

Sixty-third meeting of the ad hoc working group on PBA



Consultation on the draft international guidelines on people centred smart cities

17 February 2025



Agenda



Time (EAT)	Object	Speaker/Moderator
9:15-9:20	Opening remarks	Mr. Michal Mlynár , Deputy Executive Director, UN-Habitat
9:20 -9:50	Presentation of the draft guidelines on people centred smart cities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultations and drafting processes• Overview of the guidelines document	Ms. Edlam Yemeru , Director (a.i.) ERSKID
9:50 - 10:00	Testimonials from experts	Juraj Hošták , Nominated expert for the EE and WEOG consultation, Slovak Republic Ms. Rini Rachmawati , Nominated expert of the global Expert Working Group, Indonesia François Ossama , Nominated expert of the global Expert Working Group, Cameroon
10:00 - 11:00	Q&A on presentation and feedback from Member States	Chair

Opening remarks:



H.E. Michal Mlynár
Deputy Executive Director
UN-Habitat

Presentation of the draft guidelines on people-centred smart cities:



Ms. Edlam Yemeru, Director (a.i.)

ERSKID

UN-Habitat

The Process

An intergovernmental, inclusive process



UN HABITAT United Nations
Human Settlements
Programme

HSP/HA.2/Res.1

Distr.: General
6 July 2023
Original: English

United Nations Habitat Assembly of the
United Nations Human Settlements Programme
Second session
Nairobi, 5–9 June 2023

Resolution adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly on 9 June 2023

2/1. International guidelines on people-centred smart cities

The United Nations Habitat Assembly,

Recognizing the profound and dynamic impact that digitalization and smart cities are having on human settlements and human lives, both in positive ways, by providing new ways to support sustainable urban development and enhancing access to basic services, and – if not managed well – in negative ways, by exacerbating existing inequalities and accessibility barriers and compromising economic growth and privacy rights, among other things,

Noting the definition of *smart city* by United for Smart Sustainable Cities, the United Nations smart city platform coordinated by the Economic Commission for Europe, the International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and supported by 14 other United Nations entities, as “an innovative city that uses information and communication technologies and other means to improve quality of life, efficiency of urban operation and services, and competitiveness, while ensuring that it meets the needs of present and future generations with respect to economic, social, environmental as well as cultural aspects”,¹

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and in particular the recognition, in paragraph 15, that the spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and to develop knowledge societies,

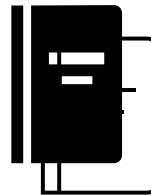
Recalling also Sustainable Development Goal 11 on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,

Reaffirming targets 17.6 and 17.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals and their respective objectives to enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and to fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology,

Reaffirming also the pledge in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that no one will be left behind,



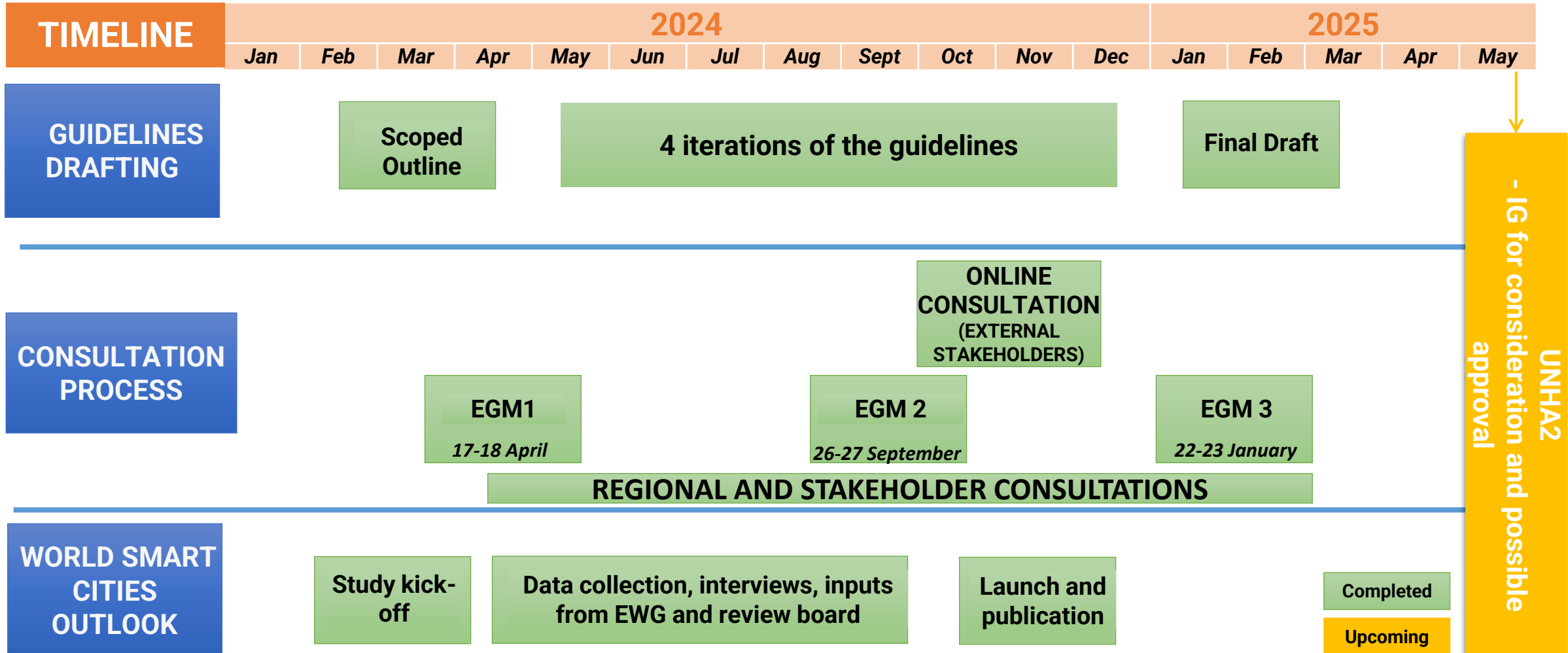
In June 2023, **193 countries** mandated UN-Habitat to develop **International Guidelines on People-Centred Smart Cities** through [UN-Habitat Assembly Resolution 2/1](#)



