World Urban Campaign
UN Steering Group
Terms of Reference

Background
On 27-28 April 2016, the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) endorsed a paper entitled *Urbanization and Sustainable Development: A United Nations System Input to a New Urban Agenda* prepared by a working group of the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP).

The paper addresses the challenges facing today’s urbanization patterns and the opportunities that urbanization offers. It presents, for consideration by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), ten guiding principles and ten key levers of transformative change towards sustainable urbanization as a United Nations system input to a ‘New Urban Agenda’, the expected outcome document of Habitat III.

The paper also proposes a multi-stakeholder partnership for the implementation of a ‘New Urban Agenda’ in order to promote the integration of the environmental, social and economic objectives of sustainability, which have many inter-linkages. Integration requires not only a shared vision of sustainable urbanization among the different UN system organizations, but also partnership in the implementation of that vision.

In response to a directive of the HLCP to pilot issue-based platforms and coalitions within the ongoing efforts on forging a common vision of urbanization and its contribution to sustainable development, it was suggested to use the World Urban Campaign (WUC) as an implementation platform for multi-stakeholder engagement in support of actions to achieve Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals and the expected outcome of Habitat III – a New Urban Agenda.

The paper states that given its history and impact so far, the WUC constitutes a sound basis for a broader multi-stakeholders partnership and to become the host platform for UN agencies to interact with non-State actors through policy dialogue and joint advocacy. The purpose would be to define and launch issue-based initiatives and concrete alliances between UN agencies and non-State actors. Also, for the current group of WUC partners, the introduction of UN entities would bring a new legitimacy to the platform conferring a higher level of credibility as a global hub on urbanization.

For UN entities to ensure a relevant, concrete and catalytic role in the WUC, it is suggested that a UN WUC Steering Group be established to define the policies, actions and initiatives of UN entities jointly. It was also suggested that the UN WUC Steering Group be represented through a seat in the WUC Standing Committee.

The World Urban Campaign is currently governed by a Steering Committee described as the catalyzing, action-planning and monitoring organ of the World Urban Campaign. Its members are the

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1 See Appendix I
WUC Lead partners. The Standing Committee of the Steering Committee is a committee comprising representatives of the 15 constituent groups. The WUC Secretariat is located within UN-HABITAT.

Article 1: Purpose
1. The purpose of the UN Steering Group of the WUC is to coordinate the implementation of the ‘New Urban Agenda’ amongst United Nations agencies, in coordination with non-governmental stakeholders engaged in the World Urban Campaign, through joined knowledge sharing, policy dialogue and advocacy activities at the global level and country level within National Urban Campaigns.

Article 2: Definition
2. The UN Steering Group (UN-SG) is the designated advisory and coordination organ of the World Urban Campaign for United Nations entities and programmes.

Article 3: Partners
3. The UN-SG Partners are UN entities with activities addressing urbanization issues, compatible with the goal of the World Urban Campaign and committed to the New Urban Agenda.
4. Partners of the UN-SG can be:
   ● Lead UN Partners of the WUC having signed an MOU with UN-Habitat, with a voting role in the Steering Committee
   ● Associate UN Partners of the WUC having signed a Statement of Commitment to the World Urban Campaign, with an observer role in the Steering Committee
5. Applications for membership will be reviewed by the WUC Secretariat prior to being circulated to all members of the UN-SG for approval. In principle, acceptance or rejection is based on consensus. Failing consensus, a two-thirds majority vote is required to accept or reject such a proposal.
6. Each partner of the UN Steering Group will report annually on their activities to the Steering Committee before the 31st of August.

Article 4: Secretariat
7. The WUC Secretariat acts as the Secretariat to the UN-SG. The WUC Secretariat is located within and coordinated by UN-Habitat.

Article 5: Roles
8. The UN-SG interacts with the other organs of the WUC as follows:
   ● The UN-SG Chair seats in the WUC Standing Committee to represent UN agencies and programmes next to the 15 constituent groups of non-State actors of the Committee; It has one vote as the other 15 constituent groups;
   ● Each UN agencies and programmes of the WUC can seat in the WUC Steering Committee, with a vote when having a status of Lead Partner, as an observer as Associate Partner;

Article 6: UN-SC Chair
9. The UN-SG is chaired by one of the UN partner of the UN-SG, elected for two years, at the time of the WUC Steering Committee election. It has a co-Chair, elected for the same period. UN-Habitat will chair for the first two years. The Chair and co-Chair cannot serve for more than one term.
Article 7: Working groups
10. Working groups may be constituted by the UN-SG to address the specific needs of the group.

Article 8: Meetings
11. The UN-SG meets statutorily once a year, in conjunction with the Steering Committee meeting. Virtual meetings are organized at least twice a year.
12. Extra-ordinary meetings can be convened by a two-thirds majority vote by partners having attended the previous UN-SG meeting. Extra-ordinary meetings will be held, in principle, on the occasion of a major conference, inter-governmental meeting or other event to which several partners intend to participate and represent a substantive interest for the partners.

Article 9: Agenda of meetings
13. The Agenda of the UN-SG meetings will be proposed by the WUC Secretariat in consultation with the Chair and co-Chair for its approval 4 weeks before the scheduled date of the meeting.
14. Members of the UN-SG are committed to participate actively in the formulation of the draft agenda and have the responsibility of approving the draft agenda 15 working days prior to the meeting for dissemination to all partners 10 days prior to the meeting.
15. The Agenda, to be adopted electronically before the start of each meeting, will comprise, in principle, the following items: (a) Report of the Secretariat, including status of partners; (b) Situation analysis and recommendations by the Secretariat; (c) Situation analysis and recommendations by partners; (d) Discussions in plenary; (e) Working groups to turn recommendations into actions; (f) Report of working groups; (g) Adoption of the report and action plan; (h) Other matters.

Article 10: Working documents for the UN-SG
16. The Secretariat distributes a Secretariat report 3 weeks prior to the meeting.
17. Reports of sub-committees should also be prepared and submitted to all partners attending the UN-SG meeting 10 working days before the meeting.
18. Each partner prepares and submits an activities report, not exceeding three (3) pages to the Secretariat 15 days prior to a meeting to be circulated to all partners attending the UN-SG meeting 10 working days prior to the meeting. These reports are sent to all partners electronically by the Secretariat.
Appendix I

Paper: Urbanization and Sustainable Development: A United Nations System Input to a New Urban Agenda
Endorsed by: Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB)
Prepared by: Working Group of the High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP)

High Level Committee on Programmes: Twenty-Ninth Session

Agenda Item 1: Urbanization and Sustainable Development

Urbanization and Sustainable Development: A United Nations System Input to a New Urban Agenda

Executive Summary
This paper addresses the challenges facing today's urbanization patterns and the opportunities that urbanization offers. It presents, for consideration by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), ten guiding principles and ten key levers of transformative change towards sustainable urbanization as a United Nations system input to a 'New Urban Agenda', the expected outcome document of Habitat III. It also proposes a multi-stakeholder partnership for the implementation of a 'New Urban Agenda'.

Urbanization is one of the most important global trends of the 21st century. It is a transformative force that can be harnessed to enhance economic growth, productivity and development in general, including wealth and state-building. However, today's most common urbanization patterns are not sustainable environmentally, socially, politically and economically. They present a number of challenges to ensuring equitable access to urban basic services, including water, sanitation, health, education, and social services as envisioned in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The many opportunities of urbanization today could be the basis for harnessing its transformative force and activating a pattern of urban growth that could positively impact other spheres of national development. Ten guiding principles could steer the vision of such a new urban agenda and induce transformative change:

(a) Promoting a new urbanization vision that is universal and adaptable to different national circumstances and that is based on the key urbanization challenges and opportunities shared by all countries.

(b) Promoting a new urbanization vision with mechanisms and procedures that respect, protect and promote human rights and social justice.

(c) Promoting equitable urban development and inclusive urban growth, which entails bringing equality and non-discrimination considerations, including gender equality, to the centre of urban development.

(d) Promoting integration in the implementation of a new urbanization vision in order to address the environmental, social and economic objectives of sustainability, which have many inter-linkages, including rural-urban linkages that need to be addressed in a balanced and equitable way, as well as the concerns of different levels of government.

(e) Promoting the empowerment of civil society, meaningful participation and consultation in decision-making processes, expanding democratic participation and reinforcing multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaboration.

(f) Promoting green cities and environmental sustainability, which involves establishing a critical connection between science, environment, industry, economic growth, resource use, urban planning and governance.

(g) Promoting urban metabolism as a cornerstone of urban planning and management and a fundamental aspect of urban resilience.

(h) Promoting solutions that work for fragile cities to reduce the vulnerability and enhance the resilience of...
urban populations in fragile cities most at risk to multiple and interlocking natural and human-made crises.

(i) Promoting innovations that facilitate learning and the sharing of knowledge, which entails the creation of supportive learning, science, technology and innovation policies as well as development of capacities.

(j) Promoting a global data revolution for effective, results-based, implementation and monitoring of the New Urban Agenda at the local, national and global levels.

The proposed New Urban Agenda should represent a paradigm shift towards a new vision of urbanization that can better respond to the challenges of our age. Ten key levers of change, adaptable to different circumstances, may be considered. The first five levers deal with the strategic conditions for sustainable urban development. Of the other five, three address the needs of urban households (the deliverables of successful urbanization), while two are about other fundamental requirements.

1. Developing and implementing national urban policies: This lever amalgamates the dispersed energy and potential of urban centres within a national system of cities and towns. It helps to establish the role and responsibilities of cities and towns in national development, including rural development, to coordinate the work of different sectors and tiers of government, to establish the incentives for more sustainable practices, and to allocate resources accordingly.

2. Strengthening urban legislation and systems of governance: Laws, institutions and systems of governance in line with states international obligations and bound by human rights and the rule of law shape the operational principles as well as the stability of organizational structures and institutional and social relationships that underpin the process of urbanization, including guarding against corruption.

3. Harnessing the urban economy, creating employment opportunities and improving existing working conditions for all: Many urban areas and regions require economic regeneration, cluster development and industrial zone strategies; productivity plans, employment generation and income-growth programmes; as well as sustainable transport.

4. Strengthening municipal finance: This lever is about realigning fiscal authority, responsibility and revenue sharing, i.e. achieving the right balance between different levels of government; improving systems of revenue collection; designing new financial mechanisms; and improving budget management and transparency.

5. Reinvigorating territorial planning and urban design: New planning methods and systems can contribute to changing the city’s structure, form and functionality towards more compact, integrated and connected and sustainable solutions, such as densification, social diversity and mixed land uses, climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable use of natural resources, and adequate public spaces, including vibrant streets.

6. Promoting universal and equitable access to quality and affordable basic services: A new urban development vision supporting the SDGs will promote universal and equitable access to quality and affordable health and education services, clean water and sanitation, sustainable energy and transport and nutritious food, as well as basic income security, and socio-economic safety nets and other social services, especially for people living in poverty, including those living in rural areas close to cities and towns, i.e. in urban-rural regions.

7. Promoting adequate housing for all income categories of urban residents: This requires access to land for different social groups; prioritizing sustainable, energy efficient housing for the most in need; effective land-use plans; adequate legal and institutional frameworks; sustainable building technologies; predictable financial mechanisms for affordable housing; and recognition of housing as a place of work. Housing can contribute to the realization of human rights and to growth through backward and forward linkages.

8. Strengthening gender equality and women’s empowerment: National and local governments are encouraged to develop their capacity to integrate a gender perspective into all their urban policies and programmes so as to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and to improve the welfare and rights of all women and girls.
9. **Placing culture at the heart of sustainable urban development**: Integrating culture in urban development policies will contribute to efficient management of urban change. Leveraging creativity and cultural diversity will foster social cohesion and promote job opportunities in culture and tourism related activities. Strengthening the understanding of the socio-cultural context of urban spaces will also enhance their liveability and contribute to urban regeneration.

10. **Promoting resource efficiency and circular economy at city level**: More efficient delivery of urban services, including management of resources flowing to, from, and within cities can contribute to more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

The proposed guiding principles, levers of transformative change and multi-stakeholder partnership could be the basis of a UN system-wide approach to the implementation of the cities and human settlements dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Goal 11, and the outcome of Habitat III. They could also constitute a framework for cooperation and showcasing of UN work on urban issues in a way that demonstrates UN policy coherence in the area of sustainable urbanization.

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I – **Introduction**

1. This paper addresses the challenges facing today's urbanization patterns and the opportunities that urbanization offers. On the basis of these, it presents, for consideration by the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), ten guiding principles and ten key levers of transformative change towards sustainable urbanization that could constitute a UN system input to the 'New Urban Agenda', the expected outcome document of Habitat III. It also proposes a multi-stakeholder partnership for the implementation of a 'New Urban Agenda'.

2. It is important to state, at the outset, that the proposals contained in this paper do not seek to establish a blueprint. Instead, the proposals constitute a new vision and general principles of sustainable urbanization (guiding principles and levers of transformative change) that need to be contextualized and adapted to different settings.

II – **Urbanization can drive economic growth and development, yet the prevailing urbanization patterns are not sustainable**

3. **At the beginning of the 19th century, only 2 per cent of the world’s population was urban.** By the beginning of the 20th century, the percentage had increased to 10. During the first decade of the 21st century, a historic milestone was reached when the population living in cities and towns exceeded 50 per cent of the global population, thus making urban centres the dominant habitat of humankind. Urbanization continues to increase, with 60 per cent of the world’s population expected to live in cities by 2030 and nearly 70 per cent by 2050 (see Table 1). Most of this growth, at least 90 per cent, will take place in low-income countries, some of which are currently fragile states plagued with recurrent conflicts.

Box 1. Urbanization and socio-economic transformation

*Urbanization* may be defined as a process of change from rural to urban ways of living, in physical-spatial, social and economic terms. It is the process by which towns and cities are formed and increase in number and size as more and more people begin living and working in central areas defined as ‘urban’. The word ‘urban’ is defined differently from country to country, but the criteria used for such definitions are usually population size, population density, and proportion of population in non-agricultural occupations, with clear thresholds being given for each criterion.

The process of urbanization is associated with fundamental demographic, economic and social transformations. Demographically, urbanization is a result of three processes: rural-to-urban migration; growth of the internal population of towns and cities; and official reclassification of ‘rural’ settlements to ‘urban’. In physical-spatial terms, urbanization is the emergence and multiplication of comparatively large, dense and permanent agglomerations. Economically, urbanization involves the geographical or spatial concentration of non-agricultural productive activities such as industrial production/manufacturing and services, facilitated by agglomeration economies. Socially, and
behaviourally, urbanization entails significant changes in ways of living, including from customary (or traditional) to bureaucratic ways of socio-political organization. Whereas urbanization offers many positive impacts for health, education, water and sanitation, urban settings also create or accentuate risk factors for health (such as for chronic diseases, spread of infectious diseases). It was, in fact, the outbreak of waterborne infectious diseases that directly led to the emergence of urban planning in 19th century Europe.

