STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE FOR A SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE URBAN FUTURE

Insights from the UN-Habitat Expert Group Meeting on Urban Governance

JULY 2021
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 26-27 April 2021, the Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS) of UN-Habitat hosted a two-day Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on governance for a sustainable and inclusive urban future. The objective of the EGM was to share global, regional and country perspectives and insights on governance challenges and opportunities, with a view of capturing the key trends and defining some niche areas of intervention for UN-Habitat, as well as finding synergies and areas of collaboration with external partners. The event gathered more than 200 participants from diverse professional backgrounds, all regions and representing a wide array of countries with different socio-economic development levels, governance arrangements, policy/legal traditions, all facing different challenges but also devising unique solutions.

The purpose of this report is to disseminate the key insights from the EGM and create a shared vision for how governance can be strengthened for a sustainable and inclusive urban future. The first section outlines UN-Habitat’s work on governance to date and reiterates the centrality of governance for achieving the goals of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. In section 2, the report takes stock of governance trends across different regions around the world and the following section 3 summarizes the insights that emerged on four key themes of the EGM:

- The Future of Urban Governance
- Multi-level Governance
- Partnerships in Governance
- Digital Governance

“A key insight from the regions was that realities and dynamics on the ground are changing, and as such governance approaches need to be adaptive to these new processes by having *locally relevant interventions that respond to the real needs of the people* to avoid a loss of trust in public institutions.

This requires fostering the dialogue between citizens and the government by treating people as *co-creators and harnessing the power of social networks for knowledge exchange.*

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“*It is only through shared responsibility and collective action that governmental and non-governmental actors can come together to ensure all people realize their potential as members of an interconnected, fragile planetary ecosystem.*”

*Rafael Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat*
Innovation has to be **inclusive** however, for example by ensuring broad access to technological services and infrastructure, promoting literacy skills and digital rights, privacy and integrity of public procurement. This requires governments to create an enabling regulatory framework for digital governance, something that UN-Habitat can contribute to.

The cross-cutting insight that stood out across all thematic areas is the need for **people-centred approaches** in urban governance. This is embodied by public engagement in decision-making; co-creation of solutions; equitable access to digital technologies; promotion of human rights; and multi-stakeholder partnerships that are driven by and focused on real needs of urban populations. Cities work for people and urban governance needs to reflect this reality. Strengthening the **social contract** between governments, the public, civil society, and private sector is essential to ensure that indeed, no one and no place is left behind.

The insights from the EGM will inform UN-Habitat's work going forward. Working towards promoting governance for a sustainable and inclusive urban future, UN-Habitat will continue to: develop common governance principles; offering networking platforms for partners; acting as a repository for urban governance tools; and leveraging the Agency’s soft power to facilitate effective inter-governmental coordination and inclusive multilateralism among urban stakeholders.

Areas of work that the Agency is already involved in will be advanced further, including functional and fiscal decentralization; enhancement of local revenue generation; promotion of public participation; and facilitation of multi-level governance through tools and methodologies. Possible new areas of focus for UN-Habitat include providing guidance on co-creation and partnerships as new forms of ‘adaptive governance’, strengthening the role of regional governments, and exploring new approaches to governance that recognize the overlaps between administrative boundaries on the one hand and functional boundaries on the other.
Governance has been a long-standing area of work within UN-Habitat as it is key for the eradication of poverty and achieving sustainable urbanization. For more than 20 years, the Agency has undertaken several substantial efforts in urban governance both at normative and operational levels, starting with the Urban Management Programme that introduced Urban Governance in UN-Habitat work and the Global Campaign on Urban Governance 2001-2005 that aimed at creating the necessary framework to encourage and accommodate effective implementation of programmes.

Globally, 193 countries have officially committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Effective governance is seen as the linchpin for sound action – a means to achieve the SDGs. The New Urban Agenda identifies governance as one of its means of implementation\(^1\). From there, UN-Habitat’s Strategic Plan 2020-2023 established governance as one of the four fundamental drivers of change for sustainable urbanization along with policy and legislation, planning, and financing mechanisms. These drivers are context specific, and UN-Habitat is supporting cities and countries to develop their own successful means for deploying them and overcoming any barriers that might prevent their full implementation.

The role of governance in sustainable and inclusive urbanization is recognized by UN-Habitat’s Strategic Plan 2020-2023, which calls for institutional coordination at all levels through multilevel governance arrangements and improved metropolitan governance structures and it also highlights the role of capacity building in effective governance systems by tasking UN-Habitat with assisting local governments to effectively capture domestic revenue, improve fiscal decentralization, manage urban displacement, take climate action, and utilize frontier technologies.

The success of the Strategic Plan and the associated Flagship Programmes will undoubtedly depend on a range of supportive structures such as the involvement of governments at all levels. This will involve multilevel cooperation built around broad consultative processes and mechanisms for vertical and horizontal integration.

The sustainability of the flagships can only be ensured if the projects build the capacities of local governments and support their implementation of activities. Community needs and interests require to be mediated and critical decisions will be made. Only national and local institutions are in a legitimate position to perform this role and as such, these flagships should build their capacities.

\(^1\) The New Urban Agenda Illustrated handbook available in: https://unhabitat.org/the-new-urban-agenda-illustrated
SUB-AREAS OF THE UN-HABITAT GOVERNANCE WORKSTREAM:

1. **Local governance** – strengthening urban governance to achieve SDGs and the New Urban Agenda (including localizing the SDGs and working with local governments and their associations)

2. **Multi-level governance** – focusing on vertical and horizontal coordination for policy implementation including metropolitan management and;

3. **Multi-stakeholder partnerships** – rethinking the relationship between public and private actors to enhance public sector investment.

CATEGORIES OF INTERVENTION:

- **Normative work**: development of tools and methodologies as well as the identification of best practices.

- **Technical cooperation**: field and technical cooperation projects including testing and implementation of developed normative tools and methodologies.

- **Partnerships & Advocacy**: establishment of partnerships and cooperation mechanisms between various stakeholders and the development of MOUs and joint agenda

- **Knowledge & Awareness**: seminars, webinars/workshops, podcasts, production of case studies and training events. Development and dissemination of discussion papers and research publications.
3. URBAN GOVERNANCE ACROSS THE WORLD: REGIONAL INSIGHTS

UN-Habitat’s four regional offices: Africa, Arab States, Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, shared key insights to understand the regional dimension of governance. The main urban governance challenges in the Arab states include: the prevalence of centralized state administration traditions; fragmented and complex geopolitical situation in some countries; inadequate functional and fiscal decentralization; unclear mandates and rules; and poor engagement and participation of citizens in local governments.

Some positive changes have also taken place in the region such as in Morocco, which has one of the most updated local governance systems after the update of the Constitution in 2011, that strengthened participation and citizens’ involvement in local governance.

Urban governance plays a crucial role in the Arab region as it catalyses well-guided urbanization for sustenance of peace in post conflict contexts and in rebuilding the capacity of local governments to provide services. Active UN-Habitat urban governance initiatives in the region include: enhancement of local revenues and land-based finance to empower local governments in Egypt; capacity building for basic services delivery in Lebanon; joint UN-Habitat and UNDP project in Lebanon to support municipal resilience and support Syrian refugees. The new realities of increased digitalization of services and COVID-19 pandemic are challenging traditional definitions of governance and require new approaches.

The Sub-Saharan Africa region has witnessed an evolution in local government functions in that local governments are increasingly becoming more involved in private sector engagement (PPP); there is more focus on local revenue generation; greater involvement in climate change action, especially by secondary cities e.g., in Beira, Mozambique; and greater participation in international SDG processes, such as Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs).

Moving forward, it is crucial that urban governance in the region is geared towards two main objectives. First, improving the quality of life of the population through socio-economic development and service delivery. Second, creating a system for public participation in decision-making. UN-Habitat tools, such as the “International Guidelines on Decentralization and Access to Basic Services; and Participatory Budgeting” still hold considerable usefulness in streamlining urban governance in Sub-Saharan Africa, provided they are adapted to local contexts.
In the **Latin America and Caribbean** (LAC) region, a third of the population is young – an asset that ought to be harnessed. The region is also characterised by high levels of informality and although it is considered ‘middle income,’ a large portion of the population is vulnerable to falling back into poverty.

Furthermore, migration is an important factor when considering urban governance in the region as well as the presence of social discontent in cities as a result of a disconnect between citizen needs and institutional solutions. There is a need to map stakeholders and actors and recognize that urban governance is shaped by both *formal and informal rules of the game*.

Moreover, recognizing that realities and dynamics are changing, governance approaches need to be adaptive to these new processes by having locally relevant interventions that respond to the real needs of the people to avoid a loss of trust in public institutions. Improving the *dialogue between citizens and the government*, treating people as co-creators, and harnessing the power of social networks for knowledge exchange is crucial to the future of the region. The region needs a new social contract built on the SDGs – towards “urban governance for achieving the SDGs”, which Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) are already working towards. There is a need for Regulation Impact Assessments as part of UN-Habitat’s urban governance framework to support *more effective laws*.

In the **Asia and the Pacific** region, a key governance challenge is to ensure that the principle of subsidiarity is fully implemented, ensuring that devolution of responsibilities is accompanied by fiscal decentralization to avoid an increase in unfunded mandates. Another important element of governance for the region is having a *people-centred, community driven approach*.

Urban governance priority areas for the region include enhancing property taxes as a key source of own source revenue for local governments and promoting a multi-level governance approach in climate change and disaster resilience.
4. KEY THEMATIC INSIGHTS

The key thematic insights that follow reflect the conversations that took place at the EGM. These addressed different dimensions of urban governance: 1) Future of Urban Governance; 2) Multi-level Governance; 3) Partnerships in Governance; 4) Digital Governance. For each theme, the EGM surfaced possible actions to take forward for actors for UN-Habitat and other actors working towards a sustainable and inclusive urban future.