The Guidelines are expected to provide a globally applicable **non-binding framework** for developing **national** and **local** smart city regulations, plans and strategies



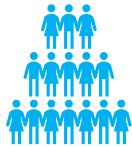
The process and key milestones



Consultation process: overview



3 Global consultations (EGM) to define the structure and content of the guidelines



7 Stakeholder Consultations to zoom in on principles, roles and actions of different actors to enable a people-centred approach.



3 Regional Online Consultations across all 5 global regions, clustered by time zone to include regional priorities and recommendations.



1 Regional in-person Consultation for WEOG and EEG to review the guidelines and discuss implementation.



13 Advocacy Events to promote the guidelines and engage with practitioners in the field through informal consultations.



1 Open Online Consultation for external stakeholders to contribute to the drafting process directly.

**Consulted
stakeholders:
>800**

Consultation process: meetings unpacked

Global consultation		
Meeting	Date	Location
EGM1	17-18/04 2024	Strasbourg
EGM2	26-28/09 2024	Online
EGM3	22-23/01 2025	Online



Stakeholders and thematic consultations		
Stakeholder	Date (2024)	Location
CSO	9-10/05	Civil Society Conference (Nairobi)
Academia	18-20/06	UNITAC (Hamburg)
LRGs	10/09	Online
Climate	11/09	Innovate4Cities (Montreal)
UN-Habitat consultation	12/09	Nairobi/online
International organizations	25/09	Online
Private Sector	2/10	Carnegie (California)
Open Online consultation	Oct/Nov	Online



Regional online consultations	
Region	Date (2024)
Latin /North America	21 November
Eastern Europe	22 November
Africa/ Europe	26 November
Asia Pacific	28 November

Second regional consultations (in-person)	
Region	Date (2025)
Eastern and Western Europe and other states group	28-29 January

The Global Expert Working Group Role

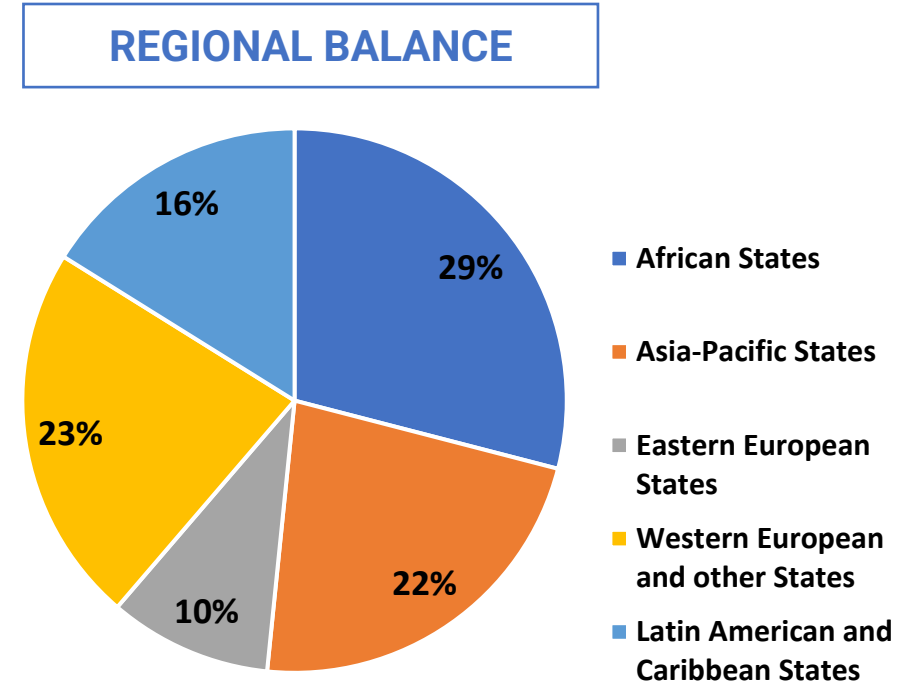
- **31 Global Experts appointed by Member States to advise UN-Habitat**
- **Ambassadors of the guidelines in their networks and primary advisory body**
- **Sharing their best practices and providing normative and practical guidance**