Urbanization is thus related to more intensive production and consumption patterns, as well as levels and rates of socio-economic activities, growth and development. Furthermore, it refers to cognitive processes; the changing of mindsets in ways that profoundly influence social development and innovation. The transformative force of urbanization is driven by these physical-spatial, social, behavioural, political and economic changes. Its potential strength is related to both the level and rate of urbanization in this wider context.

4. The rapidly increasing dominance of urban areas places the process of urbanization among the most significant global trends of the 21st century. But urbanization is not simply a demographic or spatial phenomenon. Rather, it is a force which, if effectively steered and deployed, offers opportunities for more sustainable growth and wellbeing of populations. In urban areas, there are co-benefits brought about by many factors, including economies of agglomeration and of scale. Urbanization can help the world to overcome some of the major global challenges, including poverty, inequality, poor health, environmental degradation, climate change, fragility and conflict, to name just a few.

Table 1. Global urban population distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Urban population</th>
<th>Proportion of total population</th>
<th>Urban population rate of change (% change per year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Total</td>
<td>3486</td>
<td>4176</td>
<td>4900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed countries</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>1037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other developed countries</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing countries</td>
<td>2556</td>
<td>3198</td>
<td>3963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Africa</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia/Pacific</td>
<td>1675</td>
<td>2086</td>
<td>2517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Asia/Pacific</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>1021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least Developed Countries</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other developed countries</td>
<td>2307</td>
<td>2822</td>
<td>3344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Evidence shows that very few countries have ever achieved sustained economic growth, rapid social development and gender equality without urbanizing. The transition from low- to middle-income country status is almost always accompanied by a transition from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban economy, a process often based on accumulation from the primary sector. Urbanization is a force that has changed ways of thinking and acting, ways of using space, lifestyles, governing and solving

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disputes, social and economic relations, and consumption and production patterns. It has been a driving force behind profound social, cultural and political change, including state-building, although inequalities remain a substantial barrier to development in many cities, especially within developing countries (see Box 1). In many societies, urbanization has been the locus of much of their creativity and inventive spirit, and the bulk of their economic activity. It is estimated that urban areas account for about 70 per cent of the world’s gross domestic product and a similar percentage of new job creation. Thus, urbanization has generated economic growth and prosperity, as well as the demand for inclusion and protection for many, including in post-conflict and transition contexts. In short, urbanization can be a powerful driver of development. Moreover, when health, education and other social services are managed well in urban settings, inequalities are addressed, and coordination with urban planning is maximized, the potential to achieve other development outcomes is great. This was recognised by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and later integrated into the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals as a stand-alone goal, i.e. goal 11, on cities and human settlements: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.

6. However, urbanization has generally followed a pattern that is unsustainable:
   a. **Environmentally**, with its combination of fossil fuel use and heavy dependence on the motor car; more intensive production and consumption patterns; extensive urban peripheries that often consume inordinate amounts of land, resources, and in many cases protected natural areas (largely steered by private, not public interest); and with increasing impacts of natural disasters and outbreaks of communicable diseases. Extensive urban sprawl in different cities of the world is causing environmental degradation and the depletion of natural resources, including the availability of arable land, thereby increasing per capita rates of resource use and greenhouse gas emissions as well as air pollution, leading to significant premature deaths and other impacts on health;

   b. **Socially**, with exclusive forms of urban development that add to unequally distributed income and wealth generation, discrimination in law and in practice, as well as spatial inequalities, creating divided cities in the form of wealthy gated communities that are in sharp contrast to slums or poor areas with little or no access to basic municipal services. Different forms of poverty and marginalization and the increase of income inequality are exacerbated by speculative land and housing markets. Growing difficulties in integrating migrants and other groups of urban dwellers and in sharing the human, social, cultural and intellectual assets that urban centres offer create racially, ethnically and/or socially fragmented areas. Insensitive planning and lack of accessibility of urban infrastructure, facilities and public services contributes to barriers that prevent groups such as the poor, women, persons with disabilities and older persons from participation as both agents and beneficiaries of urban development. Silo approaches to urban challenges have led to inefficient urban laws, policies and programmes. The contribution and the opinions of urban dwellers, especially people living in informal settlements, minorities or homeless people, are, in many circumstances, not considered in urban processes;

   c. **Politically**, with the continuing domination of traditional modes of representation and leadership which tend to concentrate power in the hands of the economic and social elites and to disenfranchise large sections of the urban population that cannot access the formal political system – a process not limited to urban areas only. If cities are also where new forms of social organisation and civic participation mostly thrive, these are often not able to challenge the existing power structure within the formal structures of grievance management – when they do not reinforce it instead – and as a result, cities remain prone to tensions between groups for the control of power, money and identity that more and more often degenerate into outright conflict and violence. The rights to information and meaningful participation are, in many countries, generally absent from urban decision-making processes; and

   d. **Economically**, with the incessant increase in the cost of living which is prohibitive for many, forcing them to move to distant peripheries far removed from places of employment, further increasing their expenditure on transport, thereby limiting the urban advantage. Widespread under- and unemployment and different forms of unstable and low-paid jobs, informal income-generating activities and improper working conditions create additional economic restrictions, unequal access to basic services and amenities, and poor quality of life for many. 7. Despite the fact that urbanization has the potential to
make towns, cities and city regions more prosperous and countries more advanced, many urban centres, both in the developing and the developed world, have found themselves unprepared in the face of current spatial, demographic, social, political and environmental challenges.

III – The challenges associated with development are exacerbated by poorly planned and managed urbanization

8. Urbanization, and particularly the city, historically has been associated with intrinsic attributes that generate positive dynamics for development and change. However, poor planning, discrimination, the absence of effective governance and legal frameworks, fragile institutions, low capacity of local authorities to finance, operate and deliver essential physical social infrastructure and services, weak coordination mechanisms of different levels of government and across different sectors, as well as of rural-urban linkages, among other factors, have intensified the challenges associated with urbanization. Today the most pressing challenges include:

a. Large scale urban poverty in many countries: While poverty has fallen dramatically at the global level, urban poverty and inequality are growing challenges in many countries. The lack of an agreed definition of urban poverty and the inconsistency of official data make it difficult to assess precisely the current extent of urban poverty worldwide; yet, studies at country level show that urban poverty is becoming more prevalent in many countries, partly because the expected improvement in quality of life has failed to materialize for many rural to urban as well as international migrants. Urban poverty is characterized by low incomes, low levels of access to housing, water, sanitation, education and health services, as well as hunger and malnutrition. Although hunger and malnutrition are often framed as rural problems, and urban poverty levels in the developing world are, on average, lower than rural levels, urban food insecurity is a growing issue. Urban food prices are usually higher than those in rural areas and urban dwellers have often only limited access to social protection systems such as safety nets. Urban livelihoods are highly dependent upon monetary income, and therefore upon regular income for their food security, making the poorest households especially vulnerable to internal and external economic factors outside their control. This is also true of energy and water, as lower-income urban households and people living in informal settlements spend a larger percentage of their income to cover their costs. Moreover, the lack of disaggregated data masks the significant differences in health outcomes between the wealthiest and poorest quintiles in urban areas.

b. The steady increase in the number of slum dwellers: In many countries, urban expansion has often been characterized by informality, illegality and unplanned settlements, especially in developing countries (see Table 2). Above all, urban growth has been strongly associated with slum growth, which is primarily due to a lack of appropriate planning and affordable housing as well as low incomes. In fact, the world’s estimated 828 million slum dwellers suffer in varying degrees from poor sanitation, inadequate access to clean water, food insecurity and malnutrition, poor health, crime, unemployment, insecure tenure and threats of eviction, overcrowding and poor quality housing. Slums are, in fact, the physical manifestation of urban poverty. Slum growth affects women, children and members of other disadvantaged social groups disproportionately, often because they experience greater difficulty in accessing resources and services tailored to their needs as well as decision-making opportunities. Continuing population growth, including migration into urban centres – caused by economic factors, natural disasters and conflicts, combined with the lack of appropriate responses and sustained solutions – is likely to increase the number of the urban poor and slum dwellers, whose shelter needs are not given adequate attention by municipal authorities, in spite of their provision of much needed labour to urban industries and high-income homes. Moreover, continued lack of access to health services, safe drinking water and sanitation further exacerbate the cycle of poverty;
### Table 2. Percentages of slum dwellers in developing regions

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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>61.7</td>
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<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>24.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>31.9</td>
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<td>Western Asia</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>25.2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### c. Concentration of multiple forms of poverty, vulnerability and marginalization in cities:
In addition to income poverty, there is an emerging concentration of overlapping forms of social exclusion and marginalization within some pockets in developed country cities: infrastructure-poor, immigrant poverty, young people at risk, vulnerable women headed households, and vulnerable elderly, among others. Many of these forms of poverty and marginalization stem from unemployment and under-employment, the decline of economic bases in decaying cities, low incomes, absence of traditional safety nets and lack of or weak social security systems, all of which are often physically manifested in segregated urban neighbourhoods, including those in which international migrants are concentrated, a phenomenon that is present in many cities in both the global south and the global north. Marginalization, along with consequent vulnerability and poverty, directly affect people living with disability, the poor and a number of other population groups, further driving inequality, as evidenced by analyses of social determinants of health. Unemployment is one of the greatest challenges facing youth globally. Today there are more young people without work than ever before. Estimates of the proportion of unemployed 15-24-year-olds are close to one-third in many regions and countries, representing one of the most pressing problems in the world’s cities and towns. In 2014, the global youth unemployment rate was 12.7%, compared with the overall unemployment rate of 5.9%. During the next 15 years, 600 million more people will join the global labour market, most of those will be urban youth in developing countries. These new entrants to the labour market will be competing with the existing 200 million unemployed and 550 million working poor; rising inequality in urban areas across the world: Inequality has become a universal concern. Differentials in access to opportunities and basic services, income, consumption, location, safety and security, information and technology, as well as gender-based and other forms of discrimination and stereotypes, are now the norm, not the exception. For the majority of the world’s population, income disparities are today bigger than they were a generation ago.

### d. Rising inequality in urban areas across the world:
Inequality has become a universal concern. Differentials in access to opportunities and basic services, income, consumption, location, safety and security, information and technology, as well as gender-based and other forms of discrimination and stereotypes, are now the norm, not the exception. For the majority of the world’s population, income disparities are today bigger than they were a generation ago. Urban income inequalities intersect with other forms of inequality in the social, political, legal (in terms of both discriminatory laws and access to justice), spatial, cultural and environmental spheres, reinforcing the deprivation faced by many groups and individuals based on gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, location, disability and other factors. Moreover, inequality is an important risk factor for crime and victimization. Meanwhile, many people’s aspirations have risen due to greater access to information, resulting in social dissatisfaction and malaise.

### e. Decreasing levels of human security and inequitable health gaps in cities:
Poverty, social deprivation, poor access to health, education and other social services, inadequate housing and crowded living conditions, increasing food and nutrition insecurity, problems with water safety and availability, inadequate sanitation and solid waste disposal services, air pollution, traffic congestion, road safety, criminal violence, epidemics of both communicable and non-communicable diseases, as well as occupational health problems and accidents at work, are some of the factors associated with human insecurity in general and ill-health in particular that affect the population of many cities in the world.

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3 Source: UN-Habitat, Global Urban Indicators Database, 2012.
today. The close proximity of people living in the environmentally poor conditions typical of many cities – especially in informal slum areas with insufficient access to health services – increases the risk of and vulnerability to maternal mortality, infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) and vaccine-preventable diseases. The rates of HIV and TB infection are typically higher, and many health indicators are significantly worse in the poorest communities in urban areas as compared to those with higher-incomes. This is a result of extreme poverty, overcrowding, lack of housing, unaffordable or inaccessible health services and education, increased vulnerability and physical insecurity, stigma and discrimination, as well as separated families. For example, in all regions of the world, cities and other urban settlements bear a large and increasing share of the global HIV burden (see Figure 1). In sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that almost half (45%) of people living with HIV in 2014 were residing in urban areas. 

Differentials in income quintiles affect many aspects of health outcomes: less life expectancy as well as deaths from water borne and non-communicable diseases. Marginalized communities are often hindered from offering the levels of education, health and social protection services that are required for the healthy and safe development of children. In addition, substance use disorders often erode further the already limited human and social capital of individuals and their families in such communities. These inequitable health gaps are growing despite unprecedented levels of global wealth, knowledge and health awareness.

Increased pressure on health care systems and basic services that often do not keep up with increasing demand and do not respond to changing demographic and epidemiological transitions are part of the problem;

f. The speculative nature of housing and related markets: Housing plays a fundamental role in national economic development, having a multiplier effect on employment, income generation, investments and savings. However, a massive rise of subprime mortgage lending in the USA, partly driven by speculative behaviour and inadequate regulation of credit and financial markets, led to a sudden increase in defaults and collapse of several financial institutions, triggering the financial crisis that started in 2008 and spread globally through the contagion effect made possible by interconnected financial markets. Millions of people in a number of countries, mostly developed, faced foreclosure while at the same time millions of houses were left abandoned, underutilized or vacant. Speculative behaviour in land, housing and financial markets in many countries has contributed to the endless expansion of cities, gentrification, rampant land sub-divisions, poor street and infrastructure connectivity and unsustainable consumption of land, resources and energy. Even more, decades of neglect of public housing, state intervention and the failure of the private market to produce an adequate number of affordable homes for all parts of the population has resulted in the polarization of cities, weakening of social cohesion and further inequalities.

