

POLICY, LEGISLATION AND GOVERNANCE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



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Newsletter 4
March 2024



A. OVERVIEW

Welcome to this 5th annual recap of the Policy, Legislation and Governance Section (PLGS) Community of Practice. This newsletter recounts the key highlights from the sessions held in 2024.

The PLGS Community of Practice (CoP) serves as a hub for mutual learning, knowledge exchange, and fostering collaboration. It leverages the collective expertise, tools, and experiences to drive transformative changes in urban policy, legislation and governance, metropolitan management, and urban-rural linkages.

Since its inception in 2020, the PLGS CoP has advanced from being an internal knowledge exchange and collaboration opportunity into a powerful advocacy and partnership initiative, facilitating diffusion of best practices and lessons learned both by internal and external participants.

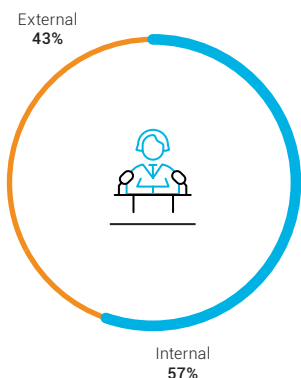
A key feature of the 2024 sessions was the increase in the number of not only external speakers, but participants as well. This has led to a wider global reach for the message on sustainable urban development across the various themes explored in 2024. In addition, 2024 featured more internal collaboration and co-creation, whereby some PLGS sessions were jointly held with other UN-Habitat organizational units. PLGS also had a speaking role in CoP sessions led by other sections and offices within UN-Habitat.



B. ANALYSIS OF 2024 PLGS CoPs

In 2024, the PLGS community of practices (CoPs) was convened **four times**, enabling the diffusion of experiences, new knowledge and lessons on various thematic areas. Through these sessions, more than **350** internal and external participants gained more understanding on these topics while several shared their contextual perspectives. The CoPs also provided opportunities to hear from development partners as well as beneficiary partners on the benefits realized from working with UN-Habitat through PLGS.

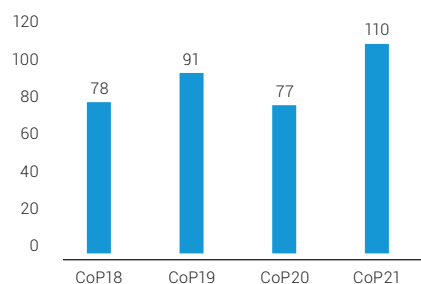
Internal and External Speakers



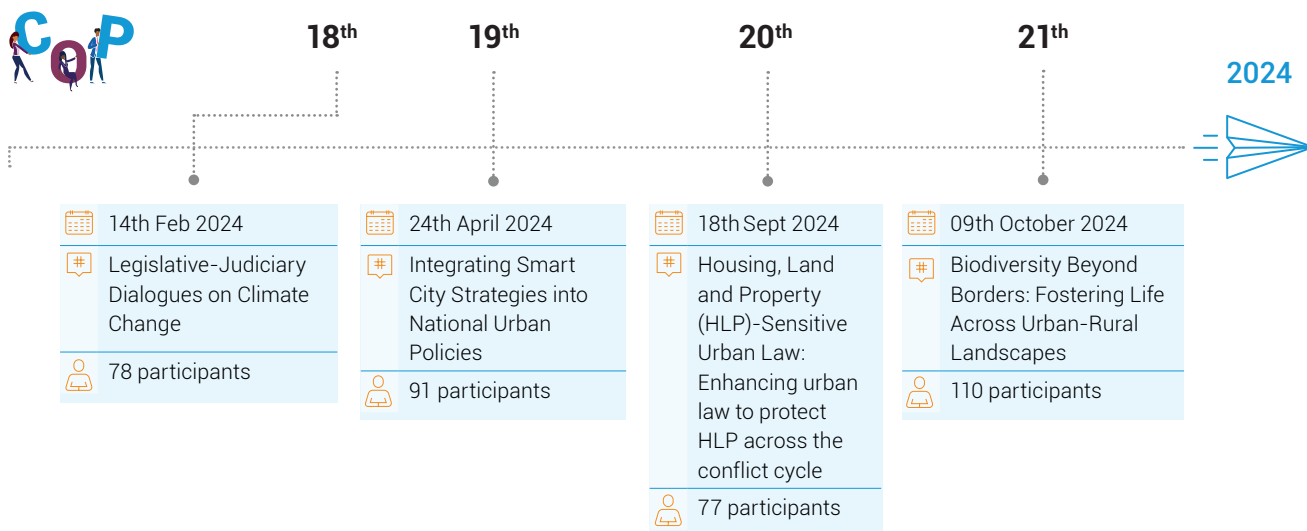
Organizations represented



Participation



C. KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2024 CoPs



18th CoP: Legislative-Judiciary Dialogues on Climate Change

This 18th CoP session centered on climate and urban law reform with 78 attendees. Key themes included integrating climate change legislation into broader policies, judicial adaptability, and urgent urban climate action. Experts from UN-Habitat, UNEP, and

the Commonwealth Lawyers Association discussed global climate litigation trends, city-led lawsuits, and the intersection of human rights with climate law. Participants emphasized accountability, coalition-building, and proactive legal responses.