4.1. The Future of Urban Governance

The COVID-19 crisis has taught many lessons for cities worldwide. It has showcased the importance of quick, clear and accurate information and the need to break down political barriers that impede access to information and transparency. It has also emphasized the central role of service delivery, and the importance of the latter for local government legitimacy.

The future of urban governance must be centered on the recognition that cities are key for achieving the SDGs. Local governments should be granted with the authority and capacity to localize the SDGs and promote a sustainable and inclusive recovery from COVID-19. Voluntary Local Reviews are an example of how municipal actors can drive collective political action and offer a platform for informing development at the national level.

ACTION POINTS

1. The importance of urban governance in achieving peace, climate resilience, equality, fairness, justice (social and economic) as well as the role of local governments in attaining these goals is unquestioned. There is need to look at how contexts have changed and how UN-Habitat tools can be adapted to new challenges and emerging needs such as those that emerged with COVID-19;

2. Breaking down political barriers and political will in general are needed to promote trust and transparency;

3. Devolution and decentralization require also devolving resources and capacities; devolution does not mean abdication of central responsibilities. Governments to remain as lead-implementers and public services to remain public, public sector actors need to be actively involved in problem solving rather than putting too much reliance on the private sector for solutions;

4. Laws needs to be locally relevant; institutional frameworks for implementation need to be factored in the legislative design process rather than being an afterthought;

5. Participation and contribution of all stakeholders is key, and it should take place throughout the urban decision making process; not just at the end.
4.2. Strengthening collective action through Multi-level Governance

Despite the fact that subnational governments (regions; metropolises; districts; counties; municipalities and others) play a crucial role in the implementation of the NUA, there are still some gaps affecting the clarity of roles and responsibilities of the different levels of government. This, in turn, prevents the existence of effective collective action between them. The obstacles to effective horizontal and vertical collaboration are mainly of administrative and functional nature, creating contrasting objectives of different actors and prevalence of departmental silos. Also, weak incentives, unequal distribution of costs and benefits between different levels of government, and finally inadequate resources (human and financial), especially at the local level, exacerbate the situation. Yet, political will, a shared framework of territorial and urban systems, and enabling legislation can facilitate collaborative governance approaches. A key element of building policy coherence across different levels of government is ensuring that stakeholders – such as the private sector, civil society, and most importantly, the public – are involved in shaping local and national development visions. This requires promoting meaningful stakeholder engagement that goes along the continuum of consulting, involving, collaboration and, as a result, empowers people (“leaving no one behind”) as well as strengthens democratic processes.

ACTION POINTS:

1. Develop new approaches to governance that recognize overlaps between administrative boundaries on the one hand and functional boundaries on the other – “such as metropolitan management”;

2. Strengthen the role of regional and metropolitan governments by increasing their opportunities within the global arena through cooperation, balanced representation between local and regional governments, also with the help of UN-Habitat; constant learning among regions, and providing advocacy to national government to understand the need for engaging all levels of government;

3. Strengthen the engagement of all stakeholders as an essential element of governance and assisting governments to move across the continuum of meaningful public participation starting with the provision of information to residents to understand the problem; conducting consultations to encourage feedback; and further involving the public in the decision-making processes;

4. Cultivate the political will to promote multi-level governance alongside with creating legislation that clearly articulates the mandates and responsibilities of different levels of government.
4.3. Partnerships in Governance

Creating partnerships across sectors can be a powerful way of making progress towards the SDGs and the NUA commitments. Supporting priority groups such as refugees requires breaking the silos that exist across sectors, including the private and civic sector. However, in complex realities such as those of cities, partnerships can become unmanageable, hard to sustain, and some stakeholders may become dissatisfied altogether. Partnerships need to be intentionally designed to be productive, inclusive and engaging and they need to be able to rally partners around a shared vision. Mutual trust, transparency, a learning mindset are all key to effective partnerships and heterogeneity across stakeholders can promote fruitful dialogue and collaborations.

**ACTION POINTS:**

1. Institute research networks and labs that break the silos between academia and public entities;
2. Foster legal frameworks, such as Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) that enable the creation of purposeful partnerships across a diverse range of stakeholders;
3. Promote collaborative practices across stakeholders such as co-design and co-production and data-sharing;
4. Foster agile governance systems across partners that can adapt to the quickly changing contexts of cities;
5. Promote participation in city networks to support knowledge exchange and provide peer support in creating partnerships (e.g. United Cities and Local Governments, C40, 100 Resilient Cities, Cities of Solidarity).

4.4. Digital Governance

With ongoing technological change, there is a new imperative for local governments and other urban stakeholders to update governance frameworks and ensure that technology has a positive impact for all residents. This requires bridging the digital divide caused by unequal access to digital infrastructure, poorly designed governance regulatory frameworks for digital economies, and educational and skills gaps, leading to a stunting of social mobility. It also requires a new focus on digital rights, ensuring that residents have access to affordable internet and digital services, that the right to privacy is protected, that data and digital services don’t discriminate, and that digital platforms and tools are developed in an open and inclusive manner.

At core, smart cities that deliver effectively to all residents require inclusive digital governance.
Smart cities should take a people-centered approach to technology and promote interoperability across city services. Collaboration between local governments, the private sector and civil society is crucial for effective digital governance, and the introduction of guidelines in procurement processes and in data management can ensure that technological developments are inclusive, ethical and sustainable.

**ACTION POINTS:**

1. Implement enabling regulatory framework to ensure that digital services are accessible to all residents and bridge the digital divide;

2. Formulate infrastructural development and investment plans for digital infrastructure that is accessible to all;

3. Embed inclusion in smart-city plans and promote the idea of people-centred technology;

4. Position cities as stewards of digital rights and promoters of open-data approaches;

5. Influence the development of demand-driven technological solutions through innovative procurement policies and effective collaborations with the private sector.
5. LOOKING BEYOND THE EGM

The two-day EGM was an opportunity to refresh UN-Habitat’s thinking on governance and identify challenges and opportunities in the work towards a sustainable and inclusive urban future. It reinforced that inclusive and effective governance is a necessary foundation for sustainable urbanization and it highlighted the need for a new social contract between governments, the public, civil society, and private sector to ensure that indeed, no one and no place is left behind. Most importantly, the EGM stressed the importance of placing people at the center of urban governance – whether in smart city plans, digital solutions, or multi-level arrangements.

UN-Habitat is ready to continue working with stakeholders, local governments, and people in different contexts to help achieve sustainable and inclusive governance for cities everywhere in the world by developing common principles; offering networking platforms for partners; acting as a repository for urban governance tools; and leveraging the Agency’s soft power to facilitate effective inter-governmental coordination and inclusive multilateralism among urban stakeholders. The following take-aways have informed the Agency’s strategy going forward:

KEY THEMES OF INTERVENTION DISCUSSED IN THE EGM

- Socio-economic equity
- Migration
- Health and COVID-19 recovery
- Climate Change
- Digital, innovation and rights
- Peacebuilding
- Decentralization and SDGs
- Financing
PRIORITY ACTION AREAS:

- Functional and fiscal decentralization.
- Enhancement of local revenue generation.
- Promotion of public participation and inclusion (leaving no one behind)
- Facilitation of multi-level governance through tools (including legal and digital instruments) and methodologies.
- Issues-based urban governance (for example, health, housing, land, climate change, job creation)
- Nurture partnerships and network to improve urban governance.

There is a need for the Agency to be adaptive to changing dynamics, players and processes in the urban governance sphere and the need for **co-creation and multi-stakeholder engagement**, while maintaining the centrality of the public sector in service delivery.

HOW TO ENHANCE UN-HABITAT WORK ON PARTNERSHIPS:

- Establish common principles of governance;
- Governance education and training programmes, following life-long learning principles;
- A network of laboratories as independent and accessible platforms, potentially promoted by the United Nations;
- A library of governance tools, some of which were shared during the EGM;
- The role of academia as a neutral ‘broker’ between the government and the citizens;
- Develop compendium of cases on the application of urban governance;
- Promote co-learning, co-designing and co-producing as an end goal.
HOW TO ENHANCE UN-HABITAT WORK ON DIGITAL GOVERNANCE:

▪ Tools to reduce digital divide and digital inequalities (Limited infrastructure access combined with poverty and informality)

▪ Urban governance and regulation- leads to constant undermining of digital rights.

▪ Tools for democratic oversights.

▪ Platform for dialogue between UN-Habitat, academia, tech companies, to find a common ground on enabling regulatory frameworks for digital governance.

▪ Practical reference points- what do people-centered smart cities mean in practice.

▪ What are the regulatory gaps? Hierarchy of access – electrical and digital.
The EGM at a Glance

Governance has been a long-standing area of work within UN-Habitat as it is key for the eradication of poverty and achieving sustainable urbanization. For more than 20 years, the Agency has undertaken several substantial efforts in urban governance both at normative and operational levels. The New Urban Agenda identifies governance as one of the four fundamental drivers of change for sustainable urbanization along with policy and legislation, planning, and financing mechanisms. These drivers are context specific, and UN-Habitat is supporting cities and countries to develop their own successful means for deploying them and overcoming any barriers that might prevent their full implementation.¹

The UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023 includes four domains of change that guide all activities of the organization: 1) Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum; 2) Enhanced shared prosperity of cities and regions; 3) Strengthened climate action and improved urban environment; and 4) Effective urban crisis prevention and response. The Strategic Plan also notes that urban planning and design must be a central component of the renewed urban governance paradigm, which promotes local democracy, participation, inclusion, and transparency, with a view to ensuring sustainable urbanization and spatial quality.

More specifically, the Strategic Plan calls for institutional coordination at all levels through multi-level governance arrangements and improved metropolitan governance structures and it also highlights the role of capacity building in effective governance systems by tasking UN-Habitat with assisting local governments to effectively capture domestic revenue, improve fiscal decentralization, manage urban displacement, take climate action, and utilize frontier technologies.²

Five global flagship programmes catalyse the implementation of the Strategic Plan building on past and ongoing initiatives of UN-Habitat: 1) Inclusive, Vibrant Neighbourhoods and Communities; 2) People-Centred Smart Cities; 3) RISE UP: Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor; 4) Inclusive cities: Enhancing the Positive Impacts of Urban Migration; and 5) Sustainable Development Goals Cities. These flagships aim to achieve coherence and realize synergies between initiatives, by facilitating the cross-fertilisation of ideas, experiences, and lessons. They enable the establishment of long-term partnerships with national and local governments and other stakeholders as well as enhance the integration of sustainable urbanization issues and strengthen the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals. They integrate the social inclusion dimensions identified in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023, notably human rights, gender, children, youth and older persons, and disability.


