



UN-HABITAT

Report of the Executive Director on normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat

Executive Board, 6-8 May 2024, Agenda item 7, HSP/EB.2024/6

I. Introduction

II. Updates on the Flagship Programme 1 ‘Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities’

III. The Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe)

IV. Initiatives on urban crises prevention and response and activities

V. Conclusion

ANNEXES:

- **HSP/EB.2024/INF.6 - Preliminary report on the status of the development of the efforts to reconstruct the human settlements in the Gaza Strip**
- **HSP/EB.2024/INF.7 - Progress made on selected normative and operational activities during the period July – December 2023**

II. 'Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities' Flagship Programme

The Flagship Programme is a convening platform for **multistakeholder collaboration on knowledge, partnerships, technical assistance and financial resource mobilisation** to promote more **inclusive, green and resilient** cities, neighbourhoods and communities.



GOAL

Promote **inclusive prosperity** globally by **supporting governments and urban actors** to build more inclusive, green and resilient **cities, neighbourhoods and communities** through **urban regeneration**.

3 OUTCOMES

1. Enhanced knowledge and evidence-based data on inclusive and sustainable urban regeneration

2. Strengthened global / regional collaboration, capacity, partnerships

3. Initiatives and solutions implemented to generate **social and environmental value** through urban regeneration.



Reduce **spatial inequality** and poverty in communities across the urban – rural continuum



Enhanced **shared prosperity** of cities and regions



Strengthened **climate action** and improved urban environment



Effective **urban crisis prevention** and response

Normative and Operational Portfolio



Integrated and multi-sectoral approach on urban regeneration

- Collaboration with Member States, UNESCO, UN Tourism, Academia, Private Sector and Communities to leverage the linkages between urban regeneration, heritage, climate change, mega-events, and sustainable tourism.
- Implementation mechanism for UN-Habitat Assembly Resolutions on planning and infrastructure, housing and informal settlements.
- Joint work with UN-Habitat Flagship Programs (SDG Cities, Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor) to enhance the positive impact of SDG localization and climate action.