Policy perspectives have often considered housing, land, water and sanitation (alongside health, education or justice) as mere commodities, instead of recognizing their social functions;

Figure 1. Urbanization and HIV
World map of 200 cities with the greatest estimated number of people living with HIV, 2013
g. Women face discrimination in the context of urbanization, poverty and violence: On the one hand, women living below the poverty line, especially those living in slums, tend to concentrate in the low-wage, low-skilled and often home-based jobs in the informal sector, and non-core jobs. Moreover, women in poor communities do not enjoy the same rights to infrastructure and adequate housing. On the other hand, urban women living in poverty experience a higher degree of insecurity and vulnerability to violence as they are more likely than women from higher income groups to become victims of violence, including sexual violence, both in the public space, including the workplace, and within the household, and they are more vulnerable to human trafficking;

h. Pressure for more infrastructure with associated non-efficient resource use: In developing countries - where the second urbanisation wave is well under way - cities are facing the need to invest on a massive scale in new urban infrastructure to meet the rapidly growing needs of expanding urban populations and economies. It is estimated that 60% of the built infrastructure required to meet the needs of the world’s urban population by 2050 still needs to be constructed. That infrastructure should, first and foremost, serve the people living in cities; and, furthermore, the only way that infrastructure could be developed is by the active participation of markets and the private sector. A very dynamic system is therefore emerging in which the characteristics of cities are affecting and are getting affected by individual, institutional and corporate decisions and choices. While the decisions of institutions are emerging through policies, the decisions and choices of individuals are emerging through lifestyles and the decisions of corporations through market behaviour. A new urban agenda should recognize this complexity and offer a framework of solution-driven approaches that could bring together all these actors, their processes and the impacts of individual and institutional decision making.

i. High costs to the natural environment: Increasing urbanization, often over the most productive agricultural land, produces particular environmental challenges associated with intensive land uses, higher resource and energy consumption, and rising difficulties in ensuring efficient and sustainable food systems as well as flows of goods and people. Although urban areas are now home to about half the world’s population, they occupy only 2.8% of the world’s land area. When cities are not well planned and managed, environmental health hazards increase, ecosystems are disrupted or damaged, air and water pollution aggravated and natural resources depleted. While the concentration of people and economic activities creates localized pressure on the environment, it can also help reduce others, as will be seen later under the part on opportunities offered by urbanization;

j. The urban risks of climate change and natural hazards: As the world becomes predominantly urban, the international debate on climate change is intensifying, and this is not coincidental. It is now widely accepted that urbanization brings about fundamental changes in production and consumption patterns, which when associated with a dysfunctional urban form and structure of cities, contribute to higher levels of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. (see Figure 2) Cities are both victims of and contributors to climate change. It is estimated that cities currently contribute between 37 and 49 per cent of the world’s total greenhouse gas emissions and it is projected that, by 2050, cities will be responsible for more than 70 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Cities account for much of the air pollution burden, which WHO estimates causes seven million premature deaths per year. There is, therefore, an urgent need to promote low carbon development and efforts to decarbonize specific sectors of economic activity at the city level. Also, coastal cities are increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather events resulting from climate change. In the coming decades, climate induced extreme events are expected to increase manifold. The World Bank projects that, in cities in developing countries, the number of people exposed to cyclone and earthquake risks will more than double between 2000 and 2050. The increased density of urban populations is also a key risk factor for increased transmission and worsening impact of communicable disease outbreaks, such as the Ebola virus in West Africa and influenza epidemics across the world. Human life and economic losses in urban areas caused by climate change induced and other natural disasters are a result of the high concentration of population and economic activities, as well as of the high levels of vulnerability of the poor, whose residential areas are frequently located on hazardous land, such as industrial waste sites, floodplains, riverbanks and steep slopes. This in turn is exacerbated by poor urban planning and disaster prevention measures as well as inadequate infrastructure;

k. Displacement and marginalisation: Conflicts, forced evictions and land grabbing and, to an extent, natural disasters are displacing growing numbers of people, both those who are internally displaced...
(IDPs) as well as refugees, into urban areas. Over sixty per cent of refugees, the majority of whom are women and children under 18 years old, for example, now live in towns and cities as opposed to in camps. 

IDPs and refugees in urban areas encounter many of the same challenges as the local urban poor, with difficulties in accessing the services and opportunities needed to meet their basic food security, nutrition, housing, education and other rights. Large influxes of IDPs and refugees into already congested urban areas also raise serious protection concerns and pose significant challenges to the stability of food systems in affected areas. The sizable displacements into urban areas combined with the mobile nature of urban IDP and refugee populations can create tensions with host communities, which are sometimes ignited or worsened by political discourses. Refugees face additional challenges due to their refugee status. In many countries, there is no legal framework for safeguarding the rights of refugees living outside of camps in urban settings, and the institutional arrangements in towns and cities that are needed in order to provide for their basic needs are often inadequate. Furthermore, the dependence upon regular income for food purchase in contexts where refugees are often not permitted to legally work leaves them especially vulnerable to food insecurity as well as harassment, intimidation and discrimination. Yet refugees contribute to the social, economic and cultural fabric of their host communities. They should really be seen as rights-holders, contributors and partners in the development of cities. Refugees can become key players in city development, growth, resilience and sustainability as bridges between country of asylum and origin, with skills and resources and acting as transnational traders, business partners and investors. Displacement in cities is also caused by forced evictions and gentrification, leading to further ghettoization of the most vulnerable.

I. Cities are becoming a terrain for violent conflict and crises: More than 1.5 billion people live in countries affected by state fragility and violent conflict. *Fragile states often have the highest rates of urbanization, partly due to the massive population movements from rural to urban centres caused by conflicts. They often experience extraordinary pressures on urban basic services and infrastructure, including housing, food security and nutrition, water and sanitation, as well as health and educational facilities, while lacking the necessary institutional capacity to respond to the demands. They also experience immense pressure to generate jobs and other forms of livelihood. In addition, they are unable to deal with the grievances and conflicts that arise from the lack of services and livelihoods. Many cities are failing to manage the socio-cultural heterogeneity within their populations, nor are they promoting social cohesion in any appreciable ways. Cities that were previously socially and culturally mixed evolve into highly divided urban spaces after conflict, at all levels, making effective urban governance even more difficult to achieve. The demand for services from informal settlements also causes the privatisation of services that the state is unable to deliver and can cause further tensions. In addition, the visibly increasing inequalities in income, wealth and access to services and opportunities in urban centres, and the absence of alternative means of securing livelihoods, all create the kinds of tension that can easily result in violent conflict, including over access to resources. In some cities, the use of urban renewal programmes by public authorities as justification for demolishing informal housing and businesses and shutting down of urban spaces where people can express their opinion and exercise their rights to free speech has often resulted in violent conflict between communities and authorities. Moreover, the largely informal character of urban growth in these countries and cities erodes the legitimacy of the state, creating along with other factors an environment prone to crime and other types of violent conflict not related to conflict. Together, these factors give rise to a new understanding of fragility, where risks and vulnerabilities are concentrated at the city level;* 

m. Cities are generating unprecedented levels of multi-layered crime and violence. Violence can take a multitude of forms in urban environments, including armed violence, extortions, robberies, drug and human trafficking, sexual or gender-based and domestic violence, and the criminal depredation of urban spaces and infrastructure, among other forms of violence. It is perpetrated by numerous actors, including gangs, organized criminal groups, armed individuals and militias, as well as state security and law enforcement agencies. Urban violence has become a major impediment to economic growth and has catastrophic social consequences. Urban violence is also deeply gendered: across all societies, young males are the most common perpetrators, as well as victims, of urban violence; yet, the proportion of women suffering from urban violence as direct victims keeps increasing. Crime and violence affect overwhelmingly the most deprived urban communities, where city governments and law enforcement
agencies have often abandoned their public security role, while richer sections of society resort to private security provision, often operating outside of legally-defined boundaries xxxii, and

n. Rapid urban development is generating corruption: In recent decades, corruption arising from rapid urban development has increased, xxxiv "Corruption is the abuse of power for private gain"xxxv or "...the misuse of entrusted power (by heritage, education, marriage, election, appointment or whatever else) for private gain"xxxvi, and applies to both the public and private sectors. The UN Convention Against Corruption xxxvi contains no general definition of corruption, but rather, a list of wrongful acts to be criminalized under the national legislation of state-parties. These include: bribery of national public officials (Article 15); bribery of foreign public officials and officials of public international organizations (Article 16); embezzlement, misappropriation or other diversion of property by a public official (Article 17); trading in influence (Article 18); abuse of functions (Article 19); illicit enrichment (Article 20); bribery in the private sector (Article 21); embezzlement of property in the private sector (Article 22); laundering of proceeds of crime (Article 23); and obstruction of justice (Article 25). Corruption in urban development is a result of inadequate governance systems. It often manifests itself in the manipulation of public sector procurement systems in major infrastructure projects, thus diverting resources from wider social development for the benefit of those engaged in kick-back payments, bribes and other illicit practices. This often results in lower quality of infrastructure projects, paid for at a higher price, amidst ineffective or even in the absence of monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Urban-based corruption is sometimes in the form of theft or grabbing of public land. Thus corruption results in the denial of the basic rights of ordinary urban residents, including access to land and housing. Bribes are sometimes paid in order to evade urban planning and design standards as well as building regulations, resulting in ill-planned and hazardous urban environments. A common result of this latter practice is the collapse of multi-storey buildings, usually still under construction. Moreover, corruption is a common phenomenon when dealing with housing and land, speculation, urban renewal and forced evictions in many cases.

9. All these urban challenges are exacerbated by the inefficient form and function of many cities, and the failure to create locally appropriate legal and institutional structures to promote integrated and long-term sustainable urban planning, management and governance. Indeed, poorly planned and managed urbanization – that translates into low densities, excessive separation of land-uses, mismatch between infrastructure provision and residential concentration, and inadequate street networks, among other problems – diminishes the potential of using economies of scale and agglomeration. This causes high transaction costs, loss of opportunities in production and delivery, labour shortages, poor generation of jobs, and various other negative externalities that have adverse effects on the growth and prosperity of cities. Balanced urban and rural development is also essential to ensure positive synergies between urban centres and rural areas.

IV – The opportunities offered by urbanization go beyond urban space

10. The opportunities that exist can be used to harness the transformative force of urbanization and to activate a pattern of urban growth that can positively impact other spheres of national development. The outcome document of Rio+20, The Future We Want, recognizes that, "...if they are well planned and developed... cities can promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable societies"xxxvi. More recently, and as mentioned earlier, Member States have recognized the important role of urbanization in sustainable development through the inclusion of a stand-alone goal (goal 11) on cities and human settlements in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable urbanization offers a number of avenues for overall sustainable development as described below.
a. Cities have agglomeration benefits that reduce costs of infrastructure and socio-economic services, drive innovation, as well as enhance business development and job creation: Higher densities that characterize urban settlements combine, through agglomeration and scale economies, greater productivity and innovation with lower costs and reduced environmental impacts, to deliver the benefits of urbanization more sustainably. Well planned and managed cities are in a position to maximize these agglomeration benefits. Investment in infrastructure, including in transport, energy, water and sanitation, as well as in economic and social services such as banking, retail and marketing facilities, as well as schools and public health services, clinics or hospitals, is critical. In fact, well planned urbanization is a cost-effective means of extending infrastructure as well as social and economic services across the entire nation, thus improving the living standards, productivity and overall wellbeing of the whole population.

4 Source: UN-Habitat, 2011, op. cit., p.45
Increasingly, cities are identified as the locus for change and the venue where policies and actions are mobilized. Cities have been able to forge new linkages among actors and offer innovative solutions that have been included in national agendas with greater possibilities of influencing regional and global development. Many of the new partnerships and networks that advocate for key global issues, such as security, resource management, environmental protection, human rights and sustainability, are created in and by cities (see Annex 1);

c. Urban local governments have emerged as key institutional drivers of city/regional growth: Increasingly, their work, vision and solutions transcend local political confines and exert regional and global influence. Urban local governments today are generally more decentralized, have greater autonomy, flexibility and creativity, including in service delivery, and have stronger interdependence with national and other territorial levels of government. Representative local governments interact regularly with society in the implementation of the urban development agenda, frequently through more creative means such as the increasingly common use of e-governance solutions - a process that has contributed to bringing more balanced territorial development and roles among the public, private and non-governmental sectors and other tiers of government. With adequate infrastructure and legal frameworks in place, locally institutionalized partnerships between government, industries and other actors can lead to considerable growth and contribute to the realization of the human rights of urban inhabitants;

d. Increased contribution of cities to national economic growth: Cities presently account for 70 per cent of the world’s gross domestic product (GDP); some 55 per cent of GDP in low-income countries, 73 per cent in middle-income countries, and 85 per cent in high-income countries. In spite of the relatively weak global economic growth since the beginning of the latest financial crisis in 2008, many developing countries have witnessed high economic growth rates of over 7 per cent per year since 2010, and most of this growth is concentrated around industrial activities of towns and cities, often enhanced by increasing inputs from rural areas. At the same time, most employment opportunities are in urban and peri-urban areas, generating further potential for growth and prosperity. This can be further enhanced by improving the working conditions of the urban workers. Recent empirical evidence suggests that cities, as the main sources of industrial and high-technology employment, can, in fact, be pathways out of poverty. One of the main reasons why poverty has declined significantly in some countries, such as China, is because of urbanization (with accompanying industry-focused growth strategies) and, due to the large numbers involved, this has contributed to the overall decline of world poverty (see Annex 2);

e. Cities and have always been centres of change and innovation: The concentration of people, resources and activities in cities favours the development of creative systems, thought and action driven by education and learning, innovative milieux, knowledge-creation mechanisms, knowledge-sharing networks and new technological developments that contribute to social development and prosperity. The creative capital of cities has been a catalyst of productivity, particularly in generating local solutions, which have a major role to play in urban transformation. Innovative social and institutional arrangements can contribute to the enhancement of equity, social inclusion and gender equality; improvement of decision-making; more accountable means of carrying out service delivery; more influential civic interest groups; as well as change of the ways of doing business and of using resources. Technological innovations, especially those in the realm of information and communication technologies (ICTs), can help to change the urban space in terms of connectivity, proximity and distance, as well as to improve connectivity with both proximate and more distant rural hinterlands. Annex 3 gives an overview of the role of science, innovation and technology. Additionally, information and communication technologies (ICTs), in general, can play an important role in sustainable urbanization and in making cities “smarter” and more “sustainable”. However, it is important to note that research, innovation and entrepreneurial dynamism, including in the informal sector, must be supported by enabling science, technology and innovation policies, as well as an enabling business and investment environment, without which the creative potential of cities will not be unlocked. This requires investment in the framework conditions that allow for new thinking, welcome participation and reduce obstacles that deepen the inequality of opportunities among different groups of society. For example, entrepreneurship training can enhance the employment opportunities of urban youth (see Annex 4). Innovation boosts can also be achieved through smart industrial policies that provide spaces in urban areas such as industrial or science parks, allowing
industries to cluster, thus fostering a basis for inter-industrial knowledge exchange and technology learning. Industrial and science parks as well as special economic zones can stimulate productivity, innovation and growth of local industries, and also increase foreign direct investment and related technology exchange with globally more advanced economies. They can also drive transformative structural changes, including the bundling of public services in urban areas; provision of greater efficiency of limited government funding for infrastructure; and generation of jobs and incomes;

f. The important role of culture: Culture, as a factor of social cohesion, inclusiveness and mutual understanding as well as an economic vector, notably through cultural rights, heritage and creative industries\textsuperscript{xi} (with impact on land use, building techniques, planning, high value know-how and tourism), is increasingly recognized as an asset for the sustainable management of change in the context of development policies. Cities hold much of humanity's tangible and intangible cultural heritage and are places of extraordinary expressions of cultural diversity, including in the food industry (see Annexes 5 and 6);

g. Urban areas are increasingly connected: Cities are more and more interconnected, not only through their physical infrastructure such as transportation, power and communication facilities, but also to “distant and multiple locations through financial capital, resource flows and commodity chains”.\textsuperscript{xli} The landscape of urbanization is rapidly changing, affecting the scale, rate, location, form and function\textsuperscript{xlii} of human settlements. Cities that are better connected with each other and with the rest of the world can add to productivity growth and more effective and accessible service delivery through agglomeration effects, particularly when combined with smart industrial policies, thus opening up opportunities to enhance human well-being and prosperity. However, cities and towns must also ensure that their citizens equally benefit from agglomeration factors – that networks of roads and infrastructure reach low income settlements, that urban spaces also provide the poor with productive opportunities and that regulations allow them to be service providers as well. By being physically, socially and economically connected, the expected growth in cities can be better distributed among all stakeholders, including low-income communities;

