



Quality of Life
Initiative



Global Conference of the Quality of Life Initiative

Concept Note and Agenda

Where: Steigenberger Hotel El Tahrir Cairo, Egypt

When: 2-3 November 2024

Background

Imagine looking back in 10 years and witnessing cities and human settlements worldwide transforming into more resilient, compassionate, and thriving communities. What would it take to get there?

Cities are spearheading the path toward sustainable development and enhanced quality of life. They are uniquely positioned to do so. As actors closest to their populations, cities are best placed to identify and address the issues that matter most to their communities. As hubs of innovation and economic growth, cities can create tailored solutions to pressing challenges, paving the way in creating more equitable and sustainable futures and improving quality of life for all.

However, many challenges lie ahead. Our rapidly urbanizing world demands adequate housing, transportation, energy systems, and other critical infrastructure, as well as employment opportunities and essential services like education and

healthcare, all of which must be delivered inclusively in a manner that leaves no one behind. Local governments are increasingly challenged to go beyond numbers and respond to how people experience life in urban areas. Furthermore, cities must tackle the most complex and ‘wicked problems’ of the 21st century, including how we respond and adapt to a changing climate, natural disasters and pandemics.

With the right data and policies, cities can navigate the complexities of urbanization and environmental challenges, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for all residents. This requires identifying individual priorities from both personal and community perspectives. It necessitates understanding each person’s needs holistically within their community context. It is also paramount to establish a critical connection between data production and analysis, knowledge and to policy in order to produce actionable responses to improve quality of life in different urban settings.

The Quality of Life Initiative presents a path forward: it tells the story of the people making the change, the cities and communities pioneering into the future, and provides a guide to help us get there. Implemented by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Quality of Life Initiative—a global initiative supported by a coalition of countries and sponsored by the Quality of Life Program Centre of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia—aims to empower pioneering cities’ equitable and sustainable futures and improving quality of life for all.

The Initiative goes beyond typical data tools, aiming to be globally relevant yet locally applicable. It captures universal aspects of quality of life while considering local factors, values, and priorities that define quality of life in different contexts.

As part of its bold vision for the future, where quality of life for people and the planet takes center stage, with individuals and communities driving their own

progress, the Quality of Life Initiative will convene a two-day conference in Cairo, Egypt as part of the Twelfth Session of the World Urban Forum. It marks the culmination of two years of efforts to advance thinking on quality of life, develop related metrics, and explore their global applicability in various local contexts.

The conference will serve as a global platform to debate, exchange views, learn, and act on quality of life. The concept of quality of life varies for each individual and has been significantly influenced by recent interconnected challenges such as environmental degradation, climate change, pandemics, inequalities, and rapid technological shifts. Consequently, the concept of a ‘good life,’ philosophically foundational to quality of life as defined by Aristotle, has undergone substantial evolution for both people and the planet, reshaping how policies are crafted, understood, and implemented. By addressing these issues head-on, we can forge a path toward a sustainable and equitable future.

Quality of Life Initiative Global Conference

The future we want, how to achieve it, and why it matters.

The conference will demonstrate the centrality of quality of life to inclusive, sustainable urban development at the global level. It will showcase the accomplishments of the Initiative, introduce its newly developed tools, and kick-off the next phase of work.

Objectives

- **To showcase the Initiative as a thought leader and innovator**
- **Transfer knowledge, highlight advancements and exchange views**
- **Introduce the newly developed tools, including the Index and Platform**
- **Kick-off the scale-up phase of the Initiative**
- **Garner interest and mobilize city engagement to reach the 100 city target at launch**

Agenda

DAY 1 Theme: Moving Into The Future

TIME	SESSION TITLE	DESCRIPTION
1300-1400	DAY 1 Arrival of Participants	Arrival, participant registration and networking. Coffee will be served.
1400-1425	DAY 1 Opening Remarks	Host: • Ms Sarah Syed, UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board Member Remarks by: • Ms Anacláudia Rossbach, Executive Director of UN-Habitat • Mr Khalid bin Abdullah AlBaker, CEO Quality of Life Program, KSA • Ms Rania Hedeya, Regional Director UN-Habitat, Regional Office for Arab States
1425-1505	DAY 1 SESSION 1: The Meaning of Quality of Life	Interactive session on the meaning of quality of life
1505-1545	DAY 1 SESSION 2: Envisioning the Future	Introduction: • Ms Agata Krause, Senior Specialist, Partnerships and Institutional Engagement, the Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat Moderator: Ms Anna König Jerlmyr, Former Mayor of Stockholm, Board Member Nordic Safe Cities Network Panelists: • Ms Sarah Syed, UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board Member • Ms Martine Abel-Williamson, President of the World Blind Union • Ms Rose Molokoane, Coordinator of Federation of the Urban and Rural Poor and the co-founder of SDI in South Africa • Ms Sarah Sabry, Global Urban Lead at Save the Children/ Chair at Global Alliance-Cities4Children • Ms Zeina ElZein, Assistant Professor of Architecture, Helwan University and UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board member • Mr Michael Mlynár, Deputy Executive Director, UN-Habitat
1545-1615	Coffee Break	Coffee will be served.
1615-1620	DAY 1 VIDEO: The Quality of Life Initiative	VIDEO: The Quality of Life Initiative
1620-1705	DAY 1 SESSION 3: Data for the Future	Moderator: • Mr Robert Ndugwa, Head, Data and Analytics Section, UN-Habitat Panelists: • Mr Ahmed El Saeed, Regional Head of UN Global Pulse Asia Pacific • Ms Dilek Fraisl, Research Scholar, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) Managing Director, Citizen Science Global Partnership (CSGP) UN Futures Lab • Ms Yifang Ban, Director, Division of Geoinformatics, KTH Royal Institute of Technology • Ms Aileen Dalisay, Head of Gemini and Social Impact Partnerships – EMEA, Google

