SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

FACTS AND FIGURES

- While the proportion of urban population living in slums declined slightly, **from 25.4% to 24.2% between 2014 and 2020**, the total number of slum dwellers continues to rise with increasing urbanization. As of 2020, nearly **1.1 billion people** lived in slums or slum-like conditions in urban areas, with an **additional 2 billion** expected to live in slums or slum-like conditions over next 30 years.
- Today, **85 per cent** of slum dwellers are concentrated in three regions: Central and Southern Asia (**359 million**), Eastern and South-Eastern Asia (**306 million**) and sub-Saharan Africa (**230 million**).
- Data from 2022 reveal that only **51.6% of** the global urban population has convenient access to public transport, with considerable regional differences.
- In the developing world, an estimated **1 billion** people still lack access to all-weather roads.
- Global cities expanded physically faster than their population growth rates, with average annual land consumption rates of **2.0%** compared to population growth rates of **1.6%** from 2000 to 2010, and **1.5%** compared to **1.2%** respectively from 2010 to 2020, according to data from **681** cities between 1990 and 2020.
- Globally, **air quality i**s improving, largely due to advancements in high-income countries. Although cities have traditionally been the focus of air pollution reduction policies, air quality in towns and rural areas should also be considered. In 2019, towns in **Eastern and South-Eastern Asia**, a region with a significant proportion of the world's population, experienced poorer air quality than cities.
- In 2020, data from **1,072** cities in **120** countries indicate that more than **75%** of these cities have **less than 20%** of their area dedicated to open public spaces and streets, about half of the proportion recommended. On average, open public spaces account for a meagre **3.2%** of urban land, about **4 times less** than the share of land in streets.
- The number of countries with national disaster risk reduction strategies has increased from 55 in 2015 to **126** by the end of 2022. By the end of 2022, **102** countries reported having local governments with disaster risk reduction strategies, an increase from 51 countries in 2015.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

WHERE WE STAND

- Over half (**55%**) living in urban areas, a figure projected to rise to **70%** by 2050. Most of the urban growth is taking place in **small cities and intermediate towns**, exacerbating inequalities and urban poverty. Moreover, **climate change and conflicts** disproportionately affect cities, hindering progress of achieving the goal of sustainable cities
- In many developing countries, **slum populations** have been growing, putting at risk the target of adequate housing for all by 2030.
- In 2022, only **half** of the world's urban population had convenient access to public transportation. **Urban sprawl, air pollution and limited open public spaces** persist in cities.
- Since 2015, the number of countries with **national and local disaster risk disaster risk reduction strategies** has **more than doubled.**

SPOTLIGHT

LOCAL2030 COALITION

The **Local2030 Coalition** is a project of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a UN platform and network for supporting and accelerating the localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As part of the Decade of Action, UN-Habitat coordinates the Secretariat of Local2030 Coalition. It is also the permanent co-chair of the Coalition along with another rotational chair – UNDP for the period 2022-2024.

The Coalition brings together the UN system, local and regional governments and their associations, national governments, businesses, community-based organizations, and other local actors to mobilize, empower and support local stakeholders in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Likewise, the Coalition strengthens coordination within and beyond the UN system by enabling multi-level and multi-stakeholder collaboration, essential to coherent and effective actions on complex and interlocking challenges. The Local2030 Coalition is a convening space to support partners in developing ideas and sharing tools and approaches to advance the 2030 Agenda everywhere

UN SYSTEM IN ACTION

- With a renewed and amplified mandate to assist Member States in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, **UN-Habitat** utilized the UN Systemwide Strategy for Sustainable Development to bring together the UN system through global, regional, and country level interagency processes. In October 2022, the High-Level Committee on Programmes of the Chief Executives (HLCP) reviewed progress on the implementation of the **UN Systemwide Strategy for Sustainable Urban Development**. HLCP welcomed progress in global and regional inter-agency platforms but urged greater focus on the implementation of the systemwide strategy at country level. Subsequently, **UN-Habitat** is leveraging the **Development Coordination Office (DCO)** to embark on a more dedicated engagement with select UN country teams under the leadership of UN resident coordinators.

- **UN-Habitat, FAO, and UNEP** under the auspices of HLCP will develop a policy paper on the power of sustainable urbanization to enhance rural development, food systems, climate action, environmental sustainability, and nature-based solutions to biodiversity.

- **The United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) initiative** provides an international platform for information exchange and partnership building to guide cities and communities in achieving the SDGs. It is coordinated by **UN-Habitat**, **UNECE** and **ITU**, supported by 18 UN system entities including **CBD, ECLAC, FAO, UNDESA, UNDP, UNECA, UNESCO, UNEP, UNEP-FI, UNFCCC, UNIDO, UNOP, UNU-EGOV, UN-Women, UNWTO and WM**O,

- **UN-Habitat**, **European Commission**, **UNICEF**, **UN Statistical Division, and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA)** have partnered to apply **the degree of urbanization (DEGURBA) methodology** in major surveys and census-data production cycles as part of wider efforts to enable Member States to apply a more nuanced global definition of spaces along the urban-rural continuum.

- **Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030)** is a unique cross-stakeholder initiative for improving local resilience through advocacy, sharing knowledge and experiences, establishing mutually reinforcing city-to-city learning networks, injecting technical expertise, connecting multiple layers of government and building partnerships. Partners include **UNDRR, UNDP, UN-Habitat, UNOPS, World Bank, C40 Cities, ICLEI, JICA, IFRC, Resilient Cities Network, UCLG, World Council on City Data**.

Special thanks to **UN-Habitat** for providing inputs to the factsheets. For more information about UN system actions to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, visit

UN SYSTEM SDG IMPLEMENTATION DATABASE