilities. The pandemic further hindered the shift to sustainable economies, diverting resources from renewable energy to fossil fuels.

Accelerating SDG 7 initiatives can synergistically propel the achievement of multiple SDGs. The Global Roadmap for Accelerated SDG 7 Action outlines key strategies: bridging energy access gaps, swiftly transitioning to decarbonized energy systems, securing reliable funding, ensuring inclusivity on the path to net-zero emissions, and leveraging technology and innovation. The High-Level Political Forum facilitated knowledge exchange among diverse stakeholders, including governmental, private, and non-profit entities, and showcased successful energy solutions, bolstering sustainable urban development.

The world is alarmingly off-track in achieving SDG 6

"Investing in water and sanitation creates opportunities to transform the rapidly growing urban slums and informal settlements, which is home to over 1 billion people, into resilient and equitable urban centre", UN-Habitat Deputy Executive Director, HLPF.

Thematic review of Sustainable Development Goals 6 on clean water and sanitation at the High-Level Political Forum revealed that the world is alarmingly off-track. The COVID-19 pandemic, intensifying climate change, and regional conflicts were identified as bottlenecks slowing down much-needed progress. To get SDG 6 on track, a *Blueprint for Acceleration: SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation 2023* was launched, offering 5 blueprints for how to gain momentum for SDG 6 progress and implementation of the Water Action Agenda voluntary commitments made at the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York, 22-24 March 2023: Finance, Data and information, Capacity development, Innovation and Governance.

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Getting the SDGs back on track – It's all about Localization

At the midway point in our pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the **SDG report 2023** indicates a mixed and concerning picture. Merely 15% of the evaluatable targets are on course for attainment by 2030. Almost half of them are significantly off track, and more than 30% have either stagnated or regressed below the 2015 baseline. Unless a substantial transformation occurs, the SDGs are unlikely to be met by 2030. Discussions at the High-Level Political Forum in New York emphasized the necessity for a collective effort across society and government to realign the SDGs. Central to this endeavor is the localization of the SDGs, a crucial facilitator. UN-Habitat has taken a comprehensive approach to SDG localization, incorporating normative and knowledge work, implementing the Urban Monitoring Framework, and engaging closely with local and regional governments. The "SDG Cities" flagship project aids cities in planning and financing SDG initiatives. UN-Habitat's role as the Secretariat and co-chair of the Local2030 Coalition, a UN-wide platform, underscores its commitment to SDG advancement, showcased at the upcoming SDG Summit for its transformative potential through localization.

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Cities as Catalysts for Economic Recovery: Navigating Crises and Paving the Way Forward for a Sustainable Urban Future

This year, the annual UN-Habitat Urban October will feature the global observance of the World Habitat Day on 2 October 2023 in Baku, Azerbaijan and the global observance of the World Cities Day on 31 October 2023 in Istanbul, Türkiye. Other related events will be held globally in the month of October.

These events will focus on how cities can act as drivers of economic growth and recovery to enhance the resiliency of urban economies. In light of this, UN-Habitat is developing a Local Finance Framework that supports cities to unlock investments for public projects. The framework's offering includes the **ROSRA tool**, **Cities Investment Facility (CIF)** and the **European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+)**.

By implementing these tools where they are most applicable, local authorities are empowered to weather the prevailing global economic shocks and create economic resilience for their cities and communities.

[Learn more](#) about the Cities Investment Facility.



Annual Report 2022

Crises are increasingly affecting urban populations, and cities and urban areas are all the more relevant to address them. In 2022, UN-Habitat consolidated the implementation of its Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and advocated for recognition of the critical role of cities and local communities in sustainable development and multilateral processes.

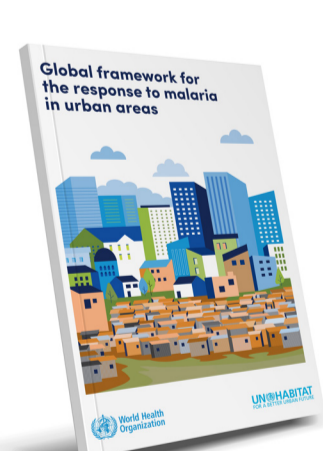
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Human rights in the digital era

Over the last years, cities have increased their efforts to lead people-centered digital transformation to support sustainable urbanization and promote human rights in the digital era. The Digital Rights Governance Project in Europe aimed at supporting cities to develop capacity and engage people to mainstream this human rights-based approach, by providing both normative and practical guidance to ensure that the human rights mechanisms that are in place offline are also in place online.

