Urban–Rural Linkages

HANDBOOK
# Table of Contents

Overview ........................................................................................................................................1

I. INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 2

II. BACKGROUND AND GLOBAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR A NEW NARRATIVE INTEGRATING URBAN AND RURAL AREAS: 2015 - 2019 ................................................................. 4

III. URL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY 2020-2023: ................................................................ 8

IV. URL-GP IN THE CONTEXT OF LOCALIZING THE SDGS AND INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT .............................................................................................................. 10
   A. NORMATIVE WORK ..................................................................................................................... 12
   B. TOOL DEVELOPMENT ................................................................................................................ 12
   C. TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ............................................................................ 13
   D. PARTNERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR URLS .......................................................................... 14
   E. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVISORY SERVICES ........................................................... 16

Conclusion ....................................................................................................................................... 17

Annex .............................................................................................................................................. 18

ROADMAP 2021-2023 .................................................................................................................... 18
Since the finalization of the **Urban-Rural Linkages-Guiding Principles and framework for action** in 2019 there have been over years of progress in developing a URL program in the Policy, Legislation and Governance section of UN-Habitat’s Urban Practices Branch. Elements of the URL program of work have now been brought together in one place – in an online integrated handbook for strengthening urban-rural linkages to advance sustainable territorial development.

The handbook is comprised of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History and URL Policy Framework</th>
<th>A. Normative work</th>
<th>B. Capacity development</th>
<th>C. Tool development</th>
<th>D. Partnerships and advocacy</th>
<th>E. Technical assistance and advisory services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Background and global policy context</td>
<td>• Overview</td>
<td>• Overview</td>
<td>• Introduction to Toolbox (links)</td>
<td>• Overview</td>
<td>• Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overview of URL-GP development history</td>
<td>• Thematic guides (links)</td>
<td>• participant guide</td>
<td>• Rapid assessment and Instructor guide (links)</td>
<td>• IFURLs</td>
<td>• Projects (links)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SDGs and strategic implementation plan in the context of UNH</td>
<td>• Thematic papers (links)</td>
<td>• Challenges and opportunities</td>
<td>• Website (links)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Country initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• URLs and COVID-19:</td>
<td>• Compendia of best practices (links)</td>
<td>• Spatial analysis tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lessons from crisis management</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Survey tools (see below)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action learning through collaboration and partnerships</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Relevance of the Framework for Action tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction to the five pillars of URL program</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Application of Guiding Principles tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Stakeholder analysis tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Capacity needs tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Policy gaps tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Preparing a workplan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Data management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. INTRODUCTION
The urban population of the world has grown rapidly, from 751 million in 1950 to 7.7 billion in 2019. Projections show that urbanization, the global shift in peoples’ residence from rural to urban areas, combined with the overall growth of the world’s population, could add another 2.5 billion people to urban areas by 2050. More than 55% of the world population is living in urban areas and this has been projected rise to 68% in 2050. Rural-urban migration is most of the time viewed as the main cause of urbanization; however urban population growth is also the result of the natural increase of the urban population. Urbanization has resulted in cities developing and advancing as rural settlements are left behind in most countries, but especially in low-income countries.

More investment, technology and policy support is directed to urban areas for infrastructure, health and social services provision, economic and technology development, while development funding continues to decline in rural areas and in provision of services for rural agricultural activities. Nonetheless towns and cities always have been and still are fundamentally reliant upon rural areas for provisioning of urban areas. Food, including crop, animal and fish products, water, fiber and industries of all kinds support urban growth. Due to many changes in the dynamic relationships between rural and urban areas, the binary divide between urban and rural is no longer functional, and in many cases, makes the situation even worse. As urbanization takes place, the peri urban and rural areas should be considered integral to sustainable urban development.