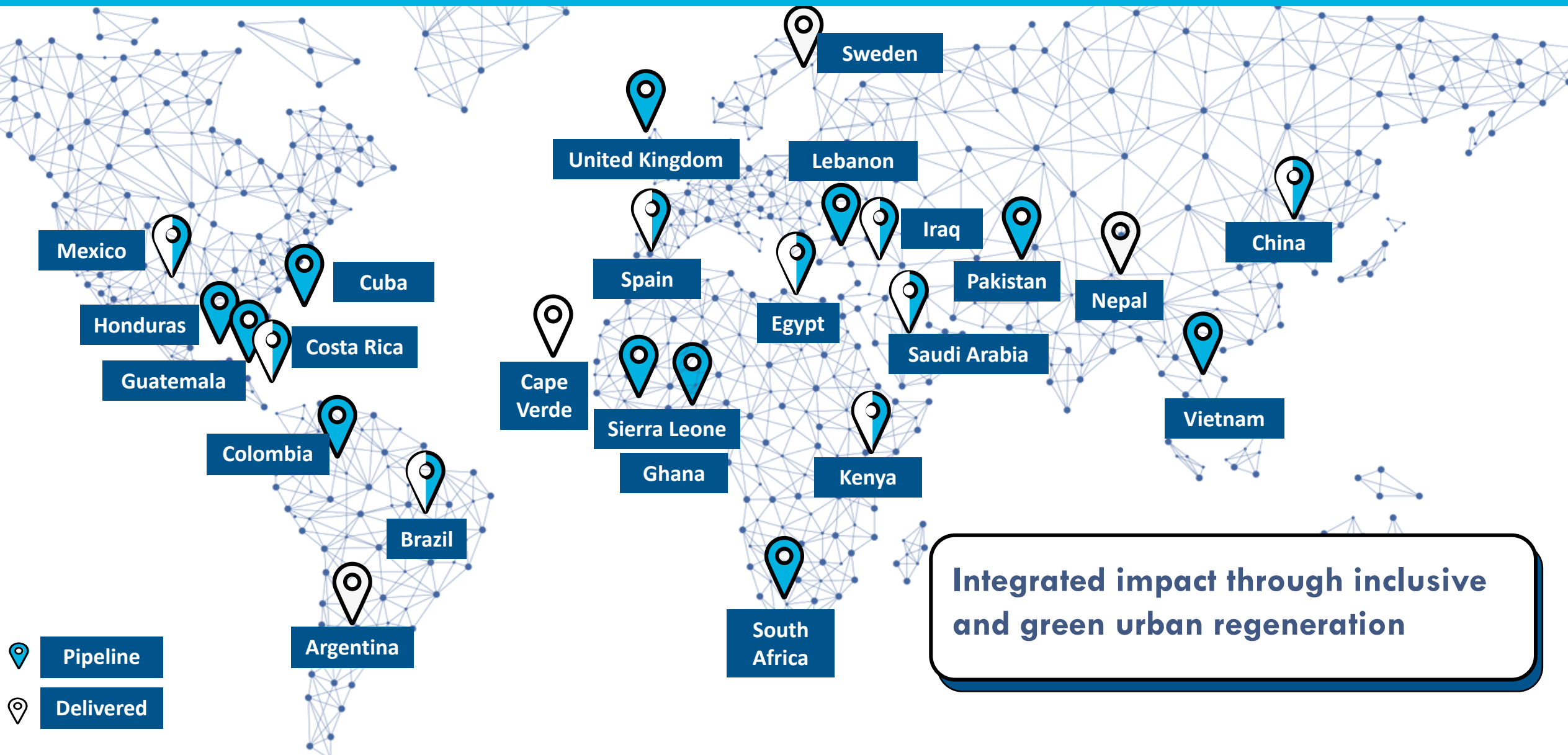
Normative and Operational partnerships with Governments, Private sector, and investors, Community Groups, Research Institutions

- Technical assistance for the formulation of project documents, policies, plans and projects on urban regeneration.
- Capacity development for UN-Habitat and partners.
- Support implementing urban regeneration participatory processes and plans.
- Foster social and environmental value creation models.
- Facilitate public – private sector interaction in urban regeneration.



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II. 'Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities' Flagship Programme





II. 'Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities' Flagship Programme

Impact (until April 2024)

Deliver social inclusion, opportunities and resilience

60 partners engaged in 32 countries

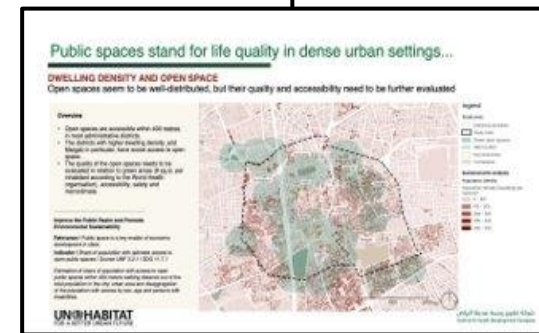
USD 9.6 M mobilized / pipeline

15 Knowledge materials developed

64 cities in 22 countries adopted urban regeneration policies

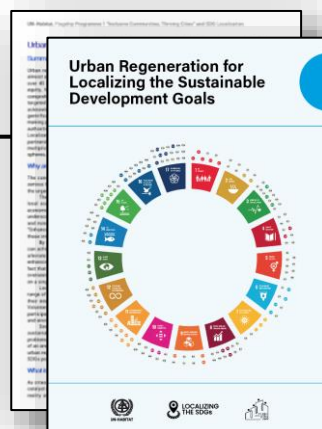


Parque de La Equidad Plan Cancún, Mexico



Central Riyadh Socio-Economic Regeneration Strategy

- LESSONS LEARNT:**
- Integrative solution for inclusive prosperity
 - UN-Habitat niche in impact and mitigation
 - Systematization knowledge and expertise
 - Catalytic role of urban regeneration



II. 'Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities' Flagship Programme

Way Forward: Next 20 Months

Normative: Completion of global normative guidance products (SDG Localisation, Migration, Climate, Housing).

