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**Executive Board of the United Nations
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**Normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including
reporting on the programmatic activities of UN-Habitat in 2021
and the implementation of subprogrammes, flagship
programmes and technical cooperation activities, and an update
on the UN-Habitat response to the coronavirus disease
(COVID-19) pandemic and the engagement of UN-Habitat in
countries, territories and areas affected by conflict and disaster**

Progress made with regard to the flagship programmes of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Report of the Executive Director

I. Introduction

1.   The present report highlights progress made with regard to the flagship programmes of the
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), critical instruments for advancing a
more integrated approach concerning the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, in line
with decision 2022/3 of the Executive Board. For each flagship programme, the report provides a short
overview of the programme, outlines the strategy used and progress made, and sets out a way forward,
based on current challenges and opportunities. As a tool to make the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the
period 2020–2023 operational, all the flagship programmes cut across the domains of change of the
plan:

(a)   Flagship programme 1 (inclusive, vibrant neighbourhoods and communities); domain
of change 1 (reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban–rural continuum);
outcomes 1.1 and 1.3;

(b)   Flagship programme 2 (people-centred smart cities); domain of change 2 (enhanced
shared prosperity of cities and regions); outcome 2.3;

(c)   Flagship programme 3 (rise up: resilient settlements for the urban poor); domain of
change 3 (strengthened climate action and improved urban environment); outcomes 3.3 and 1.2;

(d)   Flagship programme 4 (inclusive cities: enhancing the positive impact of urban
migration); domain of change 4 (effective urban crisis prevention and response); outcomes of domains
of change 1, 2 and 3;

(e)   Flagship programme 5 (Sustainable Development Goals cities); all domains of change
and all outcomes.

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* HSP/EB.2022/14.

2.   The present report provides an opportunity for the Executive Board of UN-Habitat to discuss the continued relevance of the flagship programmes to strengthen the integration of normative and operational work, to prioritize such work and to scale up the impact of the programmes.

II.   Flagship programme 1: inclusive vibrant neighbourhoods and communities

A.   Overview of flagship programme 1

3.   Flagship programme 1, inclusive, vibrant neighbourhoods and communities, allows for multi-stakeholder collaboration, technical assistance and resource mobilization to promote inclusive and resilient urban regeneration and to empower neighbourhoods and communities to become more inclusive, healthy and vibrant.

4.   The programme uses urban regeneration to address spatial inequality and climate change, and to promote social value creation, environmental resilience and shared economic prosperity. Urban regeneration represents a powerful integrative tool for social, economic and environmental impact through the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and for the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

B.   Strategy of flagship programme 1

5.   The flagship programme builds upon various tools and experiences in urban policy, community engagement, participatory processes, local economic development, mobility, climate action, urban health, basic services and housing. It leverages a strong spatial foundation and inclusive, human-rights-based processes to create strong policies that avoid, mitigate and manage risks associated with urban regeneration.

Partnership development

6.   As a convening initiative, the flagship programme supports multilevel governance and focuses on building capacity and providing technical assistance for the formulation of strategies. It also works closely with the private sector, international funds and impact funds and investors to develop inclusive business models and benchmarks to promote public-private partnerships. Through its interactions with community groups, the programme provides capacity-building, technical assistance, and tools for community-led urban regeneration initiatives. Research institution partners co-develop normative and technical materials and training.

C.   Progress of flagship programme 1

1.   The evolution of the programme from 2020 to the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum

7.   The focus has shifted to improving internal coordination and stakeholder collaboration, developing urban regeneration initiatives and partnership networks for non-traditional actors, and identifying resource mobilization opportunities.

8.   The programme is now focusing on three main outcome areas:

(a)   Consolidated data and knowledge on spatial inclusion and climate action in cities, including data platforms, methodologies and best practices for urban regeneration;

(b)   Strengthened global and regional networks for inclusive and climate-resilient urban regeneration;

(c)   Initiatives and solutions developed and implemented by localizing urban regeneration processes globally.

2.   Initiatives and portfolio

9.   Through efforts such as the development of the "Urban regeneration and viruses report: learning from past present health crises" and the guidelines for inclusive and sustainable urban regeneration, the flagship programme is actively contributing to the development of normative tools and technical guidance on urban regeneration by UN-Habitat.

10.   Strengthening networks and knowledge-sharing has been achieved through the preparation of high-level meetings and dialogues, such as the Seoul Urban Regeneration International Conference 2020, and the expert group meeting on urban regeneration as a tool for inclusive and sustainable recovery in 2021.