As towns and cities grow, in most cases nearby peri-urban and rural land are converted for urban land uses, a spatial expansion of the built environment which should be managed through policy that leads to plans and strategies. One target of the Sustainable Development Goal for cities, SDG 11.a, highlights the need to support the positive social, environmental, and economic linkages between urban, peri-urban and rural areas through strengthened national and regional development planning. This is further supported by the NUA which calls for support of small and intermediate cities as well as for the urban and territorial planning and development approach that includes urban and rural areas.

Urban-rural linkages is not a new issue on the global agenda and was first highlighted in the 1976 Vancouver Action Plan (Habitat I) and multiple times in UN-Habitat resolutions. However, calls for action to address URLs are more urgent now. The Urban-Rural Linkages Guiding Principles (URL-GP) will therefore, inform pragmatic strategies and propose a Framework for Action to build an enabling environment for more inclusive and functional urban-rural linkages. The URL-GP builds on and complements the International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning (IGUTP) developed by UN-Habitat to promote integrated planning approaches. As such, the URL-GP may be the first cross-sector, multi-level and unified interdisciplinary approach that treats urban, peri-urban and rural peoples as equal parts of a whole.

In 2020 the world was gripped by the Coronavirus Pandemic with millions infected and displaced. Urban-rural linkages, whether weak or strong, played an important role in the response and recovery from COVID-19. UN-Habitat’s URL team pivoted to focus on the pandemic and the revised URL programme strategy and implementation plan reflects many lessons learned in 2020.
II. BACKGROUND AND GLOBAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR A NEW NARRATIVE INTEGRATING URBAN AND RURAL AREAS: 2015 - 2019
Sustainable Development Goal 11 is “the urban goal” and aims to “make cities and human settlements more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Target 11.a requests to “support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.” With target 11.a, Member States acknowledged the importance of the linkages between urban and rural areas and lay the foundation for an integrated territorial approach. Urban-Rural linkages have again come into focus, not only for achieving SDG 11, but also SDGs 2, 9 and 12 among others.

Building on previous work, in 2015 UN-Habitat took the lead during the formulation process of the New Urban Agenda and coordinated with different UN-agencies such as Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to jointly draft the Habitat III Issue Paper Number 10 on Urban-Rural Linkages. This paper was a guiding document for the Special Session on Urban-Rural Linkages during the Habitat III conference.

As a follow-up to the session, the respective agencies, development partners and other stakeholders are now exploring a global network for Urban-Rural Linkages advocating for integrated territorial development and aiming to provide support, guidance and tools to Member States and local authorities for strengthening their Urban-Rural Linkages from multiple perspectives and with different mandates.

In October 2015, Expert Group meeting (EGM) was convened in Monteria, Colombia with the overall goal to exchange practices and experiences on strengthening URLs with special attention to small and intermediate cities (SICs). Participating experts discussed experiences from different regions and countries promoting urban-rural linkages and highlighting the importance of the systems of small and intermediate cities together with rural areas between them as critical spaces for enhancing URLs. The Monteria Communique, the outcome of the EGM, informed the deliberations of the group setting up indicators for the SDG 11.a and contributed to habitat III processes, particularly to the relevant policy units and regional and thematic meetings to ensure inclusion of URLs, SICs and integrated territorial development in the New Urban Agenda (NUA) the outcome of Habitat III in Quito, Ecuador in 2016. It was also during this meeting that recommendations were delivered to develop principles and a framework for action, roadmaps for partnerships and normative guidance articulating a new narrative on URLs in coming years.

The NUA, an action oriented and people centred agenda, is not only about everything urban but also about all spaces and all sizes of human settlements. The development gap between urban and rural areas is still great and urgently needs to be bridged. The evidence is clear that urban growth has positive impact on economic development, but still, most of the world’s poor live in rural areas. Many rural communities and smaller settlements lack access to basic services, including food, water and sanitation, energy, education, medical and social services. Strengthening urban-rural linkages to address these gaps is one way of implementing the NUA and making sure no one is left behind.

