

**POLICY, LEGISLATION AND GOVERNANCE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**



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Newsletter 2  
January 2022



**A. EDITORIAL NOTE**

Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Policy, Legislation and Governance (PLG) Community of Practice (COP)!

This is part of a series of annual newsletters synthesizing the PLG COPs held over the year, a series which began in 2020 when the [UN-Habitat Communities of Practices](#) was established. The PLG [Community of Practice](#) continues to play its pivotal role in facilitating substantive discussions and agency-wide learning, information-sharing and collaboration to harness the collective breadth of knowledge, expertise and experience from the various thematic and geographic parts of the Agency. This 3<sup>rd</sup> edition highlights the key pieces of information from the five (5) COPs held in 2022. It also explores participation and feedback in the COPs, presents recent PLGS knowledge products and sheds light on what to look forward to in the upcoming COPs for 2023.

You are welcome to join our PLG COP Microsoft [Teams](#) channel where you'll access all the COP resources disseminated during the various sessions held since 2020.

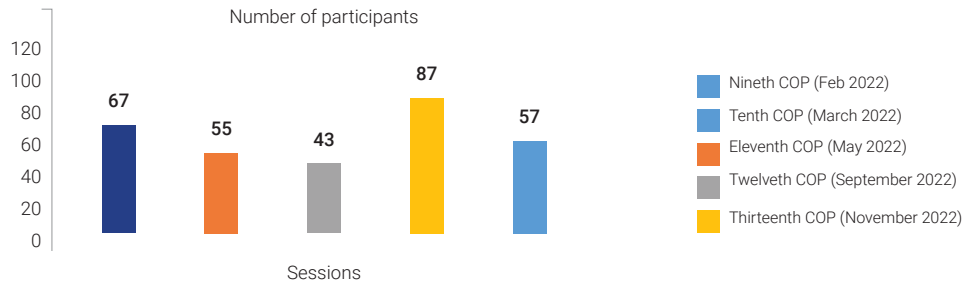
Enjoy the read and please share widely!



## B. PARTICIPATION AT PLG COPs

Since inception of the Community of Practices in 2020, PLGS has held a total of 13 COPs, spanning a wide array of thematic areas. These sessions have drawn presenters and participants from all parts of UN-Habitat HQ, as well




as regional and country offices; and externally. These COPs continue to be platforms for diffusion of experience, perspectives, best practices and lessons learned in the various themes that guided the sessions.