11.   Furthermore, the programme has collaborated on urban regeneration initiatives in five sites in Lebanon, Kenya, Mexico and Somalia. Two other major initiatives are currently ongoing, developing ISO standards for inclusive urban regeneration, co-development and social value creation.

3.   Status of the budgeting and resource mobilization strategy

12.   Some of the main activities have been funded by governments, including the Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Construction of Germany, the regional governments of the Basque Country and Catalonia, Spain, and the Seoul Metropolitan Government. Discussions are ongoing with the French national urban regeneration agency (Agence Nationale pour la Rénovation Urbaine – ANRU), the Moroccan urban regeneration agency (Agence Nationale pour la Rénovation Urbaine – ANRUR), the institute of planning of Fortaleza, Brazil (Instituto de Planejamento de Fortaleza – IPLANFOR), Hines real estate environmental, social and governance team, Clarion Group, New York University and the sustainable urban regeneration lab of the University of Bocconi, Italy. The focus is now on the further expansion of city-wide, regional and national urban regeneration initiatives, the development of an integrated platform for spatial inclusion mapping, an atlas on urban regeneration good practices and the consolidation of regional urban regeneration hubs.

D.   Way forward for flagship programme 1

13.   The external challenges and opportunities shown in table 1 will be addressed to move the flagship programme forward, including through broader mobilization of the United Nations development system.

Table 1
Flagship programme 1: external opportunities and challenges

Opportunities	*Challenges*
Urban regeneration represents a super-tool for the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda and the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2020–2023, as it impacts almost all Sustainable Development Goals simultaneously.	Urban regeneration is context-specific and regions adopt different approaches to it. There is need for a global initiative with adapted regional and national frameworks, tools and methodologies.
Governments and experts need consolidated benchmarks, data and methodologies to monitor inequality and social value creation.	In certain contexts, urban regeneration is identified with a specific political agenda, making it susceptible to change and representing a challenge for sustained collaboration with governments.
The programme has the potential to mobilize additional resources from non-traditional donors.	

14.   Proposed actions to scale up the programme:

(a)   The programme achieved results in knowledge development, concrete urban regeneration initiatives, partnership consolidation and resource mobilization. Its impact and output delivery will substantially increase if soft-earmarked resources are allocated to flagship programme 1;

(b)   The importance of urban regeneration for the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals needs to be more strongly communicated, showcasing the linkages between housing, climate change and Sustainable Development Goal priorities, and representing regeneration as a powerful tool for integrated localization of the Goals;

(c)   For the programme to effectively turn the increased resources into results, more funding is required for the flagship programmes' secretariat to provide partners with core coordination, knowledge-sharing, advocacy, project development and implementation support roles.

III.   Flagship programme 2: people-centred smart cities

A.   Overview of flagship programme 2

15.   Flagship programme 2, people-centred smart cities, puts inclusion and sustainability at the centre of smart cities, a field that has until recently been too technology-focused and industry-driven. The programme promotes an approach to smart cities that starts with the people and their real

challenges and priorities, as identified and described by cities, communities and urban residents, thus placing the needs of people at the centre of smart city planning. The approach requires a firm commitment to human rights and inclusion and to the use of digital technologies for improvement of quality of life.

16.   The programme is working towards three outcomes:

(a)   Policy transformation placing people at the centre of smart cities;

(b)   Financing of smart cities to achieve Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(c)   Capacity-building and technical assistance.

B.   Strategy of flagship programme 2

17.   The programme brings together the work of UN-Habitat on smart cities and urban innovation. It is being implemented by a cross-functional team from the Programme Development Branch and Innovation Section of UN-Habitat, and the United Nations Innovation Technology Accelerator for Cities (UNITAC), based in Hamburg, Germany.

18.   The programme has normative and operational components. The normative components guide local and national authorities, the private sector and the global development community on the adoption of people-centred smart city approaches by providing guidance on inclusive, rights-based digital technologies in cities and communities. The programme also supports Member States in their efforts to agree on international guidance to adopt a people-centred smart city approach. The programme implements projects to guide cities in smart city planning and apply people-centred solutions, builds the capacity of local governments to adopt people-centred smart city strategies, and, through UNITAC, delivers innovative digital technology and data solutions.