The challenges that urban-rural linkages can address include a wide variety of thematic issues. Strategies for enhancing those linkages cannot be developed only through single sectoral or siloed thinking. A multi-sector integrated approach is thus recognized as essential. The NUA explicitly invites “international and regional organizations and bodies, including those of the United Nations system and multilateral environmental agreements, development partners, international and multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks, the private sector, and other stakeholders, to enhance the coordination of their urban and rural development strategies and programmes to apply an integrated approach to sustainable urbanization, mainstreaming the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.” (para 82, New Urban Agenda, Quito, 2016).

UN-Habitat developed a paper published in 2017 which gives an overview of the 10 thematic entry points to Urban-Rural Linkages along with recommended necessary interventions. The paper
presents numerous case studies of successful strategies and actions taken by different actors from national levels to subnational local authorities. It shows opportunities and challenges for Urban-Rural Linkages. It also presents different areas of expertise within UN-Habitat and introduces tools such as the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, National Urban Policies and the Global Land Tool Network among others. Nonetheless a set of principles and actions were still needed for strengthening URLs.

Responding to this need in January 2018, UN-Habitat convened a participatory process for developing “Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles and a Framework for Action for Advancing Integrated Territorial development” with a first working session parallel to the World Urban Forum (WUF9) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Twenty-five participants in the first consultation provided inputs to a zero draft of the URL-GP. Over 100 stakeholders in UN agencies and regional commissions, international development partners, national and local governments, private sector and donor organizations, academic and research organizations, civil society and the private sector, provided comments for subsequent drafts over the following year.

In June, 2018 an expert group meeting (EGM) was held in La Paz, Bolivia in where a second draft was reviewed and recommendations offered to strengthen URL for the government of Bolivia developed. During the period of drafting the URL-GP, two national governments and two subnational governments in Africa (Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria and Tanzania) were engaged to explore urban-rural linkages in the context of developing national and subnational urban policies. This project was also a partnership with FAO, IFAD, UNECA, and UNCDF and experiences and challenges from these countries and regions contributed to the refinement of guiding principles and actions.

After multiple drafts including significant contributions from 70 stakeholders, the final URL-GP was launched during the UN-Habitat Assembly in May, 2019. The structure of the URL-GP consists of 10 short principles (GP) that provide the foundation for strengthening urban-rural linkages within and across sectors such as planning, finance, economic development, health, environment, transport, agriculture, etc. Equally important and even more concrete for implementers (planners, programme managers, development agencies, donors, etc.) are the 11 entry points in the Framework for Action (FFA). The final text of the URL-GP is thus a two-part tool for implementation, first, applying the guiding principles to projects and programmes, and second, incorporating URLs into specific interventions in concrete spatial and functional applications at the national or subnational level.

Parallel to the finalization of the URL-GP, UN-Habitat’s Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit (RMPU) designed an initial programmatic framework for normative guidance to countries, local governments and other stakeholders in the form of thematic papers on leading issues in the context of urban-rural linkages and participatory tools and manuals for capacity development. The first thematic papers were on URLs and national urban policies (NUPs) and URLs and Nutrition (published by UN Nutrition). A first generation of implementation tools and a training manual were drafted and first tested in August of 2019 in Mozambique. In October, a workshop held in Zanzibar, Tanzania for the four above-mentioned African countries further explored application of tools related to URL-GP. Then, In November 2019 the first International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages (IFURL) was hosted in Songyang County, China, under the theme of rural revitalization through urban-rural linkages.

This first forum brought together 200 participants from 17 countries for a three-day review of critical issues for urban-rural linkages in different regions and different sectors including rural development, urban design and planning, agriculture and nutrition, health and economic development, among others. From all the events and processes between 2015 and 2019 the foundation for a URL program was being built. The structure for the program builds from this foundation, from the new UN Habitat Strategic Plan launched in 2020, from early applications of policy and normative tools to strengthen URLs, and from the experiences of COVID-19.
The UN-Habitat URL team has supported implementation of measures in countries in Africa and Latin America through the generation of tools and training materials. Together with other partners, the team has hosted capacity development sessions in five countries (Mozambique, Guinea-Conakry, Nigeria, Tanzania and Bolivia). These tools are described in the section below on tool development.