h. Some cities are merging into new regional spatial configurations: In some parts of the world, both large and small cities are merging to create urban settlements on a massive scale. These new configurations can take the form of mega-cities, urban corridors and city-regions (see Annex 7). These forms seem to act as nodes where global and regional flows of people, capital, goods, research and science, services and information combine and commingle, resulting in faster economic and demographic growth than that of the countries where they are located. These new configurations are increasingly connected spatially and are functionally bound by their economic, socio-political and environmental linkages. They offer the possibility of reinventing mechanisms of governance, and play an increasing role in the creation and distribution of prosperity far beyond their own specific geographic areas, including in their rural hinterlands;\textsuperscript{xliv}

i. Higher interdependence between rural and urban areas: The geography of rural, urban and peri-urban space is changing. Complex interactions are taking place, influencing social and environmental transformations at the interface of rural and urban areas, including flows of people, products/goods, food, money, information environmental and other services and waste.\textsuperscript{xlv} The urban-rural linkages approach that integrates urban and rural and focuses on the rural-urban nexus, in contradistinction to a conventional view of urban versus rural, is gaining more acceptance. In this approach, cities can, with the right policy environment, stimulate growth and development in rural areas and be vehicles for job creation and poverty reduction, while at the same time rural areas are the source of ecosystem services that cities require, as well as of the food and other agricultural inputs they need for both nutrition and industrial production. The provision of strategic infrastructure, basic services and amenities in rural areas, including for smallholder farmers, and better urban-rural interconnectivity and flow of information have the potential of contributing to the creation of economic opportunities, reduction of rural communities' vulnerability, enhancing the prospects for equity and promoting regional and national sustainability;
j. Adequate housing brings an opportunity for social, economic and spatial integration: More than half of city space is composed of residential areas. Appropriate urban planning and policies and programmes geared toward the fulfillment of the right to adequate housing for all contribute to efforts by countries to comply with their international obligations. Along with appropriate urban design, housing can contribute to increasing densities and enhancing economies of agglomeration. The housing sector can improve social integration, urban safety and security and enhance quality of life when housing is affordable, built to provide adequate protection from weather elements, equipped with adequate services and amenities, and linked to proximate livelihood opportunities – all of these in the context of the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing. It can also stimulate the construction sector, generate healthy and safe jobs and promote local economic development through backward and forward linkages. Housing is not only a place for living, but often also a place of work, especially in the cities and towns of developing countries. Well-designed housing units favour spatial integration that in turn reduces land and energy consumption and diminish the cost of infrastructure provision, including public and non-motorised transport;

k. Tourism increasingly constitutes a significant component in the economy, social life and the geography of many cities: Tourism can help reduce poverty and support sustainable development in cities. It creates not only economic opportunities for local residents, but can also be an important tool for transforming the urban landscape and improving the worldwide reputation of individual cities. Tourism, if carried out in a sustainable and accountable way, is also an important means for the rejuvenation of cities through infrastructure improvements, creation of a skilled labour force, stimulation of local business entrepreneurship, attraction of other industries and services, and creation of local amenities and recreational facilities. The regeneration process not only builds a quality visitor experience but, if benefits are equally redistributed, also safeguards and enhances the quality of life for the local community (see Annex 8 and also Annexes 5 and 6). Within this context, urban land-use plans and management policies must give full consideration to the needs of tourism development, including the spatial distribution of tourism attractions, promotion of accessibility of tourist destinations and the conservation of natural and cultural heritage;

l. New comprehensive human rights-based approach to urbanization: Human rights are advancing in cities, including with regards to adequate housing, tenure security and water and sanitation. The respect for all human rights and the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food, the right to safe drinking water and sanitation, the responsible governance of tenure, gender equality and women's empowerment, the rule of law, and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies for development was reaffirmed in the outcome document of Rio + 20. Likewise, key documents drafted as inputs to the post-2015 development agenda stress that new goals and targets “need to be grounded in respect for universal human rights” and based “on the values of equity, solidarity and human rights.” A human rights-based approach to urbanization and the progressive realization of human rights in the city is also gaining more traction in many cities and countries. A significant challenge to the full enjoyment of human rights in urban areas is the rise of racism and discrimination. Multiple forms of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance have emerged in cities, leading to the marginalization, exclusion and exploitation of groups and individuals. The increasingly important role played by city authorities in combating discrimination, through their proximity to populations, their autonomy, networks and resources, is crucial to the development of effective solutions. Collaboration and exchange between cities through initiatives such as the International Coalition of Cities against Racism can further enhance urban action to combat discrimination.

m. Urbanization offers many advantages for women’s social and economic growth and their equal participation and rights with men: On the social front, greater cultural diversity found in urban areas can provide an enabling environment to deconstruct social norms, entrenched gender stereotypes and traditions or customs that hold women back and perpetuate gender discrimination against women, girls and youth in general. Furthermore, cities may offer better social and infrastructure services, such as water, transport, education and health services, including sexual and reproductive health, and this is where women can more easily access information facilities and communication technologies as well as opportunities for practicing sports, recreation and cultural activities. On the economic front, there are growing opportunities in cities for women to engage in highly paid professional jobs or dynamic sectors
such as manufacturing and services. Women's equal access to productive resources and decent jobs is critical not only for their empowerment and for furthering the gender equality goal, but it also has positive multiplier effects for a range of key development goals, including poverty eradication. Women's economic empowerment has proven to generate both micro-level efficiency results through increased household productivity and macro-efficiency, as evidenced by the positive correlation between indicators of gender equality and economic growth;\[1\]

n. Urbanization offers many opportunities to deal with climate change and disaster risk reduction: Cities are well positioned to assess their risks and vulnerabilities, and to develop mitigation and adaptation strategies through appropriate urban planning and design as well as through appropriate building regulations and materials as well as construction technology, including in the retro-fitting of both buildings and infrastructure (see Annex 9 and also Annex 1) and initiatives such as the WHO Safe Hospitals Index. Policies that promote compact cities with higher densities and more mixing of residential and commercial uses can certainly contribute to climate goals because of reduced per capita rates of resource use and greenhouse gas emissions, and can also bring a number of co-benefits. For example, reducing car transport and increasing access to public transport and bicycle paths will reduce morbidity and mortality due to air pollution. Ecocity design and smart sustainable city approaches can also achieve the same results (see Annexes 10 and 11). The economies of scale, as well as proximity and concentration of enterprises and innovation in cities, or agglomeration economies, make it cheaper and easier to take actions to minimize both emissions and climate hazards. Implementing the many provisions of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction as they relate to cities can reduce the impact of disasters. Green growth through increasing use of renewable energy, growth in environmental industries such as solid waste management and recycling industries, as well as the decoupling of urban growth from resource use can have positive impacts on climate change. Well planned and managed urbanization offers significant opportunities for disaster risk reduction and management, climate resilience and lessening of the vulnerability of people living in poverty. In this regard, it is important to promote and support green jobs;

o. Well-planned and managed urbanization offers many opportunities for increasing collaboration between urban planners, health and non-health sectors to reduce health inequalities and increase wellbeing. Acting on health inequities requires an understanding of their nature and distribution, causes, as well as engagement of communities in collecting and interpreting data, as well as prioritizing actions. Undertaking exercises to bring together urban planners, health and non-health city departments increases the opportunity to collectively plan and act to reduce a number of inequities as well as create synergistic action for each sector. The WHO Urban Health Equity Assessment and Response Tool (Urban HEART)\[1\][ii], used in over 60 countries, along with an Urban Health Index \[1\][iii], rely on core sets of indicators across sectors to map disaggregated patterns across neighbourhoods, and diseases or conditions. Acting on inequities requires concerted action as reflected in recent reports by the WHO-UN-Habitat 'Hidden Cities report', UNICEF's '2012 State of the World's Children Report' \[1\][iv], Save the Children's '2015 Urban Disadvantage and maternal health report\[iv], the '2014 UNAIDS Cities Report' \[iv\] and the '2015 World Migration Report'. \[iv\] Changes in the built and social environments have demonstrable impacts on reducing many non-communicable and infectious diseases, improving environmental conditions, and reducing injuries. Leadership shown by cities as diverse as New York, Liverpool, Seoul, and Cape Town through engaging urban planners and health professionals, have resulted in successes in areas such as reducing obesity, tobacco use, as well as cases of tuberculosis.

p. Cities show strong potentials for establishing the basis of positive state-building dynamics: Cities in 'failed states' may be easier to fix than the states in which they are located. The political dynamics of running a city are more favourable than that of a whole fragile country. In most countries, cities' compact size and blurring off cultural and other identities make elections of city governments more a test of competence and pragmatism in urban governance than a contest between different ethnic, religious-based or ideological narratives as found at national level. In many countries, officials at city-level can be held more easily accountable than those in central government. The concentration of elites (political, social, intellectual and economic) means also the capacity to challenge the bargains on which political settlements rest when these are not sustainable. Cities in post-conflict settings can become critical spaces
for institutionalized forms of political debate and participation that help build inclusive institutions for managing conflict and transitional justice mechanisms; and

q. Urban violence can be successfully addressed by tackling its root causes and through integrated preventative strategies: Despite high levels of armed violence, encouraging results can be seen in the reduction of armed violence in certain urban communities. Multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary initiatives at the city government level have resulted in the design of city community-based security and social cohesion plans that extend the reach of law enforcement, improve response to criminal incidents and include close cooperation with civil society to prevent armed violence (see Annex 12). These initiatives also tackle different dimensions of urban life that are critical to creating safer environments, including urban design for crime prevention, job-creation, education, health, addressing cultural needs and access to justice. They are also reinforced by programmes to reduce violence in the domestic and educational spheres. Violence prevention becomes closely linked to urban planning and how greater social diversity can be generated through transport, services, housing and economic policies that break ghettoization dynamics.

V – There is a need for a UN system-wide approach to sustainable urban development

11. To effectively address the above-mentioned challenges and take advantage of the opportunities of urbanization, the United Nations, in its role as the ‘guardian’ of the international development agenda, requires a coherent and coordinated approach to urbanization. This approach should recognize urbanization, including the industrialization process that often accompanies it, as a force on its own, which, alongside other drivers of development such as agriculture and rural development, can be harnessed and steered through policy, planning and design, regulatory instruments as well as other human actions to contribute towards national sustainable development. Moreover, the challenges posed by urbanization have global ramifications that, if not addressed adequately, could jeopardize chances of achieving sustainable development. It is therefore necessary to shift cities and towns onto a sustainable development path.

12. Urbanization affects the whole continuum of human settlements: from rural villages and service centres, through small and medium-sized towns, to cities and megacities. Urbanization can contribute to a positive dynamic of rural transformation through the equitable and balanced provision of improved physical infrastructure, access to modern energy, social and economic services. The whole continuum of settlements contributes in different ways to national growth and sustainable development.

13. Habitat III offers an excellent opportunity for the UN system organizations to reflect on the role of urbanization in sustainable development and to come up with a system-wide approach that is guided by the content and spirit of international human rights instruments, including on women’s rights, gender equality, and the rights of the disabled. Similarly, dialogue on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is crucial to developing a shared perspective on sustainable cities and human settlements, for discussing the challenges and opportunities that urbanization offers and for synergistic implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. These global frameworks and discussions, as well as the work of the High Level Committee on Programmes, are excellent platforms for forging agreement on a new vision of sustainable urbanization and the main principles and characteristics that a sustainable city should have, including the mechanisms that are needed to induce a drastic change towards sustainable urbanization. However, this UN consensus should also be informed by the views of other stakeholders, especially cities and local authorities, as well as civil society.

14. The UN system and the international community recognize the importance of and high priority that should be accorded to transformative change. This is a critical juncture at which the dynamic forces of urbanization must be used to make a giant leap towards sustainability. It is clear that continuing along the current patterns of urbanization is no longer an option. Cities and towns can play a greater role in the sustainable development agenda, and for that they need to be better understood and integrated into the changing global discourse on sustainable development. The UN can ride the wave of change by promoting a ‘new urban agenda’ in order to match the world’s evolving development goals and meet the current and emerging urban challenges. The ‘new urban agenda’ should promote sustainable cities and
other human settlements that are environmentally sustainable and resilient; socially inclusive, safe and violence-free; economically productive; and better connected to and contributing towards sustained rural transformation. Such a vision should be fully in line with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, most particularly goal 11 on cities and human settlements, and should enable the advancement of the underpinning principle of equity.

15. For this ‘new urban agenda’ to induce transformative change in cities and countries, both developed and developing, it needs to give explicit attention to both the principles that can guide this change and the levers to support the pursuit of the new urbanization vision. In other words, the ‘new urban agenda’ needs to address the longer-term, structural and social factors, including beliefs and behaviours that hinder the possibility of transformative change, using clear guiding principles. It also needs to respond to existing challenges and opportunities to promote sustainable urban development through appropriate levers of transformative change.

16. Ten guiding principles can steer the vision of such a ‘new urban agenda’ towards transformative sustainable development: universality, human rights, equity, integration and synergy, democratic participation, environmental sustainability, learning and sharing of knowledge, promotion of urban metabolism, promotion of solutions that work for fragile cities, and data revolution.

