

Distinguished Vice-President of ECOSOC,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

[Slide 1 - cover page]

Thank you for the opportunity to present some key findings on the status of SDG 11 from the recently launched *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special Edition*. This report is prepared by DESA, in collaboration with more than 50 international and regional agencies.

[Slide 2]

The proportion of urban population living in slums declined slightly between 2014 and 2020. However, the total number of slum dwellers continues to rise with increasing urbanization. In 2020, an estimated 1.1 billion urban residents lived in slums or slum-like conditions. If current trends continue, over the next 30 years, 2 billion more people are expected to live in such settlements, mostly in developing countries.

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In 2022, only 51.6 per cent of the global urban population had convenient access to public transport. An estimated 1 billion people still lack access to all-weather roads in developing countries, where demand for mobility has been rising exponentially. In addition, in 2020, more than three-quarters of cities had less than 20 per cent of their area dedicated to open public spaces and streets, far short of the target of 45–50 per cent.

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Globally, air quality is improving, though this is largely driven by advancements in high-income countries. In 2019, towns in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, a region with a significant proportion of the world's population, experienced poorer air quality than cities. Tackling air pollution requires a shift in perspective, acknowledging that it is no longer an exclusively urban issue.

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The number of countries with national disaster risk reduction strategies rose from 55 in 2015 to 126 by 2022. In 2022, 102 countries reported having local governments with disaster risk reduction strategies, a substantial increase from 51 in 2015.

[Slide 6 – conclusion]

Ladies and gentlemen, there have been some gains in making cities more sustainable since 2015 – but progress is far too slow. The world now faces a moment of choice and consequence.

Efforts must focus on implementing urban development policies that prioritize access to basic services, affordable housing, efficient transportation and green spaces for all.

I invite you to visit our website for the full report.

Thank you for your attention.