The Global Expert Working Group Composition

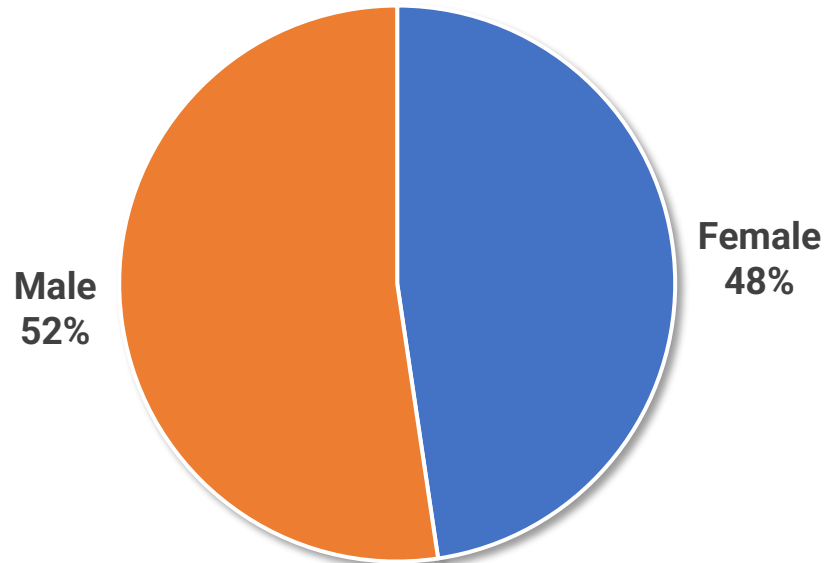
Region	Experts
African States	9
Botswana	1
Cameroon	1
Egypt	1
Ghana	1
Kenya	1
Mauritius	1
Morocco	1
Nigeria	1
South Africa	1
Latin American and Caribbean States	5
Brazil	2
Mexico	2
El Salvador	1

Region	Experts
Asia-Pacific States	7
China	1
India	1
Indonesia	1
Japan	1
Philippines	1
South Korea	1
Yemen	1
Eastern European States	3
Azerbaijan	2
Russia	1
Western European and other States	7
France	2
Germany	2
Israel	1
United States	2

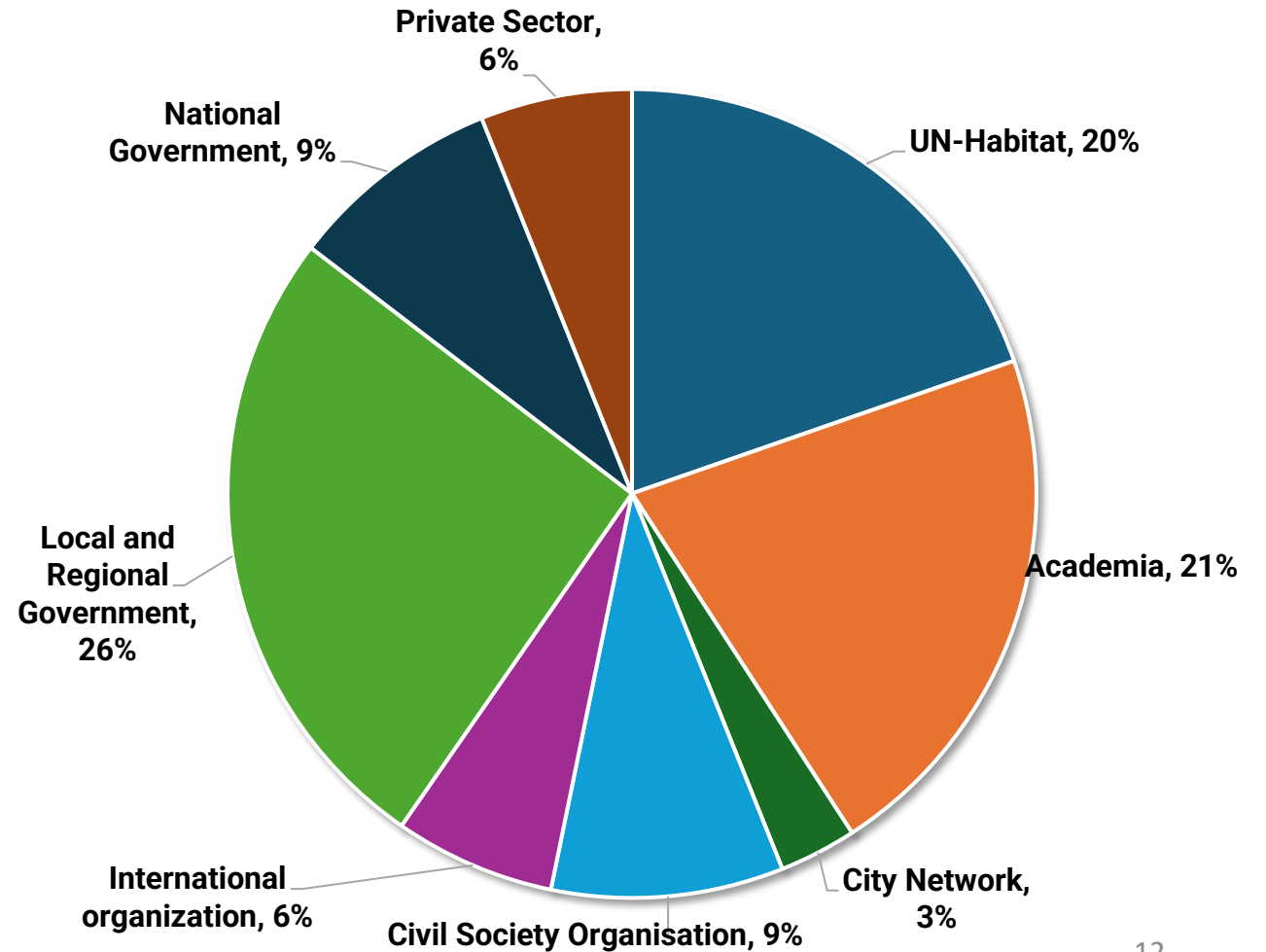


Stakeholder consultation process (1/2)