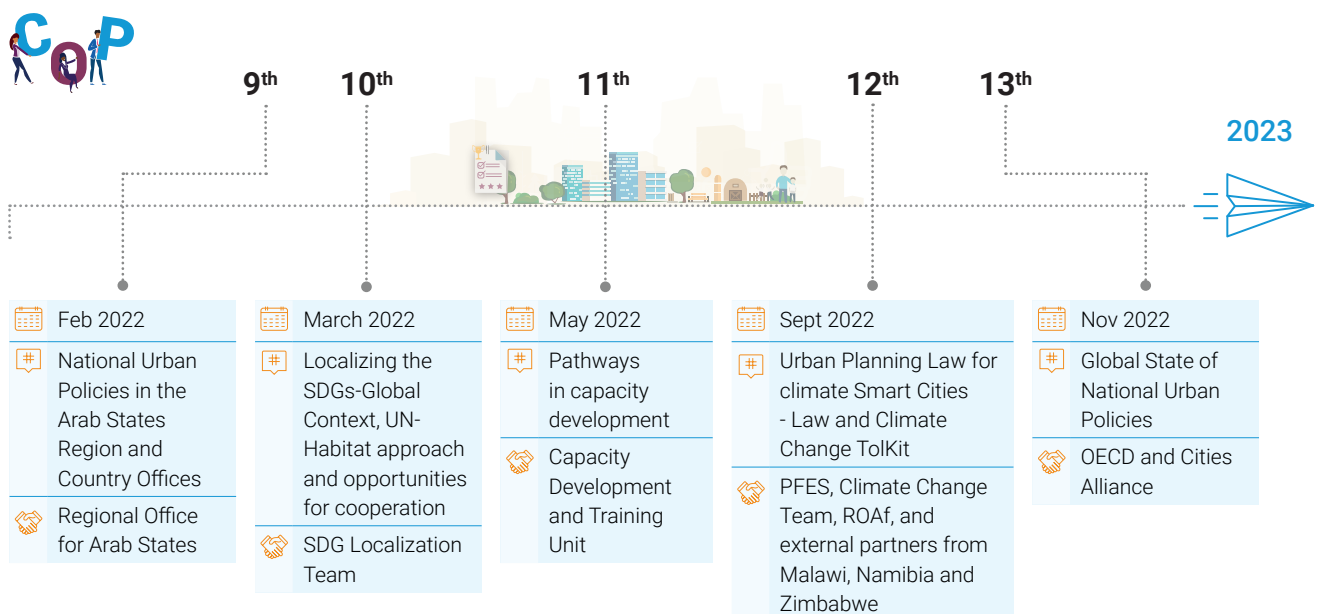


During the last COP of 2022, a survey was sent out to get feedback about the content, general organization, and improvement areas. Recalling the propositions in 2021 to engage more with regional and country offices as

well as external partners, the PLGS COPs in 2022 invited more regional and country offices and external partners to co-organize and present their thematic perspectives.

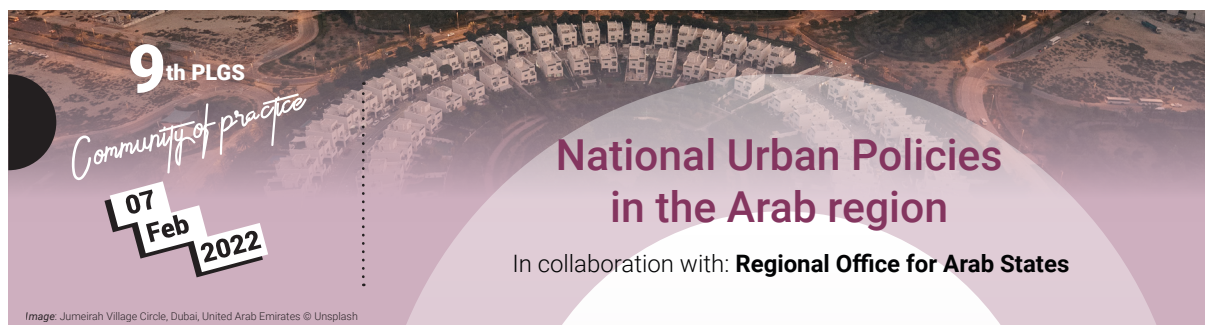
The survey was administered using similar questions as the previous survey, to observe trends and emerging issues. Some of the top responses and suggestions for improvement from the survey are below:

	<b>On the content and what is working</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Effective platform for knowledge exchange on policy, legislation and governance work.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Promotion of [agency-wide] collaboration in development and application of tools and PLG projects</i></li> </ol>
	<b>On what could be improved</b>	<i>Shorten presentations and provide time for interactive discussions</i>
	<b>On proposed themes for 2023</b>	<i>Urban-rural linkages and NUPs; PLGS work and its linkage to Flagship Programmes; Digital governance and Smart Cities; Social Inclusion</i>



## C. HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 5 COP SESSIONS

The PLG COPs demonstrated the synergy that comes out of collaboration. In the [5 COPs](#) held in 2022, PLGS brought in perspectives from other sections, regional and country offices, as well as external partners into the fold. These include UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS), the Planning, Finance and Economy Section (PFES), SDG Localization programme, Capacity Development and Training Unit, Climate Change programme, and external partners from Malawi, Namibia Zimbabwe, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Cities Alliance.



The 9<sup>th</sup> session, attended by 67 participants, was co-organized with the Regional Office for Arab States and Country Offices in the region. It was designed to take a brief look at: the state of urbanization in the Arab region; experiences from the Arab region in developing National Urban Policies; the challenges, priorities, innovations, and lessons learned; the impacts, normative instruments and tools emerging from the process. During the opening plenary, a set of guiding questions were shared, which were first discussed by the panelists (Country offices), then the rest of the participants chipped in with

various experiences, perspectives, and ideas, leading to a vibrant and engaging session. The guiding questions gave the panelists and participants a focused lens for an interactive and effective discussion.

Some of the key lessons and opportunities that emerged from this 9<sup>th</sup> session include: **Need for increased awareness/advocacy** on the importance of NUP among diverse actors; **Continuing to develop capacity of decision-makers on urban policymaking** to advance on NUP development and; **Need for strengthened political support** in NUP development.