Partnership development

19.   The programme continues to build broad partnerships with Member States, United Nations entities, local government entities, private sector-based platforms and other non-State actors. Since 2020, several key partnerships have been established, including with United Nations agencies,[1] city networks,[2] academic institutions,[3] foundations[4] and regional development banks.[5] The Government of France, with support from the European Commission, hosted an expert group meeting on people-centred smart cities. As part of the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence, UN-Habitat is co-leading a workstream on artificial intelligence for people-centred smart cities, building on the co-lead role of UN-Habitat in the United for Smart Sustainable Cities initiative.[6]

C.   Progress of flagship programme 2

1.   The evolution of the programme from 2020 to the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum

20.   Despite limited resources, normative frameworks for adopting people-centred smart city approaches, strategic partnerships and the cross-functional team have been put in place. Further, a body of normative tools is being established. A series of "playbooks" on people-centred smart cities for local and regional governments was launched at the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum. Global research was undertaken on artificial intelligence, smart city governance and blockchains for urban development. A digital rights governance framework for cities was produced and a toolkit for local governments on digital transformation for people-centred cities was developed in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union and other United Nations agencies.

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[1] The International Telecommunication Union, the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Technology, the Office of Information and Communications Technology of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme.

[2] Cities Coalition for Digital Rights, Eurocities and United Cities and Local Governments.

[3] Edinburgh Napier University, HafenCity University and Mila – Quebec Artificial Intelligence Institute.

[4] Open Society Foundations.

[5] The Development Bank of Latin America (CAF).

[6] See https://u4ssc.itu.int/.

2. Initiatives and portfolio

21. The operational portfolio includes the following projects:

(a) UNITAC projects on mapping, data and digital governance are being implemented in Brazil, Jordan, Mexico, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania;

(b) A "smart city strategy toolbox" is being developed and will support the development of local and national smart city policies and strategies, with a focus on implementation in Africa;

(c) The Climate Smart Cities Challenge is currently operating in four cities, and as an open innovation programme it has identified bankable climate-smart solutions for cities;

(d) The Digital Helpdesk for Cities initiative is being piloted with four cities in Europe;[7]

(e) Scaling up the people-centred smart cities flagship programme has produced smart city policies and strategies in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar and Nigeria.

3. Status of the budgeting and resource mobilization strategy

22. During the first two year of the programme, the Governments of Germany[8] and Sweden[9], as well as the Open Society Foundations[10], made contributions. The programme has also received in-kind support from the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), Edinburgh Napier University and Mila – Quebec Artificial Intelligence Institute.

23. Discussions are ongoing with the Government of Germany on projects related to just transitions in difficult places and digital solutions for more climate-resilient informal areas and climate-smart urban recovery of communities affected by crisis in Namibia and Ukraine, as well as embedded initiatives on climate-smart cities. The second phase of the project to scale up people-centred smart cities through national urban policies is being formulated with the Republic of Korea. France has expressed interest in supporting the development of international guidelines on people-centred smart cities. A discussion is ongoing with Sweden regarding additional funding for the Climate Smart Cities Challenge. Botswana has expressed interest in establishing a UNITAC presence in Gaborone, focusing on support for digital transformation on the African continent.

D. Way forward for flagship programme 2

24. Table 2 sets out the external challenges and opportunities that will be addressed in moving the flagship programme forward.

Table 2
Flagship programme 2: external opportunities and challenges

Opportunities	*Challenges*
Digital transformation has risen to the top of the agenda in international development.	Smart cities are still considered to be a top-down, technology-first, industry-led approach that doesn't consider people's needs.
The demand for support for smart cities and related digital transformation issues continues to grow.	The digital divide is inhibiting smart city developments.
Member States have expressed the need for international guidelines on national smart city plans, policies and strategies.	Limited resources to deliver the technical support needed for people-centred smart cities, particularly in least developed countries.

25. Proposed actions to scale up the programme:

(a) Develop international guidelines on people-friendly smart cities to scale up the programme and disseminate the normative frameworks and the best practices and lessons learned from country operations;

(b) Build on the existing relationships with the branches, regional and country offices of UN-Habitat to ensure the sustainability and scalability of existing solutions;

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[7] Brussels, Dublin, Sofia and Tirana.

[8] $6.6 million for UNITAC.

[9] $500,000 for the Climate Smart Cities Challenge.

[10] $150,000 for the Digital Helpdesk for Cities.

(c)   Leverage existing external partnerships and identify new ones, especially in the private sector;

(d)   Increase capacity by identifying sustainable, long-term funding sources.