The success of the Strategic Plan as well as the Flagships will undoubtedly depend on a range of supportive structures such as the involvement of governments at all levels. This will involve multi-level cooperation built around broad consultative processes and mechanisms for vertical and horizontal integration. The sustainability of the flagships can only be ensured if the projects build the capacities of local governments and support their implementation of activities. Community needs and interests require to be mediated and critical decisions will be made. Only national and local institutions are in a legitimate position to perform this role and as such, these flagships should build their capacities.

The concept of governance has proven to be complex to understand and apply. It is multidimensional because decisions are based on complex relationships between many actors with different priorities and power relations. As a result, several competing approaches are applied at different territorial scales leading to wasted resources, inefficient sectoral interventions, human rights violations, and an overall lack of progress. Effective urban governance depends on four core elements:

**The city-national interface:** Effective urban governance depends not only on local institutions and actors, but also on the framework set by national governments that links the city and broader regional and national development. However, in many contexts, inadequate institutional frameworks have impeded effective urban governance.

**Municipal capacity:** Expanding municipal capacity to plan, manage and finance urban growth is a fundamental component of effective urban governance. It is important that each level of government has sufficient capacity to ensure that physical and socio-economic planning processes are well-coordinated, legally enforced, inclusive and cross-sectoral. However, many municipalities lack the skills, capacity and resources to meet their obligations.

**The role of the private sector:** The private sector is a key stakeholder in both urban and economic development. In addition to providing jobs, it can also be engaged in the design, construction and maintenance of infrastructure (for example through PPPs) and in service provision. However, where the private sector has contributed to improvements, it has often been at the expense of universal coverage, with low-income areas excluded.

**Political systems and institutions:** Urban governance is profoundly political, influenced by the creation and operation of political institutions, government capacity to make and implement decisions and the extent to which these decisions recognise and respond to the interests of the poor. The most vulnerable are often excluded or ignored in decision-making processes. There are large gaps between poor and better-off urban residents’ access to social, economic, and political opportunities, and in their ability to participate in, and leverage, the benefits of urban living.
Sustainable urbanization is central to the realization of the global development goals as set out in the suite of global agreements signed between 2015 and 2016, including, most importantly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the New Urban Agenda (NUA).

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Strategic Plan 2020-2023 focuses on the agency’s commitment and contribution to the implementation of the global development agendas, particularly the premise of the SDGs and NUA to ‘leave no one behind.’ Through its normative and operational work as well as coordination and focal point role within the UN system, UN-Habitat’s objective is: “to advance sustainable urbanization as a driver of development and peace to improve living conditions for all.”

In January 2020, the Agency underwent a restructuring to align with the Strategic Plan 2020-2023. In this new structure, the Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS), is one of the five sections/units of the Urban Practices Branch (UPB), the Agency’s skills centre for tools and methodology production.

Background

Sustainable urbanization is central to the realization of the global development goals as set out in the suite of global agreements signed between 2015 and 2016, including, most importantly, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the New Urban Agenda (NUA).

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Strategic Plan 2020-2023 focuses on the agency’s commitment and contribution to the implementation of the global development agendas, particularly the premise of the SDGs and NUA to ‘leave no one behind.’ Through its normative and operational work as well as coordination and focal point role within the UN system, UN-Habitat’s objective is: “to advance sustainable urbanization as a driver of development and peace to improve living conditions for all.”

In January 2020, the Agency underwent a restructuring to align with the Strategic Plan 2020-2023. In this new structure, the Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS), is one of the five sections/units of the Urban Practices Branch (UPB), the Agency’s skills centre for tools and methodology production.

PLGS’s current categories of intervention are:

1. **Normative work** – development of tools and methodologies as well as the identification of best practices.
2. **Technical Cooperation** – field and technical cooperation projects including testing and implementation of developed normative tools and methodologies.
3. **Partnerships and Advocacy** – establishment of partnerships and cooperation mechanisms between various stakeholders and the development of MOUs and joint agenda.

This will contribute towards the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and can act as a catalyst for a better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world.

After the EGM, it is expected that UN-Habitat will have a common position and joint strategy on urban governance that will guide the Agency’s work on positively transforming lives in cities, communities and their institutions. Another key outcome is the identification of tangible and action-oriented niche pathways on urban governance.

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4. Knowledge and awareness – seminars, webinars/workshops, podcasts, production of case studies and training events. Development and dissemination of discussion papers and research publications.

UN-Habitat's work on Governance

UN-Habitat is the focal point for local and regional governments (LRGs) within the UN System. It partners with local and regional governments associations worldwide to amplify the voice of LRGs within UN processes and international fora – such as the High-Level Political Forum, while supporting other UN agencies to work more effectively and intensively with local governments and their networks. UN-Habitat holds the co-secretariat of the Local 2030 initiative, hosted by the Executive Office of the Secretary General, and has been traditionally working with partners such as United Nations Development Programme and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) to promote the localization of the SDGs through the formulation and dissemination of cutting-edge knowledge and technical cooperation at country level. Together with UCLG, and in coordination with other international partners – such as UNDESA; the UN Regional Commissions and the European Commission Joint Research Centre, UN-Habitat leads the global discussion on Voluntary Local Reviews, providing local governments with knowledge and guidelines to support their SDG monitoring efforts. Moreover, it technically assists cities to produce their VLRs – such as Moscow, Florence and Amman.

UN-Habitat also supports government authorities at national and local levels in the formulation of rights-based governance frameworks on affordable housing, effective land rights and legal frameworks, economy and finance, access and sustainable management of basic services and natural resources as well as the proper planning and design of urban and peri-urban areas.

In the past, UN-Habitat has undertaken several substantial efforts in urban governance:

1. The Urban Management Programme (UMP) was a research programme that ran for 18 years from **1986 to 2004**. It is one of the largest global technical assistance programmes in the urban sector ever. One of the merits of the UMP was the introduction of urban poverty and urban governance into the mainstream of UN-Habitat activities.

2. The Global Campaign on Urban Governance **2001-2005** aimed at creating the necessary framework to encourage and accommodate effective implementation of programmes.

3. In **2007**, the Agency developed the ‘International Guidelines on Decentralization and Strengthening of Local Authorities and the International Guidelines on Access to Basic Services for All’ to intensify its efforts in sustainable urbanization and the international dialogue on decentralization.
PLGS Current work on Governance

Asymmetric power relations manifest in the negotiations and contestations of urban spaces which undermine the core functions of institutions in three ways: exclusion, capture and clientelism.

a. Exclusion happens where some individuals or groups are “systematically side-lined from policy decisions that affect their interests”.3

b. Influential groups often have the ability to ‘capture’ policies and make them serve their narrow interests. For example, despite operating in the least productive sector of the economy, powerful firms may advocate for policies that protect their economic power, obtain preferential treatment and block competition.

c. Clientelism occurs where benefits are exchanged in return for political support. Examples include public officials soliciting for votes in exchange for short-term benefits such as transfers and subsidies or where politicians become responsive to groups that wield greater influence.

To manage power asymmetries, the New Urban Agenda proposes that first, for optimum delivery of urban services, the national-local government interface must be strong with proper inter-institutional hierarchy and coordination (NUA para 87-90). Second, the recognition that local governments are responsible for provision of most services requires a focus on decentralization in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and accompanied by capacity building (NUA para 91). Third, effective urban governance needs to appreciate the role of the private sector as a complementing partner of public authorities in service provision and its ability to spur economic growth and generate employment (NUA para 91-92). Such a discussion must, however, also recognize that inadequate regulation of the private sector may reinforce social and economic inequities and promote exclusion and exploitation.

In light of the above, the PLGS Governance workstream currently has three sub-areas:

i. **Local Governance**: Strengthening urban governance to realise the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda (including localising the SDGs, and working with local governments and their associations);

ii. **Multi-Level Governance**: Focusing on vertical and horizontal coordination for policy implementation including metropolitan management; and

iii. **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships**: Re-thinking the relationship between public and private actors to enhance public sector investment.
In a nutshell, the following normative tools have been developed so far:

2. UN-Habitat-UCLG (2021) Guidelines for Voluntary Local Reviews: Connecting VLRs and VNRs.

Annex I contains a comprehensive overview of the governance workstream in these three sub-areas.

**Purpose of the Expert Group Meeting**

The main objective of the EGM is to re-align and strengthen UN-Habitat’s work on Governance to support the Flagship Programmes and the domains of change of the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023. This will contribute towards the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023 and can act as a catalyst for a better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world.

To achieve this objective, the EGM will pursue the following specific goals:

- Identify niche and innovative areas of work on governance that UN-Habitat could fulfil in the three sub-areas of 1. Local governance 2. Multi-level governance and 3. Multi-stakeholder partnerships; and
- Identify potential areas of collaboration with partners and stakeholders.
**Expectations from Participants**

This EGM will provide participants with the opportunity to review UN-Habitat’s work on governance and provide feedback and recommendations on the way forward. Participants in the meeting are expected to:

A. Review the current work programme of governance (see attached Annex I);

B. Review the governance elements that support the Flagship Programmes and Domains of Change of the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023 (see attached Annex II); and

C. Review the discussion paper on the definition of governance (see attached Annex III);

D. Come up with suggestions for entry points for the governance workstream.

E. Contribute towards drafting of a *UN-Habitat Governance Handbook* that will highlight some of the current trends in governance, compile definitions, and furthermore provide information on:
   - The impact of governance on urban practices;
   - Innovation in governance; and
   - Digital governance (e.g. how to bridge the digital divide and access to online institutional platforms).

