



UN-HABITAT

SDG Cities Certification



Date: March 2023

Background and Challenges

THE WORLD WILL BE URBAN

Today 55% of the world's population lives in cities, yet by 2050 this is expected to increase to 68%

CITIES ARE CENTRAL TO SDGs

Two-Thirds of SDGs have important local dimensions

LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE in

achieving the SDGs through transformative actions in cities and communities around the world.

Relevant UN Agendas and Frameworks

Local implementation the SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



The New Urban Agenda



SDG Localization



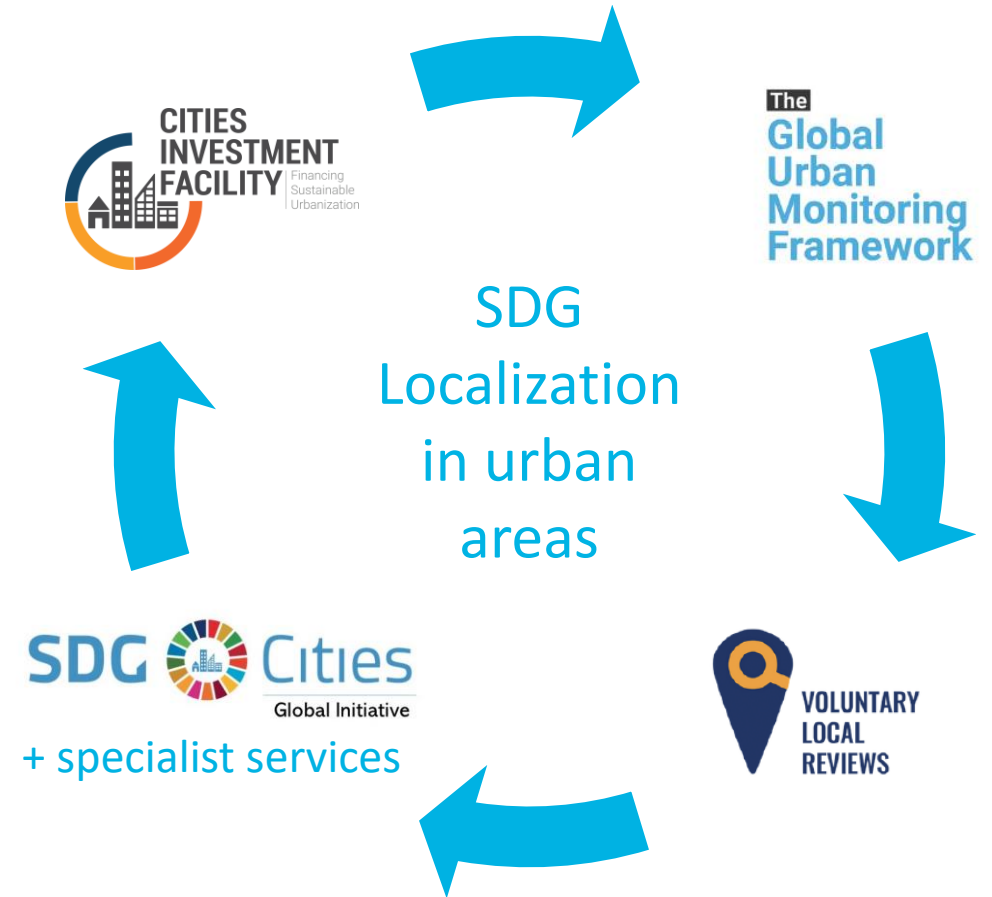
UN- Habitat support initiatives for cities



Strengthened institutional capacity

- Inclusive governance
- Planning
- Municipal finance
- Service delivery
 - Solid waste management
 - Water/sanitation
 - Mobility

Theory of Change



UN-Habitat key support initiatives for cities

SDG Cities Flagship

SDG Cities Flagship Initiative encourages cities to catalyze their own potential to accelerate their achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SDG Cities is implemented in four tracks:



Data



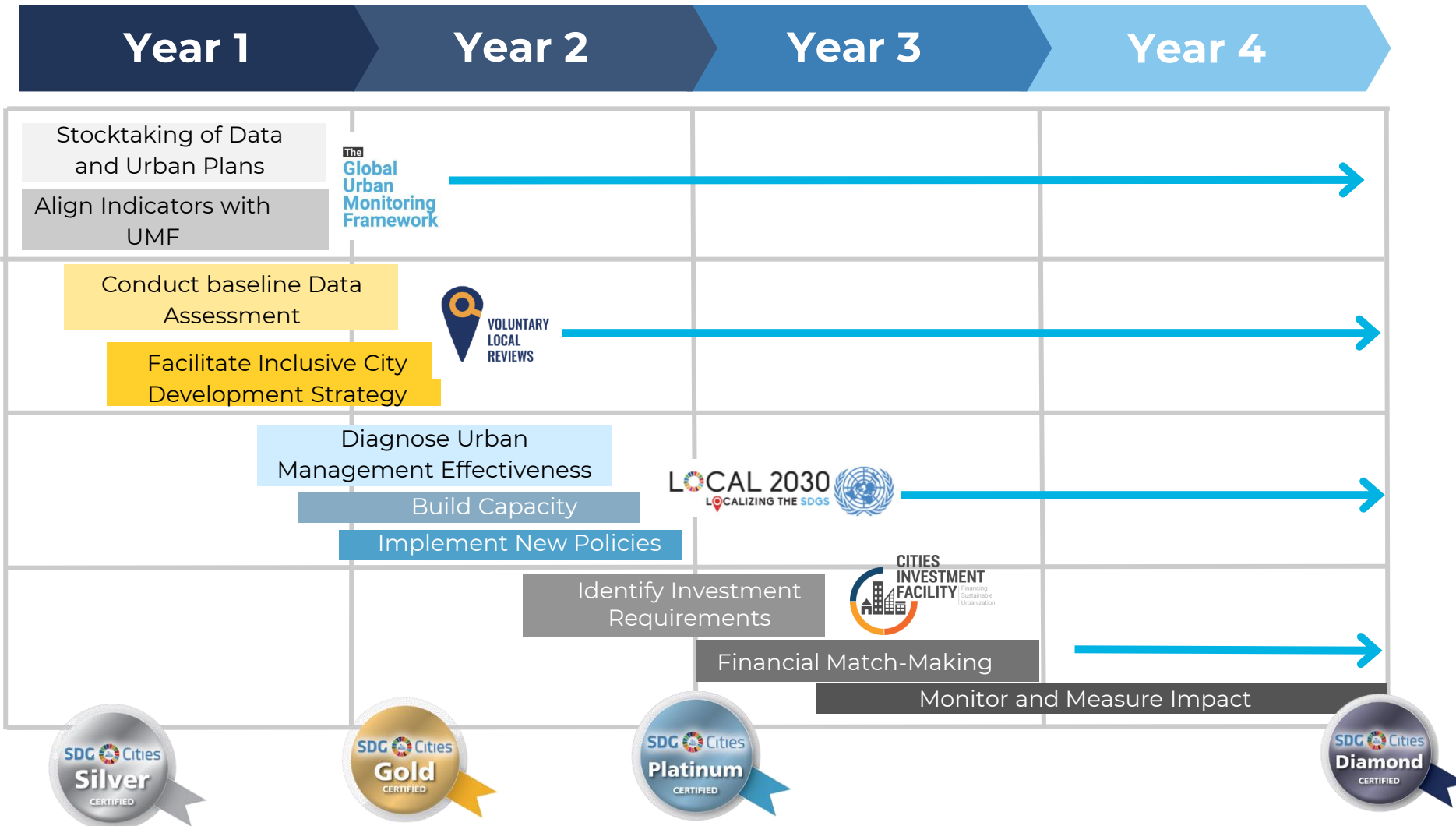
Strategic Planning



Plans, Regulations, and Institutions



Investment in Impact



SDG Cities Certification

Need for cities to step up the realization of their *transformative potential* as a positive force for sustainable development

However...

