

Input for the 2025 High-level Political Forum
UN Habitat

Your assessment of the impacts of the multiple and interconnected crises on the implementation of SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14 and 17.

Cities are where services are delivered (SDG3), where jobs are created (SDG 8), where climate action comes to life (SDG 14), where communities thrive (SDG 5), and where actors can respond to crises (SDG17).

The housing crisis, affecting 2.8 billion people with inadequate housing, 1.1 billion in informal settlements, and 300 million homeless, is deeply interconnected with multiple crises. It exacerbates inequalities and undermines progress on SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14, and 17.

SDG 3: Inadequate, unsafe, and unaffordable housing increases stress, anxiety, and vulnerability to diseases. Overcrowding accelerates disease transmission, while poor sanitation and contaminated water heighten health risks. Poorly planned urban areas with limited access to healthcare, safe mobility, green spaces, and nutritious food further impact urban well-being.

SDG 5: Women are disproportionately affected by insecure tenure, limiting their economic independence and resilience. Lack of adequate housing and participation increases their vulnerability to violence, displacement and poverty. Strengthening land tenure rights, housing finance, and gender responsive budgeting is critical for advancing gender equality.

SDG 8: Housing drives economic activity; generating jobs in construction, infrastructure, and services. Secure housing enables workforce participation and productivity, while well-planned mixed-use cities and regions attract investment and innovation.

SDG 14: Poorly planned housing and informal settlements contribute to coastal degradation, wastewater mismanagement, marine pollution. Unregulated urban expansion and poor land-use planning increase vulnerabilities. Climate-resilient housing, nature-based solutions, and sustainable water management are essential for mitigation.

SDG 17: Addressing the housing crisis requires strengthened global cooperation, increased ODA, collaboration between national and local governments, and innovative financing mechanisms such as land-based financing.

Three key areas where sustainable, inclusive, science-and evidence-based solutions for achieving the SDGs and leaving no one behind are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2025, also bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets.

- **Adequate Housing for All**

Addressing the global housing crisis through a multi-stakeholder platform that promotes access to adequate, affordable, and sustainable housing. This initiative leverages data-driven policy recommendations, spatial planning, innovative financing mechanisms, and inclusive governance approaches to support national and local governments in achieving SDG 11 as well as SDG 3, 5 and 8 and ensuring housing as a foundation for prosperity, well-being, human right and economic participation.

- Compact and efficient urban development

Implementing evidence-based urban growth monitoring tools to promote compact, resource-efficient cities while curbing urban sprawl. By integrating geospatial data, smart technologies, land value capture mechanisms, participatory urban planning approaches, and inclusive policy frameworks, these cities can enhance resilience to climate change (SDG 14), improve public health (SDG3), and expand economic opportunities (SDG 8). This approach strengthens proximity-based planning, ensuring access to essential basic services, while also preventing inequalities, environmental degradation, and biodiversity loss.

- Advancing a better quality of life for all

A comprehensive, science-based approach to measuring and improving well-being in urban areas by integrating economic, social, environmental, and governance indicators. The framework supports policy decisions that prioritize inclusive urban services, mobility, public spaces, and environmental sustainability, directly contributing to SDG 3 , SDG 10 (, SDG 8 and SDG 11.

These three areas collectively foster sustainable urbanization, social inclusion, and evidence-driven decision-making to leave no one behind in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda.

Three examples of measures to accelerate progress towards SDGs through well-coordinated actions in key transitions to bring progress to scale (food security, energy access and affordability, digital connectivity, education, jobs and social protection, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution), building on interlinkages between SDGs to ensure cohesive progress.

To accelerate progress towards the SDGs through well-coordinated actions in key transitions, UN-Habitat emphasizes the following three measures:

Localizing the SDGs through the Local2030 Coalition: The Local2030 Coalition is the UN system-wide platform to advance the localization of the 2030 Agenda, in particular the six SDG transitions and the Pact for the Future. It provides a common space for the UN to engage and empower every actor of local sustainable development, The Coalition enhances advocacy, builds institutional capacities, scales up impact of local initiatives, contributes to channel finance towards local action, and produces knowledge and evidence. It does so through its 14 UN member entities, its 5 Constituencies, and external partners.