**Expected Accomplishments of the EGM**

» UN-Habitat will have a strategic focus on urban governance that will guide the Agency’s work on positively transforming lives in cities and communities;

» The identification of tangible and action-oriented niche areas on urban governance; and

» The identification of joint projects, partnerships and initiatives on governance.

**Logistics, Agenda and Programme**

The two-day Expert Group Meeting will take place on 27-28 April 2021 and it will be hosted virtually by UN-Habitat. The EGM will be conducted in English. The link for the online participation will be sent to registered participants. Before the meeting, a survey will be prepared and shared with participants to collect preliminary proposals and contributions on proposed governance definitions, values, principles, and key approaches etc. The meeting format will be structured around presentations from UN-Habitat and selected participants. The group of experts will then provide suggestions and feedback in the moderated breakout group discussions. The focus group meeting will have 30-40 participants with expertise in the thematic area of governance as well as from different relevant stakeholders.
# UN-Habitat Expert Group Meeting on Urban Governance

## Provisional Agenda

### DAY 1: TUESDAY, 27 APRIL 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14:00 -14:30 (EAT)</td>
<td><strong>I. Opening remarks</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raf Tuts - <em>Director, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>14:30 -16:00 (EAT)</td>
<td><strong>II. UN-Habitat and Urban Governance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation of the survey results</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional perspectives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Erfan Ali - <em>Regional Office for Arab States</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Oumar Sylla - <em>Regional Office for Africa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Elkin Velasquez - <em>Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Atsushi Koresawa - <em>Regional Office for Asia Pacific</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1. EXPERT DIALOGUE 1: The Future of Urban Governance

**Moderator:** Shipra Narang-Suri - *Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN-Habitat*

**SEGMENT 1.** Public Service Delivery (45mins)

- Emilia Saiz - *Secretary General, UCLG*
- Amy Gill - *Core Government Functions/ Local Governance, UNDP*
- Rosa Pavanelli - *General Secretary of Public Services International*

**SEGMENT 2.** Localizing the SDGs (45mins)

- Anthony Pipa - *Brookings Institute*
- Discussant: Anél du Plessis - *North West University*

**Guiding questions:**

1. How do you imagine (or reimagine) the Future of Urban Governance in 10 years' time?
2. What are the most important trends that will impact and drive the future of urban governance?
3. How can urban governance be a vehicle for sustainable development? And which is the role of public service delivery?
4. What innovations governments, specifically local, can adopt to increase efficiency and productivity while operating in constrained staffing and fiscal environments?

5. Which transformations are needed to strengthen SDG localization in a post-COVID world?

6. How to ensure that no one is left behind?

16.00 - 17:30 (EAT)

2. DIALOGUE 2: MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE

Moderator: Filipe Decorte - Chief, Programme Development Branch, UN-Habitat

SEGMENT 1. Role of sub-national governments in a post-pandemic world (regions; states; metropolitan governments)

- Octavi de la Varga - Secretary General, World Association of the Major Metropolises
- Ivy Morales - Sustainable Development Officer, Regions4

SEGMENT 2. Policy coherence and effectiveness – global to local

- Mr. Bokyun Shim - Head of United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

Guiding questions:

1. How have regions and states addressed global crises and which is their role to promote territorial sustainable development?

2. What are the essential issues that need coordination for sustainable urban development, including inter-governmental and sectoral integration?

3. Metropolitan Authorities can have different nature (some are elected, some are administrative constructions), but globally they are becoming key players in governance systems. Which is their role in the urban future and how could they support effective multilevel governance?

4. There is a common acceptance in governments that better vertical and horizontal coordination would lead to improved development results. Why is this not happening?

5. How to guarantee participative and balanced decision-making in multilevel governance arrangements?

6. What other means exist, beyond the traditional institutional measures, to achieve collective action and coordinated and integrated results?
DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, 28 APRIL 2021

14:00 – 15:30 (EAT)

3. DIALOGUE 3: PARTNERSHIPS IN GOVERNANCE

Moderator: Eduardo Moreno - Director, Knowledge and Innovation Branch, UN-Habitat

SEGMENT 1. Public-Private People Partnerships

- Dr Gesa Ziemer - Director, City Science, HafenCity University

Short interventions:

- Joanne Irvine - Migration and Sustainable Development Unit, IOM
- Frederic Saliez - Urban Maestro, UN-Habitat Brussels
- Reinhilde Lambrechts

SEGMENT 2. Research and Academia

- Lara Kinneir - Leader / Design Cities, The London School of Architecture
  Host / Open City Podcast, Open City
  Advisor / Ministerial Advisory Group, Architecture+Built Environment Policy, Northern Ireland; Coordinator / Urban Governance, UN Habitat University Network Initiative

- Albert Edman - Strategist, Viable cities, RISE Research Institutes of Sweden

Guiding questions

1. What is the role of private sector and academia in sustainable urban development?

2. Partnerships take often place within a self-constructed structure, what needs to be done to address questions regarding accountability amidst shared responsibility?

3. How can multi-stakeholder partnerships be structured and designed to be productive, inclusive, and engaging?

4. How to achieve more informed societies that promote and contribute to sustainable cities and territories?

5. How to ensure meaningful public participation and inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in governance processes?
Each Segment is structured as follows:

Presentation by international experts (15min)

Plenary Discussion (25min)

Summary of Key Action points (5min)

**4. DIALOGUE 4: DIGITAL GOVERNANCE**

**Moderator:** Pontus Westerberg - Innovation Unit, External Relations, Strategy and Innovation Division, UN-Habitat

**SEGMENT 1. Inequalities and digital divide**

- Dr Edgar Pieterse - African Centre for Cities
- Emily B. Royall - Smart City Coordinator, Office of Innovation, City of San Antonio

**SEGMENT 2. E-Governance and transparency**

- Dr Non Arkaraprasertkul - Government of Thailand
- Serge Novaretti - EU

**Short Intervention:** Joakim Formo - Ericsson

**Guiding questions**

1. What are the pre-conditions/basic digital governance frameworks that should be in place?
2. How can the digital divide be tackled to leave no one offline?
3. What needs to be done to address the needs and ensure the rights of vulnerable groups in the digital world?
4. How digital governance can be used to improve urban and territorial management?
5. How to prevent digital-dystopian urban futures?

**17.00- 17:30 (EAT) Way forward**

Remy Sietchiping - Chief, Policy, Legislation and Governance Section, UN-Habitat

**Closing remarks**

Neil Khor - Officer-in-Charge, Office of the Executive Director, UN-Habitat
ANNEX II: UN-HABITAT CURRENT AREAS OF WORK ON GOVERNANCE

GOVERNANCE WORK STREAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB- AREA 1: Local Governance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Challenge** | Weak institutions and poor governance mechanisms increase the risk of low performance, wasted resources, inefficient sectoral interventions, human rights violations and an overall lack of progress. In many countries, urban governance systems are currently unfit for purpose and need critical reforms to enable sustainable and inclusive urban development.  

They have institutional frameworks that prevent local governments from fully delivering on their responsibilities through inadequate decentralization, insufficient resources, poor capacity and weak frameworks for engagement with residents, civil society and other key stakeholders.  

Community engagement and participation in public-decision making needs to promote more productive and inclusive interactions to better include women, youth, ethnic minorities, migrants, the urban poor and other disadvantaged groups such as people with disabilities in decision-making processes. |
| **Goal** | Strengthened local/urban governance to realise the SDGs and New Urban Agenda |
| **Change objective** | Strength of stakeholder ownership  
Efficiency of policy instruments  
Effectiveness of institutional arrangements |
## Component 1. Normative Work – development of tools and methodologies as well as the identification of best practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome EA1</th>
<th>Enhanced Knowledge and Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Tools and methodologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthened local government capacities in governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td><strong>Development of tools and methodologies, identification of best practices</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines and tools to improve accountability, participation, transparency and efficiency in local governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tools on decentralization and capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guide on promoting subsidiarity in Urban-Rural continuum to reduce spatial inequalities and poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good Urban Governance in Practice: Safeguards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governance Action Framework for Smart and Liveable Cities</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Guide on Civic engagement and citizenship in NUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Checklist/guidance notes on governance frameworks for UN-Habitat Flagship Programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methodology/ tool to monitor the governance gap between policies and outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines for VLRs Vol.1: a Comparative Analysis of Existing VLRs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing and planned:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengthening local government capacities with tools and methodologies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Training events and workshops on local governance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good Urban Governance Training Programme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Case studies on lessons learned from country projects on urban governance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Internal background document on governance in the New Urban Agenda and UN-Habitat Strategic Plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Knowledge materials on participatory processes in urban governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of knowledge materials for climate change action</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines for VLRs Vol.2: Connecting VLRs and VNRs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research on VLRs and Megacities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Component 2. Technical Cooperation – field and technical cooperation projects including testing and implementation of developed tools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome EA2</th>
<th>Increased implementation know-how</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Countries supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Implementing pilot projects to test participation assessment methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting countries on harnessing technology to facilitate public participation and data collection for evidence-based governance.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting local governments worldwide to develop VLRs and to strengthen connection with national SDG monitoring processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting Saudi social housing project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advisory services to governments and partners on governance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Component 3. Partnerships and Advocacy – establishment of partnerships and cooperation mechanisms between various stakeholders and the development of MOUs and joint agenda.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome EA3</th>
<th>Raised Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced Networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Partnership agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raise awareness and knowledge, share interventions performed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Partnership with local and regional governments and their associations to amplify LRGs voices within international fora, strengthen their capacities and advance the 2030 Agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partnerships with Academia and multi-lateral Agencies to promote UN-Habitat governance approaches and tools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raise awareness and share knowledge on urban governance</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Component 4. Knowledge and Awareness – seminars, workshops, case studies and training events. Development and dissemination of discussion papers and research publications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome EA4</th>
<th>Enhanced Knowledge and Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Increased implementation know-how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Study reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case studies on urban governance and decision-making processes (SIDA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LiveLearningExperience #BeyondTheOutbreak and #CitiesAreListening with UCLG and Metropolis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sub-Area 2: Multi-Level Governance

**Description**

UN-Habitat supports countries to improve the vertical and horizontal linkages between government institutions and also among non-state actors. In 2016, the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III, presented the New Urban Agenda, a framework for sustainable management of cities. The Agenda appreciates the role of multi-level urban governance in sustainable and inclusive cities. It calls for stronger coordination and cooperation among national, subnational and local governments, including through multi-level consultation mechanisms and by clear definition of mandates; coherence between goals and measures of sectoral policies at different levels of administration; and strong metropolitan governance based on functional territories rather than administrative borders. The New Urban Agenda also emphasizes on participation of all urban residents in urban governance by encouraging collaborations among local governments, communities, civil societies and the private sector in infrastructure and basic services provision as well as urban and territorial policy and planning processes.