GENDER BALANCE

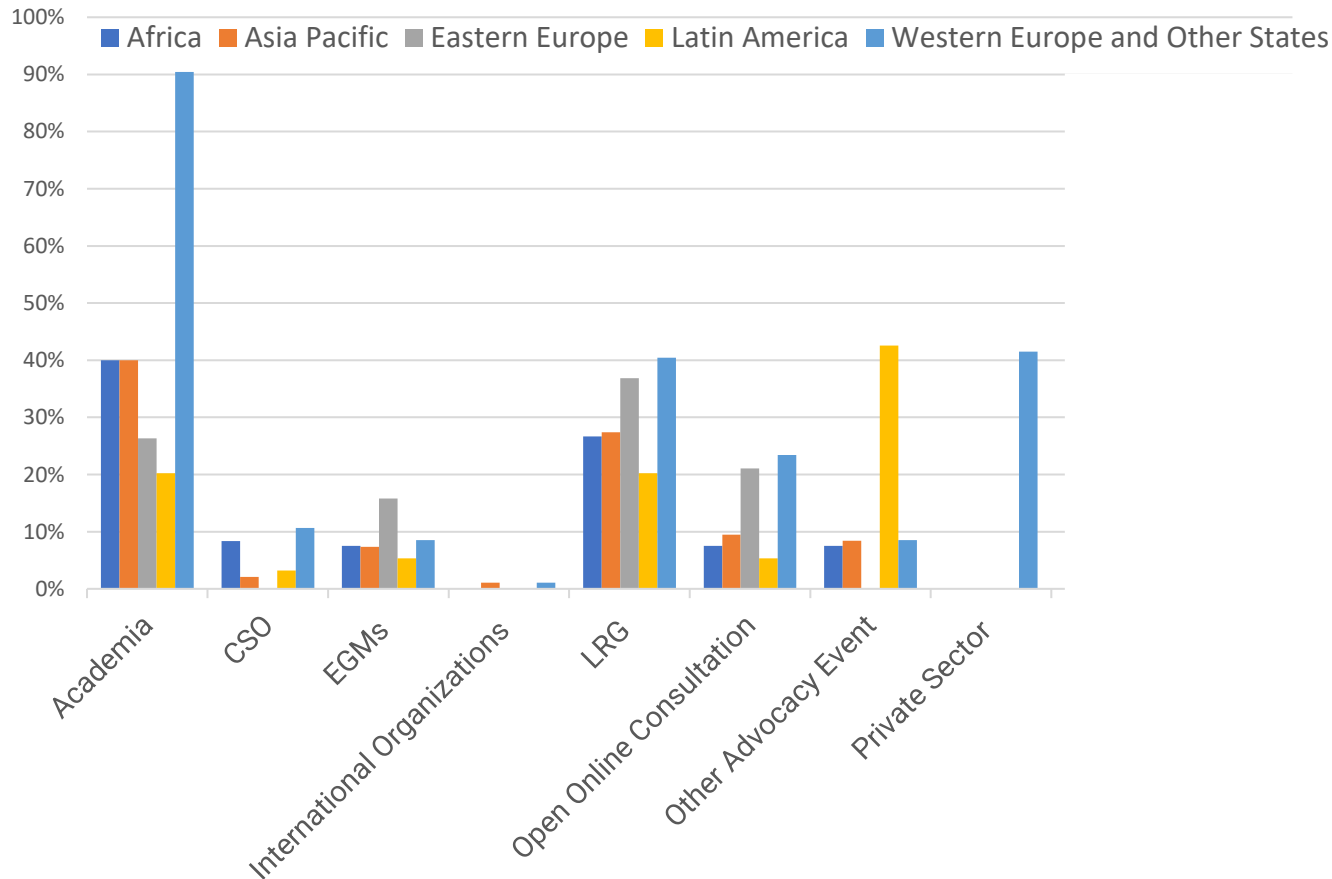


STAKEHOLDER BALANCE

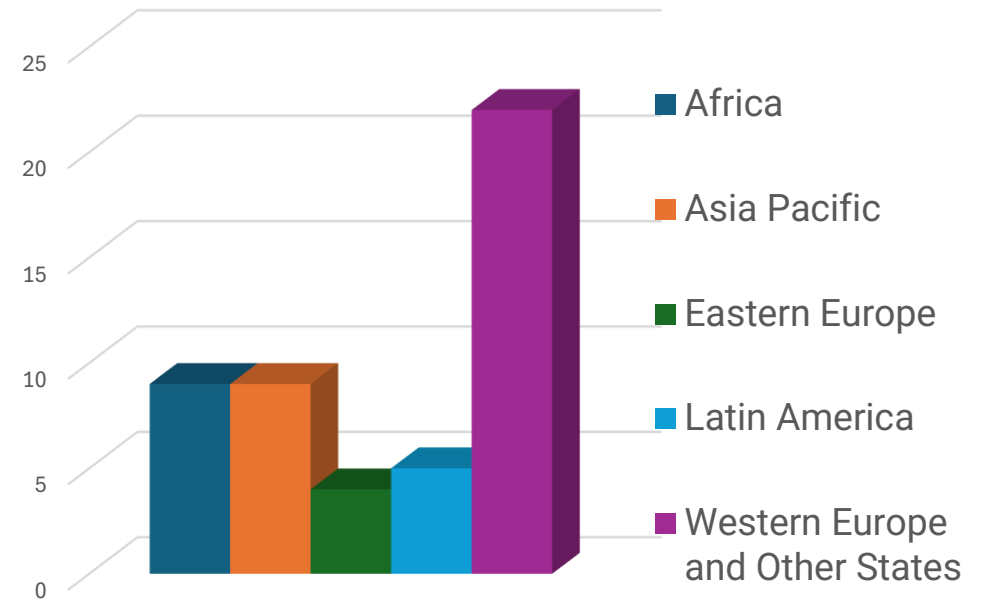


Stakeholder consultation process (2/2)

REGIONAL BALANCE IN ALL CONSULTATIONS

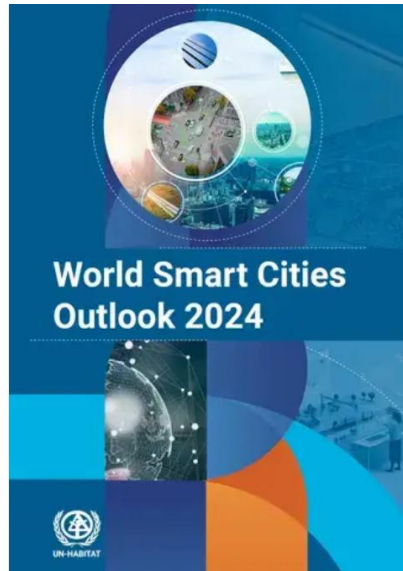


FOCUS ON OPEN ONLINE CONSULTATION



The Word Smart Cities Outlook

The report, launched at WUF12, offers robust **empirical findings** and **global knowledge** on smart city trends, challenges, and opportunities, including **regional variations**, which informed the development of IG-PCSC. The outlook:



- 1 assesses the **current state of people-centred smart city developments** across cities and countries globally **and insights for future developments**
- 2 evaluates the **impact of smart city technologies and strategies** on sustainability, resilience, equity, social inclusion, accessibility, security, and quality of life in urban area
- 3 offers **recommendations** to foster people-centred smart city development that enables global community building, standardization, and benchmarking.



**SCAN TO
DOWNLOAD**

HOW

1. **Primary and secondary data and best practices' collection** of people-centred smart city implementation
2. Analysis of key drivers to anticipate expected **future trends**
3. Continuous **coordination** between the WSCO team and the IG-PCSC drafting process

World Smart Cities Outlook - findings

Persistent digital divide

- **38%** of world population has no access to mobile internet
- Worldwide **65%** women use the Internet **against** the percentage of male (70%) – *gender usage gap*

Regulatory issues

- Smart city strategies often not aligned with other national/municipal strategies
- **Only 30%** of municipalities with AI strategies
- Data protection laws lacking in 58 countries globally
- **Only 5.6%** of world nations adopted data governance policies
- Ethics and digital human rights missing in procurement processes, as well as Human Rights Impact Assessments

Digital skills gap

- **45% of municipalities** report that digital literacy is an issue affecting citizen engagement
- **60%** reporting digital skill gap in public administration
- In the Global South access to educational resources is limited

Financial gaps

- **40%** funding gap for units or departments to oversee smart cities projects (e.g smart city units)
- **65%** funding coming from municipal funds, but there are quite a lot of regional disparities
- Private sector funding amounts to **only 13%**
- Rigid procurement processes, unsustainable business models deter private sector participation, affecting **64%** of respondents, especially in Africa and Latin America

