

Concept Note
World Cities Report 2024: Cities and Climate Action
Case Studies and Best Practices Annex

Background: WCR Annex on Case Studies and Best Practices

The World Cities Report (WCR) 2024 seeks to provide a greater understanding of the role that cities and human settlements can play through reinvigorated action in addressing the existential threat posed by climate change. The Report further explores how urban areas in different contexts can be positioned to take effective action towards achieving the Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels in view of the urgency of the climate crisis.

In the context of urban areas, climate action refers to initiatives designed to achieve the Paris Agreement, SDG13 in cities and human settlements, as well as the major milestone decisions reached during various COPs especially as they relate to cities and human settlements. Such actions include (but are not limited to) mitigating climate change through the reduction of GHG emissions, adapting to the impacts of climate change by building resilience across a wide range of sectors, reversing the impacts of climate change and reducing the vulnerability of at-risk communities, groups and individuals. In practice, well-designed climate change initiatives should cover these actions simultaneously. Climate actions should be interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Effective climate action requires strong partnerships and cooperation at various levels as envisioned in SDG 17. Climate action needs to be inclusive — at the local, national, regional and global levels.

The WCR Annex on Case Studies and Best Practices will highlight action-oriented case studies that tackle climate change and its impacts. These case studies will look at various angles of climate action to propose a comprehensive set of measures that can be implemented by cities to enhance their sustainability and the implementation of SDG 13. They will expand on what cities effectively do to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters (SDG 11 Target 13.1). The case studies will also look at how cities integrate climate change measures into policies, strategies and planning (SDG Target 13.2). They will reflect on how cities can improve education, awareness-raising and, human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning (SDG 11 13.3). Lastly, they will analyse how cities can promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least-developed countries and small island developing states, including focusing on women, youth, and local and marginalized communities (SDG Target 13.b).

Objective and intended impacts

The objective of this Annex is to provide decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders at the city level with a compilation of successful climate actions for improving resilience and contributing to the global effort to reduce climate change and its impacts. The Annex aims to inspire urban stakeholders to mainstream climate action in their urban management frameworks, based on their cities' characteristics and challenges.

The intended impact is to increase knowledge on the implementation of climate actions in view of the New Urban Agenda, National Determined Contribution (NDC) at the city level and the Agenda 2030, and to increase cities' resilience by highlighting good practices, and expounding on the enablers and key factors of success for such actions.

Methodology

Case studies and practices will be compiled through the following channels:

- **Desk review of existing best practices:** an extensive desk review to identify case studies will be undertaken. Sources for the desk review will include, but not be limited to, UN-Habitat sources - the New Urban Agenda (NUA) platform, climate projects, initiatives and awards –, other organizations' reports (UNEP, UNDP, city and mayor networks, World Bank and OECD, ...), various city awards, academic literature.
- **Partner outreach:** a call for submission of cases and practices will be launched for partners on UN-Habitat's website.
- **UN-Habitat projects and initiatives:** a call for proposal will also be launched within UN-Habitat for teams to submit case studies. UN-Habitat databases and global platforms will also be used to identify successful practices (e.g. NUA, SURGE).

Certain criteria will need to be met for the final selection of case studies, such as regional balance to avoid biased reporting, verifiable implementation and impact in the form of documentation (photos, news stories, project reports etc.), timeframe (with more recent cases, from 2020 onwards, being preferred), and should be aligned to the UN values.

Organization of the Case studies and practices Annex

The Annex will integrate 30 case studies and practices. Each study and practice will be of around a thousand-word length. The *Case studies and practices Annex* will follow the structure of the WCR and hence flow as follows:

- Part 1: Case studies on adaptation to specific climate-related hazards

Part 1 will demonstrate how some cities have successfully responded to (i) flood and landslides; (ii) drought and heatwaves; and (iii) sea level rise. It will integrate examples of nature-based solutions that reinforce cities' resilience to climate threats.

- Part 2: Case studies on actions aiming at building climate resilience of vulnerable urban populations

Part 2 will focus on actions deployed to protect women, youth, elderly, indigenous communities, displaced populations and populations in informal settlements from the adverse effects of climate change. It will also integrate examples of mechanisms facilitating the inclusion of populations who have been displaced from rural areas because of the impacts of climate change and demonstrating an integrated approach to climate change and displacement.