**Challenge**

Most countries, especially low- and middle-income countries suffer from ill-defined distribution of responsibilities between different levels of governments, leading to the duplication of roles and gaps which can lead to institutional wars. The net effect being that common citizens suffer from poor public service delivery and they end up procuring these services from informal, expensive yet unsafe channels.

These ineffective multilevel governance arrangements also compromise planning processes, risk backlogs in budget spending, lead to higher transaction costs and create wider economic inefficiencies, as well as compromising the principles of transparency and accountability.

The expansion of metropolitan areas and the burgeoning gap between them and intermediary cities pose serious challenges to urban governance.

**Objective**

Vertical and horizontal collaboration within and among different levels of government and sectoral institutions

Sustainable development in world’s metropolises and regions

**Change objective**

Improved metropolitan management

Effective inter-institutional cooperation

**Component 1. Normative work – development of tools and methodologies as well as the identification of best practices.**

**Outcome EA1**

Enhanced Knowledge and Skills

Increased Implementation Know How

**Output**

Knowledge materials on multi-level governance approaches to improve vertical and horizontal linkages.
### SUB- AREA 2: Multi-Level Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Guide on Multi-level Governance for NUP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governance Assessment Framework for Metropolitan, Territorial and Regional Management (GAF-MTR).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Guide on Leveraging Multi-level governance to Promote Health Equity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>UN-Habitat Global State of Metropolis 2020 - Population Data Booklet</td>
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<td>UN-Habitat Global State of Metropolis 2020 – Compendium of Case Studies on Metropolitan Management (forthcoming publication)</td>
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<td>UN-Habitat Global State of Metropolis Report (forthcoming publication)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Guide on Metropolitan Institutions.</td>
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<td>Guide on Metropolitan Observatories.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Component 2. Technical Cooperation – field and technical cooperation projects including testing and implementation of developed tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Ea3</th>
<th>Improved metropolitan management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Countries supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Improving governance and legal frameworks in the Metropolitan Area of San Salvador (El Salvador).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving governance in the Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara (Mexico).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving metropolitan governance and legal frameworks in Colombia metropolitan areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Component 3. Partnerships and Advocacy – establishment of partnerships and cooperation mechanisms between various stakeholders and the development of MOUs and joint agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Ea</th>
<th>Establish a strong partnership with relevant networks and creation of a platform for linking several metropolitan networks.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>MetroHUB Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Co-host campaign together with Metropolis for participants to showcasing initiatives and exchanging knowledge and ideas on metropolitan phenomena worldwide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Publishing audio-visual material and web stories on metropolitan subjects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Component 4. Knowledge and Awareness – seminars, workshops, case studies and training programmes and events. Development and dissemination of discussion papers and research publications

| Outcome Ea4 | Workshops and sessions on multi-level governance and metropolitan management. |
## SUB- AREA 2: Multi-Level Governance

| Output | World Metropolitan Day Events  
|        | Postgraduate and other training programmes on metropolitan management |
| Activity | World Metropolitan Day 2020 Virtual Event co-hosted by Metropolis and UN-Habitat.  
|         | 27 World Metropolitan Day 2020 side events held by local governments and metropolitan partners around the world.  
|         | Post-graduated on metropolitan management and governance with the National University of Colombia. |

## SUB- AREA 3: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

| Description | Multi-stakeholder governance/network governance is a practice of governance that brings multiple stakeholders together to participate in dialogue, decision making, and implementation of responses to jointly perceived problems. The principle behind such an approach is grounded on the fact that if collaborative input is provided by multiple types of actors, the eventual consensual decision gains more legitimacy and sense of ownership, and can be more effectively implemented than a traditional state-based response. |
| Challenge | As an evolving global governance form, only a limited number of organizations and institutions are involved in multi-stakeholder processes. In several arenas, opposing forces are actively challenging the legitimacy, accountability, and effectiveness of these experimental changes in global governance. |
| Objective | Improved relationship and synergies between public and private actors for effective public sector investment. |
| Change objective | Self-organising, inter-organisational networks characterised by interdependence, resource exchange, rules of the game and significant autonomy from the State. |

### Component 1. Normative Work – development of tools and methodologies as well as the identification of best practices.

| Outcome EA1 | Increased Stakeholder collaboration  
|            | Development of Stakeholder Engagement Plans |
| Output | Knowledge materials on the role of stakeholders in governance |
| Activity | Methodology to assess participation of residents, NGOs, civil society organizations, and the private sector in urban governance. |
### UN-HABITAT STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drivers of Change</th>
<th>Domains of Change</th>
<th>Flagship Programmes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban–rural continuum</td>
<td>Inclusive, Vibrant Neighbourhoods and Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Enhanced shared prosperity of cities and regions</td>
<td>People-Centred Smart Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Strengthened climate action and improved urban environment</td>
<td>RISE UP: Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Effective urban crisis prevention and response</td>
<td>Enhancing the Positive Impacts of Urban Migration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sustainable Development Goals Cities**
Governance

Outcome 2: Increased and secure access to land, and adequate and affordable housing

Improving land-based finance as revenue sources for local governments.

Outcome 3: Effective settlements growth and regeneration

Underscoring urban cores, peri-urban areas and suburban settlements with inclusive governance arrangements that promote socially cohesive urban communities.

Outcome 1: Improved spatial connectivity and productivity of cities and regions

Reinforce institutional coordination at all levels.

Enhancing metropolitan governance structures and collaboration mechanisms as it is critical for sustainable urbanization.

Outcome 2: Increased and equitably distributed locally generated revenues

Assisting local authorities in enacting the institutional and legal reforms that are necessary to generate additional financial resources, including through public–private partnerships, and land-based revenue and financing tools, maintaining a strong emphasis on transparency and accountability.

Outcome 3: Expanded deployment of frontier technologies and innovations for urban development

Improving the capacity of local governments to effectively procure, test and implement frontier technologies.

Enhance capacity-building in local government to turn smart city plans and the use of frontier technologies in urban planning, design and regeneration into people-centered opportunities.

Outcome 3: Effective adaptation of communities and infrastructure to climate change

Promote multilevel governance approaches so that national governments empower local governments to take climate action through improved frameworks with strong local-national collaboration.

Outcome 1: Enhanced social integration and inclusive communities

Inclusive engagement of all segments of society, as well as vulnerable groups, including migrants, refugees, returnees, and internally displaced persons, in the planning and management of cities.

Empower local governments and communities and strengthen their capacity to promote social cohesion and resilient recovery and rebuild the social fabric.

Outcome 2: Improved living standards and inclusion of migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees through effective crisis response and recovery

Supporting local governments and building their capacity to manage urban displacement, drawing on its strong experience and expertise in the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus.
Overarching:

Para 158: Weak institutions and poor governance mechanisms increase the risk of low performance, wasted resources, inefficient sectoral interventions, human rights violations and an overall lack of progress. Effective institutions and governance mechanisms, both formal (constitution, legislation and regulations) and informal (social norms, customs and traditions), together determine how people, and public and private sector organizations, make decisions of an economic, social or political nature, maximizing potential and optimizing resources. Urban governance encompasses the different ways in which public and private institutions and individuals participate in the planning, design and management of the common affairs of a city, and the processes used for effectively realizing the short- and long-term agenda of a city's development. Urban governance can deliver sustainable development when it is environmentally friendly, participatory, accountable, transparent, effective, equitable and inclusive, both in law and in practice.

Para 159: UN-Habitat recognizes the multiplicity of local, regional, and national governmental agencies and organizations, many of which have competing interests and influence. Improving urban governance requires that the institutional framework be coordinated and transparent. UN-Habitat will work to help strengthen urban governance, with sound institutions and mechanisms that empower and include representatives of urban stakeholders and constituencies, in addition to appropriate checks and balances, providing predictability and coherence in urban development plans to enable social inclusion; sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth; and environmental protection.
There is no universally adopted definition of governance in political literature. The concept originates from Plato, an Athenian philosopher during the Classical period in Ancient Greece (323 - 510 BC) who was the first to use the Greek word *ΚΥΒΕΡΝΏ* (*kubernáo*), meaning to steer a ship, metaphorically, in the context of steering men.¹ Over the years, the word has been used generically and the concept has evolved to encompass relationships between stakeholders in a variety of set ups. In the present highly dynamic environment; politically, socially, economically and culturally, the term means different things in different contexts and the use of an adjective (such as good, inclusive, effective etc.) with the word governance has become almost mandatory for it to make any sense at all.²

Governance systems set the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate.

Governance refers to the process through which state and non-state actors interact to design and implement policies within a given set of formal and informal rules that shape and are shaped by power. It involves the structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive and sets the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate.