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Global framework for the response to malaria in urban areas

This framework supports the control and elimination of malaria in urban environments. It guides city leaders, health programmes and urban planning as they respond to the challenges of rapid urbanisation in a targeted way. For each urban context, the strategic use of data can inform effective, tailored responses and help build resilience against the threat of malaria and other vector-borne diseases.

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UN-Habitat's recent publications

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ARAB STATES

Home sweet home.... the tale of two families in Western Nineveh

After a decade of living in displacement, enduring the harsh conditions of the Shingal mountains with no access to water or food, Barakat Murad Khalaf and his family of fourteen now finally have a place to call their own.

"Here on my land, hope has returned to me. I have planted trees and created a small garden, and I can witness their growth," Barakat said about receiving his house.

In 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) invasion caused widespread destruction, triggering a massive wave of displacement. In West Ninewa, Murad Yilmaz, a Civil Engineer who also experienced displacement during ISIL's occupation, worked with UN-Habitat.

"Through the construction of their houses and providing shelter for them, I have witnessed a profound change in their lives, dispelling the feeling of hopelessness," shared Yilmaz.

Supported by MADADFUND, UN-Habitat provided 323 core-housing units, accommodating 2897 returnees; upgraded four primary schools; drilled and rehabilitated three water boreholes; rehabilitated a marketplace and football park and provided vocational training for 1200 youth. Occupancy certificates for 4000 plots were issued as well as the execution of legal awareness sessions on housing, land, and property rights for returnees and local authorities.

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AFRICA

Launch of the Kenya's Habitat Country Programme Document 2023-2027

On the 14th June 2023, The Executive Director of UN Habitat, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif and the Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development in Kenya, Mr Zacharia Mwangi Njeru launched the Kenya's Habitat Country Programme (HCPD 2023-2027) in the presence of H.E Dr William Samoei Ruto, The President of the Republic of Kenya during the inaugural Kenya Urban Forum.

The HCPD 2023-2027 gives direction to UN- Habitat activities in Kenya with an aim of having a robust Country Programme that is well resourced to respond to the needs of the national government and 47 counties of Kenya. The HCPD has four focus outcome areas which were developed in line with the government priorities within the sustainable urban, housing and human settlements sector.

During the event the government of Kenya through the Cabinet Secretary reiterated the need for sustainable development and reassured the government commitment to the realization of the objectives of the SDG 11 and NUA which were mainstreamed in the document.

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ASIA PACIFIC

UN-Habitat supports Pakistan to become an engine of climate innovation and action

In Pakistan, UN-Habitat and the Ministry of Climate Change initiated a project to 'strengthen the capacities of the national government, local institutions, and communities in promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation, especially by developing an enabling environment for low-emission development and the carbon market' funded by Korea Land and Housing Corporation (LH). This further aims to support Pakistan's NDC plan under the Paris Agreement with a special focus on the urban sector.

This project will result in numerous benefits to over 80,000 beneficiaries including poor informal settlements in the largest city, Karachi. Promoting low-carbon housing, energy-efficient streetlights, and renewable energy electrification can help reduce GHG emissions, improve air quality, and create more sustainable and livable cities for a greener urban future. UN-Habitat ensures that communities can fully engage in the decision-making process and supports the adoption of better livelihoods by developing and raising awareness of community-based organizations.

According to a community leader of Kachi Abadi in Karachi,

"We're thankful for UN-Habitat and LH's support. This project offers hope for an improved infrastructure and a better future for our children", According to a community leader of Kachi Abadi in Karachi.

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LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

**Envisioning Sustainable Cities:
The SDG Commitment of the Neuquén, Argentina Initiative**

"Sustainable Cities: A New Urban Agenda for the Province of Neuquén, Argentina" is a transformative initiative led by UN agencies such as UN-Habitat, UNOPS, and UN Women supported by the **Secretary of State for Development Planning and Action, COPADE Neuquén** and financed by the **Federal Investment Council, CFI Argentina**. The project aims to strengthen inclusive, integrated, and sustainable urban planning within the province.

The initiative's accomplishments include enhancing capabilities in five provincial micro-regions for implementing sustainable public spaces, along with active collaboration involving 35 municipalities. Four municipalities are currently developing participatory municipal plans, while others are making progress in the evaluation of public spaces.

This effort engaged 39 provincial entities, 31 civil society organizations, and private sector entities, ultimately providing training to over 600 individuals.