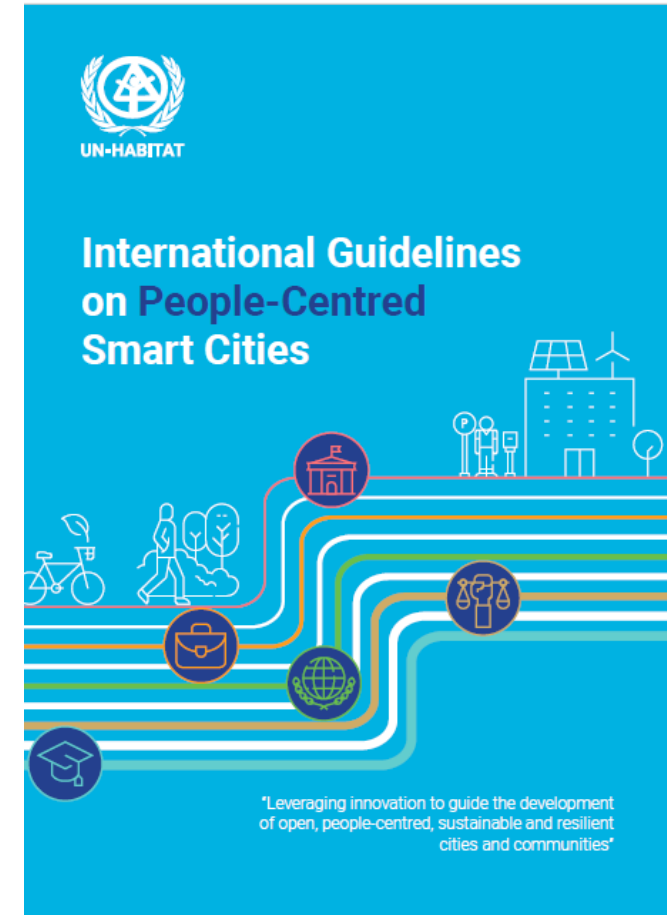
Monitoring

- **37%** municipalities with smart city monitoring process
- **30%** of municipalities lack technical standards for data in smart city initiatives
- **Environmental impact** of smart cities projects is less measured than social and economic impacts

The guidelines

The Guidelines: what they are

- 1 Non-Binding Framework** – a voluntary framework to people-centered smart cities, offering recommendations rather than strict regulations.
- 2 Aligned and Complementing other agendas** – they build on and complement global frameworks such as the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, the Global Digital Compact.
- 3 Tailored to National and LRGs** – designed to be applicable at both national and local levels, the guidelines consider the specific roles and responsibilities of different government entities.
- 4 Flexible** – they accommodate diverse urban contexts, allowing cities and countries to adapt them according to their needs, priorities, and capacities.
- 5 Evolving** – recognizing the rapid pace of technological change, they should be periodically revised to remain relevant and responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities.



Content of the guidelines

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INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVE

CORE BODY OF THE GUIDELINES

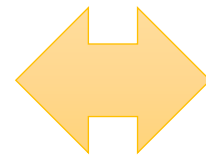
ANNEX

Definition of a People-Centred Smart City

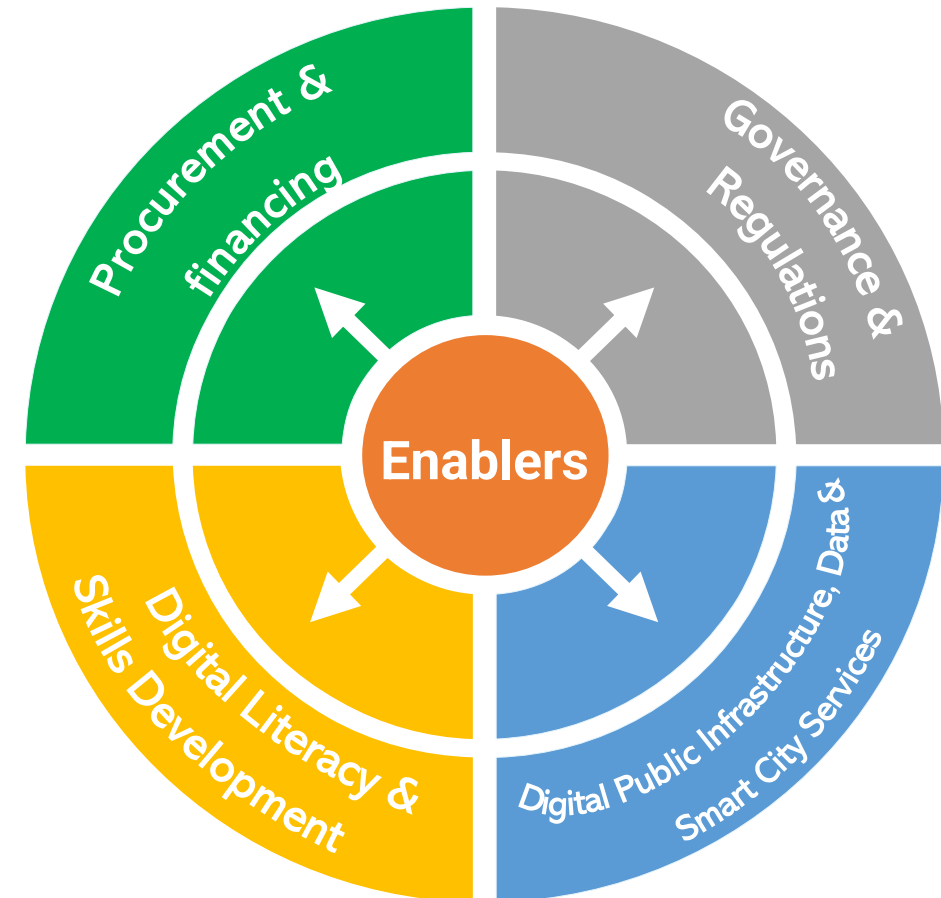
“A people-centred smart city leverages technology to improve the quality of life of people and the sustainability and resilience of the environment, while advancing shared prosperity and inclusion. It ensures that smart city innovations are developed through participatory approaches and collaboration, providing equitable access to digital services, skills and infrastructures especially for people in vulnerable situations. It respects, protects and promotes human rights, with multi-level governance systems and regulations ensuring that technology supports sustainable development rather than becoming the goal itself”.