Strong multi-level governance frameworks characterized by coherence and coordination between different levels of governments and the involvement of all urban stakeholders are crucial to sustainable development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOVERNANCE</th>
<th>MANAGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set and norms, strategic vision and direction and formulate high-level goals and policies.</td>
<td>Run the organization in line with the broad goals and direction set by the governing body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversee management and organizational performance to ensure that the institution is working in the best interests of the public, and more specifically the stakeholders who are served by the organization’s mission.</td>
<td>Implement the decisions within the context of the mission and strategic vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct and oversee the management to ensure that the organization is achieving the desired outcomes and to ensure that the organization is acting prudently, ethically and legally.</td>
<td>Be responsive to requests for additional information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


¹ International Centre for Parliamentary Studies, Governance Section, https://www.parlicentre.org/Governance.php
² Ibid.
Several attempts have been made to bring precision to the definition on governance, culminating into two categories:

1. **Prescriptive**: Refers to the understanding of governance through the application of a set of principles and normative parameters (e.g., transparency and accountability).

2. **Analytical**: Refers to the systemic understanding of governance through the linkages and synergies between its different dimensions (e.g., effective governance).

**How key international agencies define governance:**

**UNDP** - In **2004**, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defined governance as "the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and private sector. It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions—achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action. It comprises the mechanisms and processes for citizens and groups to articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligations. It is the rules, institutions and practices that set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organizations and firms. Governance, including its social, political and economic dimensions, operates at every level of human enterprise, be it the household, village, municipality, nation, region or globe." (hybrid approach).

**World Bank** - In **1993**, the World Bank defined governance as the method through which power is exercised in the management of a country’s political, economic and social resources for development. While the World Bank has focused on stabilization and state reforms that overwhelmingly focused on civil service retrenchment and privatization for a long period, the early 1990s saw a change of focus. The Bank came to realize that most of the crises in developing countries are of a governance nature. Hence, the contemporary adjustment package emphasizes governance issues such as transparency, accountability and judicial reform. In this context, the Bank has introduced a new way of looking at governance; good governance. In **2010**, it provided this definition of governance, “consists of the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them." (prescriptive approach).

In **2016**, the World Bank reviewed its thinking on governance. It observed that, instead of asking “What is the right policy?” development practitioners should ask “What makes policies work to produce life-improving outcomes?” The World Development Report (WDR) 2017 moves on from (i) ‘good’ governance as the ability of the State to provide institutions that support growth and poverty reduction to (ii) ‘better’ governance as the ways in which governments, citizens, and communities engage to design and apply policies to ensure that well-intentioned policies improve the lives of their communities and deliver results. The WDR **2017** further explores how governance can help achieving development outcomes. There is a need to explore how policies for security, growth, and equity can be made more effective by addressing the underlying drivers of governance. Moving beyond the traditional concerns about implementation, such as limited state capacity, the report digs deeper to understand how individuals and groups with differing degrees...
of influence and power negotiate the choice of policies, the distribution of resources, and the ways in which to change the rules themselves. Thus in 2017, the Bank provided this definition, “the process through which state and nonstate actors interact to design and implement policies within a given set of formal and informal rules that shape and are shaped by power.” (Analytical approach).

OECD – In 2006, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined governance as the, “exercise of political, economic and administrative authority necessary to manage a nation’s affairs. It is also the process by which decisions are made and implemented (or not implemented). Within government, governance is the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources.” (Analytical approach).

UNESCO – In 2009, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Global Monitoring Report sees governance as ‘power relationships,’ ‘formal and informal processes of formulating policies and allocating resources,’ ‘processes of decision-making’ and ‘mechanisms for holding governments accountable.’ UNESCO has thus defined governance as the, “structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive. Governance systems set the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate. Governance is about how power is distributed and shared, how policies are formulated, priorities set and stakeholders made accountable.” (hybrid approach).

UN-Habitat – In 2000, through the Global Campaign on Urban Governance, UN-Habitat noted that the concept of governance is complex and controversial, but there are some common points of departure. First, governance is not government. Governance as a concept recognizes that power exists inside and outside the formal authority and institutions of government. Many definitions of governance include three principle groups of actors: government, the private sector and civil society. Second, governance emphasizes ‘process’. It recognizes that decisions are made based on complex relationships between many actors with different priorities. It is the reconciliation of these competing priorities that is at the heart of the concept of governance.3 Therefore, UN-Habitat has defined governance (urban) as “the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action can be taken. It includes formal institutions as well as informal arrangements and the social capital of citizens. Urban governance is inextricably linked to the welfare of the citizenry. Good urban governance must enable women and men to access the benefits of urban citizenship. Good urban governance, based on the principle of urban citizenship, affirms that no man, woman or child can be denied access to the necessities of urban life, including adequate shelter, security of tenure, safe water, sanitation, a clean environment, health, education and nutrition, employment and public safety and mobility.

3https://mirror.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=25&cid=2097
Through good urban governance, citizens are provided with the platform which will allow them to use their talents to the full to improve their social and economic conditions.  

In 2015, the UN family adopted the Agenda 2030 which has significant policy goals. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires strong political institutions and processes. SDG 16 (“Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies”) explicitly acknowledges this need and prescribes “effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

It is worth noting that the 17 SDGs can only be achieved through good and effective governance frameworks at all international, national and territorial levels. In particular, SDG 16 has specific targets that contain ingredients for good governance which include: promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all; substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms; develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels; ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels; and ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

In 2016, the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, “Habitat III”, presented the New Urban Agenda (NUA), a framework for sustainable management of cities. The NUA acknowledges and advocates for a multilevel governance approach. It calls for stronger coordination and cooperation among governments at all levels, including through multilevel consultation mechanisms and by clear definition of mandates; coherence between goals and measures of sectoral policies at different levels of administration; and strong metropolitan governance based on functional territories rather than administrative borders (para 87-90). The NUA also emphasizes participation of all urban residents in urban governance by encouraging collaborations among local governments, communities, civil societies and the private sector in infrastructure and basic services provision as well as urban and territorial policy and planning processes (para 91-92).

Also, from the NUA, national governments have a role to provide lower-level governments “with adequate, timely and predictable resources and enhance their ability to raise revenue and manage expenditures” (para 135). The NUA also contains an express commitment by Member States to adopt “a smart city approach that makes use of opportunities from digitalisation, clean energy and technologies, as well as innovative transport technologies, thus providing options for inhabitants to make more environmentally friendly choices and boost sustainable economic growth and enabling cities to improve their service delivery” (para 66).

The UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023 recognizes the importance of effective urban governance in the implementation of the NUA and the SDGs. It draws attention to the need for multilevel governance; decentralization and capacity building; accountability and transparency; and inclusivity, participation and promotion of human rights in cities and human settlements. More specifically, the Strategic Plan calls for institutional coordination at all levels through new governance arrangements and improved metropolitan governance structures (para 77).

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It also highlights the role of capacity building in effective governance systems by tasking UN-Habitat with assisting local governments to effectively capture domestic revenue (para 66), improve fiscal decentralization (para 80), manage urban displacement (paras 108-109) and utilize frontier technologies (paras 83-85).

Consequently, the following principles lie at the heart of making governance effective for sustainable urbanization:

**Transparent and accountable decision-making:** Transparency requires government officials to act openly and allow those affected by administrative decisions to know about the resulting facts and figures (e.g., the city budget) as well as the criteria used to reach those decisions. Availability of information on government policies and actions, a clear sense of organizational responsibility, and an assurance that governments are efficiently administered and free of systemic corruption are important components of transparent governance. Accountability provides the framework for community oversight and reporting government misconduct as well as the framework for individuals to seek recourse for any harmful acts by public administrators.

**Broad-based participation and inclusivity:** Governments at all levels should involve all stakeholders including communities, civil society organizations and other public and private institutions in public decision-making from the planning phase, implementation and in maintaining and sustaining the benefits and outcomes (whole-of-civil society approach). The participation model should always contain specific mechanisms to ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups (based on gender, age, ethnicity and other characteristics) have adequate opportunities for their voices to be heard.

**Subsidiarity, decentralization and proportionality:** Subsidiarity involves the delegation of resources, competences and decision-making powers to democratically elected lower-level authorities that are independent of central government. Subnational authorities should be empowered by legal frameworks to have the fiscal and jurisdictional autonomy to carry out urban functions and optimize service provision as they are better placed to understand and respond to local needs. Subsidiarity at the metropolitan level involves allowing metropolitan and regional institutions to assume local powers and functions which are transferred by mutual agreement.

**Cooperation, efficiency and capacity building:** Urban management, including policy implementation and monitoring must be free of unnecessary bureaucracy. Human resource capacity is the basis for efficient delivery of public goods. In cities where territorial dynamics have surpassed municipal boundaries, local authorities should cooperate and establish formal and informal inter-municipal institutional arrangements, as well as metropolitan governing bodies for joint decision-making, service provision and public investment.

**Digitalization and knowledge management:** The use of digital governance tools and knowledge management strategies can facilitate greater access to urban services for dwellers and businesses, as well as creating new options for gathering and using data. Decision-making should be based on the most reliable and accurate available information. Data collected must be gender- and age-sensitive, promoting social inclusion in the decision itself and outcomes and respecting privacy. Cities must implement and make sustainable knowledge management strategies and instances, such as observatories, information systems, think tanks and others that facilitate monitoring and implementation of territorial urban development.
In 2018, the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration developed basic principles of effective governance for sustainable development which apply to all public institutions, including the administration of executive and legislative organs, the security and justice sectors, independent constitutional bodies and State corporations. The principles are given depth and made operational through a selection of commonly used strategies and related practices. (see Table 1 below).