1. Promoting a new urbanization vision that is universal and adaptable to different national and local circumstances: Work towards ensuring universality of the new urban agenda, given that the key challenges of urbanization are shared by all countries. Some of the shared challenges are increasing urban poverty and inequality, high levels of unemployment and underemployment, especially among the youth, climate change and increasing vulnerability to disasters, as well as urban-based social and political upheavals. The new urbanization vision should promote co-benefits and sharing of solutions to these challenges and of ways to take advantage of the opportunities that urbanization offers, within the context of north-south and south-south cooperation, and of the normative role of the UN. Global urban networks such as United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and C40 Climate Leadership Group, facilitated by new information and communication technology, could play an important role in promoting universal urbanization principles. It will be important for this universal agenda to be adaptable to different national priorities and urbanization levels;

2. Promoting a new urbanization vision with mechanisms and procedures that respect, protect and promote human rights and the rule of law: Ensure that both the desirable outcome (sustainable cities and other human settlements) and the process to achieve this outcome take account of the content and intent of international human rights instruments. That process should be guided by an equitable vision of urban development which addresses a number of basic rights, including access to: decent work; diverse, safe and nutritious food; adequate and affordable health care; adequate housing; clean water and adequate sanitation; education; basic social services and socio-economic safety nets; protection from crime and violence (safety and security); transparent institutions and justice systems; as well as participatory public decision making mechanisms. It should also be guided by international instruments such as those on persons with disabilities and on the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. Pursuit of an equitable vision of urban development will contribute to the progressive realization of human rights in urban centres and the expansion of open and inclusive democratic spaces as well as of opportunities and prosperity for all urban residents. The advancement and justiciability of all human rights, including economic, civil, social, cultural and political rights as well as enhanced protection from crime and violence, is essential for development and poverty eradication, and requires responsive, accountable and legitimate public institutions guided by the rule of law, including at the local level;

3. Promoting equitable urban development and inclusive urban growth: Transformative change can occur when equity considerations, including gender equality and the prioritization of the needs of the most vulnerable, are brought to the centre of urban development and guide informed decision-making that enhances the lives of all city dwellers. This can happen when all levels of government and development partners adopt equity-based approaches, not only for legal and ethical reasons, but also because they realize these approaches are cost-effective. In particular, the promotion of access to adequate housing
and urban basic services is essential to building ‘cities for all’, as it enables all urban dwellers to live and participate in a meaningful manner within their towns and cities. This also requires moving away from the commodification of housing, land and services to the recognition of their social value. In addition, urban processes leading to inequalities and marginalization, such as unbridled speculation over housing and land, unaffordability of basic services and gentrification, need to be addressed;

4. Promoting integration and synergy in the implementation of a new urbanization vision: Fully sustainable urban development and potential co-benefits cannot be achieved without integration and synergistic action in urban planning and management so as to address, simultaneously, the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainability. This will ensure that different sectoral objectives, such as those on land and housing, environment, transport, water and sanitation, health, education, industry and employment, are addressed simultaneously because of their many inter-linkages. This is also necessary for eliminating duplication and waste in investment in the different sectors. Spatially, the new urbanization vision should address rural-urban linkages in a balanced and equitable way, the regional impacts of towns and cities and the multi-level governance and planning requirements of urban development within the context of metropolitan regions, urban-rural regions and other emerging configurations such as urban corridors. Integration also entails joint, or coordinated, planning and implementation by different agencies at the local, regional, national and global levels. For the UN system organizations, this implies joint planning and implementation of development assistance in the area of sustainable urbanization, especially at the national and municipal levels;

5. Promoting the empowerment of civil society, expanding democratic participation and reinforcing collaboration: Empowering civil society, expanding democratic participation and reinforcing collaboration enables transformative change, leading to a strong and well-organized civil society; equal and balanced participation between men and women, young and old; as well as deliberate inclusion and participation of marginalized groups, such as people living in poverty, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants, minorities and other historically excluded groups. Inclusion and participation may also be achieved by upholding and promoting cultural diversity. This requires new avenues for political organization, social participation and the expression of cultural diversity, so as to influence decision-making and change policy outcomes for the benefit of the majority. It also requires an effective local platform that allows for genuine and efficient collaboration between different levels of government and interested groups, including civil society and the private sector, and that is capable of steering urban growth towards a more sustainable path. In particular, community media should be used to enhance public debate and participation fostered by international standards that respect freedom of expression and journalistic independence;

6. Promoting green cities and environmental sustainability: Transformative change occurs when a critical connection is established between individuals and communities, science, environment, industry, economic growth, urban planning and governance with regards to issues such as land and resource use, energy systems and consumption, pollution, rural-urban linkages, material flows, industrial development, land fragmentation, disaster risk reduction and climate change, and when urban development brings co-benefits. The need to integrate green growth considerations, “decoupling” of urban growth from increased resource use and its environmental impacts, greening of urban centres and peri-urban areas, green training of urban enterprises and workers, and environmental strategies in long-term urban planning and management are fundamental aspects of this guiding principle;

7. Promoting urban metabolism as a corner-stone of urban planning and management and a fundamental aspect of urban resilience: Cities are subject to complex dynamics caused by the process of urban metabolism which itself provides the necessary framework to understand the interactions of natural and human systems within a specific space. Within this dynamic environment, the ability of cities to develop in a sustainable way as well as the resilience of cities to withstand the impacts of natural and social evolution and change depend predominantly on the flow and efficient management of resources. This flow of resources at the city level is furthermore affected by: (i) the behaviour of economic agents; (ii) the consumption patterns of individuals and organizations (public and private); (iii) the nature of stakeholders’ participation in decision making; and (iv) systems of infrastructure (both “soft” and “hard”)
and technology. This is why how cities manage their resources has a critical impact both on the global and local environment, as well as on the well-being of the urban population that benefits from using the resources and, at the end, on the ability of the cities to develop in a sustainable way. Cities need to set specific targets to use resources more efficiently and formulate plans to achieve them and provide an enabling framework to spur resource efficiency as well as micro and city level innovations.

8. Promoting solutions that work for fragile cities: Over the past 40 years, the urban population in lower income and fragile countries has increased by an astonishing 326 per cent. With these growth rates projected to continue, it is certain that the humanitarian crises of tomorrow will be more urban than rural and it is also certain that, today, the urban centres of fragile and conflict-affected countries are some of the world’s most vulnerable zones. To be effective, humanitarian, peace building, and development actors need to develop effective and feasible gender-responsive options to reduce the vulnerability and enhance the resilience of urban populations in fragile cities most at risk to multiple and interlocking crises. National and municipal governments in these contexts are demanding tools such as for preparedness and early warning systems to be able to respond to these overlapping risks. Yet, current responses are limited and international organizations, such as the World Bank and the United Nations, remain ill-equipped to assist. To change this reality, the United Nations University and the World Bank are collaborating in a project on Resilience and the Fragile City funded by the UN-World Bank Fragility and Conflict Partnership Trust Fund. This project will develop frameworks to accurately understand vulnerability and resilience in disaster and violence prone cities and identify feasible and practical solutions that can reduce the vulnerability and enhance the resilience of urban populations most at risk to multiple and interlocking crises.

9. Promoting innovations that facilitate learning and the sharing of knowledge and developing capacities: Transformative change, whether in urban or rural areas, depends on social and institutional innovations that facilitate participatory learning. It happens when a supportive learning environment and supportive science, technology and innovation policies are established, people’s and institutions’ capacities are developed, including those of the private sector and industries, and appropriate tools are employed; and when long-term collective, collaborative and cumulative learning is connected to knowledge in support of the achievement of desirable outcomes and the monitoring of goals and targets. Educational as well as scientific and cultural institutions are integral to this process, as well as to the future of cities, in particular because of the opportunities they offer young people seeking a better life;

10. Promoting a global data revolution: For the effective and results-based implementation of the ‘new urban agenda’, with the above-mentioned guiding principles providing direction, and within the framework of goal 11 and other goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development relevant to urbanization, there will be a need to put in place a global monitoring mechanism with clear indicators, adaptable to the national and sub-national levels, that provides a general framework for periodic assessments of the different dimensions of urbanization and the state of cities and towns, including all forms of inequity. Furthermore, the development of human rights indicators at city level is an important tool for assessing progress and addressing accountability in urban areas. It is important that data collected on these aspects of urbanization is disaggregated by age, gender, location, income, ethnicity, etc, and that it be collected in a participatory manner. In addition, alternatives to traditional data gathering, including those generated by communities (like participatory enumerations) and the civil society should be encouraged. This will allow cities and towns, countries, and the international community to measure progress and identify possible setbacks and constraints, thus pre-empting unintended developments.

17. The ‘new urban agenda’ can only be successful in achieving its objectives if these ten guiding principles actively underpin and structure urban growth and development, and if they functionally and operationally guide the way urban societies function.

VI – A ‘new urban agenda’ for transformative change
18. The proposed ‘new urban agenda’ should represent a paradigm shift towards a new urbanization vision that can better respond to the challenges of our age, optimizing resources to harness future potentials. This ‘new urban agenda’ should be universal, rights-based, sectorally and
spatially integrative, inclusive, equitable, people-centred, green and measurable. It should also have the possibility of articulating different scales, from the neighbourhood to the global level, and diverse human settlements, from the rural village and rural service centre, through the small and medium-sized town, to the city and megacity.

19. **The contours of a ‘new urban agenda’ should revolve around major issues that are linked to urban sustainability.** A number of levers of change, or effective means, could be deployed to effect the adoption of a new urbanization approach that could have an impact on the sustainability of national development. In this manner, the ‘new urban agenda’ should make a critical connection between urban sustainability and sustainable development at large.

20. Ten key levers of change are presented here as a UN system input to the ‘new urban agenda’, the document expected to come out of Habitat III. These levers, which may help to achieve the desired outcomes of sustainable urbanization and sustainable development in general, need to be adapted to different circumstances, as there is no one-size-fits-all solution. More specifically, these levers of change have to be designed locally, nationally and regionally, taking into consideration the needs and specific circumstances of cities and towns, and the level of peace, state-building and development of the countries where they are to be deployed.

21. Once deployed, the levers may increase economic productivity and enhance equitable growth, improve the rights and wellbeing of the population, improve inclusion, gender equality and accountability in urban governance, and create multiplier effects that spread across space and through different types of human settlements – from remote rural villages and rural service centres, through small and medium-sized towns, to cities and megacities. Their effective implementation will determine the actual form and content of urbanization, in the process steering urban growth, influencing land-use markets, forming the basis for managing public spaces and other common goods, and identifying opportunities for multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral solutions. Fundamentally, the transformative agenda needs to focus on all people and to maximize their engagement.

22. Below are the proposed ten levers of transformative change. When cities are not well-planned and governed, and when municipal finance systems as well as the urban economy are weak, addressing all of the economic, social and environmental needs and challenges highlighted earlier in this paper cannot be done effectively. Effective urban planning, governance, including legislation, and municipal finance systems, as well as a strong urban economy are the foundation of successful urbanization. Together, they constitute strategic conditions for sustainable urban development. The first five levers of transformative change address these strategic conditions. The remaining five levers address the needs of urban households (the deliverables of successful urbanization), gender equality and women’s empowerment as well as sustainable use of resources at the city level, all of which are critical to transformative change:

1. **Developing and implementing integrated national urban policies:** This lever amalgamates the dispersed energy and potential of urban centres within a national system of cities and spatial or territorial planning. It establishes synergetic connections between the dynamics of urbanization and the overall process of national development, recognizing the importance of fostering mutually reinforcing rural-urban linkages and leveraging the rural-urban nexus for development. It builds linkages between sectors, defines the broad parameters within which the transformative force of urbanization is activated and steered, coordinates the work of different tiers of government (local, regional and national), establishes the incentives for nudging economic and social agents towards more sustainable practices, and provides a framework for the allocation of resources accordingly;

2. **Strengthening urban legislation and systems of governance:** Laws, institutions, regulatory systems, and systems of governance bound by human rights and the rule of law integrate a composite set of factors which embody the operational principles, as well as the stability of organizational structures and institutional and social relationships that underpin the process of urbanization. Laws, policies and governance systems must address all relevant economic, social and cultural rights, as well as guard against corruption, crime and violence; must not discriminate in substance or in practice; and must...
reflect the inputs of the population and should be equitable, ensuring that efforts are geared towards the most in need so as to avoid reinforcement of inequalities. With respect to corruption, it is important to put in place or strengthen anti-corruption frameworks for urban development projects – financed from both public and private sector funds – that may illicitly extract resources from ordinary citizens and exacerbate the situation of vulnerable groups, especially in terms of their access to housing, water, sanitation, health, education and other basic rights and services. This requires implementation of enhanced preventive mechanisms that guarantee transparency and accountability, including mechanisms for the active participation of civil society and the private sector in monitoring the implementation of urban public projects. Balancing regulations with incentives provides potential “win-win” opportunities for urban planning and development. These governance elements provide the medium through which the transformative force of urbanization is nurtured and deployed. This lever creates the normative basis for action and realization;

3. Harnessing the urban economy, creating employment opportunities and improving existing working conditions for all: This lever refers to the very foundation of urbanization and the basis for socio-economic transformation and accumulation. To provide adequate employment, reduce poverty and generate enough taxes to fund public infrastructure and services, cities must be economically productive. Many urban areas and regions therefore require gender-responsive economic regeneration and renewal programmes, cluster development and industrial zone strategies, as well as access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport for all. Others also require productivity and structural diversification plans, knowledge sharing and technology learning platforms, as well as employment generation and income-growth programmes for vulnerable groups, including newly arrived immigrants. These can have positive multiplier effects in various development areas, especially when redistributive mechanisms are put in place, including extension of public spaces and public procurement for people’s livelihoods. Adequate gender-responsive urban design maximizes agglomeration economies that are needed to develop the local urban economy and reduce the inequality of opportunities among different groups of society;

4. Strengthening municipal finance: This lever is about realigning fiscal authority and responsibility, i.e. achieving the right balance between different levels of government (municipal, subnational/regional and national) in terms of fiscal authority, responsibility and revenue sharing; improving systems of revenue collection; designing new financial mechanisms; and improving budget management and transparency, including through capacity-building and institutionalization. It is also about the proper use of the urban space, legal mechanisms and taxation instruments that reinforce capacities of local authorities and land-value sharing strategies. It also refers to innovations in financing, including through endogenous local solutions, leveraging the statutory role of planning to mobilize public and private resources and enhancing local government credit-worthiness and accountability;

5. Reinvigorating territorial planning and urban design and optimizing agglomeration economies: New planning methods and systems can contribute to changing the city’s structure, form and functionality towards more compact, integrated, connected and sustainable solutions that optimize agglomeration economies. They can also contribute to the resilience of cities and environmental sustainability of urban activities, including the conservation and use of biodiversity and ecosystem services inside and outside the city. Cities that increase densities (where these are low), promote enterprise linkages, provide adequate logistics infrastructure, adopt environmentally sound production and consumption methods, encourage social diversity and mixed-land uses, foster inclusiveness, protect commons, and consider the possible impacts of climate change induced and other natural hazards, as well as promote public spaces and vibrant streets can better address current urbanization challenges. So too can re-establishing joint gender-responsive urban planning and public health initiatives, as well as initiatives with other sectors. As urban centres do not exist independently from their surroundings, with the constant and in some cases reciprocal flow of people, goods, natural resources and services between urban centres and their rural hinterlands, territorial planning at the urban region level is necessary for sustainable development;

6. Promoting universal access to quality basic services: An urban development vision with adequate policies and institutional frameworks aiming at fulfilling States national and international obligations,
including social protection systems or safety nets, for promoting universal access to urban basic services, such as sustainable and affordable housing, nutritious food, water and sanitation, health care coverage, education and training facilities, and basic income security, especially for urban dwellers living in poverty, including those living in rural areas close to cities and towns (i.e. in urban-rural regions), is another lever of change. It requires integrated and gender-sensitive planning, innovative solutions for sustainable energy services, adequate financing and investments, effective partnerships with the private sector and all relevant stakeholders, technological support that promotes green economic and industrial development, resilience and climate change considerations, and a scheme that retrofits and rehabilitates existing infrastructure. Basic services and infrastructure strategies, including green infrastructure, transport and mobility, need to be people-centred and to be clearly articulated to housing programmes and land-use plans, as well as to prioritize vulnerable and marginalized groups. For the latter to happen, urban policy makers need to understand the patterns and causes of inequities (including poverty), the needs of and risks faced by the poor and marginalized populations, and their solutions, to seriously consider their rights, safety and well-being at work and at home, as well as to appreciate their contribution to cities;