This 10<sup>th</sup> session of the PLG COP focused on localization of the SDGs, in particular the global context, UN-Habitat's approach as well as opportunities for cooperation. The session was informative and dynamic, combining a collaborative presentation by the different experts working on SDG localization-related activities, with discussion with participants to address how PLGS can support UN-Habitat's strategy on SDG localization, including ongoing activities at regional and country level,

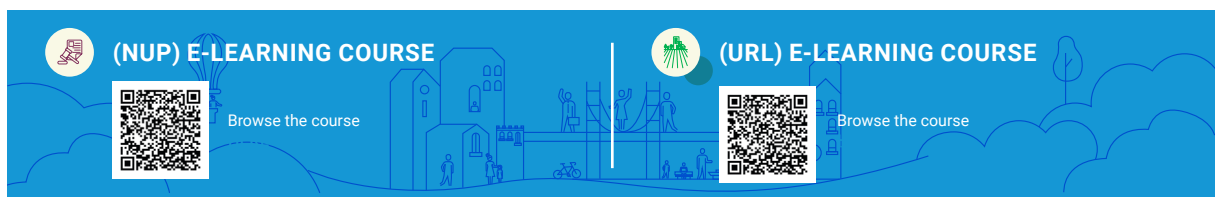
upcoming projects, and opportunities for cross-sectional engagement across the house. Participants interacted with insightful presentations from the speakers, on the following topics: Voluntary Local Reviews; overview of the Global Urban Monitoring Framework; SDG Cities (how cities can achieve SDGs); Multi-level Governance and Opportunities for engagement for UN-Habitat colleagues and partners.





This 11<sup>th</sup> COP was centered around capacity development, where “UN-Habitat Learn”, the Organization’s primary learning platform was showcased. The session combined several delivery methods, including the informative presentations of various tools and their application on the ground, as well as open discussion sessions where participants shared remarks and questions for the panelists’ response, not forgetting the interesting engagements in the Microsoft Teams chat. The session demonstrated the collaboration between PLGS and CDTU in development of capacity

development tools such as the [National Urban Policy \(NUP\)](#) e-learning course and the [Urban Rural Linkages \(URL\)](#) e-learning course. It also provided an opportunity to learn about country case studies where the developed tools have been piloted and/or applied, including NUP capacity development in **Liberia** and **Sierra Leone**, URL trainings for county planners in Kenya in collaboration with University of Nairobi and the MetroHUB global capacity development programme, with cases from **Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Italy and Paraguay**.



The 12<sup>th</sup> PLGS COP involved discussions, experiences and lessons learned on how urban planning law can strengthen climate action in cities and communities. Attracting over 90 participants, the COP provided insights into the interrelationships between urban planning and climate change and explored the entry points for city involvement in climate change action through climate-smart urban planning. The session also featured a presentation of the *Urban Law Module of the Law and Climate Change Toolkit* developed by UN-Habitat as well as reflections from PFES, Climate Change Team and ROAF.

Country experiences from the *Urban Law for Resilient and Low Carbon Urban Development* in **Malawi, Namibia, and Zimbabwe** were also presented. From the presentations, a common observation was that the toolkit was quite effective in reviewing the countries’ policy and legal frameworks, identifying gaps and improvement areas as well as developing policy recommendations for improving urban planning laws for strengthened climate action. One of the **key outcomes** of the country projects is that the project findings are contributing to the drafting of a **new climate law in Zimbabwe**.





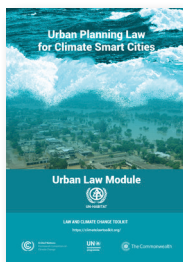
The 13<sup>th</sup> session of the PLGS COP drew over 55 internal and external participants under the theme of urban policies. The session offered an opportunity for participants to understand and appreciate national urban policies and their importance in contributing to the SDGs and NUA. The session's main theme was on the Global State of National Urban Policy Report, which is prepared to review and update the state of NUPs from over 162 countries globally. This knowledge product is one of the initiatives under the National Urban Policy

programme, a partnership between UN-Habitat, OECD, and Cities Alliance. The presentations that featured included: *Overview of urban policies and the GSNUP report*; *Presentation of the NUP database*; *Findings of the 2nd edition of the report-GSNUP 2021 and; partnerships into the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of GSNUP*. The session was concluded with an overview of the planned activities as the leading partners (UN-Habitat, OECD and Cities Alliance) continue developing GSNUP3, slated for release in 2024.