**TABLE 1. Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPLE</th>
<th>COMMONLY USED STRATEGIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>Competence: To perform their functions effectively, institutions are to have sufficient expertise, resources and tools to deal adequately with the mandates under their authority</td>
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<td>Promotion of a professional public sector workforce</td>
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<td>Strategic human resources management</td>
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<td>Leadership development and training of civil servants</td>
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<td>Performance management</td>
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<td>Results-based management</td>
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<td>Financial management and control</td>
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<td>Efficient and fair revenue administration</td>
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<td>Investment in e-government</td>
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| Sound policymaking | To achieve their intended results, public policies are to be coherent with one another and founded on true or well-established grounds, in full accordance with fact, reason and good sense | Strategic planning and foresight
Regulatory impact analysis
Promotion of coherent policymaking
Strengthening national statistical systems
Monitoring and evaluation systems
Science-policy interface |
| Collaboration | To address problems of common interest, institutions at all levels of government and in all sectors should work together and jointly with non-State actors towards the same end, purpose and effect | Risk management frameworks
Data sharing
Centre of government coordination under the Head of State or Government
Collaboration, coordination, integration and dialogue across levels of government and functional areas
Raising awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals
Network-based governance
Multi-stakeholder partnerships |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Integrity</th>
<th>To serve in the public interest, civil servants are to discharge their official duties honestly, fairly and in a manner consistent with soundness of moral principle</th>
<th>Promotion of anti-corruption policies, practices and bodies</th>
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<td>Codes of conduct for public officials</td>
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<td>Competitive public procurement</td>
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<td>Elimination of bribery and trading in influence</td>
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<td>Conflict of interest policies</td>
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<td>Whistle-blower protection</td>
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<td>Provision of adequate remuneration and equitable pay scales for public servants</td>
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<td>Transparency</td>
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<td>To ensure accountability and enable public scrutiny, institutions are to be open and candid in the execution of their functions and promote access to information, subject only to the specific and limited exceptions as are provided by law</td>
<td>Proactive disclosure of information</td>
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<td>Budget transparency</td>
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<td>Open government data</td>
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<td>Registries of beneficial ownership</td>
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<td>Lobby registries</td>
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<td>Independent oversight</td>
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<td>To retain trust in government, oversight agencies are to act according to strictly professional considerations and apart from and unaffected by others</td>
<td>Promotion of the independence of regulatory agencies</td>
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<td>Arrangements for review of administrative decisions by courts or other bodies</td>
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<td>Independent audit</td>
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<td>Respect for legality</td>
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</table>
| **Inclusiveness** | Leaving no one behind | To ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality, public policies are to consider the needs and aspirations of all segments of society, including the poorest and most vulnerable and those subject to discrimination | Promotion of equitable fiscal and monetary policy  
Promotion of social equity  
Data disaggregation  
Systematic follow-up and review |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Non-discrimination** | To respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, access to public service is to be provided on general terms of equality, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status | Promotion of public sector workforce diversity  
Prohibition of discrimination in public service delivery  
Multilingual service delivery  
Accessibility standards  
Cultural audit of institutions  
Universal birth registration  
Gender-responsive budgeting |
| **Participation** | To have an effective State, all significant political groups should be actively involved in matters that directly affect them and have a chance to influence policy | Free and fair elections  
Regulatory process of public consultation  
Multi-stakeholder forums  
Participatory budgeting  
Community-driven development |
| Subsidiarity | To promote government that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of all people, central authorities should perform only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more intermediate or local level | Fiscal federalism  
Strengthening urban governance  
Strengthening municipal finance and local finance systems  
Enhancement of local capacity for prevention, adaptation and mitigation of external shocks |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Intergenerational equity | To promote prosperity and quality of life for all, institutions should construct administrative acts that balance the short-term needs of today’s generation with the longer-term needs of future generations | Multilevel governance  
Sustainable development impact assessment  
Long-term public debt management  
Long-term territorial planning and spatial development  
Ecosystem management. |
Main Takeaways

The concept of governance is complex and controversial. However, there are some common points of departure. First, governance is not government.

Goverance as a concept recognizes that power exists inside and outside the formal authority and institutions of government. Many definitions of governance include three principle groups of actors: government, the private sector and civil society. Second, governance emphasizes ‘process’, instruments, and impacts (changes). It recognizes that decisions are made based on complex relationships between many actors with different priorities. It is the reconciliation of these competing priorities that is at the heart of the concept of governance.

Existing Definitions:

Governance refers to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation. Governance also represents the norms, values and rules of the game through which public affairs are managed in a manner that is transparent, participatory, inclusive and responsive. Governance systems set the parameters under which management and administrative systems will operate. Governance is about how power is distributed and shared, how policies are formulated, priorities set and stakeholders made accountable. It encompasses a diverse range of actors in decision-making processes as well as the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement decisions.

Urban governance is the sum of the many ways in which individuals and institutions, both public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city in a continuing process where conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated, and cooperative action can be taken. Good urban governance is a participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective, efficient, equitable and inclusive process that ensure all urban residents reap the benefits of urbanization. It reduces mismanagement, ensures that the views of minorities are considered and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard within the decision-making processes.

Multi-Level Governance can be defined as the arrangements for making binding decisions that engage a multiplicity of politically independent but otherwise interdependent institutional actors (private, public and social) at different territorial levels and that does not assign exclusively policy competence or assert a stable hierarchy of political authority to any levels.5

Network Governance is first characterized by autonomous but interdependent actors. The driving force informing networks is that all kind of actors realize that they cannot solve a particular problem alone but need each other. A second feature of network governance is that the collaboration between actors take place within a self-constructed structure. When the actors first come together, there will be no structure in which interactions take place, but when they interact with each other they will gradually develop a structure which informs interactions.

A third feature of network governance is their ability to work on complex social problems. Actors come together around a common concern and through joint coordination of actors try to work towards a solution.\(^6\) Thus, the merging of the concepts networks and governances provides an understanding of network governance as "governing with and through networks" and differs significantly from other modes of governance such as markets and hierarchies.\(^7\)

**Informal governance** has mainly been propelled by the European Union (EU), and to a significant extent, it is a necessary part of the EU system, because the EU can often actually make policy by way of informal routes and networking. One example of this is the "Eurogroup": the circle of finance ministers arguably shaping European economic governance by pre-agreeing all critical decisions made by the European Council, deciding on overall orientation of economic governance in the euro area.

It is formally recognized that it should meet informally (Article 137 - Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union), and consequently, neither a secretariat nor a Eurogroup post box exists in Brussels. Informal governance "refers to unwritten (and often vaguely specified) rules, shared expectations, and norms that are not enshrined in formally constituted organizations and which modify or substitute legally binding rules."\(^8\) It has also been defined as "a means of decision-making that is un-codified, non-institutional and where social relationships and webs of influence play crucial roles."\(^9\)

Furthermore, informal governance are “those non-codified settings of day-to-day interaction concerning policy issues, in which the participation of actors, the formation of coalitions, the processes of agenda setting, (preliminary) decision-making and implementation are not structured by pre-given sets of rules or formal institutions”.\(^10\)


Emilia Sáiz is Secretary General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). She has worked with the international movement of local and regional governments in different capacities since 1998, leading programmes and initiatives on institutional capacity building, the participation of women in local decision-making and decentralized cooperation. She collaborated with the Working Group of Local and Regional Governments for the Post-2015 Development Agenda in the process towards Habitat III and facilitated the contributions from local constituencies to the United Nations process.

Amy Gill is the Team Leader on Core Government Functions and Local Governance in the Crisis Bureau at the United Nations Development Programme, with over 20 years’ experience in policy development and the design and management of local governance and recovery programmes. She has focused on service delivery, decentralization, federalism and strengthening state-society relations in urban and rural settings.

In particular, Amy has provided policy and programming advice to strengthen local governmental institutions, non-governmental organisations, and civil society in fragile and crisis settings. She has supported local governance programming in a variety of settings including Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Madagascar, Lebanon, Jordan, Pakistan, Sudan, Indonesia, Philippines, Central African Republic, Yemen, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. She also has been a contributing specialist to different policy fora including the High Level Political Forum, the World Humanitarian Summit and Habitat III among others.

Prior to joining the United Nations, Amy worked with non-governmental organisations, DFID and the EU. Amy holds a Master of Science in Violence, Conflict and Development (hons) from SOAS, University of London.

Rosa Pavanelli is General Secretary of Public Services International (PSI), the Global Union Federation founded in 1907, uniting more than 700 trade unions representing 30 million working women and men who daily deliver public services in 154 countries. PSI defends trade union and workers’ rights and fights for universal access to quality public services.
Since 2016, Rosa has been a Commissioner on the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth (UN ComHEEG), representing the trade union movement, health workers and public services. She is also a member of the United Nations High-level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP) and of the Cornell University International Labour Relations Worker Institute Advisory Council. She collaborates with the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation (ICRICT).

Prior to her election as PSI General Secretary, Rosa was elected to the FP-CGIL (Public Services branch of the Italian General Confederation of Labour) National Secretariat in 2002 and led the European and International Department from 2005 to 2012. Prior to that, she was responsible for the municipal and healthcare sector and was FP-CGIL General Secretary of the Lombardy region of Italy.

Tony Pipa is a senior fellow in the Center for Sustainable Development, housed in the Global Economy and Development program at Brookings. He studies place-based policies to improve social progress in the United States and globally, including through use of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local level. He is also considering the future of U.S. multilateral aid and the applicability of lessons from international development to improving rural development in the U.S.

Tony has over 25 years of executive experience in the philanthropic and public sectors addressing poverty and advancing inclusive economic development. During the Obama administration, he served as chief strategy officer at the U.S. Agency for International Development and held multiple senior policy positions at the Agency. He served as U.S. special coordinator for the Post-2015 Agenda at the Department of State, leading the U.S. delegation at the U.N. to negotiate and adopt the SDGs. Prior to his government service, he directed the NGO Leaders Forum at Harvard University and was the founding CEO of the Warner Foundation, a family foundation in North Carolina focused on improving economic opportunity and race relations. He helped launch Foundation for Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and has played a principal role in the start-up of several philanthropic ventures focused on addressing poverty and improving distressed communities.
Dr. Maria Mousmouti is Lecturer in Law at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies of the University of London and Executive Director at the Centre for European Constitutional Law, a research center based in Athens, Greece. Her research in the field of legislative studies deals with the concepts of legislative quality and effectiveness, legislative design and mechanics and their application in different areas of law, especially equality, fundamental rights and European legislation. At the IALS, she teaches at the LLM in Drafting Legislation, Regulation, and Policy, at the Legislative Drafting Course and other specialised short courses offered to students and practitioners and supervises PhD students. She coordinates the work of the Sir William Dale Legislative Drafting Clinic and is in charge of the Urban Law Initiative a research cooperation between the Sir William Dale Centre for Legislative Studies at IALS and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) with the aim to promote innovative research, generate knowledge and improve the quality of urban legislation in countries around the world. Her monograph titled ‘Designing Effective Legislation’ was published in August 2019. She is Secretary of the Board of the International Association for Legislation, participates in many international research networks and works as an Expert for the European Commission. For many years, her work supported legislative and policy reform initiatives through research, evidence-based advice and capacity-building in more than 20 countries in the EU, Southern Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia.