Strategic Partnerships: Consolidation of strategic partnerships (UN Tourism, UNESCO, IOC, BIE, AFD, ANRU, ANRUR, national and local governments, SUR Lab)

Programme Development: Project proposals for 12 national governments (MDOs, BDOs, and others) and Mega-events & urban events as catalyzers of sustainable urban development and localization of the SDGs and NUA.

Impact: Advance integrated policies and programmes for the localized delivery of 15 SDGs and 45 SDG targets & Scale up its contributions to the UN's system on urban inclusion and local economic development (HLPF, Summit of the Future, World Social Summit, Social and Solidarity Economy)



Mega-Events Legacy



Atlas of Urban Regeneration



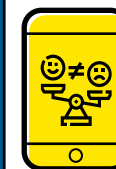
Global, Regional and Local Hubs



Urban Regeneration Initiatives from MS



ESG Framework: Global Playbook



Spatial Inclusion Assessment Framework



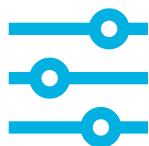
Guidelines for Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Regeneration



III. Update on the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative

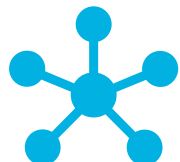
Second UN Habitat Assembly resolution, options and recommendations for operationalizing the SURGe initiative:

Key Requests:



Options and recommendations for operationalizing SURGe as a meaningful institutional arrangement.

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Strengthening the linkage between urbanization and climate change in alignment with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.

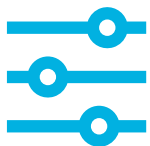
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Efforts to mobilize resources & support Member States in climate action.

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III. Update on the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative



Overview of options

- All options recognize SURGe as a mechanism for accelerating multi-stakeholder and multilevel climate action and as an ongoing, multilevel and multistakeholder partnership initiative, fully aligned with work of the Subprogramme 3
- All options reflect the multistakeholder reality of climate action at the city level



Opportunities to create linkages

- All options recognize acknowledge creating synergies with other ongoing initiatives (RISE UP, BCRUP, etc)
- Complementarity between CHAMP (as a space for national pledges and government commitments and SURGe (as a mechanism for translating multistakeholder partnerships at the local level)



Clarification on funding

The Programme Budget Implications for Resolution 2/5 kept at a minimum. However, the budget includes strong reference to the SURGe as part of the overarching operational paragraph. Thus, the PBI is the baseline and aligned with Option 1.

III. Update on the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative - Overview of options

Option 1 [minimal]

SURGe to be sustained as a 'light' network

Basic elements of the SURGe initiative will be implemented without additional resource requirements to sustain the SURGe network of partners.

Option 1 **no additional resources** would be required

Option 2 [medium]

SURGe as an entry point for accelerated climate action

This option supports stronger collaboration with the members of the SURGe Alliance, coordinated by a dedicated UN-Habitat-led secretariat. Collectively, partners would advance multilevel climate action.

Option 2 and 3: Beyond the recurrent post and non-post resources anchored in the PBI, the additional resources will be sought from **soft-earmarked funding**. No regular budget or foundation non-earmarked budget will need to be sought

Option 3 [strong]

SURGe as a global coordination platform

SURGe initiative would accelerate multilevel climate action through additional support to Member States and cities and would provide a stronger stakeholder coordination platform.

IV. Update on initiatives on urban crisis prevention and response

Progress in institutional and normative support to partners

Key Initiatives

- Institutional Plan on Solutions to Internal Displacement adopted.
- Guide for Mainstreaming Migration and Displacement in National Urban Policy released.
- Community of Practice on forced displacement established for knowledge exchange and program support.

Multistakeholder Engagement

- Joint programs approved by IDSF in five countries.
- Informal task force (UN agencies, NGOs, UCLG) crafting urban forced displacement solutions framework.
- Expert Group Meeting scheduled for March 2024.