- Not all cities are aware of the SDGs
- Not all cities are incentivized to engage with global agendas
- Not all cities are aware of frameworks such as the NUA to guide them in the local implementation of the SDGs

Purpose of SDG Cities Certification

SDG Cities certification helps set cities on the course to accelerate achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by:

1. Guiding an effective urban development process, in line with the New Urban Agenda
2. Recognizing the achievement of key milestones and inclusive, effective processes via the completion of objectives

Certification Stages

1. Cities have effective **data** that reflects social, economic and environmental dimensions with and have evidence-based, inclusive, participatory and **strategic development frameworks** for 2030

2. Cities have effective **enablers**: They have taken stock of plans, regulations, governance system, revenue system, plans and taking action to make them fit for purpose

3. Cities are generating measurable SDG **impact**

Further opportunities associated with SDG Cities Certification:

- Improving multi-level policy coherence
- Improving UN coordinated action at the local level
- Alignment with SDG accreditation and support of other organisations
- Alignment with “credit-worthiness” metrics
- Alignment with ESG metrics of financiers
- Aggregated investments

Mechanism: Global Mechanism & Costs

Global Mechanism for Implementation

Global Advisory Committee

Role

- Setting rules and criteria and guiding national mechanisms

Pilot Stage

- UN-Habitat establish certification criteria in consultation with UN Member States and relevant partners

Long Term

- Advisory Board of UN partner entities and UN Member States

Technical Team

Role

- Monitoring and auditing certification for quality control

Pilot Stage

- Technical support provided through SDG Cities Global Flagship Initiative

Long Term

- Establishment of technical team in the SDG Cities Global Office

Cost Break Down:

\$1.5 million/yr extrabudgetary

- Travel for Global Advisory Committee
- Secretariat team supporting the Global Advisory Committee
- Global Technical Team working in UN Languages
- Digital platform maintenance

(may expand with demand)

Mechanism - National Mechanisms

National Mechanism for Implementation

National Advisory Committee

Role

- Adapt certification criteria to national context

Pilot Stage

- Ministries use internal resources to support the certification of a cluster of cities

Long Term

- Establish a national hub
- Global engagement and peer-to-peer learnings

Technical Team

Role

- Review applications and make recommendations on certification

Pilot Stage

- Technical support is provided by national staff and SDG Cities Global Initiative staff

Long Term

- Establish technical team to assist with certification criteria in cities

Cost Break Down:

- Annual meeting of National Advisory Committee
- One National Coordinator
- One National Technical officer per 40 cities
- Four training sessions per year in first year, and Eight per year by 3rd year (webinars encouraged)
- Digital Platform, tools, ToT and backstopping provided in-kind by global hub

Support Services



Digital Platform

Provided through an in-kind donation for technical support and data storage



SDG Cities Tools

City Scan Data Tool; Institutional Diagnostics tool : Governance, revenue, planning & service delivery