7. Promoting adequate housing for all income categories of urban residents: This lever considers re-positioning housing as a pillar of sustainable urban development in such a way that it contributes to building cities that are economically viable, environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. It requires an understanding of housing which goes beyond viewing it as a mere commodity and which recognizes its social function, as well as its link with other rights such as security of tenure and employment. It requires equal access to land for different social groups as well as men and women, without discrimination and prioritizing the most in need, effective land-use plans, adequate legal and institutional frameworks, sustainable building technologies, responsible construction industries, and predictable financial mechanisms for affordable, habitable and accessible housing, all of which should also take into account that housing is often a place of work (home-based enterprises). This contributes to the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living;

8. Strengthening gender equality and women's empowerment: National and local governments should develop and strengthen their capacity to integrate a gender perspective into all their urban policies and programmes so as to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and to improve the welfare and human rights of all women and girls. Efforts should be made to effectively collect urban data disaggregated by gender and age, and to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence through prevention measures. Specific attention should be given to women’s and girls’ safety in private and urban public spaces. In particular, cities should develop approaches and standards for city-wide implementation of gender mainstreaming in all areas, including the design of public spaces, housing, transportation and street lighting. Increasing the voice and participation of women in urban public life is vital for ensuring that women’s issues are taken into consideration in urban development agendas;

9. Placing culture at the heart of sustainable urban development: Integrating culture and cultural rights in urban development and/or urban regeneration policies contributes to efficient management of change in cities towards more sustainable social, economic and human development through improved understanding of the socio-cultural context of urban spaces, as well as to better job-creation opportunities, social cohesion, education and promotion of cultural diversity. Sustainable and resilient cities are those which preserve their urban heritage as a factor of social identity, safeguard their intangible cultural heritage and the collective memory as factors of identity and dialogue among communities, and promote the creative industries and the creative economy, at the same time understanding the dynamism and evolution of culture, partly through international migration. Raising awareness on respect for diversity in urban spaces, free from all forms of discrimination, should be a core concern of city-level authorities. Placing culture at the heart of sustainable urban development provides a solid baseline for better understanding of each socio-cultural context and is a means for ensuring better linkages between local and global needs; and

10. Promoting resource efficiency and circular economy at city level: More efficient delivery of urban services, including management of resources flowing to, from, and within cities can contribute to more
sustainable patterns of consumption and production. Promoting sustainable lifestyles in urban areas and fostering behavioural change can reduce environmental impacts and have cross-sectoral influences (e.g. on buildings, tourism, food, procurement, etc). To this extent, a circular economy could help cities realise the potential of resource efficiency. A circular economy at the city level is not only about recycling but also about reusing, remanufacturing, recovering, repairing and refurbishing. One of the best pathways to operationalize a circular economy at the city level is by establishing new markets of a sharing economy. Such an economy is based on product-service systems, sharing and swapping practices that decouple ownership of an asset from its use, while reinstalling social interactions and trust within a community of people having similar interests. Sharing practices and models are typically less resource intensive, as fewer products are produced to provide the same service to more people. New markets, new interactions and new lifestyles will emerge from sharing practices.

VII – Implementing the new urban agenda through multi-stakeholder partnership

23. Promoting integration in the implementation of a new urbanization vision in order to address the environmental, social and economic objectives of sustainability, which have many inter-linkages, is one of the ten guiding principles suggested earlier in this paper. Integration requires not only a shared vision of sustainable urbanization among the different UN system organizations, but also partnership in the implementation of that vision.

24. In response to a directive of the HLCP to pilot issue-based platforms and coalitions within the ongoing efforts on forging a common vision of urbanization and its contribution to sustainable development, the ideas below suggest a way forward in fostering multi-stakeholder engagement in support of actions to achieve Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals and the expected outcome of Habitat III – a New Urban Agenda. More specifically, suggestions are made on how the World Urban Campaign, anchored at UN-Habitat, could be used for this purpose as an implementation platform. A brief historical description of the World Urban Campaign is made first, followed by concrete proposals on how the Campaign could be strengthened by including the participation of UN system organizations.

25. The need for a concerted and coherent approach to urbanization has been a concern to UN-Habitat, particularly since the Habitat II Conference (Istanbul, 1996) resulting in an inclusive Habitat Agenda, calling for partnerships and the enablement of non-State actors to achieve sustainable urbanization. This strong demand was addressed by a number of projects and accompanied by global campaigns to engage non-governmental partners to jointly advocate on sustainable urbanization and create synergies between urban stakeholders. Two global campaigns were launched in 1999 focusing on urban governance and secure tenure, anchored at the country level. The concept of a single forward looking strategic campaign was later expressed by Member States at the 21st session of UN-Habitat's Governing Council (2007) calling for a single platform to promote engagement and provide coherence on sustainable urbanization issues. In 2009, at the 21st session of the UN-Habitat Governing Council, Member States called for a single campaign – the Global Campaign on Sustainable Urbanization, renamed World Urban Campaign, to bring together urban stakeholders in order to elevate urban policies, sharing tools and campaigning on themes related to sustainable urbanization. Since its launch, the WUC is part of UN-Habitat's work programme and budget and is governed by a Steering Committee, composed of UN-Habitat partner organizations, acting as an advisory body to UN-Habitat’s Executive Director, supported by the WUC Secretariat, based in UN-Habitat’s Division of External Relations.

26. The WUC has played an essential role in the mobilisation of urban stakeholders towards Habitat III. At its 24th session in April 2013, UN-Habitat’s Governing Council requested the Secretary General of the Habitat III Conference to strengthen the World Urban Campaign and support National Urban Campaigns. In particular, the Governing Council called upon the Secretary General to continue engaging all Habitat Agenda partners and new partners in the World Urban Campaign in order to identify and collect good practices that could contribute to the new urban agenda and to support national urban campaigns and their communication and outreach activities to contribute to national preparations for Habitat III. Policy dialogue, advocacy and consensus building on urbanization issues have been the key strengths of the World Urban Campaign, best illustrated by 'The City We Need' process launched in March
2014, which is meant to build a global manifesto in order to provide compelling messages and recommendations towards the Habitat III Conference and the New Urban Agenda. During 2015-16, a total of 27 Urban Thinkers Campuses were organized by WUC Partners and coordinated by UN-Habitat in order to contribute to the content of ‘The City We Need’, a key outcome document to be finalized and shared by the World Urban Campaign through various channels and media before the end of March 2016.

27. In April 2015, WUC partners launched a special initiative, the General Assembly of Partners (GAP), conceived as a global deliberative devise for non-governmental partners to negotiate a global ‘partners’ position towards the Habitat III Conference. The GAP is composed of fourteen Constituent Groups: Local and sub-national authorities, Research and Academia, Civil Society Organizations, Grass roots organizations, Women, Parliamentarians, Children and Youth, Business and Industries, Foundations and Philanthropies, Professionals, Trade Unions and Workers, Farmers, Indigenous people, Media. Proposed by an array of partners united by the World Urban Campaign, the GAP represents an innovative process, building on the legacy of the Habitat II Conference. In December 2015, Member States expressed their appreciation to the Secretary General of Habitat III for “…his support for the work of the General Assembly of Partners for Habitat III, as a special initiative of the World Urban Campaign, in supporting and improving stakeholders’ engagement in and contributions to the preparatory process for Habitat III and the Conference itself”.

28. At the national level, the WUC is meant to be operational through National Urban Campaigns. National campaigns have been initiated and launched (India, Iran, Mexico, Egypt, Saudi Arabia), and are meant to mobilize stakeholders on urbanization issues towards the preparation of the Habitat III Conference and beyond, on the implementation of national urban strategies derived from the New Urban Agenda. Beyond the Conference, national campaigns can potentially become implementation platforms on issue-based initiatives and can be considered instrumental in the implementation of SDG Goal 11 on Cities and Human Settlements.

29. Given its history and impact so far, the WUC constitutes a sound basis for a broader multi-stakeholders partnership for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and targets related to urbanization. In particular, the WUC may be considered as the host platform for UN agencies to interact with non-State actors through policy dialogue and joint advocacy in order to define and launch issue-based initiatives and concrete alliances. For the current group of WUC partners, the introduction of UN entities would bring a new legitimacy to the platform conferring a higher level of credibility as a global hub on urbanization.

30. For UN entities, the use of the WUC as a host platform presents several advantages:
A large outreach of committed stakeholders and their networks engaged on urbanization issues at the global and national level;

(i) An organized platform with its own brand and identity (website, newsletter, social medias and outreach tools) to articulate joint advocacy activities and initiatives;
(ii) A total of 130 entities and networks organized in a structured partnership around a Steering and a Standing Committee of Lead partners, its Associate partners, Members and Sponsors managed by a Secretariat;

(iii) The basis for country level issue-based initiatives using National Urban Campaigns processes;

(iv) A large experience in consultative processes such as the Urban Thinkers Campuses through which UN entities could join hand to promote and define issue-based initiatives with other stakeholders.

31. For UN entities to ensure a relevant, concrete and catalytic role in the WUC, they would need to define their status in the current governance of the campaign. A UN WUC Steering Group could be established to define the policies, actions and initiatives of UN entities jointly. The UN WUC Steering Group could be represented through a seat in the WUC Standing Committee. However, each UN entities joining the WUC would join as Lead Partners of the WUC Steering Committee where they would have a distinct role (examples: UNICEF as Lead UN Partner on children friendly cities issues, ILO as Lead UN Partner of decent work in cities).

32. On the WUC road map towards Habitat III, the UN WUC Steering Group could be established and launched at Prepcom 3 in order to allow interaction before the Conference, in particular through an exchange on the respective papers on Urbanization and Sustainable Development - Input to a New Urban Agenda prepared by the HLCP and The Future We Want - The City We Need 2.0 drafted by the World Urban Campaign partners.

VIII – Conclusion

33. Urbanization is vital for delivering sustainable development, not only because the urban areas of the world are expected to absorb almost all future population growth, but because they have the potential to concentrate economic activities and influence social change. They also have the ability to reduce ecological footprints (by densification), connect to rural and natural environments and create system-based solutions. The ‘new urban agenda’ should respond to the differentiated needs, challenges and opportunities of cities in developed and developing countries. It should contribute to “fixing” the urban space in its form, structure and functionality so as to positively influence social change in various development domains.

34. As this paper has shown, urbanization has the potential to help the world to overcome some of its major challenges; including poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, violent conflict, poor health and climate change. However, uncoordinated interventions (by different actors) that are not based on a broadly shared vision and guiding principles can inadvertently contribute to forms of urbanization that are not sustainable, such as: the unnecessary spatial expansion of cities, the development of communities at densities that are too low, a mismatch of infrastructure investment and productive activities, allocation of resources and investments that may contribute to the generation of further inequalities, and the entrenchment of conflict-inherited urban governance systems that aggravate societal divides rather than facilitate reconciliation and state-building. Thus, the ‘new urban agenda’ should provide guiding principles for promoting an overall spatial framework for sustainable urban development that addresses a number of essential physical and environmental aspects, such as: designing compact cities, protecting public spaces and the commons and making them safer, enhancing street connectivity, and encouraging well-designed urban layouts, favouring social diversity and inclusiveness as well as mixed land-uses. The ‘new urban agenda’ should also include the guiding principles for promoting sustainable social and economic development within urban centres as outlined above.

35. The ‘new urban agenda’ should bring about sustainable urban development, which is essential for national sustainable development, as its expected outcomes extend well beyond urban areas. From an economic perspective, the ‘new urban agenda’ should support more efficient economic and industrial growth through better allocation of land and other resources, as well as through greater connectivity, economic diversification and strategies for creating employment and improving working conditions for all. From a social perspective, the new agenda should put urban dwellers at the centre of urban
development. It should promote shared prosperity with equitable access to the benefits of urbanization, underpinned by a rights-based approach to urbanization, with concomitant protective laws and institutions. This requires active protection and promotion of the human rights of all urban inhabitants, which in turn will generate stability and support to the authorities. This also includes socio-economic safety nets that guarantee equal access to basic urban services, as well as practical actions designed to add value e.g. employment-generation through public services, combating corruption and child labour as well as support to youth in risky sectors. From an environmental perspective, the agenda should protect natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity at local and global levels, and promote climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as building of resilience, allowing present and future generations to live in sustainable cities. Cities that are environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, free from all forms of discrimination and violence-free, economically productive and resilient can genuinely contribute to national development, prosperity, gender equality and sustainability.

36. This paper proposes ten levers of transformative change that can help countries to maximise the contribution of urbanization to economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development. The first five levers deal with effective urban planning, governance, including legislation, and municipal finance systems, as well as the urban economy. Together, they constitute strategic conditions for sustainable urban development. The remaining five levers address the needs of urban households (the deliverables of successful urbanization), gender equality and women’s empowerment as well as sustainable use of resources at the city level, all of which are critical to transformative change and sustainable development.

37. Finally, in addition to being a UN system input to the preparatory process for Habitat III and its expected outcome document, a 'new urban agenda', this paper could be the basis of a UN system-wide approach to assisting countries and municipal authorities in implementing goal 11 (on cities and human settlements) and other relevant goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It could also be the basis of a framework for cooperation among UN system organizations, especially at the local and national levels, on sustainable urbanization issues. In this way, it could facilitate the systematic inclusion of urbanization in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. In addition, it could provide a framework for UN system organizations to showcase their work on urban issues in a way that demonstrates UN policy coherence on sustainable urbanization, which is likely to increase the interest in and support to urban development among international development partners, especially at the country level. Further to this, a multi-stakeholder partnership for the New Urban Agenda, based on a revamped World Urban Campaign, is proposed. For this to work, the vision, guiding principles and levers of transformative change proposed in this paper should be in the consciousness of as many UN system Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies as possible and be reflected in their work programmes, and it is hoped that they will be integrated into the outcome document of Habitat III.
Annex 1. Major international city networks and initiatives on climate change

ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) was previously known as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. Created in 1991, it is an association of more than 1200 local governments from 70 countries who are committed to sustainable development. ICLEI has worked with cities world-wide on climate change through its urban CO2 Reduction Campaign, Green Fleets Campaign and its Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP Campaign). Local governments participating in the CCP Campaign commit to undertake and complete five performance milestones.

The Large Cities Climate Leadership Group, also known as the C40 (and originally as the C20), was created in 2005 with the main goals of fostering action and cooperation on reducing GHG emissions, creating policies and alliances to accelerate the uptake of climate-friendly technologies. C40 is composed of cities from all world regions.

The Clinton Climate Initiative was launched in 2005 by the William J. Clinton Foundation to create and advance solutions to the core issues driving climate change. In collaboration with governments and businesses around the world, the initiative focuses on three strategic programme areas: increasing energy efficiency in cities; catalysing the large-scale supply of clean energy; and working to stop deforestation. In 2006, the initiative became the delivery partner of the C40 to assist in the delivery of urban mitigation projects. The initiative launched the Climate Positive Development Program in 2009 to support ‘climate positive’ development in 17 urban locations across six continents. Nearly 1 million people are expected to live and work in these developments when they are complete.