IV.   Flagship programme 3: rise up – resilient settlements for the urban poor

A.   Overview of flagship programme 3

26.   Flagship programme 3, entitled "rise up: resilient settlements for the urban poor", addresses one of the greatest challenges for climate adaptation; how to build resilience for the three billion people living in vulnerable climate hotspots[11] and the one billion people living in informal settlements. Despite the efforts made so far, urban vulnerable groups are disproportionately affected by climate change.[12]

27.   The objective of the programme is to mobilize large-scale investments in resilience to provide local and national governments and communities with the resources, knowledge, capacity and policy environment required to accelerate climate-resilient actions. The programme improves the adaptive capacities of poor urban communities by reducing climate disruptions to livelihoods, protecting them from the costs of climate disasters, and improving basic services. The programme also advocates for the integration of urban vulnerability and climate change adaptation issues into city-wide and national frameworks.

28.   The programme works towards the following main outcomes:

(a)   Achieving a breakthrough in adaptation and resilience for the more than three billion people highly vulnerable to climate change globally;

(b)   Redirecting climate finance to local-level and large-scale investments in resilience for the most vulnerable urban poor;

(c)   Fostering an enabling policy environment, knowledge transfer and capacities to build local resilience through multi-level governance and cooperative partnerships.

B.   Strategy of flagship programme 3

29.   The programme implements innovative, feasibility-proven and bankable resilience solutions for the urban poor and for the natural and built environments. It advocates for the integration of pro-poor urban climate action in city-level and national climate policies, plans and commitments, global climate action, and finance architecture. The programme seeks to increase investment and financing for inclusive pro-poor adaptation projects in urban vulnerability hotspots, focusing on small and medium-sized cities in developing and transition countries, least developed countries, and small island developing States. It enhances the capacity of all levels of government and core partners to coordinate multilevel governance action towards building the resilience of the urban poor, including accessing and mobilizing resilient investments.

Partnership development

30.   The programme builds on the global multi-partner initiative on building the climate resilience of the urban poor, launched at the 2019 Climate Action Summit convened by the Secretary-General.

C.   Progress of flagship programme 3

1.   The evolution of the programme from 2020 to the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum

31.   Since 2020, flagship programme 3 has integrated its objectives across the normative and operational work of UN-Habitat and conveyed the urgency of issues facing the most vulnerable at several events. Urban October 2021 contributed to the Race to Zero campaign and UN-Habitat has also joined the Race to Resilience campaign. During the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the

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[11] See Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability,* contribution of Working Group II to the *Sixth Assessment Report* of IPCC (Paris, 2022) (chapter 8).

[12] See IPCC, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, contribution of Working Group II to the *Sixth Assessment Report* of IPCC (Paris, 2022) (chapter 12).

Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, together with the local government and municipal authority constituency to Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN-Habitat supported the integration of "multi-level governance and cooperative action" into the Glasgow Climate Pact. At the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Adrienne Arsht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center, which will second an urban heat officer to UN-Habitat.

32.   The relevance of the flagship programme has been highlighted at several high-level events: Urban October 2020 and 2021, the 2021 Innovate4Cities conference, the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the first session of 2022 of the UN-Habitat Executive Board, AfriCities 2022 and the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum.

2.   Initiatives and portfolio

33.   To date, the portfolio of flagship programme 3 has grown to $89.8 million, including climate action efforts in some 20 cities in 17 countries, financed by the Adaptation Fund, the Asian Development Bank, Germany, the International Climate Initiative, Stiftelsen Stockholm International Water Institute and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

3.   Status of the budgeting and resource mobilization strategy

34.   Two projects have raised the opportunity for additional normative and global projects: a proposal designed with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency builds an integrated approach to strengthening climate action, improving the urban environment and creating resilient settlements for the urban poor in Madagascar, Malawi and the Solomon Islands; and a project financed by the fourteenth tranche of the United Nations Development Account focuses on building the capacities of African, Caribbean and Pacific small island developing States for green, resilient and pro-poor pandemic recovery.

35.   The projects in the pipeline, aligned with the Executive Director's priorities – adequate housing, cities and climate change, and localizing the Sustainable Development Goals – and financed by the Adaptation Fund, will mobilize $54,000,000 in Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Saint Lucia and Sri Lanka.

36.   It is critical for the growth of the programme to strengthen the programme secretariat, which manages the replication and transfer of knowledge from country-level investments, through increased core and earmarked funding.

