

Input of UN-Habitat to ECOSOC in Preparation for the High-Level Political Forum, July 2020

1. Key policies and measures to ensure “accelerated action and transformative pathways” for realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development

a. Critical gaps in implementing the 2030 Agenda within the area of UN-Habitat (bearing in mind interrelations with other goals and targets)

Inequality: unmanaged urbanization separating groups of people geographically within subregions of countries and neighborhoods of cities creating spatial inequality that perpetuates discrimination, deepens social exclusion, and reinforces income inequality.

Stalled Economic Transformation: unmanaged urbanization that perpetuates low productivity agricultural sector, weakens investment in infrastructure connecting food production to urban consumer markets, undermines potential of light industry including food processing to absorb agricultural surplus, and proliferates low-wage, un-organized informal service sector stalling industrialization.

Climate Crisis: Unmanaged urbanization resulting in production and consumption of energy, housing, water, transportation, food and waste that worsens climate emissions and degrades the environment.

Climate Vulnerability: Unmanaged urbanization resulting in at risk populations living in urban and peri-urban areas prone to disasters exacerbated by the climate crisis

Conflict and Insecurity: Unmanaged urbanization leading to the spatial exclusion of refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons many of whom reside in subregions of countries and in neighborhoods of cities that lack access to basic services and housing and are not integrated into society.

b. Priority measures to:

i. Accelerate actions:

Policy: Adopt national urban policies that integrate urban development in national economic planning and development

Governance: Establish mechanisms for vertical integration and dialogue between central and local government

Planning: Strengthen inclusive urban planning through consultative processes that harness the ideas and expertise of neighborhood organizations, small business entrepreneurs, youth, large private industry, grassroots women, and professional associations.

Finance: Create regulatory environment and strengthen institutional capacity to mobilize public and private domestic finance, and alignment of investments by IFIs and foreign direct investment.

ii. Ensure transformative pathways to realize the decade of action for achieving the 2030 Agenda

Equality: Promote national territorial development and urban planning to reduce spatial inequality brought about by the separation of groups of people geographically within subregions of countries and neighborhoods of cities that exacerbate forms of discrimination, social exclusion and income inequality.

Prosperity: Improve livelihoods and balanced economic development by harnessing the opportunities of urbanization to increase productivity in rural agriculture, invest in infrastructure connecting rural agriculture to urban consumer markets, elevate food processing and light industry, bolster service sector utilizing economies of scale in cities for the delivery of basic services.

Climate Mitigation: Adopt a systems approach for climate action, integrating municipal regulations and planning practices on energy, food, waste, water, housing and mobility to achieve net-zero emissions and environmental sustainability.

Climate Adaptation: Adopt an urban systems approach for climate resilience for the urban poor at once eradicating poverty, creating employment and adapting to the consequences of extreme weather and rising sea levels.

Peace and Security: Integrate refugees and internally displaced persons in urban policy, planning and development

2. Contribution of UN-Habitat to accelerated action and transformative pathways and realizing the decade of action and delivery for achieving the 2030 Agenda within its area of responsibility (including its cooperation with ECOSOC and other intergovernmental bodies)

New Urban Agenda: Adopted by Member States RES/71/536 following the Habitat III Conference in Quito, the New Urban Agenda advances the above-mentioned transformative pathways and accelerated actions to enable Member States realize the decade of action. UN-Habitat is mandated by the General Assembly to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the New Urban Agenda as a road map for SDG 11 and related targets of associated goals. It does so in collaboration with other UN entities under the UN systemwide strategy for sustainable urban development. And in collaboration with key constituencies of the New Urban Agenda that include local and regional governments, grassroots organizations, professional associations, youth, business leaders, and women's organizations among others.

United Nations Habitat Assembly: In May 2019, 122 Member States convened the inaugural session following the adopted by the General Assembly to establish a new governance structure for UN-Habitat, RES/73/256. In addition to adopting the strategic plan of UN-Habitat, the intergovernmental body is mandated to establish global policy on housing and urban development much as the World Health Assembly is mandated to establish global health policy. The constituencies of the New Urban Agenda have observer status in the Habitat Assembly and actively engage Member States on seminal issues of urban policy. The Habitat Assembly convenes every four years in Nairobi, Kenya.

World Urban Forum: Hosted by a municipality appointed by UN-Habitat through a competitive selection process, the World Urban Forum meets every two years. It is a non-legislative platform for knowledge exchange and networking among 15,000 government and local and non-State actors. The World Urban Forum provides a platform for participants from over 100 countries to discuss innovations in affordable

housing and sustainable urban development. It also enables constituencies of the New Urban Agenda to network and identify priorities for consideration by the Habitat Assembly to inform global urban policy.