- Part 3: Case studies on urban design and planning for sustainable cities

Part 3 will highlight how climate-smart urban design and planning allows cities to reduce their vulnerability to climate change and leverage sustainable actions - through for instance the development of comprehensive climate action plans that are associated with resource mobilization strategies and investment plans identifying priority actions. These case studies will demonstrate how climate-smart urban planning, mainstreaming climate actions in statutory plans and sectoral plans, can support the achievement of the NDCs at the city level as well as the localization of the SDGs. Examples of cities that have made net zero pledges will also be captured under Part 3, to illustrate how urban design and planning have been adapted to transform this commitment into action – in terms of process, monitoring and accountability.

- Part 4: Case studies on sectoral interventions and resilient infrastructure

Part 4 will showcase successful measures put in place to reduce the vulnerability of transportation, sanitation, waste, water, health, communications and energy networks. It will highlight which plans, standards, building process and maintenance mechanisms can be put in place to make city infrastructure climate-smart, both from an adaptation and mitigation perspective. This part shall

include cases related to the energy transition and its integration with agendas aiming at ending energy poverty.

- **Part 5: Case studies on multilevel governance for climate action**

Part 5 will integrate examples of governance mechanisms that can be put in place at the city level to accelerate the implementation of the climate agenda. It will show how cities have transformed their urban governance frameworks to integrate adaptation and mitigation objectives and to enhance disaster risk management. It will further show how cities have built capacities locally to address a wide range of climate change related challenges. These case studies will also look at communication strategies and channels that have been deployed by mayors and local leaders to communicate to and include the potential losers of climate action.

- **Part 6: Case studies on fostering innovation for inclusive climate actions**

Part 6 will deep dive into how cities have used nature-based solutions and green and smart technologies to decarbonize their actions and increase their resilience. The innovative solutions that will be highlighted through these case studies will have to be highly impactful, scalable, trustful and scientifically sound, while also tailored to local contexts and incorporating indigenous people's knowledge. Innovative solutions developed by urban residents could be showcased here. This part shall also capture case studies that illustrate solutions tackling both climate change and emerging issues such as urban health and pandemics in an integrated manner.

- **Part 7: Case studies on financing interventions for climate change in cities**

Part 7 will illustrate how cities can successfully finance interventions which support climate resilience in urban areas. These include infrastructure and policy actions addressing local needs that contribute to overall adaptation and mitigation such as: funding maintenance and repairs, neighborhood upgrading, enhancing transparency and accountability of climate finance, promoting social protection for at-risk groups, reversing the impacts of climate change, and measures of ensuring equitable and just transitions.

Each part will be composed of a minimum of two and a maximum of four case studies.

Structure of each case study

Case studies will be structured as follows:

- i. **Context:** summary of climate challenge and socio-economic impacts caused by climate change.
- ii. **Solution:** illustration of action put in place to tackle the climate challenge described in (i).
- iii. **Drivers and enablers:** description of the key drivers and enablers that were leveraged to make the solution successful. This part shall provide an explanation(s) on *why* the solution was possible, effective and impactful.
- iv. **Impacts:** information on the key figures that show the impacts of the solution implemented. Impacts will be elaborated based on the thematic of the case study.
- v. **Development prospects:** elaboration on how the solution can be scalable and replicated in other cities and contexts.

All case studies must highlight clear evidence of change and impact. The case studies and practices will not be descriptive but rather analytic to demonstrate *how* actions at the city level are impactful for the implementation of the climate agenda.

Indicative timeline for the drafting of the Annex

Project Stage	Key Activities	Start Date	End Date	No. of Weeks
Preliminary Activities	Launch of the call for submission of best practices through UN-Habitat website for external partners	15-Feb-24	28-Mar-24	6
	Launch of the call for submission of best practices within UN-Habitat, especially through regional offices	15-Feb-24	28-Mar-24	6
	Compilation of case study options – from submissions in response to call and desk review – and selection of 30 case studies	14-Mar-24	4-Apr-24	4
First draft	Drafting the first version of the 30 case studies for the WCR Annex	5-Apr-24	12-Apr-24	1
	Review of the first draft	12-Apr-24	22-Apr-24	1
EGM II	Second EGM (Tentatively last week of April, 23-25 April 2024)	23-Apr-24	25-Apr-24	-
Second draft	Integration of EGM comments and finalization of the Annex	10-May-24	28-Jun-24	6