Founded in December 2005, the World Mayors Council for Climate Change has more than 50 members from all of the world and seeks to promote policies addressing climate change and its local impacts; to foster the international cooperation of municipal leaders on achieving relevant climate, biodiversity and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and to have a say in the design of effective multilateral mechanisms for global climate protection.

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) represents and defends the interests of local governments globally. In 2009, more than 1000 cities in 95 countries were direct members of UCLG. It is involved in the Partnership for Urban Risk Reduction, an ad hoc coalition of international organizations with the following objectives:

- promote worldwide awareness campaigns about risk reduction in regions regularly affected by natural disasters;
- build capacity at the local level to foresee and manage risks through the transfer of technical know-how to local actors and decision-makers; and
- set up a global platform for local authorities on disaster risk reduction.

The Climate Alliance is an association of cities and municipalities in 17 European countries that have developed partnerships with indigenous rainforest communities. Since 1990, when it was founded, around 1500 cities, municipalities and districts together with more than 50 provinces have joined the alliance. NGOs and other organizations have also joined as associate members. Its aim is to preserve the global climate through a twofold mechanism: the reduction of GHG emissions by developed countries and the conservation of forests in developing countries. The hope is that the former will be achieved through an exchange of information on best practices and by providing recommendations, aids and tools for local climate change policies; while the latter will be achieved through the organization of campaigns and political initiatives on the conservation of the tropical rainforests and the defence of indigenous rights, and by raising awareness of the political situation and living conditions of the indigenous peoples in Amazonia.

The Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network is an initiative of the Rockefeller Foundation in partnership with other entities such as academic, non-governmental, governmental, international, regional and national organizations. The network seeks to catalyse attention, funding and action on building climate change resilience for poor and vulnerable people in Asian cities. In order to accomplish this, the network is in the process of testing and demonstrating a range of actions to build climate change resilience in India, Viet Nam, Thailand and Indonesia. Lessons from these interventions will be used to support climate change resilience-building in other urban areas of the region.

The Covenant of Mayors is a mechanism intended to encourage mayors of cities in EU countries to significantly reduce their GHGs. Accordingly, signatories to the covenant enter a formal commitment to go
beyond the target to curb their CO2 emissions by at least 20 per cent by 2020, as already set by the EU's Climate Action and Energy Package. About 2000 cities in 42 countries were signatories to the covenant by end of 2010. Within one year of signing the covenant, cities are expected to prepare a Sustainable Energy Action Plan indicating how they intend to meet their commitments. Energy Cities, the European association of more than 1000 cities and towns, created in 1990, plays a leading role in the implementation of the covenant.

Annex 2. National urban policy in China

China's experience of urbanization and industrialization has been similar in several respects to Korea, although somewhat delayed and with a more compressed timescale. The country's explosive urban surge in the last 30 years is linked to its dramatic economic transition from an agrarian to an industrial society (OECD, 2013a; World Bank, 2014). A simple manifestation of how far the country has come is that the 17 largest cities comprise 11 per cent of China's population but 30 per cent of its GDP. They have also already reached “high income status” as defined by the World Bank and are comparable to some members of the OECD, unlike the rest of the country. Another illustration of China's remarkable transformation is the 500 million people who have been lifted out of poverty over the last three decades (World Bank, 2014). The government has played a key role in shaping this trajectory. Until the late 1970s, urbanization was resisted in favour of rural development. Urbanization accelerated after the economic reforms of 1978, when the fierce anti-urban policy was relaxed.

Over the following decade, the government pursued an increasingly effective combination of vision and pragmatism whereby particular locations and enterprises showing the greatest potential were given extra support (McGranahan et al, 2014). Special economic zones sited in undeveloped coastal regions offered big incentives to attract foreign investment and export-led industrialization. Obligatory linkages with local suppliers meant valuable spinoffs from the transfer of technology and managerial skills. These early achievements encouraged other territories in the south-east to be opened-up, and by the 1990s these billowing coastal cities were China's main economic engines. They were magnets for vast flows of domestic migration and investment, which depressed labour costs and fuelled the growth machine. Incomes have risen more rapidly in these cities than elsewhere as a result of higher productivity, strengthening further migration (Miller, 2012).

The government recognized, rewarded and sought to replicate success by steering resources to selected regions and by continually innovating institutions (McGranahan et al, 2014). Additional powers and responsibilities were devolved to local governments to incentivize economic development. Smaller municipalities were merged to create larger and more capable entities, and to give cities more control over surrounding land for development. The expropriation of agricultural land and its conversion to industrial and residential uses has been a key feature of China's urban growth engine. The uplift in land values and growing tax revenues from industry have financed urban infrastructure, facilitated catalytic construction schemes and helped city marketing efforts through flagship projects. Larger cities also have powers to issue bonds to fund new roads, water and other infrastructure. China's current five year plan explicitly calls for more urbanization and supports the emergence of mega-cities. The theory of agglomeration economies is described as “the objective law of urban development”...

The land conversion process has been highly controversial, contributing to inefficient land uses, road-oriented development and environmental degradation. It has also been a source of property speculation among developers, a black market in land, corruption in municipalities and much illegal construction. Ambiguous property rights have been manipulated to secure land from rural collectives and peasant farmers in order to sell it for development. National rules have encouraged this by enabling municipalities to retain most of the proceeds. The process has become so important to China's growth trajectory that central government has sought to gain greater control over it in order to boost or cool the economy as required. For example, a law was introduced in 1999 to slow down the rezoning of agricultural land for urban development. There has also been growing resistance from displaced farmers forced to make way for redevelopment, prompting efforts to strengthen their property rights (World Bank, 2014).

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Nevertheless, rapid urban growth has been supported by fast-track regulatory procedures, an absence of public participation, and unprecedented levels of investment in infrastructure, real estate and other fixed capital. China spends about 50 per cent of its GDP on such investment, including roads, power generation, railways, dams, ports, telecoms, factories, office buildings and housing. This is the highest share ever recorded in the world (Turok, 2014a). During their great booms in the 1960s and 1970s, Japan and Korea never exceeded 40 per cent. External observers have warned of the risks of over-development and property bubbles. To date, the incessant demand from an expanding real economy and massive household growth have so far averted this. The World Bank recently warned that “Urbanization has relied excessively on land conversion and land financing, which is causing inefficient urban sprawl and, on occasion, ghost towns and wasteful real estate development” (2014, p. xxiii). Although China’s urban development machine has delivered impressive growth, certain groups have been excluded from the benefits. A household registration system (hukou) was introduced in the Mao era (1949-1976) to control urbanization. The permits have been eased to allow temporary migration, but vulnerable groups such as peasants do not enjoy the same rights to schools, health facilities and social services (OECD, 2013a; World Bank, 2014). The policy reduces the cost to municipalities while meeting industry’s demand for cheap labour. Rising prices in the booming cities also make housing unaffordable for poor migrants.

Another source of growing social inequality and associated with political tensions is the spatial disparity between cities in the coastal belt and inland regions. The government has recently extended the special support available to the coastal cities to the interior, and has begun to invest heavily in roads, high speed railways and other connecting infrastructure in “logistics corridors”.

To sum up, China’s NUP has been geared above all to fostering quantitative economic growth, with less concern for social equity and environmental sustainability. This is changing as the government seeks to rebalance the economy towards domestic consumption and particularly service industries. Consumer-driven growth will be led by the major cities and influenced by the extent to which migrant households gain greater security, become more integrated socially, and adjust from being savers to being spenders. This also implies a new approach to urban growth, based on creating more liveable and inclusive cities, which make more sustainable use of land and natural resources.

Annex 3. The role of science, innovation and technology in sustainable urbanization

Science, technology and innovation are key elements of sustainable urbanization and will play a growing role as such. Their use may not solve all urbanization problems, yet can provide a multitude of solutions that can be leveraged by cities. The use of science, technology and innovation in the urban context implies the application of both high and low technology and innovative approaches to urban planning and institutional innovation. Science, technology and innovation approaches are widely available for cities to draw upon, yet cities are complex structures that require integrated responses to their problems and there are sometimes difficulties related to such integration.

Science, technology and innovation contribute to sustainable urbanization in a variety of ways, including with regard to new capabilities in spatial planning, socio-economic research, and enhancing cooperation between urban departments, optimizing mobility and enabling sustainable resource management. A science, technology and innovation-oriented mindset also brings about innovative models of thinking in urban governance, such as for participatory budgeting and regional urban planning. Moreover, ICTs have brought positive changes in the way people live, boosted social prosperity, and have had a significant impact on the growth of urban economies. In this regard, ICTs help with increasing resource efficiency, improving quality of life, reducing and monitoring greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improving waste management techniques.

Given the potential of ICTs in urban development, the concept of ‘Internet of Things’ (IoT), involving an extensive network of interconnected people, devices as well as other physical systems, aids the upgrading and transformation of urban infrastructure through intelligent buildings and transportation systems, smart energy and water networks and disaster risk management systems. Finally, science, technology and innovation contribute to social inclusion by improving the tools available to urban planners to respond to the needs of excluded groups and to increase sensitivity to gender equality. Each urban setting faces different challenges and has different technology needs. In some cases,

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inexpensive and readily available technologies may be the best solution to urban problems. For example, intermodal transport services can be designed without necessarily requiring expensive high technology means of transport. Promoting bicycles, an affordable, healthy, clean and energy-efficient technology, may be the best option to improve mobility in many cities, for both younger and older citizens.

**Annex 4. Entrepreneurship training and urban youth employment: Ideas from the Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID) Campaign**

The need of any country for a sizable pool of educated, entrepreneurial, and industrial human resources has long been recognized as a pre-requisite for long-term development and economic success. Through inclusive and sustainable industrial development, educational opportunities are enhanced at all-levels through the gender-responsive provision of quality educational materials and infrastructure, research and training opportunities.

Education is also a crucial basis for creating the necessary opportunities for young people to enter the formal economy and/or find employment, reduce the possibility of mismatches between jobseeker skills and the labour market and achieving reduced levels of inequality and shared prosperity for all. The creation of an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, research and innovation is crucial to harnessing the creative energies that propel economic growth, particularly for vulnerable demographics, such as young people and women in urban areas suffering from high structural unemployment.

Entrepreneurship is a major building block of industrialization, and one which provides opportunities for young people to grow and prosper, who thereby contribute to the prosperity of their communities. Yet many developing countries today lack a strong culture of entrepreneurial dynamism, with young people finding many barriers to capitalizing on their creative instincts. If well introduced, gender-responsive entrepreneurship training programmes and curricula lay the groundwork for private sector development and longer-term prospects for the economic future of a country. The programme introduces entrepreneurship as a subject in general secondary schools or technical and vocational schools on a nationwide basis.

Such programmes provide young people with greater knowledge, confidence and capacity to invest in and establish their own enterprises, leading to a vibrant and productive Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise sector. ISID projects can thus form the keystone in alleviating youth unemployment in urban areas.

**Annex 5. Urban heritage conservation in Stone Town of Zanzibar**

The Stone Town is the centre of the greater city of Zanzibar and houses much of the island’s commercial and government activity. It is famous for its traditional coral stone buildings, intricate balconies, massive carved doors and narrow bazaar streets. With the rapid population growth in Zanzibar town, lack of maintenance and uncontrolled new constructions, the fabric of the Old Stone Town has been under increasing pressure. Not only are many historic buildings very dilapidated – some have even collapsed – but in some instances residents in traditional buildings have partitioned, altered, added onto, or demolished and replaced the traditional buildings with new structures. Realizing the need to preserve the Stone Town in Zanzibar, the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority was established in 1985, and the Stone Town Conservation Plan was approved in 1994. The plan, designed to coordinate the conservation initiatives in the Stone Town, lays out a general planning framework and establishes the broad conservation and development policies for the Stone Town. The plan proposes controls on the use and development of land, measures to protect individual buildings, street elements and open areas, and measures to develop and improve parcels of land and other larger spaces in the central area, including methods to improve parking and circulation of vehicular traffic around the Stone Town. As a result of the work of the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority and its partners, several buildings in

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the Stone Town have been gazette as monuments, while numerous others have been repaired and restored and 80 per cent of the streets in the Stone Town have been paved.

Cost-benefit analysis has confirmed the value of conservation in Stone Town of Zanzibar, as illustrated by a recent project in the Stone Town. The project aims to improve access to urban services and help conserve the Stone Town’s traditional seafront, thereby safeguarding its UNESCO World Heritage status. A World Bank loan supports the rehabilitation of the Stone Town’s sea wall and refurbishment of the adjacent Mizingani Road, which are both in danger of collapse. Investments also include improving key infrastructure below the roadbed and creating a pedestrian promenade with landscaping, street lighting and street furniture along the seafront. The preservation of the value of the historic area and avoiding replacement costs by preventing collapse of the sea wall, the road and other key infrastructure are some of the direct benefits. Indirect benefits were calculated based on the continued growth in revenue from Zanzibar’s tourism. The cost-benefit analysis conducted for the Zanzibar project estimates that investing US$8.3 million brought a net present value of US$15 million. The 47% internal rate of return indicates the benefits generated through investing in heritage – in this case in the rehabilitation of the sea wall and road. In addition, the project has a number of non-quantifiable benefits, including enhanced urban aesthetics and quality of life, thanks to the improvements along the sea wall and promenade.

While the Stone Town area of Zanzibar Town attracts plenty of tourists, other parts of the town are lagging behind in terms of living standards and tourism income. This is why a project was set up to achieve sustainable development through heritage in more neglected neighbourhoods. The project’s initial phase included the formulation of a comprehensive development plan for the Ng’amo neighbourhood. Unknown to many, Ng’amo, also known as the ‘other side’ of Zanzibar Town, has been largely ignored in the past despite an equally rich heritage. Stone Town and Ng’amo share the tradition of a sophisticated network of public, semi-public and private open spaces that are key to the sociability of neighbourhoods. Following successful rehabilitation projects in the Stone Town, the inhabitants of Ng’amo showed their concern about public spaces – including spaces for children, community exchange, barazas (or mass meetings) and movement corridors – often neglected in the midst of new development projects. The project applied a fully participatory model. During public consultations, the community expressed its vision for maintaining the area’s heritage and the need for more open spaces as opposed to the infringement by new developments. In response, the Zanzibar Government, with the support of a wide range of partners, started a number of initiatives, including the implementation of the Hifadi Zanzibar model, which aims to promote heritage-based urban regeneration through the renewal of buildings and urban spaces, and a series of projects to restore the area that respects the traditional use of public spaces and heritage buildings in order to enhance the quality of life of its inhabitants and to potentially increase tourism revenues.