Achievements

- Co-leading with UNHCR in adopting pledges on Housing, Land, and Property, and Climate Resilient Human Settlements at Global Refugee Forum.
- Contributing to three more pledges: UN Common, localization, and a call for local action.

Progress on support to countries experiencing crisis

Ukraine Crisis Response

- Office and Urban Lab being set up in Kyiv
- Recovery planning activities started in Borydianka and Makariv
- Selection of other municipalities ongoing
- Synergies between the UNITAC project and the urban recovery project further detailed

Gaza Strip Crisis Response

- Participation in EU-UN-WB interim Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment
- Assessing sites for potential transitional shelter solutions
- Preparing neighborhood based assessments to support area-based responses

Other crises responses

- Response to the earthquake in Syria and Turkiye
- Response to the floods in Derna, Lybia
- Response to the earthquake in Herat, Afghanistan

Comprehensive and up-to-date report on the status of the development of the efforts to reconstruct the human settlements in the Gaza Strip:

Outline preliminary report

Part 1: Scope and the limitations of the report

Part 2: Sets out what is needed and what is already going on in terms of assessing the impact of the war on the human settlements in the Gaza Strip, calling for a focus on neighbourhood functionality

Part 3: Summarizes principles derived from lessons learned from previous reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip and relevant examples from elsewhere

Part 4: Set outs pathways from emergency response to recovery and reconstruction taking into account the immense scale of the damage and the uncertainty of when and how the war will end

Part 5: Next steps

Scope and limitations of the report

Scope

- Data available as of 15th March 2024
- Consultations with a wide range of stakeholders including during a mission to the region (5-12 February 2024)
- Highlights key challenges and uncertainties in planning for recovery and reconstruction efforts in the context of Gaza
- Report further seeks to look beyond humanitarian phase and explore pathways moving forward

Limitations

- War in the Gaza Strip is still ongoing with no durable ceasefire reached
- No field-based assessments are possible and the report relies on ongoing remote
- Focus is strongly on the current acute humanitarian crisis
- Unpredictable political and security landscape post-conflict

Assessing the impact of the war on the human settlements in the Gaza Strip

Urbanization challenges pre-war

- Highly urbanised Gaza strip with chronic housing shortage, insufficient access to basic services and high degrees of poverty
- Territorial fragmentation and isolation of the Gaza Strip resulting severe limits to sustainable reconstruction options and future sustainable urban development
- Diverse typology of neighborhoods across the Gaza Strip



IV. Update on initiatives on urban crisis prevention and response - Comprehensive and up-to-date report on the status of the development of the efforts to reconstruct the human settlements in the Gaza Strip

Assessing the impact of the war on the human settlements in the Gaza Strip

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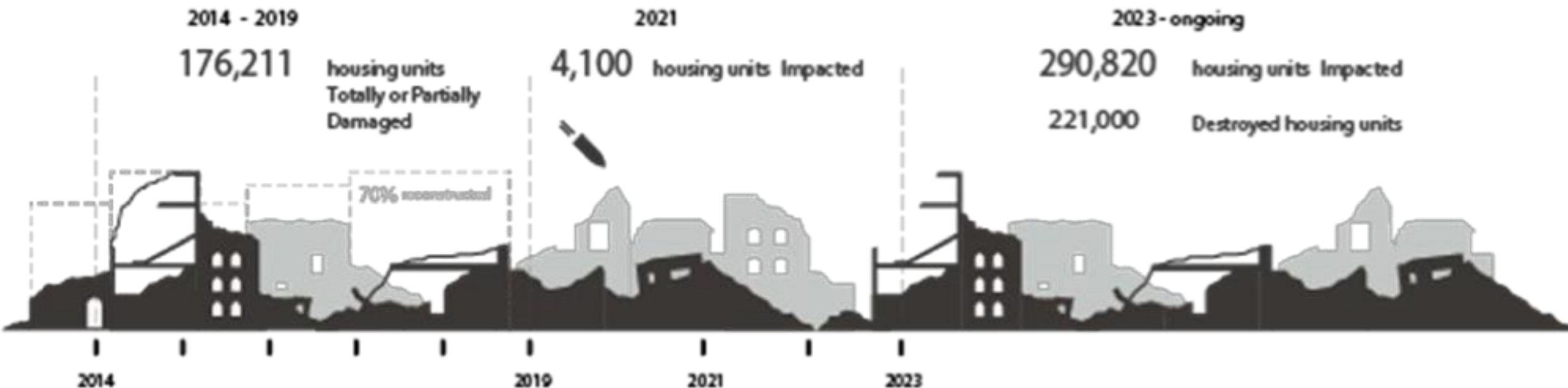
accumulative damage compared to after the 2014 conflict