Through its focus on comprehensive planning, sustainability, and incorporating gender and diversity perspectives, this collaborative endeavour has notably enhanced the quality of life within local communities. This showcases the feasibility of implementing Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda at the grassroots level. The achievements of this project establish a model for analogous projects across Argentina, thus charting a course toward a fairer and more inclusive society.

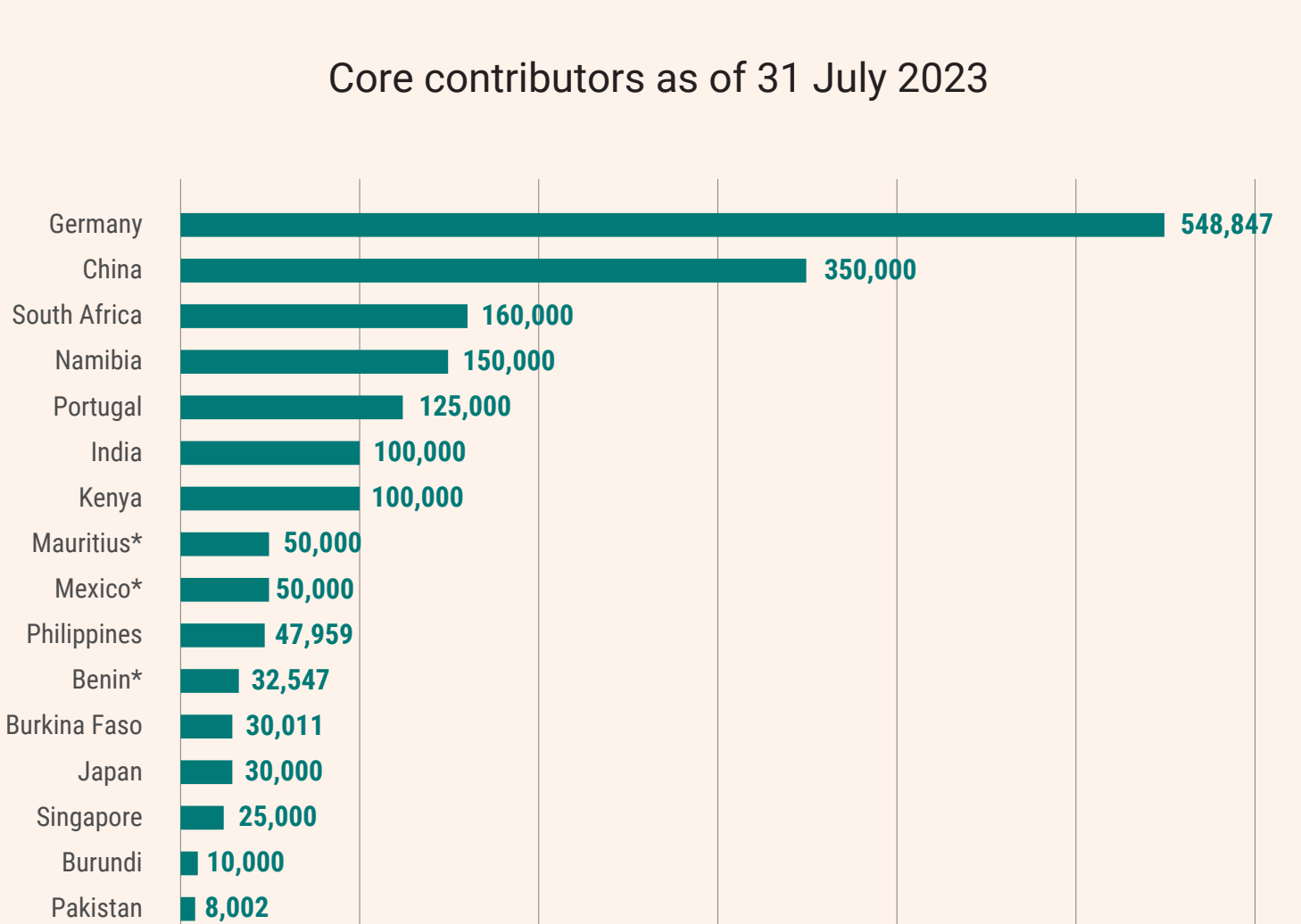
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Financial Update

Top donors and development partners as of 31 July 2023



Core contributors as of 31 July 2023



*Includes arrears from previous years

Upcoming Events and Meetings

SDGs Summit
18 – 19 September 2023
New York, USA

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World Habitat Day
2 October 2023
Baku, Azerbaijan

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World Cities Day
31 October 2023
Istanbul, Türkiye

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