1705-1730	DAY 1 SESSION 4: A Youth Vision of Quality of Life	Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Raphaëlle Vignol, Global Coordinator of the Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat • Ms Sukaina Al Nusrawi, Lead of Urban Development, UN ESCWA • Mr Ali Alsunaider, Winner, First Prize, Arab Youth Photo competition • Ms Rahma Mohammed, Winner of the Arab Youth Photo competition • Mr Ahmed Emad, Winner of the Arab Youth competition
1730-1900	DAY 1 Photo Competition Vernissage	Vernissage photo exhibition and high-level networking event. Canapés will be served.

DAY 2 Theme: The Quality Of Life Initiative

TIME	SESSION DESCRIPTION	THE ELEMENTS
0830-0900	DAY 2 Arrival of participants	Arrival and networking. Coffee will be served.
0900-0910	DAY 2 Tubular Symphony	VIDEO: The Quality of Life Initiative - An Urban Symphony Followed by: Interactive Icebreaker.
0910-0930	DAY 2 Opening Remarks	Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Marija de Wijn, Global Coordinator, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat • Moderator: Mr Erfan Ali, Chief of Staff and Acting Director of the Regional Programme Division, UN-Habitat Speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Ibrahim Saber Khalil, Governor of Cairo • Dr Abdelkhalek A. Ibrahim, Senior Assistant for the Minister of Housing, Egypt
0930-0940	DAY 2 Opening Keynote - Richard Florida	Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathleen Sullivan, Senior Communications and Advocacy Lead, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat Keynote Address on Quality of Life in Cities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Richard Florida, Urbanist, Author and Professor
0940-0955	DAY 2 SESSION 1: The Quality of Life Initiative: A Global Vision	Introduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Raphaëlle Vignol, Global Coordinator, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat Speaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Sahar Attia, Emeritus Professor of Urbanism at the Faculty of Engineering, Cairo University
0955-1025	DAY 2 SESSION 2: Beyond Your Typical Data Tool	Interactive presentation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Kyle Farrell, Senior Urban & Regional Economist, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat
1025-1055	Coffee Break	Coffee will be served.

1055-1125	DAY 2 SESSION 3: A New Tool for Urban Leaders: The Quality of Life Initiative Platform	Interactive demonstration by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Grayson Bass, Innovation Manager, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat
1125-1210	DAY 2 SESSION 4: The Link with City-Level Data Exercises	Moderator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Agata Krause, Senior Specialist, Partnerships and Institutional Engagement, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Tanja Obradovic, Adviser, the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, the government of Serbia Mr Saehwan Kim, Deputy Director Seoul, Seoul Metropolitan Government Mr Abdulrahman Ibrahim, Chief Data and Innovation Officer, Madinah Regional Development Authority (MDA) Mr Takehiko Nagumo, Representative Director, the Smart City Institute Japan Mr Mohamed Elzarkani, Resident Coordinator United Nations in Saudi Arabia
1210-1225	DAY 2 Breakout Session: Pitch	Breakout Sessions include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Q&A With Pioneer Cities Platform Demo-AI Enhanced Workflow Reframing the City through a Quality of Life Lens Joining the Initiative and Developing the Index
1225-1325	Lunch	Lunch is served. Participants sign up for breakout sessions.
1325-1405	DAY 2 Breakout Session: Round 1	Break Session Round 1: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Q&A With Pioneer Cities Platform Demo-AI Enhanced Workflow Reframing the City through a Quality of Life Lens Joining the Initiative and Developing the Index
1415-1455	DAY 2 Breakout Session: Round 2	Break Session Round 2: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Q&A With Pioneer Cities Platform Demo-Quality of Life Improvements in Cities Reframing the City through a Quality of Life Lens Joining the Initiative and Developing the Index
1455-1520	Coffee Break	Coffee will be served. Pilot City videos will start playing ten minutes into the break.
1520-1555	DAY 2 SESSION 5: Leading the Way: Success Stories from Pioneer Cities	Host: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Marija de Wijn, Global Coordinator, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Jon Raven, Mayor of Logan, Australia Mr Simplicio Lissant, Mayor of Punaauia, French Polynesia Mr Thanadorn Phuttharak, Mayor Udon Thani, Thailand Mr Rogelio Alcocer Gomez, Head of the Public Registry and Cadastre, State of Querétaro, Mexico

<p>1555-1640</p>	<p>DAY 2 SESSION 6: Turning Insights into Impact</p>	<p>Moderator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Raphaelle Vignol, Global Coordinator, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr David Hansen, Director of Growth, Economy, and Sustainability, Logan, Australia Mr Taimana Ellacot, Chief of Staff, Punaauia, French Polynesia Mr Zakaria Oulad, Counselor, City of Agadir, Morocco Mr Peter Marriott, Social Planner, Healthy City Strategy, Vancouver, Canada
<p>1640-1645</p>	<p>DAY 2 Conference Reflection</p>	<p>Reflecting and connecting on the key themes and takeaways from the Conference.</p> <p>Host:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Marija de Wijn, Global Coordinator, Quality of Life Initiative, UN-Habitat
<p>1645-1715</p>	<p>DAY 2 SESSION 7: A Commitment to the Future</p>	<p>Announcement of cities joining the Quality of Life Initiative.</p>



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