73%

of damage involves housing in 2024 so far compared to 56% in 2014

75%

of the population displaced mostly towards the south



Assessing the impact of the war on the human settlements in the Gaza Strip

Ways Forward

- Update Urban Profile of the Gaza Strip
- Agreed consensus to focus on a neighbourhood-level lens to assessments to measure neighborhood functionality
- Identifying options for transitional shelter solutions
- Map out HLP challenges
- Initiate environmental assessments as soon as possible

Lessons learned from previous reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip and elsewhere



Need for balanced funding across sectors

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Institutional capacity must be rebuilt and localized

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Support self-help and self-reliance as much as possible

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Fast-track reinvigoration of the local private sector and economy

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Use of urban recovery frameworks to complement national recovery plans

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Contextualization of the approach to support return to neighbourhoods and recovery

Pathways from Acute Humanitarian Response to Recovery and Reconstruction

The outcome of the war is still unpredictable and will define:

- 1) If and how Gazans will be able to return or if displacement will be protracted
- 2) The scale and speed of return recovery and reconstruction
- 3) To what extent sustainable urban development can be achieved at all and how it can contribute to a viable two-state solution

Tentative Scenarios to inform the pathways on

- 1) **Transitional shelter solutions**
- 2) **Return, recovery and reconstruction**
- 3) **Long term sustainable urban development/building back better**



IV. Update on initiatives on urban crisis prevention and response - Comprehensive and up-to-date report on the status of the development of the efforts to reconstruct the human settlements in the Gaza Strip

Pathways from Acute Humanitarian Response to Recovery and Reconstruction

Scenario 1

If the conflict within the Gaza Strip continues for a long period and security arrangements do not allow return to large parts of the Gaza Strip

Then displacement will become protracted for most, and transitional shelter solutions, mostly prefab, will be the only go to option to improve the living conditions, without a meaningful way forward towards recovery and reconstruction

Pathways from Acute Humanitarian Response to Recovery and Reconstruction

Scenario 2

If peace prevails, return is possible across the Gaza Strip, but if restrictions of movement remain in place including on lists of goods and equipment, including “dual use” materials, and the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism is extended

Then we revert back to the situation post 2009 and post 2014, severely affecting the scale and speed of recovery and reconstruction, protracting displacement for many, in particular as the damage is already ten-fold compared to 2014



IV. Update on initiatives on urban crisis prevention and response - Comprehensive and up-to-date report on the status of the development of the efforts to reconstruct the human settlements in the Gaza Strip

Pathways from Acute Humanitarian Response to Recovery and Reconstruction

Scenario 3

If the political conditions, governance and security arrangements allow a (temporary or permanent) corridor with the West Bank, and/or in addition access from Jordan and Egypt,

Only then it would be possible to have a clear pathway from transitional shelter solutions, to return, recovery and sustainable reconstruction, allowing to move forward with the required speed and scale

Next steps

- Optional **follow up report** with neighborhood-based assessments, testing assumptions made and detailing strategies for transitional shelter solutions, recovery and reconstruction
- Promote the **neighborhood-based approach** in the response system-wide
- Start exploring what **building back better** could look like in the Gaza Strip

Thank you

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