## D. PLGS UPCOMING EVENTS

1. PLGS Learning Session: Public participation in spatial planning. (In collaboration with Planning, Finance and Economy Section)- 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023
2. COP 14: Public Participation in Spatial Planning (February 2023)

## C. RECENT PLG KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

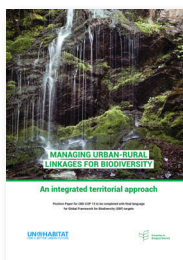


### 1. Urban Planning Law for Climate Smart Cities: The Urban Law Module of the Law and Climate Change Toolkit.

This companion guide helps users to navigate through and use the online version of the Toolkit. Its structure replicates the five sections of the online module and, for each section, provides a narrative description and examples of legal provisions. It stems from a successful collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the UNFCCC Secretariat in developing the urban law module of the law and climate change toolkit.



Read the full report [Here](#)



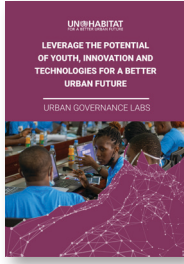
### 2. Managing Urban-Rural Linkages for Biodiversity:

Biological Diversity (CBD) in preparation for launch of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) to be launched in 2022 at the UN CBD COP 15. The paper addresses 15 of the provisional GBF targets in the context of URL guiding principles. This provides a set of actionable entry points for the implementation of GBF by managing urban-rural linkages.



Read the full report [Here](#)



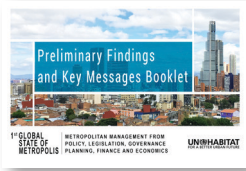


### 3. Leverage The Potential of Youth, Innovation and Technologies for a Better Urban Future

This report demonstrates the relevance of innovative approaches to overcome challenges facing by cities by leveraging the potential of young people and technologies through urban governance labs in order to build more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities. The report presents the idea behind the urban governance laboratories, their relevance, and how they can contribute to building better cities for all. A focus is also made on the first experience of the [Cameroon urban governance lab](#)



Read the full report [Here](#)

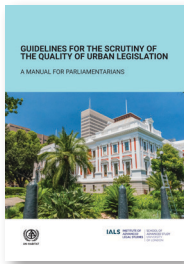


### 4. 1st Global State of Metropolis - Preliminary Findings and Key Messages Booklet

This Booklet presents the preliminary findings and key messages from the metropolitan management assessment made to a Global Sample of Metropolises defined and analyzed jointly by UN-Habitat and metropolitan authorities and experts between 2019-2022. The trends distilled from the analyses configure a sound milestone towards the forthcoming UN-Habitat's 1st Global State of Metropolis Report.



Read the full report [Here](#)



### 5. Guidelines For the Scrutiny of the Quality of Urban Legislation: A Manual for Parliamentarians

UN-Habitat, in collaboration with the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London, UK has prepared these Guidelines for the Scrutiny of the Quality of Urban Legislation: A Manual for Parliamentarians to act as a point of reference and reflection into quality law-making for all parliamentarians and lawmakers, with the hope of stimulating discussion over ways to address shortcomings in urban legal frameworks.



Read the full report [Here](#)



### 5. Enabling Meaningful Public Participation in Spatial Planning Processes

This toolkit on Enabling Meaningful Public Participation in Spatial Planning Processes has demonstrated that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to public participation. The toolkit features a step-by-step process perspective on how to engage the public and civil society and has a series of mechanisms that can be adapted and aggregated in the form of policy mixes that can better suit the local context, the stage of the process and the available resources. More importantly, rather than using participation as a "symbolic gesture", with little transformative impact on urban governance structures and systems, it is recommended to foster the empowerment and autonomy of social movements and local stakeholders and entrust citizens and residents with real decision-making powers.



Read the full report [Here](#)



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#### Editorial Team

**Focal points:** Remy Sietchiping, Anne Klen-Amin | **Editor:** Antonio Kipyegon

**Design & Layout:** Jean Robert Gatsinzi