Implementing the SDG Cities Initiative: The SDG Cities Initiative supports cities in creating integrated solutions that drive progress across multiple SDGs, ensuring cohesive and scalable urban development addressing challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss. It does so by leveraging the potential of data for evidence-based decision-making, fostering access to finance, while building the capacities of city administrations and city leaders. It facilitates city-to-city partnership and peer-learning through its SDG Cities Global Community.

Adopting people-centred Smart City Guidelines: By integrating technology, innovation and data analytics, these guidelines assist cities in improving service delivery, optimizing resource use, and enhancing citizen engagement. This smart approach addresses key transitions like energy efficiency, digital connectivity, circular economy and sustainable infrastructure, contributing to achieving various SDGs through innovative and evidence-based solutions.

These measures exemplify UN-Habitat's commitment to fostering sustainable urban development through localized, data-driven, and technologically advanced strategies, ensuring cohesive progress across the SDGs.

Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration and the outcomes of the 2024 Summit of the Future, to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UN-Habitat is taking concrete follow-up actions to implement the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration and the outcomes of the 2024 Summit of the Future. These efforts focus on strengthening housing policies, empowering local and regional governments (LRGs), and advancing sustainable urbanization.

UN-Habitat Assembly and Strategic Plan 2026–2029: Guided by the UN-Habitat Assembly, UN-Habitat has developed its Strategic Plan 2026–2029, with a focus on promoting access to housing, land & basic services to all, including slums transformation, to align with the broader UN system, the QCPR, and key global priorities. The plan integrates the outcomes of the 2024 Summit of the Future and the SDG Summit. The UN-Habitat Assembly is set to approve this new Strategic Plan in May 2025, with implementation beginning in January 2026.

Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All: Established in December 2024, this working group is developing strategies to expand access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing. It supports the implementation of the New Urban Agenda by addressing housing affordability, security of tenure, and financial mechanisms to scale up sustainable housing solutions. (UNHA Resolution 2/7).

Strengthening global partnerships for SDG localisation through the Local 2030 Coalition and SDG Cities Initiative: UN-Habitat is enhancing local governance and city-led solutions through these initiatives.

The Local 2030 Coalition fosters partnerships to localize the SDGs, ensuring city-level action in critical transitions like housing, climate resilience, and social protection. The SDG Cities Initiative strengthens cities' capacities, enabling data-driven decision-making and financing mechanisms to improve urban infrastructure and services.

These coordinated actions, driven by UN-Habitat's governing bodies and forums, ensure that housing and sustainable urbanization remain central to achieving the 2030 Agenda, leaving no one behind.

Recommendations and key messages to be considered for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2025 HLPF.

Scaling Up Access to Adequate Housing for All: Prioritizing access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing remains essential for sustainable development. Addressing the global housing crisis requires forward-looking housing policies, climate adaptive solutions, increased housing finance including through land-based financing mechanisms, and innovative partnerships. Vulnerable populations, including those living in informal settlements, facing forced evictions and the homeless require particular attention. Strengthening Local and Regional Governments and Multilevel Governance: Successful implementation of the SDGs depends on effective multilevel governance anchored on localization and empowered local and regional governments. National policies should be inclusive and equip cities with urban and territorial planning tools, institutional capacity, and the financial and technical resources. Enhancing Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships localising the SDGs: Stronger global, regional, national, and local partnerships are crucial. Civil society, the private sector, academia, and youth play a key role in advancing these efforts. Initiatives such as the Local2030 Coalition and SDG Cities illustrate the potential of multi-level partnerships to drive urban sustainability and resilience. Unlocking Finance for Cities and Human Settlements: Expanding financial flows to cities and local governments, including for affordable housing, urban health, climate-resilient infrastructure, gender-inclusive economic development and sustainable infrastructure, is a key priority. Promoting economic growth and social protection through sustainable urbanization: Cities are key drivers of economic transformation and must be at the center of efforts to create green jobs, enhance social protection, and reduce inequalities (SDG 8, SDG 5. Regional Dimension of Sustainable Development: Implementing housing and urban policies at the regional and transnational level will promote equity and sustainability.