COVID-19 has impacted all regions, all countries and all communities globally. In 2020 the URL team hosted two series and 9 webinars to hear and learn from what different kinds of subnational communities were experiencing and how they adapted to the changed and challenging circumstances. The webinars revealed diverse responses to the pandemic, including those that benefited from having strengthened urban-rural flows and cooperation pre-pandemic. Furthermore, COVID brought attention to essential workers in the health and food sectors, many of whom live in both urban and rural areas. This put a spotlight on the disparity and unequal access to services (food, education, housing, finance, etc.) across the urban-rural continuum.

2021 is a year of continuing impacts of COVID-19, but also a year of recovery and rebuilding. In addition, 2021 is a year of reviewing the major global agendas for sustainable development and food systems, for biodiversity, desertification and climate change. In the context of localization of the global agendas, urban-rural linkages and territorial approaches to sustainable development have become more important, with recognition by major organizations in the global development community. Local and regional governments, including small, intermediary and large cities are more central to the operationalizing of global agendas as a result of both COVID-19 and the complex interlinked challenges that require interlinked solutions. Local and regional governments, with national enabling support, are often more capable to manage this complexity in ways that are appropriate, responsive and inclusive of local communities and people. This resonated with the theme of the second international forum on urban-rural linkages whose theme was on integrating health and territorial development for sustainable livelihoods. The forum was attended by over 200 participants from

The URL programs’ normative products, tools and learning materials are designed to be adapted and used by convenors from inside or outside government at any level, local, territorial or national.
III. URL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY: 2020-2023
As part of the first UN-Habitat Assembly (UNHA) in 2019, the strategic plan 2020-2023 was agreed upon by member states which comprises of four domains of change. Three of the domains of change directly address urban-rural linkages: 1) reducing spatial connectivity and poverty, 2) enhancing cities and regions prosperity, and 3) strengthened climate action and improved urban environment. The URL dimensions of the domains of change and the UNHA Resolution 1/5 on “Enhancing Urban-Rural Linkages for Sustainable Urbanization and human Settlements” guide the fundamental structure of the URL Implementation Strategy for 2020-2023. The mission, goal, objectives, activities, and partnerships important to strengthening urban-rural linkages across levels of governance have been articulated to answer the questions of why, what, how and with whom the work on URLs unfolds over the next few years. The spread of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) in the early months of 2020 diverted attention for most of 2020 to COVID-19 response and eventual recovery. Experiences of local and subnational governments in 2020 underscored the importance of integrated urban and rural approaches to address the impacts of the disease, including dramatic flows of people and the disparities within and between communities at all scales and countries.

**Mission:** The mission of the UN-Habitat URL work is to develop and pilot tools and methodologies to support member states promote the prosperity of cities and regions while reducing disparities and inequities across the urban-rural continuum.

**The Goal:** Member states, local and subnational governments will have increased capacities and implemented projects/programs helping to overcome the urban-rural divide while promoting cities and regions prosperity.

**Objectives of the URL program include:**

1. Develop and share inspiring good practices to exchange across cities and regions

2. Strengthen the capacity of actors in small and intermediate cities and rural communities to promote i) good governance and management through multi-actor, multi-sector and multi-level approaches and ii) leadership and long-term vision, strategy and plans for the city and region

3. Develop and assist in piloting of tools, approaches, indicators to support member states and other relevant stakeholders in strengthening the URL

4. Strengthen collaboration with partners to enhance interventions at the sub-national, national and global levels

5. Improve information and knowledge on the small and intermediate cities; documenting proven successful experiences, collecting data on the sector jointly with other partners and promoting and assisting member states in consumer information