The Guidelines principles and enablers

FOUR THEMATIC AREAS OUTLINING THE PRINCIPLES



FOUR ENABLING CONDITIONS OUTLINING RECOMMENDATIONS

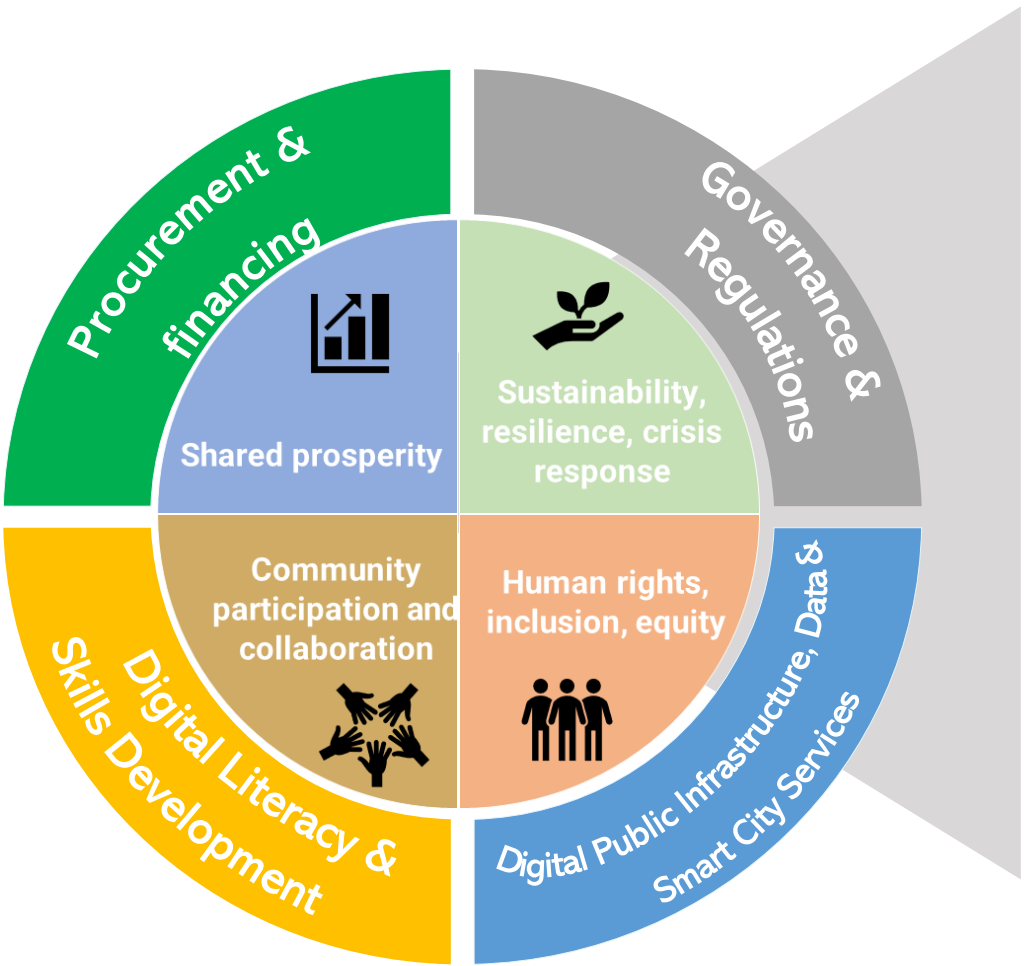


The Guidelines characteristics



- 1. UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE:** designed to be adaptable across different governance structures, countries development levels and urban contexts
- 2. INTERTWINED & COLLABORATIVE:** recognizing that digital transformation requires cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation, they are interlinked.
- 3. ACTIONABLE:** provide implementable yet adaptable to diverse needs recommendations to be translated into urban strategies and measurable outcomes.
- 4. INCLUSIVE & EQUITABLE** – Placing people at the center of digital transformation by ensuring equal access, ethical technology use, and sustainability for all urban residents.