18th PLGS
Community of practice
14 February 2024

Legislative-Judiciary Dialogues on Climate Change

Image: Village residents committee going through the new maps, 2016 © Julius Mwelu/UN-Habitat

In collaboration with: **Global Solutions Division; Climate Change Unit (internal) United Nations Environment Programme; Global Covenant of Mayors on Climate and Energy; Commonwealth Lawyers Association; Konrad Adenauer Foundation (external)**

19th CoP: Integrating Smart City Strategies into National Urban Policies

This 19th PLGS CoP session focused on integrating smart city strategies into National Urban Policies (NUPs) with 91 attendees. Presentations and case studies from Korea, Niger State, and Egypt emphasized innovation, governance, and stakeholder engagement in addressing urbanization challenges.

Key insights included the importance of digitalization, governance, and UN-Habitat's support through the Korea-funded NUP programme. Tools discussed were the draft Quick Guide for Integrating Smart City Strategy in NUPs and the International Guidelines on People-Centered Smart Cities.

19th PLGS
Community of practice
24 April 2024

Integrating Smart City Strategies into National Urban Policies

Image: Aerial photo of Oldewater in the Netherlands © Royal-free stock photo

In collaboration with: **Global Solutions Division; Innovation Unit; UN-Habitat Egypt; Regional Office for Africa (internal) Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements; Niger State Government (Nigeria) (external)**

20th CoP: Housing, Land and Property (HLP)-Sensitive Urban Law: Enhancing urban law to protect HLP across the conflict cycle

This joint session with the Urban Crisis Community of Practice, titled "HLP-Sensitive Urban Law," drew 77 participants and introduced the Urban Law and Conflict publication series. The series highlights how urban law can protect and promote HLP rights for urban dwellers, including displaced populations, during crises. The session covered securing HLP rights in conflict-affected

contexts, emphasizing legal framework revisions, transitional justice, adaptive urban law, community inclusion, flexible governance, and localized legislation. Tools like the UrbanLex Database and FAO's Voluntary Guidelines were showcased, alongside strategies such as participatory land boundary demarcation in Somalia and "fit-for-purpose" urban planning laws in Syria.

20th PLGS
Community of practice
18 Sept 2024

Housing, Land and Property (HLP)-Sensitive Urban Law: Enhancing urban law to protect HLP across the conflict cycle

Image: A busy street in downtown Port-au-Prince, Haiti © Julius Mwelu/UN-Habitat

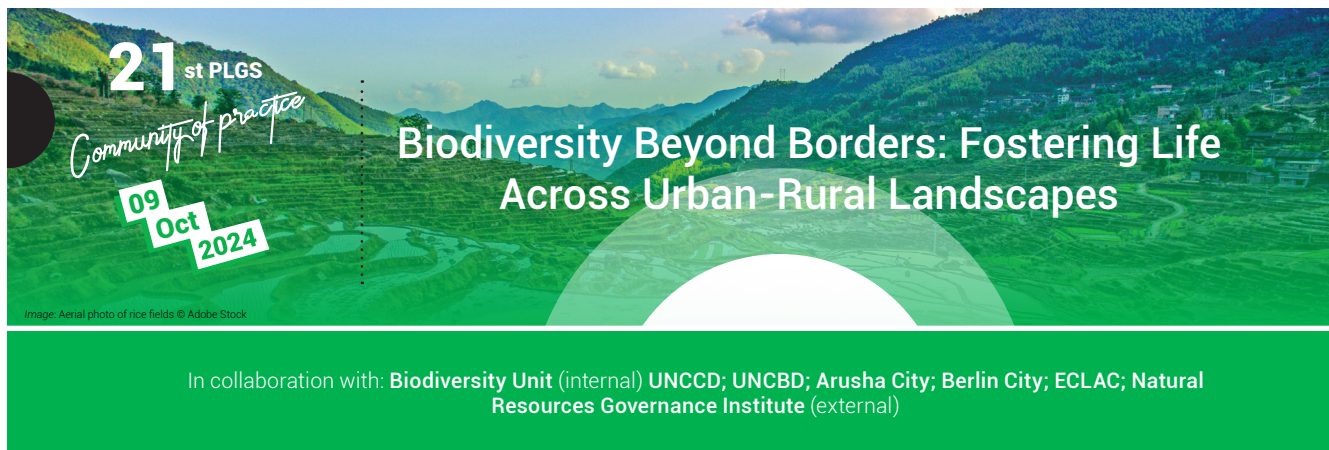
In collaboration with: **Land, Housing and Shelter Section; Urban Crisis Team; UN-Habitat Yemen; UN-Habitat Syria; UN-Habitat Somalia (internal)**



21th CoP: Biodiversity Beyond Borders: Fostering Life Across Urban-Rural Landscapes

The 21st PLGS Community of Practice session on October 9, 2024, brought together 110 participants to explore urban-rural interdependence in biodiversity conservation. Presentations highlighted how urban areas rely on rural ecosystems and vice versa, with examples from Arusha, Monteria, and Berlin.