6. Develop and mainstream communities of practice and networks engaged in strengthening urban-rural linkages to foster functional territories

7. Monitor and assess interventions at country level at various stages of development and implementation

8. Provide a living road map for the next 4 years

**Expected Accomplishments of the URL program are to:**

1. Develop and implement normative products and toolkits on urban-rural linkages for policy, legislation, planning, governances and projects to support member states at national and sub-national levels towards achievement of global agendas as SDGs and NUA among others while enhancing sustainable urban and territorial development

2. Enhance knowledge and capacities of related stakeholders on urban-rural linkages through learning materials, events and dissemination of inspiring practices from projects implemented by UN-Habitat or other agencies/stakeholders

3. Deliver concrete outputs from partnerships and advocacy for URL at global, regional, national and subnational level. The Urban-Rural Linkages (URL) program includes a set of interconnected activities in which UN-Habitat and partners cooperate in the implementation of the URL-GP and the UNHA Resolution 1/5 on “Enhancing Urban-Rural Linkages for Sustainable Urbanization and human Settlements” adopted in May 2019.
IV. URL-GP IN THE CONTEXT OF LOCALIZING THE SDGS AND INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT
After successful launch of the URL-GP, the main task for UN-Habitat has been to provide guidance for implementation and localization by partners, local governments and member states. The application of the URL-GP to actual geographic locations at different scales (small, intermediate or large cities, territories, countries) requires another set of learning materials and tools which UN-Habitat has developed with inputs from experts. From expert meetings and workshops with both national and subnational agencies a set of assessment tools, thematic guides, case studies and a learning manual are being developed to support national and subnational actors who are conveners or facilitators of inclusive urban and rural processes to identify challenges, opportunities, capacity needs and stakeholder engagement, data needs and policy options. These tools are designed to be used where appropriate in conjunction with policy (National/Sub-national Urban Policy (NUP) processes. NUP was identified as a key pathway to the localization of the SDGs and the NUA and a set of tools have been developed to support URLs in the context of revising or developing NUPs.

In addition to the NUP and related policy guidance emphasizing URLs and integrated territorial development, there has been significant global and regional interest in URLs and territorial governance in the context of COVID-19 and 2021 review of global agendas including food systems, biodiversity, ecosystem restoration and climate change. The tools and methodologies under the URL-GP all seek to support member states and subnational governments reduce the urban-rural divide and promote urban and territorial prosperity. The initial development of tools and training materials before the pandemic were informed by an action learning process in which two series of thematic learning events were hosted by the UN-Habitat between May and December, 2020. The urgent needs of communities and the coordination among international agencies with local and territorial actors has further elevated the importance of the URL-GP related to global agendas such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and many of the SDGs beyond SDG 11.

From this context of early tools and methodology the URL program pursues five broad tracks of work:

**PILLARS OF UN-HABITAT WORK ON URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES**

- **TOOLS DEVELOPMENT**
- **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SHARING BEST PRACTICES**
- **NORMATIVE WORK**
- **ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIP BUILDING**
- **TECHNICAL/ADVISORY SERVICES**

Figure 1: UN-Habitat URL tracks of work
A. NORMATIVE WORK

Normative work is comprised of products and materials to assist member states and partners in implementing Urban-Rural Linkages (URL) activities. They include standards, methodologies, regulatory frameworks, and a growing collection of good practices on URL at global, regional, and national levels. Some of the materials that under development include URL thematic papers, discussion papers, policy and issue briefs and other related guidelines. For example, UN-Habitat has contributed to papers with partners including UNSCN, OECD, GIZ, FAO, UNCCD, AGRA, and the World Bank among others.