The Guidelines – targeted audience



NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

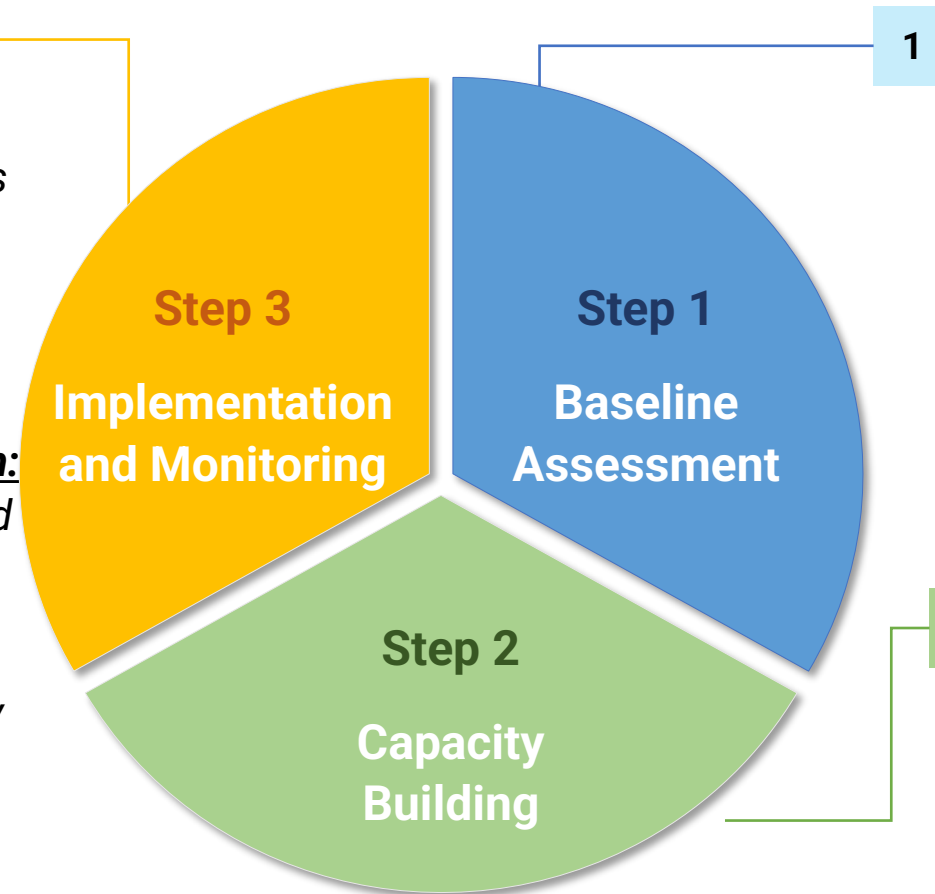


LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS



RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

The Guidelines: Monitoring and implementation



3

- **Pilot:** roll out pilot projects
- **Design and deploy:** implement digital tools, projects etc.
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress
- **Adapt/update** the strategy regularly, as needed.

1

- **Assess:** analyze the current local context, gaps, challenges
- **Prioritize:** map stakeholders and human/resources capacity and identify priorities
- **Localize:** tailor the Guidelines to fit local priorities

2

- **Collaboration and engagement:** foster collaboration among government officials, communities, and relevant stakeholders
- **Build capacity:** develop measures to fill the skills gap for smart city development and build capacity of public officials

The Guidelines – UN-Habitat role

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES

- Enhance knowledge, skills, and implementation capabilities

METHODOLOGIES AND APPROACHES

- Facilitating diagnostics to evaluate cities and countries' readiness to adopt the principles of the guidelines.
- People-Centred Smart Cities Impact assessments to review the societal, environmental, and economic impacts of digital technologies and related policies.

SCALABILITY AND REPLICATION

- Partnerships to apply the principles and enablers of these guidelines also to promote scalability and replication of successful models.

GLOBAL ADVOCACY

- Global advocacy and mobilization through networks of cities, countries, and partners committed to advancing the guidelines.

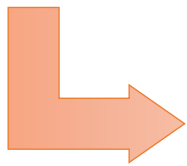
Way forward

Next steps

February

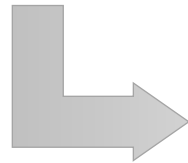
- **10th February:** draft guidelines dispatched to PMs
- **17th February:** 1st in-person consultation at PBA
- **24th February:** 2nd in-person consultation at PBA
- **26th February:** deadline for MS to share written comments to Secretariat

*Consultation on the **draft guidelines***



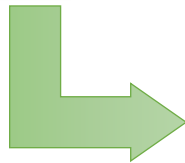
March

- **5th March:** 3rd in-person consultation (if needed) at PBA
- **6th March:** guidelines submitted to UNON for translation
- **25-27 March:** Update at the EB on the Res 2/1 implementation



April

- **April/May:** OECPR informal consultations on a draft resolution



May

- **26-28 May:** OECPR negotiations on a draft resolution
- **29th May:** UNHA2 COW negotiation (if needed)
- **30th May:** UNHA2 adoption

*Consultation on the **draft resolution***

Expert Testimonials



Mr. Juraj Hošťák

Director General MIRDl and nominated expert of the EEG and WEOG consultation

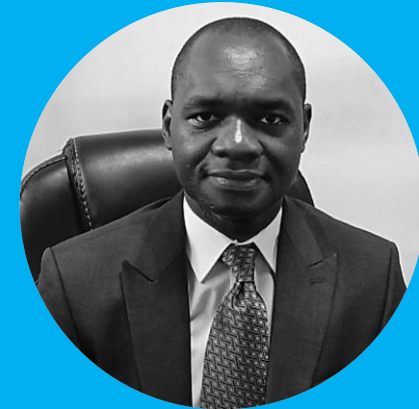
Slovak Republic



Ms. Rini Rachmawati

Professor in Urban Geography at Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) and Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Social Studies

Indonesia



Mr. François Ossama

Second Technical Advisor to the Minister of Housing and Urban Development and nominated expert of the Expert Working Group

Cameroon

Questions and answers



Feedback session on the guidelines



Thank you!



For more information on the international guidelines on people-centred smart cities, contact us via: ig-pcsc@un.org

Innovation Section, UN-Habitat

