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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Sweden and UN-Habitat sign a USD 20 million agreement to promote sustainable urbanization**

**Nairobi, 1 July 2020** – Sweden has signed a global programme cooperation agreement with UN-Habitat, the United Nations agency charged with promoting socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, to support sustainable urban development through a comprehensive range of activities.

Under the agreement, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), a government agency of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, will provide SEK 195 million (around USD 20 million) for four years.

The funding is intended to support UN-Habitat's efforts to achieve the following objectives: reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum; enhanced shared prosperity for cities and regions; strengthened climate action and improved urban environment; and effective urban crisis prevention and response. Social inclusion issues which include human rights, gender, children, youth, older persons and people living with disability will be highlighted throughout.

These areas are all components of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan which it is implementing from 2020 to 2023. The funding will also support UN-Habitat's work on COVID-19 to prevent the spread of the pandemic, provide basic services and work towards recovery and resilience particularly for vulnerable populations in informal settlements.

An important outcome of UN-Habitat's COVID-19 Response Plan is to ensure that slums and informal settlements are integrated into city-wide COVID-related actions.

The agreement also emphasises the importance of supporting UN-Habitat's organisational reforms which are intended to strengthen the agency as a Global Centre of Knowledge and Excellence on sustainable urbanization.

"This is a substantial contribution towards UN-Habitat's work and will ensure that we can make a lasting impact and a real difference to the lives of the most vulnerable," said the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Maimunah Mohd Sharif. "We would like to thank Sweden for their consistent support and dedication to improving the lives of urban residents."

Maria van Berlekom, Head of the Unit for Global Cooperation on Environment, Sida, said: "The future of our planet lies in our cities and towns. We have to get them right. We believe UN-Habitat has the knowledge, expertise and experience to make a real difference on the ground."

For more information contact

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