UN-Habitat has developed a guide to mainstreaming URLs in National Urban Policies. This is part of a series of thematic practical guides by policy makers. Other practical materials, papers and guides that UN-Habitat is in the process of developing include: thematic papers/guides on URLs and food systems and nutrition, ecosystem restoration, biodiversity, climate change, migration, and health, among others that may arise based on demand. The URL thematic guides have been developed with and sometimes published by partners, and a framework for thematic guides has been developed by UN-Habitat (see annex 1).

Another set of normative material that UN-Habitat has already embarked on is the dissemination of good practices. This is through a series of compendia of case studies on URL in different regions and contexts. Two editions have been published as of early 2021, including submissions from partners and other stakeholders working on related work. The compendia include existing projects, policies and activities shared as inspiring practices for replication, adoption etc. the available normative products are:

- Implementing the NUA by strengthening urban-rural linkages
- Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles and Framework for Action - English
- First edition of the Compendium of case studies for the implementation of the URL-GP Tool development

iv. Second edition of the compendium of case studies for the implementation of URL-GP
v. Mainstreaming Urban-Rural Linkages in National Urban Policies
vi. From smart cities to smart villages
vii. Chapter contribution on Role of African cities in strengthening agri-food systems
viii. UNCSN Publication on Urban Rural linkages for Nutrition Territorial approaches for sustainable development

B. TOOL DEVELOPMENT

The normative guidance and case studies on URLs bring the principles and actions from the URL-GP closer to concrete challenges and entry points for solutions that planners and programme managers must confront. It is however the adaptive, interactive tools for participatory work in urban and rural settings by convenors and agencies at different levels of governance and in other field applications with partners, that a set of URL tools have begun to be developed.

The 10 principles and 11 actions of the URL-GP can be applied to many different particular contexts at different scales. The tools are organized for different phases of engagement, from early assessment of challenges and possible solutions to stakeholder engagement, capacity development, policy review and data collection and management.

URL Toolbox: A set of draft tools have been designed to be used either in sequence or individually depending on the context. Each of the tools will be availed for use as hard copy checklists or templates in a workshop setting, or through online webtool formats using mobile phones/tablets/laptops. All the tools utilize the URL-GP to provide a foundation, and build toward identification of policy (among others) recommendations and an approach monitor progress over time.
a) **URL Spatial assessment:** designed to bring an understanding of the tangible and intangible spatial flows in the urban-rural continuum.

b) **URL Challenge Assessment:** This tool designed to bring prioritization of the challenges to strengthening urban-rural linkages using the URL-GP as a common foundation in a participatory, multistakeholder process.

c) **URL Opportunities Assessment:** this tool is to assist in identifying the opportunities in improving URL.

d) **URL Stakeholder Engagement Assessment:** this tool helps map who should be engaged in different levels of government and different sectors and actors across the urban-rural continuum.

e) **URL Capacity Development Assessment:** This tool is designed to bring to the surface the institutional, technical, human and financial capacity including local knowledge and expertise that is available, or gaps that need to be addressed.

f) **URL Policy Review and Assessment:** This tool begins with identifying existing relevant policies or strategies/documents and how the Urban and rural integration is or is not addressed.

g) **URL Data Collection:** starts with an assessment of the already existing data and helps define the methodology for data collection, indicator development and evaluation methods.

**URL Recommendations templates:** these templates are linked to the assessment tools above. This is to ensure that no gaps identified in the assessment are left out. The recommendations templates include actions that could be taken including actions to address challenges, opportunities, capacities, participation and policy.

---

### C. TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

One of the objectives of the URL Program is to strengthen the capacity of actors in major cities, small and intermediate cities and rural areas on pathways to improve URLs. This requires development of learning materials for the URL-GP that have been tested in different contexts and regions, including adaptations for use by partners in different communities of practice (for example by FAO for agricultural ministries or UNEP for environmental ministries, etc.

Country application of the URL-GP tools and training materials, the COVID pandemic experiences and other cases for subnational and national approaches to URLs have influenced the development of a next general of learning materials based on multiple contexts, entry points and governance levels. One main lesson from early applications of the URL-GP is that there are no two situations that are alike and the learning materials must be flexible and highly adaptive to the priorities and challenges on the ground.

