Agenda item 7: Normative and operational activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Implementation of the flagship programmes

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Introduction

This report highlights progress made with regards to the flagship programmes (FPs) as critical instruments for advancing a more integrated approach concerning the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat:

FP1. Inclusive, Vibrant Neighbourhoods and Communities
FP2. People-Centered Smart Cities
FP3. RISE UP Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor
FP4. Inclusive Cities: Enhancing the positive impact of urban migration
FP5. SDG Cities
Urban regeneration represents a powerful integrative tool for social, economic and environmental impact in cities. The Flagship applies urban regeneration to address spatial inequality and climate change, and to promote social value creation, environmental resilience, and shared economic prosperity.

Flagship Programme 1. Inclusive Vibrant Neighborhoods and Communities

Multilevel governance  Capacity building  Technical assistance

Inclusive and resilient urban regeneration strategies
Flagship Programme 1. Inclusive Vibrant Neighborhoods and Communities

Planned outcomes

- Consolidated data and knowledge on spatial inclusion and climate action in cities
- Strengthened global and regional networks for inclusive and climate resilient urban regeneration
- Initiatives and solutions developed and implemented by localising urban regeneration processes globally

Progress since 2020

Normative tools and technical advice:

- Urban Regeneration and Viruses Report: learning from past and present health crisis
- Guidelines for Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Regeneration
- Spatial Inclusion Indicators Framework
- Spatial Inequality Monitoring Dashboard
Flagship Programme 1. Inclusive Vibrant Neighborhoods and Communities

Opportunities

• Urban regeneration as a super-tool for the localisation of the SDGs and NUA as it impacts most of the SDGs simultaneously

• Consolidated benchmarks, data and methodologies for authorities and experts

• Potential to engage non-traditional finance and funding sources

Challenges

• Urban regeneration is context-specific with various regional approaches → a global initiative needed to adapt regional and national frameworks, tools and methodologies

• Urban regeneration is identified with a specific political agenda
The Flagship puts **inclusion, sustainability and the needs of the people** at the centre of smart cities.

**Planned outcomes**

- “smart” cities policy transformation to center on people
- financing of smart cities to achieve SDG11
- capacity building and technical assistance to authorities, the private sector and the global development community
Progress since 2020

Normative frameworks, strategic partnerships and project collaboration:

- Digital rights governance framework for cities
- Playbook series on people-centred smart cities for local and regional governments
- Global review of smart city governance in 250 cities worldwide
- Research on AI and blockchain for urban development

Operational portfolio:

- Mapping, data, and digital governance projects by UNITAC in Brazil, South Africa, Tanzania, Jordan
- Smart City Strategy Toolbox to be tested in Ghana, Malawi, Mauritius
- Toolkit on digital transformation for people-centered cities
- Digital Helpdesk for Cities service in Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Ireland
- Climate Smart Cities Challenge in Colombia, Brazil, Uganda, United Kingdom
- People-Centred Smart Cities Programme scaled up to provide smart city policies in Nigeria, Myanmar, and the Islamic Republic of Iran
Opportunities

• top of the agenda in international development
• demand for support on smart cities grows.
• an expressed need for international guidelines on people-friendly smart cities

Challenges

• consideration of smart cities as a top-down, technology-first, industry-led approach
• the digital divide is inhibiting smart city developments.
• Limited financial and human resources
The Flagship addresses one of the greatest challenges for climate adaptation: how to build resilience for the 3 BILLION people living in vulnerable climate hotspots and for the 1 BILLION people living in informal settlements.

- mobilize large-scale investments in resilience
- improve adaptive capacities of the urban poor
- integration of urban climate adaptation into city & national frameworks

More resilient urban poor communities and natural and built environments
Flagship Programme 3. ‘RISE UP’ Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor

Progress since 2020

Advocacy on the climate action urgency for the most vulnerable people in cities

- Race to Zero campaign
- Race to Resilience campaign
- Supported a UNFCCC constituency in COP26 in integrating Multi-level Governance and Cooperative Action into the Glasgow Pact

Acquired a portfolio of $89.8 million for climate action in 20 cities in 17 countries

Planned outcomes

- Achieving a breakthrough in adaptation and resilience for the over three billion people vulnerable to climate change
- Redirecting climate finance to local level and large-scale investments in resilience for the most vulnerable urban poor
- Creating an enabling policy environment, knowledge and capacities for building local resilience
Flagship Programme 3. ‘RISE UP’ Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor

Opportunities

- mature Adaptation Fund portfolio
- existing experience, tools, and methodologies
- scale up the partnerships through the COP27 presidential initiative
- increase human resources and expert pool of the programme

Challenges

- reduction in financial resources
- limited knowledge and capacities of local governments
Flagship Programme 4. Inclusive Cities:
Enhancing the Positive Impacts of Urban Migration

The Flagship aims to harness the positive impact of migration and displacement in urban areas.