Dialogues 2: Multi-Level Governance

Octavi de la Varga Mas is the current Secretary General of Metropolis. Previously, he was the Executive Director of Metropolis, Head of the Europe and International Strategy Office of the Barcelona Provincial Council, Head of the Development Cooperation Office of the Barcelona Provincial Council, and Executive Director of the Orientation and Coordination Office of the URB-AL III Programme. He has also been the Head of the European Cooperation Office of the Barcelona Provincial Council, Coordinator of the Permanent Secretariat of the network Arco Latino, the Head of the European Union Unit of Intermón-Oxfam, Programme Information and Communications Coordinator of Oxfam International and Deputy to the European Coordinator of Frères des Hommes Europe. He is as well certified by the Observatory of the Decentralised Cooperation between the EU and Latin America as a trainer of trainers. He has a degree in law, as well as a Master’s Degree in European Studies (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), a Post-Degree in International Humanitarian Aid (Universidad de Deusto) and a Post-degree in International Relations (Universitat de Barcelona).
Ivy Moraes is the Sustainable Development Policy Officer at Regions4. She is committed to social and environmental responsibility, and brings experience in advocacy, research, policy analysis and program management, with a focus on international cooperation and sustainability. At Regions4, she leads on the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

She strives to improve the capacities of subnational governments in the process of localizing the SDGs and reporting their progress within their territorial perspectives. She also manages collaborative projects, providing expertise and tools that could be replicated and showcased. In her career, she has been consistently highlighting and promoting greater coherence and stronger partnerships across various stakeholders as well as fostering transparency, accountability, and social control. She holds a Bachelor’s degrees in International Relations and in Social Sciences, and a Masters degree in Public Administration and Government with a specialization in Government and Civil Society in the Subnational Context.

Mr. Bokyun Shim is Head of Office of the United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), an integral part of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

Since his inauguration in March 2020, he has been dedicated to contributing to strengthening public administration capacities in developing Member States to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Prior to joining the United Nations, Mr. Shim was Vice Minister of the Interior and Safety of the Government of the Republic of Korea. Mr. Shim also held various senior positions including Vice Governor for Administrative Affairs of Jeonbuk Province, Assistant Ministers for Planning and Coordination of the Ministry of the Interior and Safety and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, as well as Chair Professor at the Korea National Open University.

During his long and rich experiences in state affairs from 1988 to 2018 with the Government of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Shim had contributed to government innovation, decentralization and digital government development by working for the central and local governments, and the Office of the President of the Republic of Korea. Mr. Shim completed a Doctorate course on Governance at Sungkyunkwan University in Korea and has a Master’s degree in Policy Analysis from Saitama University in Japan, a Master’s degree in Public Administration and a Bachelor’s degree from Seoul National University.
DAY 2: UN-HABITAT EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON GOVERNANCE

DIALOGUE 3: PARTNERSHIPS IN GOVERNANCE: SHORT BIOS

**Gesa Ziemer (Prof. Dr. phil.)** is professor for cultural theory and the director of the City Science Lab, a cooperation with MIT Media Lab. Currently she is setting up a technology and innovation lab for the United Nations (UNITAC Hamburg) as senior advisor in cooperation with UN Habitat and OICT. She is a fellow of the Humboldt Foundation at the Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge/USA. Her research focusses on digitalisation of cities and new forms of collaboration. She is member of the Scientific Council of Germany and reviewer for different foundations and academic research funds.

**Albert Edman** is Focus Area leader for Cities in transition at RISE, Research Institutes of Sweden, and Strategist for the Viable cities Strategic Innovation Programme. Albert has almost 20 years’ experience working at local, regional, national and international level with sustainable urban development. Current work includes the piloting of mission-driven “climate city contracting” with nine Swedish cities and the Swedish government, aiming to be Climate-neutral by 2030, by and for its citizens.

**Mr. Frédéric J. Saliez** is the Programme Officer, UN-Habitat Office for Europe and European Institutions, based in Brussels. An Architect and Civil Engineer from Catholic University of Louvain, Frédéric J. Saliez holds a Master of Research in Geography from University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne.

He has been posted successively in Belgium, Portugal, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Kenya, Kosovo and Brazil, countries and regions in which he contributed to design and develop public policy initiatives in the field of urban planning, urban design, social cohesion, environmental protection, urban governance and cultural heritage.

**Joanne Irvine** specialises in migration governance and sustainable development in the Migration and Sustainable Development Unit of IOM Headquarters. Joanne has over 12 years of experience working with and supporting local and national governments, civil society and UN organisations globally to maximise the development potential of migration in support of the 2030 Agenda.
She now manages the IOM-UNDP Global Joint Programme on Making Migration Work for Sustainable Development which is working in 11 countries to showcase how mainstreaming migration into national and local policies contributes to local development results through the roll out of concrete initiatives led by cities, local and regional authorities.

Joanne is also part of the inter-departmental team within IOM working to enhance the role and positioning of cities and local and regional authorities, as key migration governance actors for local development, including supporting IOM’s participation as a partner in the Mayors’ Mechanism of the GFMD.

Ilde Lambrechts, is a senior consultant in Urban and Regional Planning working with United Nations, World Bank and regional development banks in developing countries mostly in Africa but on occasion also in Asia, the Caribbean and Micronesia. She combines hands-on operational work with analytic and strategic work in the field of urbanisation and infrastructure development. She has wide experience in evaluation of projects and programmes, policy preparatory work and needs assessments. I undertake project and programme evaluations such as the evaluation of the Ninth Session of the World Urban Forum. I do policy preparatory work, feasibility studies and needs assessments. I contribute to country urbanisation reviews and project appraisals, analysing context and advising on future development. I hold a master degree in architecture and in urban and regional planning from the University of Antwerp, Belgium.

Lara Kinneir is a designer working across the public, private, academic and the third sector, campaigning and delivering projects that demonstrate how the built environment connects to people’s quality of life. Her specialism is in collective, collaborative and civic design strategies and governance of cities. She leads the Design Cities programme at the London School of Architecture, is founder of a new design startup to change how we shape our environments and a ministerial advisor for Architecture Policy in Northern Ireland.

Anél du Plessis is Professor of Law and Acting Director: Research at the North-West University (NWU). Her scholarship focuses on the nexus area of environmental-, local government and different aspects of human rights law and city governance. She is editor of the first and still only extensive volume on South African environmental and local government law.
She has published widely and supervised more than 40 post-graduate students and post-doctoral scholars in these areas. She coordinates the NWU’s LLM Programme in Environmental Law and Governance since 2015. She is currently co-heading an Alexander von Humboldt research project with the Freie Universität, Berlin with the focus on “Safe and Sustainable Cities”. The project team submitted an edited volume on the globalisation of urban governance to Routledge in June 2018. From November 2018 Prof Du Plessis will direct the newly designated NRF SARChI Chair at the NWU focusing on Cities, Law and Environmental Sustainability (CLES). She is a rated researcher of the South African National Research Foundation (NRF), served as an elected member of the South African Young Academy of Science and is an alumnus of the scholarship programmes of the DAAD, Fulbright and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. She is member of the Executive Committee of the Environmental Law Association of South Africa for the past twelve years and serves on the Teaching Committee of the international IUCN Academy of Environmental Law.

**DIALOGUE 4: DIGITAL GOVERNANCE**

**Professor Edgar Pieterse** is founding director of the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town and holds the South African Research Chair in Urban Policy. He publishes different kinds of text, curates’ exhibitions, as well as difficult conversations about pressing urban problems. Current research is focussed on a major exhibition—CompleXities—on urban futures that will be mounted in 2022. He is also working on an institutional framework to promote city-level innovation ecosystems in Africa that will promote the localisation of sustainable infrastructure in low-income contexts.

**Dr. Non A** is a smart city enthusiast. He serves as an expert in smart city promotion at the Digital Economy Promotion Agency (depa) of Thailand, where he works to advocate the concept and practice of smart cities. His main professional specialization is the use of human-centred design (also known as design thinking) to solve pressing open-ended urban problems. Having lived and worked globally, he is constantly inspired by cross-cultural exchange, social psychology, and behavioural economics. He is passionate about research and development (R&D) in how smart cities help mitigate social problems such as urban growth, mobility and mental health. Dr Non received his bachelor’s degree in architecture from a technical college in Thailand and a doctorate in social anthropology from the US.
Emily Royall is a data professional and urban planner working towards equity in smart cities. She is currently the Smart City Coordinator at the Office of Innovation for the City of San Antonio. Formerly, Emily worked in Singapore at the smart cities think tank, City Form Labs, and the Massachusetts Office of Information Technology (MassIT). She has several years of public sector experience in digital services, data governance, community engagement, and smart city strategy. In her current role, Emily manages San Antonio’s data governance strategy, a multi-stakeholder smart city partnership, and supports special projects in Digital Inclusion and IoT. Emily holds a Masters in City Design & Development at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a B.S. in Neuroscience, and a B.A. in Plan II from the University of Texas at Austin.

Since 2011 Serge NOVARETTI is a Policy and Programme Manager at the European Commission/DG CNECT working on Public Sector Modernisation, Digital Public Services and eParticipation. He is in charge of large scale pilots (e-SENS, TOOP), involved in the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF Digital) and in the implementation of the new eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020. From 2006 to 2011 within DG DIGIT/ISA Programme unit he was in charge of the European Interoperability Strategy (EIS), the European Interoperability Framework (EIF) and the European Interoperability Architecture (EIA).
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