D.   Way forward for flagship programme 3

37.   The resource mobilization strategy for flagship programme 3 identifies priority areas for resilience as well as strategic countries where there is a budget potential exceeding $500 million for the programme.

38.   A knowledge management strategy interlinking UN-Habitat offices globally has been created to facilitate the mainstreaming of the programme across UN-Habitat and to institutionalize its emerging best practices and lessons.

Table 3
Flagship programme 3: external opportunities and challenges

Opportunities	*Challenges*
Mature Adaptation Fund portfolio.	Reduction in financial resources.
Existing experience, tools and methodologies.	Limited knowledge and capacities of local governments on how to access climate finance for local levels and achieve resilience for the urban poor.
Scale up the partnerships reanimated at the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, through the presidential initiative for that session.	
Increase the human resources and expert pool of the programme.	

39.   Proposed actions to scale up the programme:

(a)   Define strategic partnerships by analysing existing expertise, experience, best practices and lessons learned;

(b)   Increase resource mobilization by disseminating success stories to relevant stakeholders.

V.   Flagship programme 4: inclusive cities – enhancing the positive impacts of urban migration

A.   Overview of flagship programme 4

40.   Since the establishment of flagship programme 4, entitled "inclusive cities: enhancing the positive impact of urban migration" in 2020, the number of people forced to flee their homes has steadily and dramatically increased, hitting new records. As at May 2022, 100 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide due to conflicts, food insecurity, the climate crisis and other emergencies.[13] The programme aims to harness the positive impact of migration and displacement in urban areas. Its relevance has been stressed by the Secretary-General in recent global guidance and agreements on displacement. To achieve the ambition of making the urban environment more inclusive for migrants, internally displaced persons and host communities, UN-Habitat launched a four-year global programme on migration at the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum. The global programme was developed to operationalize flagship programme 4, by promoting evidence-based approaches as the basis for the normative and operational work of UN-Habitat on urban migration.

B.   Strategy of flagship programme 4

41.   The programme encompasses two outcomes:

(a)   Improved knowledge (based on data and normative frameworks and tools) informing integrated and inclusive solutions for urban migrants, internally displaced persons and their host communities;

(b)   Innovative, integrated and people-centred solutions are scaled up to respond to migration and displacement challenges and opportunities in urban areas through area-based approaches;

(c)   The capacities of UN-Habitat headquarters and regional offices will be strengthened to support the implementation of the global programme in ten pilot countries by the end of 2024. Capacity-building efforts will also be deployed in support of local and national governments, as well as operating partners.

Partnership development

42.   Partnerships are at the heart of the programme's approach to build and share knowledge. UN-Habitat has already engaged with key actors such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration and the World Bank. UN-Habitat and UNHCR identified areas of collaboration and launched a series of internal webinars to better share their areas of expertise and explore potential collaboration in the field. A senior programme adviser has been deployed from UNHCR to UN-Habitat for the initial period of one year to support the flagship programme at headquarters.

43.   UN-Habitat is also part of several regional and global networks and platforms for global advocacy, outreach and knowledge-sharing activities on urban migration, such as the Global Alliance on Urban Crises, the Global Forum on Migration and Development, the Global Refugee Forum, GP2.0, the United Nations Network on Migration and the World Bank Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development.

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[13] UNHCR, 2022.

C.   Progress of flagship programme 4

1.   The evolution of the programme from 2020 to the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum

44.   Since the launch of flagship programme 4 at the tenth session of the World Urban Forum, its focus has primarily been on programme development in migration and displacement-affected contexts, in cooperation with key partners. In East Africa and the Horn of Africa, UN-Habitat has collaborated with UNHCR in a review of housing, land and property issues and in assessing the possibility of the inclusion of UN-Habitat in the Solutions Initiative for South Sudan and the Sudan refugee situation. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UN-Habitat has developed a joint programme with UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration, using evidence-based approaches to reduce the vulnerabilities of refugees and migrants and increase the resilience of host communities in six Latin American and Caribbean countries.

45.   In 2022, UN-Habitat contributed to interventions in countries facing large-scale and often protracted displacement, such as Afghanistan, Kenya, Mozambique and Pakistan. The contribution of UN-Habitat to the work of the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement was reflected in the September 2021 report of the Panel[14] and in the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement.[15] The key role of local governments in identifying and implementing durable solutions to internal displacement, as well as the increasingly urban character of displacement, have been affirmed in both documents.