Key topics included community involvement, financial mechanisms, and integrated policies for ecological and economic sustainability. Panelists from UN-Habitat and other organizations shared insights on governance, financial restructuring, and leveraging global platforms.



D. OTHER CoP SESSIONS WITH PLGS ENGAGEMENT

As part of advancing ongoing collaboration and co-creation efforts, the PLGS CoP engaged with other Communities of Practice in 2024 in a speaking, participating or co-creation role.

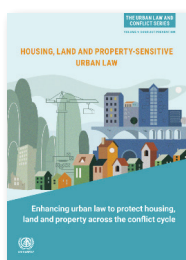
Collaboration in a speaking role:

1. Climate Change and Urban Environment Community of Practice session "Inform the IPCC & other Global Climate Processes: a brainstorm on the latest & most important topics in Cities and Climate" (April 2024)
2. Brownbag session on MY neighborhood and Urban Design Guidelines for Mountainous Cities (February 2024)
3. Learning session on Public Space (July 2024)
4. Urban Basic Service Community of Practice (October 2024)

PLGS at co-creation sessions

1. Co-creation session with UN-Habitat Andean Countries Hub (Bolivia)
2. Co-creation session with Innovation Unit (Knowledge and Innovation Branch)

E. RECENT KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

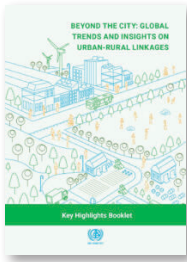


1. Housing, Land and Property (HLP)-Sensitive Urban Law: Enhancing urban law to protect HLP across the conflict cycle (Conflict Prevention)

This publication series –“Urban Law and Conflict” – aims to support the identification of where (in what laws, policies, rules or regulations and dealing with what subject matters) and how (suggested best practices and reforms) urban law can better protect and promote the HLP rights of urban dwellers in periods of crisis to “ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements”



Read the full report [Here](#)

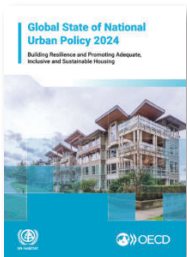


2. Beyond the City: Global Trends and Insights on Urban-Rural Linkages - Key Highlights Booklet

This insightful booklet offers an overview of global efforts on urban-rural linkages (URLs), showcasing their significance in today's development landscape. Delve into the challenges, opportunities, and transformative trends that have shaped URLs. Through comparative analysis of Member States' survey responses, explore how URLs are integrated into national and subnational frameworks, and learn about the diverse actions taken globally to enhance these crucial connections. This booklet is a preview of the global trends and insights on urban-rural linkages. This knowledge resource aligns with the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and Resolution 1/5 on Urban-Rural Linkages adopted during the inaugural UN Habitat Assembly (2019).



Read the full report [Here](#)



3. Global State of National Urban Policy 2024 - Building Resilience and Promoting Adequate, Inclusive and Sustainable Housing

The report offers a unique framework for understanding how and in what forms NUPs have been developed, implemented and monitored globally. Building on the previous two editions, this third edition features key trends, country experiences and other cross-cutting thematic topics related to NUPs.

This report highlights the growing importance of NUPs worldwide. Drawing from diverse experiences, it offers lessons and recommendations to guide policymakers and ensure sustainable urban development for future generations. The report expands on the previous two editions of the Global State of National Urban Policy reports of 2018 and 2021.



Read the full report [Here](#)



4. Metodología para Consolidación Metropolitana en Honduras

This offers a comprehensive framework designed to promote the sustainable development of metropolitan areas in Honduras and other Central American countries. It focuses on fostering integrative metropolitan management systems to enhance both the functionality and competitiveness of Honduran cities. This methodology provides clear steps and strategies for local, regional, and national authorities to effectively consolidate and manage metropolitan zones. It addresses key dimensions such as policy, legislation, governance, planning, and financing, offering a holistic approach to metropolitan development. Additionally, it zooms into the case of the Central Metropolitan Zone, presenting an integrative solution to address its ongoing metropolitanization process.



Read the full report [Here](#)

F. WHAT'S COMING FOR 2025?

PLGS aims to continue utilizing the CoPs to advance the various thematic areas including urban policy, legislation, governance, urban-rural linkages and metropolitan management. For 2025, the plan is to hold at least 5 CoP sessions covering these topics in relation to other thematic areas where UN-Habitat is working.

Internally, the collaboration and co-creation sessions will be continued, with plans to co-develop projects and normative materials as well as collaboratively oversee their implementation.

The PLGS CoP will also continue engaging a wide array of external partners to exchange knowledge and experiences, further fostering collaboration and strengthening joint efforts to advance impactful solutions.

The first PLGS CoP session for 2025 is planned for the 22nd of January on **"Strengthening Legal Frameworks for SDG Localization: SDG Cities Legal Checklist."**

Look forward to seeing you there!



PLGS Publications



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Editorial Team

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

Design & Layout: Jean Robert Gatsinzi