Annex 6. Social and economic development through heritage in Old Cairo (Egypt)\(^\text{10}\)

In 1984, His Highness the Aga Khan decided to finance the creation of a park for the citizens of Cairo. The only suitable central location was the dilapidated Darassa site, a 30 hectare (74 acre) mound of rubble adjacent to the historic centre. Today, the project has evolved to include the rehabilitation of important monuments and buildings in the historic city, as well as socio-economic initiatives, such as housing rehabilitation, microfinance and the creation of apprenticeships and healthcare facilities in the adjoining low-income Darb al-Ahmar district. The park, where jobs were created for young men and women in horticulture and restoration of monuments, attracts over 1 million visitors a year. A housing credit scheme is aiding inhabitants in the rehabilitation of their own houses, so that housing remains affordable and of good quality for the local residents. The project intended to provide an alternative to the decline of historic neighbourhoods and encroachment by commercial developers. This is why it aimed in the first place to stimulate rehabilitation without displacing residents, by ensuring that they have a stake in the future of their community and by helping to create viable businesses through the provision of micro-credit and assisting owners to restore their crumbling houses. Community priorities, including restoration of houses, health, education, solid waste disposal, job training and jobs, are now being addressed. The construction of the park and the restoration of monuments were catalysts for socio-economic development and the overall improvement of the quality of life in the district. In addition, the

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park’s spectacular views over historic Cairo’s countless architectural treasures draw tourists and people from other areas of the city alike to the once-neglected area.


**Mega urban-regions:** Mega-regions surpass mega- and meta-cities by population and economic output, combining large markets, skilled labour and innovation, and amalgamating several cities within the orbit of the overall region.

*Example:* Japan’s Tokyo-Nagoya-Osaka-Kyoto-Kobe region, with a population close to 60 million.

**Urban corridors:** A number of urban centres of various sizes are connected along transportation routes in linear development axes that are often linked to a number of megalopolises, encompassing hinterlands. New developments in some fringe areas experience the fastest growth rates and the most rapid urban transformation.

*Example:* in Malaysia, the Kuala Lumpur-Klang corridor along the Klang Valley.

**City-regions:** City-regions take on a larger scale than large cities, expanding beyond formal administrative boundaries to engulf smaller ones as well as semi-urban and rural hinterlands, and even merging with other intermediate cities, creating large conurbations that eventually form city-regions.

*Examples:* Sao Paulo, Brazil; Cape Town, South Africa; Bangkok, Thailand.

Annex 8. Plateau Beaubourg, Paris, France

Under Prime Minister Georges Pompidou, the French government decided to create a new museum of contemporary art in the centre of Paris, a public museum that would follow the historic tradition of *grands projets* set two hundred years earlier by the Louvre, and also demonstrate that the country had not lost its creative edge. This strategy had an educational as well as a promotional goal. A multipurpose museum of contemporary art would reach out to young French people, especially those who had been most disaffected by the political protests of 1968, and foster their creativity. But it would also connect creativity to industrial design and encourage innovation in all fields, from the ‘pure’ to the commercial, and from atonal music to conceptual art. It was a foregone conclusion, in such a centralized system, that such a great museum would only be built in Paris.

Yet the government envisioned the museum as not only revitalizing French creativity, but also as stimulating the redevelopment of a dilapidated part of the inner city. In fact, the buildings on the *plateau* Beaubourg that were torn down to build the Centre Georges Pompidou were shabby and lacked modern conveniences. With its boldly modern architecture, and the crowds of young people, both Parisians and foreign tourists, who came to ride the external elevators and congregate outside, the spectacular museum that replaced them immediately infused this area of the city with new cultural capital. The Beaubourg quickly developed into a world-class tourist attraction.

Its success was not identified with a permanent collection of art. Instead, the museum was identified partly with the Beaubourg’s innovative programmes and initially free admission and partly with Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano’s signature, high tech building design. This image of the Beaubourg quickly became as potent a symbol of the city as the Eiffel Tower. It was featured in architecture and news magazines around the world and drew crowds to the large, open space in front of the building, which became a gathering place for young people, street entertainers, and tourists from abroad: a postmodern plaza. The Centre Pompidou’s success in ‘branding’ Paris strongly suggested that big investments in flagship cultural projects could revitalize a city’s economy and reputation—even though, or maybe especially if, the architects who built the project came from overseas.

Annex 9. Climate change mitigation initiatives developed by international city networks

The Climate Group City Partnerships focus on the role of some of the world’s biggest cities in demonstrating and delivering the public-private partnerships that, according to them, will build up the low-carbon economy. The initiative includes the partnerships Forward Chicago in the US, and the Mumbai Energy Alliance in India.

The C40 Urban Life Programme is a partnership between the C40 and Arup, a consultancy firm that operates as a co-operative to implement Arup’s Sustainable Development Integrated Approach in several

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cities. The approach will be piloted in Toronto (Canada), and there are plans to extend the programme to five other cities.

The **C40 Carbon Financing** is a capacity-building programme to assist existing and emerging megacities to harness the carbon finance opportunities of the Kyoto Protocol.

The **Clinton Foundation Building Retrofit Program** focuses on energy efficiency in buildings and has, so far, completed 250 projects in 20 megacities around the world.

The **Clinton Foundation Transportation Program** focuses both on developing urban transportation systems such as bus rapid transits (BRTs) and advancing carbon-neutral transport technologies such as hybrid cars.

### Annex 10. Ecocity design

The process of urbanization is usually closely intertwined with industrialization, since it allows societies to benefit from agglomeration economies. Eco-cities are areas where urban planning and environmental tools are applied to pursue synergies in resource utilization, waste management, environmental preservation, industrial development and a healthy living environment. The construction of eco-cities, as part of a strategy of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, can facilitate cross-dimensional outcomes and opportunities in urban areas, ranging from cleaner energy and waste management solutions to greater employment opportunities and skills development. The eco-city concept thus marries the imperatives of economic growth, shared prosperity and greater productivity whilst minimizing environmental degradation. Furthermore, modern urban planning approaches such as that of eco-cities/Smart Cities allow for sustainable improvements to essential infrastructure, such as public transport, as well as to housing and utilities, while safeguarding the environment through reduced carbon-emissions, wastage of energy and raw materials, and the deployment of cleaner production methods. Below is a description of ecocity design by Ecocity Builders.

“Ecocity design relates to practically all scales of development, and, if applied across those scales, would be a solution of sufficient power to preserve and restore the health of the planet. We have been hearing for some years now that “more than half the people in the world are now living in cities.” But what is important to notice is that probably 90% or more of us – almost all of us – live in either cities, towns or villages and at all those scales our built community can be either designed upon the foundation of ecological understanding or without it. What is an ecocity?

Simply put, an ecocity is an ecologically healthy city. Because each city is unique, there is no one-size-fits-all ecocity model or one way to get there from where we are now. At the same time, there are basic characteristics ecocities share that are analogous to healthy ecosystems and living organisms.

An ecocity is...

- An ecologically healthy human settlement modelled on the self-sustaining resilient structure and function of natural ecosystems and living organisms.
- An entity that includes its inhabitants and their ecological impacts.
- A subsystem of the ecosystems of which it is part — of its watershed, bioregion, and ultimately, of the planet.
- A subsystem of the regional, national and world economic system.

**Ecocities as ecosystems**: An ecosystem is a biological environment consisting of all the organisms living in a particular area, as well as all the non-living, physical components of the environment with which the organisms interact, such as air, soil, water, and sunlight. Urban entities (cities, towns and villages) are urban ecosystems. They are also part of larger systems that provide essential services that are often undervalued, as many of them are without market value. Broad examples include: regulating (climate, floods, nutrient balance, water filtration), provisioning (food, medicine), cultural (science, spiritual, ceremonial, recreation, aesthetic) and supporting (nutrient cycling, photosynthesis, soil formation).

**Ecocities as analogous to living organisms**: Like living organisms, cities (including their inhabitants) exhibit and require systems for movement (transport), respiration (processes to obtain energy), sensitivity (responding to its environment), growth (evolving/changing over time), reproduction (including education

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and training, construction, planning and development, etc.), excretion (outputs and wastes), and nutrition
(need for air, water, soil, food for inhabitants, materials, etc.).

At its core, Ecocity Builders and associates’ definition of “ecocity” is conditional upon a healthy
relationship of the city’s parts and functions, similar to the relationship of organs in living complex
organism. We are concerned with city design, planning, building, and operations in an integral way and in
relation to the surrounding environment and natural resources of the region, utilizing organic, ecological
and whole-systems lessons to actually reverse the negative impacts of climate change, species extinction
and the destruction of the biosphere.

The ecocity model seeks to provide a practical vision for a sustainable and restorative human presence on
this planet and suggests a path towards its achievement through the rebuilding of cities, towns and
villages in balance with living systems.”

Annex 11. Shaping Smart Sustainable Cities Worldwide

The concept of smart sustainable cities (SSC) has gained significant attention in the last few years. ITU’s
Focus Group on Smart Sustainable Cities (FG-SSC) conducted significant research on this topic. The FG-
SSC was a multi-stakeholder group of over 200 experts from different backgrounds, including city
representatives, that developed the first internationally agreed standard that defines a “smart sustainable
city” as follows:

“A smart sustainable city is an innovative city that uses information and communication technologies (ICTs)
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 and
environmental aspects.”

ICTs play an important role in SSC by acting as the platform for the aggregation of information and data to
help provide an improved understanding on how a city is functioning in terms of resource consumption,
services, and lifestyles.

Within SSC, ICT can enable the following: (i) ICT-enabled information and knowledge sharing (ii) ICT-
enabled forecasts and (iii) ICT-enabled integration. Data prediction, analytics, big data, open data,
Internet of things (IoT), data accessibility and management, data security, mobile broadband, ubiquitous
sensor networks.

The main systems within SSC are:

(a) Smart energy: Smart energy management systems utilize sensors, advanced meters, digital
controls and analytic tools to automate, monitor, and control energy flows. These systems are
built using the latest technologies and deliver energy efficient results.

(b) Intelligent sustainable buildings: These building systems can make intelligent modifications to
improve building energy efficiency, reduce wastage, and make optimum usage of water with
operational effectiveness and to the satisfaction of residents.

(c) Smart transportation: Smart transportation systems collect information and monitor mobility
patterns and fuel efficiency levels.

(d) Smart water: Smart water systems use ICT to provide access to safe water, manage demand and
supply, and develop a pricing mechanism using meters.

(e) Smart waste: These systems will enable the implementation of waste tracking systems to sort,
monitor and control the movement of different kinds of waste.

(f) Smart physical safety and security: These systems include the use of technologies such as video
surveillance, video analytics, and biometrics.

(g) Smart health care: Smart health care systems include the availability of remote treatment or tele-
assistance, online medical services, an electronic health management system and even remote
monitoring systems for patients.

(h) Smart education: Smart education systems involve the use of ICTs for imparting knowledge to
students and may also be used for vocational training. These systems can significantly reduce the

14 Sources: ITU-T Focus Group on Smart Sustainable Cities, Technical Report on “An overview of smart sustainable cities and the role
of information and communication technologies”, October 2014; ITU-T Focus Group on Smart Sustainable Cities (FG-SSC), Technical
cost of education and allow people to study subjects and learn skills of their choice.

In essence, a smart sustainable city strives to create a sustainable living environment for all its citizens through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs).

Annex 12. The Safer Nairobi initiative

The strategy involves a two-year action plan based upon four pillars:

- Better enforcement of existing laws and by-laws;
- Improvement of urban design and the environment;
- Community empowerment; and
- Socially oriented measures providing support for groups at risk, including children, youth, women and street families.

The major elements of the strategy are:

- the adoption and implementation of a local safety action plan;
- local diagnoses of insecurity, involving a crime victimization study, youth offender profiling and a study of violence against women;
- extensive discussion of survey findings with stakeholders groups, including communities, the private sector, women’s groups;
- a city-wide residents convention held in 2003 that approved the city-wide crime prevention strategy, later endorsed by the City Council;
- the establishment of an inter-departmental committee on safety and security within the city council under the auspices of the mayor;
- safety audits conducted in key locations;
- launch of a Safer Spaces and Streets Campaign with two pilot projects;
- publication of a quarterly newsletter on city safety and security;
- establishment of a local coordinating team and office;
- progressive development of action-oriented partnerships;
- broad-based stakeholder consultations and reviews;
- training and exchange visits; and
- lighting up of Nairobi’s slums and streets.

It is still too early to draw overall conclusions on the success of the programme since it is trying to combat what are, in some cases, quite long-term trends and since it is seeking not merely to undertake specific projects targeted at specific problems, but also to change the ways in which crime and public safety issues are tackled in Nairobi. But what is already clear is that there have been some specific successes – for example, the programme of lighting Nairobi’s streets and slums is seen as a success both in aesthetic terms and in addressing some of the people’s fears of crime and violence. In addition, the problems of youth-related crime (including its street-life elements) are not only better understood, but are also being tackled through a longer-term strategy

Notes and list of references


5 According to the World Bank, the number of the world’s poor living on less than $1.25 a day decreased from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 1.3 billion in 2008. However, updated economic projections by the IMF and the World Bank indicate that an estimated 97 million people will continue to live on under $1.25 a day in 2015, equivalent to 15.5 per cent of the population in the developing world. Shaohua Chen and Martin Ravallion, 2012.


7 UN-Habitat shows that the absolute number of the world’s slum population is not decline; on the contrary, the figure has been rising from 650 million in 1990, to 767 million in 2000 and to 863 million in 2012. UN-Habitat, database, 2014


9 It is estimated that in the next 15 years the world’s slum population will grow by around 7 million every year. Ibid.

10 In Europe, 17 families out of 100 were considered at risk of poverty in 2007. López M. Eduardo, “Addressing New Forms of Poverty and Exclusion in Europe”, European Commission, World and European Sustainable Cities, Insights from EU Research, 2010.

11 López M. Eduardo, 2010. Ibid.


14 Poor urban planning increases inequality in cities by limiting job opportunities, aggravating gender disparities, intensifying crime, limiting the access to public goods and reducing forms of social capital. UN-Habitat, CAIf, “Construcción de ciudades más equitativas: políticas públicas para la inclusión en América Latina”, 2014.


16 UNAIDS, Cities Report, 2014

17 WHO, UN-Habitat, Hidden Cities: Unmasking and Overcoming Health Inequalities in Urban Settings”, Switzerland, 2010


19 Almost one billion people live in slums without basic services and social protection according to UN Habitat, State of the World’s Cities 2012-2013: Prosperity of Cities, op. cit.

20 UNEP IRP

21 Globally, with a population share of just above 50 per cent, cities concentrate between 60 to 80 per cent of energy consumption, and generate as much as 70 per cent of CO2 emissions.

22 Between 1950 and 2005, the urban population grew from 29 per cent to 49 per cent of the global population, while global carbon emissions from fossil-fuel burning increased by almost 500 per cent. UNEP, “Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication”, 2011.

23 IPCC, 2014.

24 http://www.who.int/topics/air_pollution/en/


26 World Bank, 2013.


28 OECD estimates that by 2050, 50 per cent of the world’s poor will live in such contexts.


30 Only in 2010, 18,167 homicides were recorded in Central America, mostly in urban areas, according to UNDP. This equates to, on average, a rate of some 42 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, a value that is similar to, or greater than, that of most contemporary armed conflicts.


32 Benito et. al., 2015.

33 Benito et. al. Ibid, p. 2.

34 Saxion University website: http://www.corruptie.org/en/corruption/what-is-corruption/.

35 UNACZ, 2005.


41 Ibid.