The learning materials currently being developed are mainly directed to and relevant for convenors of formal planning processes at different governance levels and for policy makers. UN-Habitat will develop a learning manual in two parts, the first a participant guide and the second an instructor guide. The two manuals aim to build the capacity for trainees (participant guide) to become trainers (instructor guide) after having gone through the training successfully. The Learning Manual is being developed with different modules including Adaptive tools for use by stakeholders:

1. **The participant guide:** should be comprised of questions after a set of sessions to help the participant assesses their level of understanding. This version therefore has detailed description of the subject.
II. The instructor guide: targets those who convene, facilitate, coordinate or otherwise apply the URL-GP in either national or subnational contexts. It should be comprised of guidelines to conduct a training including activities and group discussions to engage the participants. It also has questions and answers to guide the trainer or facilitator in learning sessions. It also provides a menu of step-by-step instructions, pre- and post-workshop evaluations, case study examples as optional exercises and modules for each of the assessment tools listed above.

There will also be an online version of the learning manual; this version mainly aims at those interested in the subject but may not be able to attend a physical training/workshop.

D. PARTNERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR URLS

Partnership is key to strengthening urban-rural linkages -- on many levels. The URL-GP would not exist in its current form without the many actors from different sectors who contributed to both the principles and actions. Partnership is the goal for urban and rural communities, many of which have not known equal, inclusive, mutually beneficial partnership. Partnership is essential across departments and agencies at each level of governances and in international organizations and development agencies. Partnership is needed across levels of governance, from local to national and international.

During the current period of URL-GP implementation from 2020-2023 partners are critical in each phase of implementation, from normative work to tool development, training and capacity development and advocacy. Some partners are working on all these phases, others only on one or two. Currently UN-Habitat is working closely with various partners including:

- FAO on food systems and nutrition and URLs
- CBD- on mainstreaming Biodiversity and URLs
- UNCCD on URLs and ecosystem restoration
- UN Nutrition – on nutrition and URLs
- Songyang County government – for IFURL 1 and 2
- Academic institutions such as Urban Rural Assembly/University of Berlin, Tsingua University and the University of Lisbon, among others
- Civil Society organizations such as Slow Food International, Project for Public Space and Healthbridge
- Research organizations such as the Latin American Centre for Rural Development (Rimisp)
- Private sector organizations such as AGRA on URLs and feeding African cities

Action learning approaches: As discussed in previous sections UN-Habitat is currently working with partners including UN Agencies, international organizations, academia, governments, and civil society, among others. Partners’ work feeds directly into the URL program work in a variety of ways, from developing normative products, training and capacity development, technical services and projects to advocacy through organizing joint events etc. The iterative, interactive process of working with partners became more intensified in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the entire world reeling from the economic, social and environmental impacts of the crisis, a live “action learning” process evolved, especially in the context of co-organizing online webinars to exchange and learn from the responses across the world by cities, regions, grassroots groups and international organizations. This action learning process was incorporated into the URL webinar synthesis report and informs the character of the URL programme’s work both internally and with partners.
Basic information about each partnership is organized in the form a “partnership roadmap” identifying the common areas of interest, potential shared activities, including normative work, event organizing, etc. This can be informal, evolving with the expressed needs of each partner, or formalized in a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

Areas of collaboration can vary widely from co-publishing papers and books, internships/exchange programmes, training events, research projects, developing projects, co-implementing projects, etc.