United Nations Systemwide Strategy for Sustainable Urbanization: Adopted by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) at its session in May 2019, the strategy recognizes urbanization as a “megatrend” requiring a whole-of -UN approach. It offers guidelines to the UN system on sustainable urban development for implementation by 35 UN entities, 7 UN regional collaboration platforms, and Resident Coordinators and UN country teams operating in 120 countries. The strategy underscores the transformative role urbanization plays in promoting the core elements of the 2030 Agenda on people, prosperity, planet and peace. It also provides accelerated actions, as set out in the New Urban Agenda to achieve SDG11 and numerous targets of multiple sustainable development goals.

UN-Habitat: as a programme of the United Nations mandated to assist Member States promote affordable housing and sustainable urban development, UN-Habitat is well placed to promote the above-mentioned accelerated actions and transformative pathways to enable Member States realize the decade of action. It does so by working with governments and various local and non-State actors, providing diagnostic tools and knowledge products as well as program development support, policy advisory services and targeted technical assistance. UN-Habitat complements these efforts by facilitating global efforts to monitor progress towards the achievement of SDG 11 and associated goals, and to monitor the implementation of the New Urban Agenda so essential for the attainment of the goals.

ECOSOC: as a specialized, technical programme of the United Nations Secretariat (along with UNODC, OCHA, and UNEP), UN-Habitat reports annually through the Secretary-General to ECOSOC under the Management Segment. UN-Habitat is an active participant in various commissions convened under the auspices of ECOSOC on Statistics, Social Development, Status of Women, Population, and the High-Level Political Forum, among others.

3. Selected recommendations for accelerating progress and moving on transformative pathways for realizing the decade of action, for possible use in drafting the HLPF declaration, as noted in Annex with examples of areas that could be addressed as part of the input of UN-Habitat.

Number 1. Advancing human well-being and building human capacity, including on eradicating poverty, advancing gender equality and reducing other forms of inequality, universal provision of and access to quality basic services, such as health, education, water, energy, sanitation, disaster risk management, information and communication technology, transport, adequate housing and social protection as well as ensuring that no one is left behind, focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable at the global, regional and national levels and meeting SDGs for all nations, peoples and segments of society;

Promoting national territorial development and urban planning to reduce spatial inequality brought about by the separation of groups of people geographically within subregions of countries and neighborhoods of cities that exacerbate forms of discrimination, social exclusion and income inequality

Number 2. Reducing inequalities in wealth and income through sustainable and just economies, providing adequate and well-directed financing, an enabling environment for sustainable investments and delivering on commitments to international cooperation, aligned to longer-term sustainability pathways and solving challenges through cooperation and partnerships at all levels;

Improving livelihoods and balanced economic development by harnessing the opportunities of urbanization to increase productivity in rural agriculture, invest in infrastructure connecting rural

agriculture to urban consumer markets, elevate food processing and light industry, bolster service sector utilizing economies of scale in cities for the delivery of basic services,

Number 3. Enhancing national implementation by proactively mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda into national planning instruments, policies, strategies and financial frameworks, while respecting national processes and ensuring ownership;

Adopting national urban policies that integrate urban development in national economic planning and development

Number 5. Promoting clean, reliable and modern energy sources, including by harnessing the potential of decentralized renewable energy solutions and collaborating to reshape global energy system in order to achieve transition to net-zero CO2 emissions by mid-century including by introducing carbon pricing and phasing out fossil fuel subsidies;

Adopting a systems approach for climate action, integrating municipal regulations and planning practices on energy, food, waste, water, housing and mobility to achieve net-zero emissions and environmental sustainability

Number 8. Implementing policies, investment and innovation to reduce disaster risk and build the resilience of countries, economies, communities and individuals to economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters;

Adopt an urban systems approach for climate resilience for the urban poor at once eradicating poverty, creating employment, and adapting to the consequences of extreme weather and rising sea levels.

Number 9. Investing in data and statistics for the SDGs and strengthening statistical capacities to address gaps in data on the Sustainable Development Goals in order to allow countries to provide high-quality, timely, reliable, disaggregated data and statistics and to fully integrate the Sustainable Development Goals in monitoring and reporting systems;

Adopting an agreement on a functional definition of urban areas and on sampling methods to aggregate national statistics that together establish basis for Member States to compare the extent and rate of urbanization and to disaggregate data in rural and urban areas and in geographical units within cities.

Number 10. Bolstering local action including at urban and peri-urban areas to accelerate implementation including by giving more autonomy and resources to local governments to engage in effective, evidence-based and inclusive participatory policymaking with an engaged and informed citizenry;

Establishing mechanisms for vertical integration and dialogue between central and local government and strengthen inclusive urban planning through consultative processes that harness the ideas and expertise of neighborhood organizations, small business entrepreneurs, youth, large private industry, grassroots women, and professional associations.