Existing UNH Tools

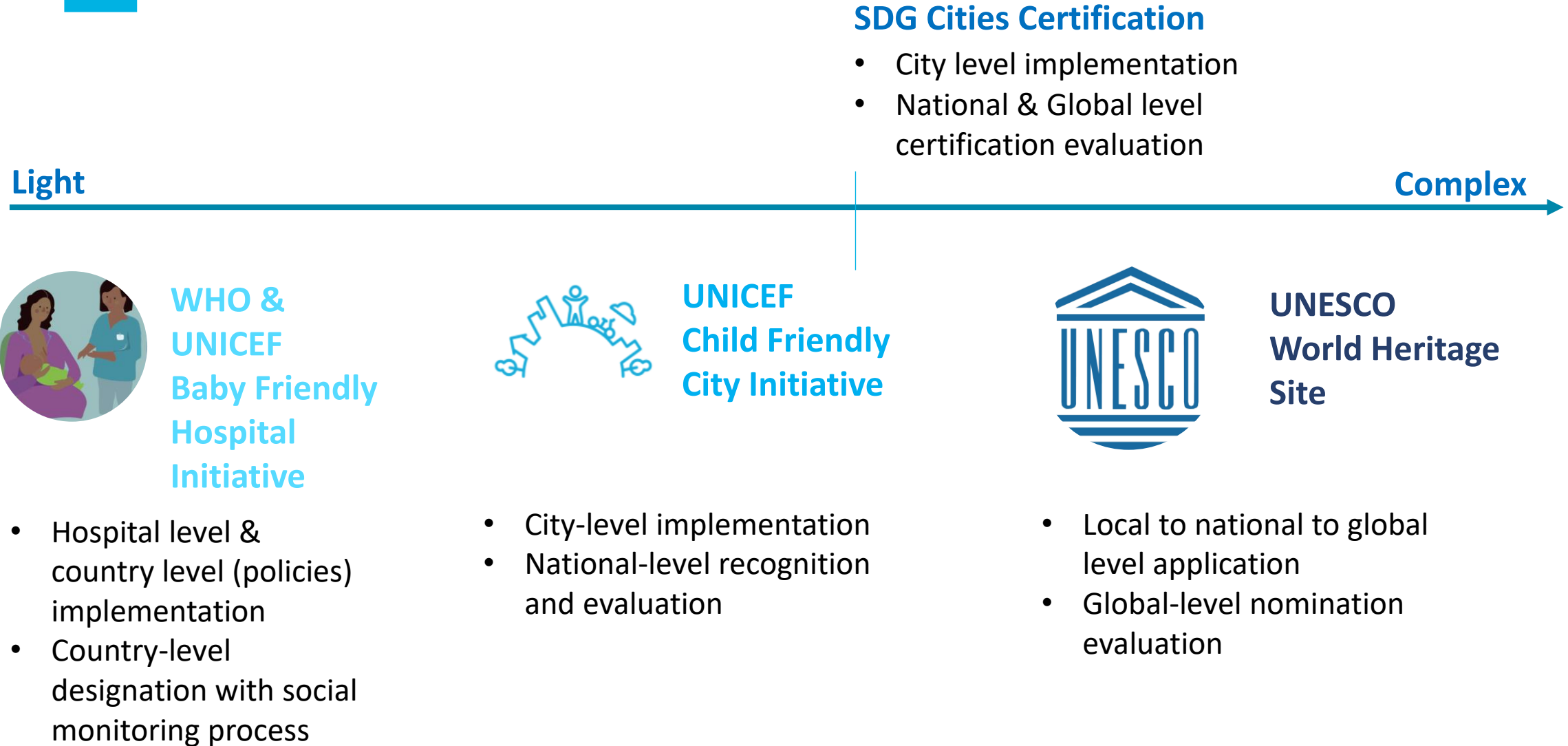
NUA Illustrated, UMF metadata, Habitat-learn; Block by Block, Her-City, Our City Plans, Shanghai Manual



Utilising partners' open source technical resources

IHS, GIZ CityWorks, Local 2030

UN Certification Model



Possible Benefits

For Cities

- Incentivizing the acceleration of the SDGs
- Providing direction
- Enabling knowledge-sharing and capacity development at scale
- Attracting SDG aligned investment
- Coherence with other city-based initiatives that support global agendas

For Residents

- Certification promotes a greater responsiveness of cities to the needs of residents in cities

All of Society Coherence

- Multi- stakeholder coherence around implementing the SDGs in cities
- Aggregating SDG investment for greater efficiency

For the UN System

- Promotes local implementation of the UN Cooperation Framework and the integration of United Nations system support at the local level

For National and Subnational Governments

- Policy coherence

Link between SDG Cities Certification and Local2030

- SDG Cities certification has the potential to become an instrument to motivate, support and build capacities of cities and local actors to accelerate progress on achievement of the SDGs
- A global certification system would be developed through extensive consultations, piloting, and alignment with existing systems at national or regional levels
- To build awareness and ownership of this certification approach across the UN system, it could be socialized through the Local2030 Coalition

6. FAQs from Members

1. Alignment with urban development agenda, policies and framework of each country and region?
2. Alignment with other initiatives such as UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour, Voluntary Local Review, and Shanghai Manual?
3. Benefits of developed cities to participate in SDG Cities?
4. Does UN-Habitat have enough capacity to deliver the programme?
5. What types of stakeholders will involve in the process of SDG Cities?
6. How can corruption be mitigated within the national mechanism?
7. How can developing cities avoid being excluded in the certification process?
8. What will be the budget for the certification?
9. How will security of data be protected during the process?
10. What has already been created for the certification?
11. Are there alternatives to the Term “Certification”
12. Role of Canada
13. Applicability in crisis affected areas

Suggested Way Forward

- UN-Habitat to further explore and pilot the SDG Cities certification model in various countries through the SDG Cities Flagship Programme.
- UN-Habitat to explore synergies and possible integration into the work of the Local2030 Coalition
- UN-Habitat to report to the EB during its third session in 2023 on costs, business model, benefits, implementation mechanism, and coherence with UN and other relevant initiatives that support achieving SDGs in cities.

Thank you!

(please switch on your headphones as we hear the testimonials)

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