Advocacy in the context of promoting the URL-GP is communication for increased awareness of the importance of urban-rural linkages for sustainable territorial development. This requires communication and outreach strategies using diverse approaches and mechanisms. This will be a continuous action learning process for every geographic region through diverse thematic entry points. Different approaches to advocacy include: social media, webinar series, newsletters, international forums on URL, conferences contributions, publications, exhibitions with partners among others. This thus requires a wide range of support from partners from relevant sectors and regions. UN-Habitat has launched a series of newsletters, webinars and International Forums on URL. The available materials on advocacy are:

i. First edition of URL newsletter
ii. Second edition of URL newsletter
iii. Third edition of URL newsletter
iv. First International Forum on URL
v. Second International Forum on URL
vi. Webinar series on URL
E. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVISORY SERVICES

This is key to supporting Member State implementation of the URL-GP in their policies, plans and strategies. This is could be related to member states who are already developing their policies, plans, strategies among others but also those who just intend to strengthen their URL. This thus means that the technical services varies from policy support to actual projects proposals and appropriate support. These are this in most cases relates to project support by UN-Habitat in different country contexts.

Knowledge creation and sharing on the other hand will be key to address any upcoming demands by Member States, local and regional governments and stakeholders. This will be accomplished through developing materials and normative products based on stakeholder needs.

Currently UN-Habitat is supporting 11 countries on strengthening URL: Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mozambique, Cameroon, Niger state, Guinea Conakry, Zanzibar, DRC, Mali, Colombia and Bolivia. In the context of the new engagements with UCLG, FAO and ICLEI in the context of the UN Food Systems Summit, there may be new demand for URL related assistance, for example as a result of independent food system dialogues or the UCLG 2nd World Forum on Secondary Cities.

The three COPs (CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC) are all expected to highlight URLs. This may lead to new demand from countries, cities and territorial/ regional governments for advice and assistance. The new alliance around territorial governance as an outgrowth of TP4D and the recognition of the cross-cutting relevance of territorial governance to the transformation of food systems may similarly generate new demand for assistance.

Figure 2: Countries Supported by UN-Habitat with strengthening URL:
The recognition that the world’s urban and rural areas must be better integrated in the governance of urban, territorial and national systems for sustainable, resilient and prosperous development is now more widely recognized. The challenges to accomplish urban-rural inclusive and balanced planning and development present administrative, political, economic and social barriers are however severe. For this the entry-points, capacity development and tools are designed to help confront and overcome challenges to improving urban-rural synergies.

The experiences of local and subnational governments together civil and private sector actors are pointing the way and these examples are being collected for sharing and adaptation. The scaling up of integrated territorial development will require support of national governments and international organizations, especially in low income countries. It is for these purposes that the URL program is being implemented.
## ROADMAP 2021-2023

### NORMATIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF WORK</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                       | • URL-Biodiversity/ migration/Climate change  
• URL Territorial Governance  
• Compendium of case studies 3rd edition  
• Online database of case studies  
• URL-GP for planners, academia etc. | • Compendium of case studies 4th edition  
• URL Global Report working papers (partner contributions)  
• Indicators for URLs | • Compendium of case studies 5th edition  
• URL: Global Report |

### TOOLS DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF WORK</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                       | • Assessment tools  
• Interactive assessment tool  
• Data collection tools  
• Resource collection: URL policies, tools, laws | • Toolkits to address Urban Rural Migration | • Evaluation of tool use/adaptation by countries and subnational actors |

### TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF WORK</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                       | • URL Participant and Instructor learning guides  
• COVID and URLs: good practice exchanges | • Online URL Learning  
• Learning manual/guides applied at field level | • Evaluation of learning manual/guides use |

### ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF WORK</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                       | • URL capacity development events  
• IFURL 2/Exhibition  
• URL webinars series  
• UNH-FAO MOU?  
• UNFSS/COPs inclusion of URLs/ITD | • URL webinars series  
• Partner organized URL activities | • URL webinars series  
• Partner inclusion in events related to launch of URL Global Report |

### TECHNICAL/ADVISORY SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF WORK</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cameroon, Guinea Conakry, Zanzibar, Niger state, Mali, DRC, Senegal, Burkina Faso</td>
<td>Other?</td>
<td>Other?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>