Planned Outcomes

- Improved knowledge informing integrated and inclusive solutions
- Innovative, integrated, and people-centred solutions

→ more inclusive urban environment for migrants, the internally displaced and host communities
Progress since 2020

Partnerships and networking
• Partnership with UNHCR, IOM, and the World Bank
• Linking with regional and global networks and platforms for global advocacy and outreach

Programme development
• **Housing, land and property** issues in the East and Horn of Africa
• **Addressing vulnerabilities and resilience** in six countries in Latin America & Caribbean
• Interventions in countries facing large-scale and often protracted displacement

Normative and policy support
• Affirmed the **key role of local governments** in durable solutions to internal displacement and the urban character in the Secretary-General’s report on the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement
Flagship Programme 4. Enhancing the Positive Impacts of Urban Migration

Opportunities

• extensive field level portfolio in all regions

• existing experience, tools, and methodologies feasible for support needs emerging in, for example, Eastern Europe and Ukraine

• Identify priority geographical areas where there is the greatest need and opportunity for UN-Habitat to add value to urban migration and displacement challenges

Challenges

• dramatic and steady increase in the number of displaced people/migrants globally

• limited knowledge and capacities of local governments on how to address challenges caused by displacement/migration
Flagship Programme 5. SDG Cities

The Flagship responds to the need for **accelerated action on the local implementation of SDGs** during this Decade of Action.

**Four-tracked programme sequence**

- data collection and analysis
- strategic planning
- strengthening of local institutions
- financing and implementation

Bolster local economic opportunities
Progress since 2020

A bank of digitized tools

• Institutional diagnostic tools and capacity development tools and spatial data tools
• Established a City Investment Facility
• Global SDG Cities Conference series

Global SDG Cities Hubs

• City Monitoring, City Performance, Investment and City Certification

Implementation windows

• National Groupings, Local Government Networks, Cities in Least Developed Countries, Youth Networks, Women-led Businesses, and Faith Communities.

Programmes in 2022

SDG Cities pilots

Mafra, Portugal; Kasarine Ennour, Tunisia; Shanghai, China; Penang, Malaysia; La Paz, Bolivia and Kyebi, Ghana; Chefchaouen, Morocco.

Mobilising SDG Cities national programmes in Ghana, Tunisia and Ecuador (64 Cities)

Mobilising WomenLed SDG Cities (50 cities) and Capital Cities Initiative (30 cities)
Flagship Programme 5. SDG Cities

Opportunities

- demand for SDG Cities Certification
- demand for technical assistance
- demand for finance for high impact projects
- interest of financers to invest in SDGs in cities worldwide

Challenges

- the need for dedicated resources at the central level to support mobilising implementation windows, tool development, knowledge management and global coordination
Flagship Programmes’ country presence in 2022 – 2023

Flagship 1
Flagship 2
Flagship 3
Flagship 4
Flagship 5
Expected and proposed outcomes

- Highlight the importance of urban regeneration for the localisation of the SDGs, showcasing the linkages between the housing, climate change and SDG priorities.
- Explore in a consultative manner the development of international guidelines on people-friendly smart cities to scale up good practice.
- Develop strategic partnerships for ‘Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor’ by analyzing existing expertise, experience, best practices, and lessons learned and expand resource mobilization by disseminating success stories to relevant stakeholders.
- Identify priority geographical areas where there is the greatest need and opportunity for UN-Habitat to add value to wider United Nations’ efforts in addressing urban migration and displacement challenges across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
- Develop a model of SDG Cities Certification to be recognized across the UN system in line with the United Nations Global Urban Monitoring Framework.
Financial constraints: The progress of the Flagship Programmes has been unbalanced due to financial constraints. Yet, focus on partnerships and resource mobilization has generated positive projections.

Additional capacities and expertise: There is an urgent need to drive additional capacities and expertise towards core capacities to manage the flagship programmes.

Seek further convergence across UN-Habitat’s global programmes and the flagships.

For increase impact: The flagship programmes need to expand on their strategic partnership successes and gain increased soft- or hard earmarked.
THANK YOU