46.   The programme has actively supported response to climate-change-induced displacement, both through operational and policy work, such as leading the urban track of the Africa Climate Mobility Initiative. UN-Habitat has been participating in the technical team that follows up on the report "Shaping the Future of Mobility in Africa: Addressing Climate-forced Displacement and Migration", published in March 2022. This has included contributions to the Virtual Summit of the Stakeholder Forum of the Africa Climate Mobility Initiative held from 26 to 28 July 2022 and the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in November 2022.

47.   UN-Habitat has been assigned as a co-lead of the housing, land and property area of responsibility under the Global Protection Cluster.

2.   Initiatives and portfolio

48.   New regional and country programmes have been initiated in all regions. In 2022, Ukraine response planning was added to the Eastern Europe engagement of UN-Habitat. To better coordinate and align approaches, the flagship programme is strengthening corporate capacities on durable solutions to internal displacement and on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus through the design of online courses in collaboration with the global networks of GP2.0 and the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

3.   Status of the budgeting and resource mobilization strategy

49.   Additional core resources or voluntary contributions are needed to initiate or support research and data collection, adapt the most relevant tools, and strengthen the engagement of UN-Habitat, from the local to global levels. Seed funding is also important to scale up programme development support in line with demand. The global programme on urban migration estimates that the cost for supporting programming in one of the ten priority areas amounts to approximately $480,000 per year.

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[14] High-level Panel on Internal Displacement, *Shining a Light on Internal Displacement: A Vision for the Future* (2021).

[15] United Nations, "The United Nations Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement: Follow-up to the Report of the High-level Panel on Internal Displacement" (2022).

D. Way forward for flagship programme 4

Table 4
Flagship programme 4: external opportunities and challenges

Opportunities	Challenges
Extensive field-level portfolio in all regions.	Dramatic and steady increase in the number of displaced persons and migrants globally.
Existing experience, tools and methodologies.	
Partnerships reanimated at the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum.	Limited knowledge and capacities of local governments on how to address challenges caused by displacement and migration.
New support needs emerging in Eastern Europe and in Ukraine in particular.	

50.   The programme will pursue the implementation of the global programme on urban migration by strengthening its work on data and better informing capacity-building needs and programming. The review and analysis of the current portfolio will be finalized to identify best practices for scaling up, replication and contextualization, and to contribute to the overall strategic direction of the programme.

51.   As a result, UN-Habitat will identify ten priority geographical areas where there is the greatest need and opportunity for UN-Habitat to add value to wider United Nations efforts in addressing urban migration and displacement challenges across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

VI. Flagship programme 5: Sustainable Development Goals cities

A. Overview of flagship programme 5

52.   Flagship programme 5, Sustainable Development Goals cities, is a response to the need for accelerated action on the local implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals during the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. It centres on the ambitious goal of supporting over 1,000 cities to accelerate their achievement of the Goals and the impact this would have on a billion lives. The programme recognizes and incentivizes exceptional achievements by cities through Sustainable Development Goals cities certification.

53.   The programme adheres to a four-track sequence: (a) data collection and analysis; (b) strategic planning; (c) the strengthening of local institutions; and (d) the financing and implementation of high-impact projects. Ultimately, the programme bolsters local economic opportunities while improving environmental sustainability and reducing social inequality.

B. Strategy of flagship programme 5

54.   The programme is achieving scale by providing cities with: (a) an online bank of tools for data collection and analysis, institutional capacity development and access to the Cities Investment Facility that prepares projects for investment and matchmakes to sources of finance; and (b) technical support hubs that backstop participating cities at each stage of the Sustainable Development Goals cities cycle. It mobilizes the global initiative through national multi-city partnerships, including with United Nations country teams, and global implementation windows, including a women-led cities initiative, supported by women-led businesses and philanthropies, a capital cities initiative, youth and sport, city networks (with Commonwealth and francophone networks planned), and faith communities. Some of the windows will be managed as franchises, with UN-Habitat providing materials, resources and certification for partners to lead the delivery.

Partnership development

55.   The flagship programme is rolled out in partnership with Erasmus University, the Global CEO Alliance, the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, the United Global SDG Index Institute Foundation, the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the World Economic Forum, municipal and national governments, and national and international networks of cities and investors.

C. Progress of flagship programme 5

1. The evolution of the programme from 2020 to the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum

56.   Since its launch at the tenth session of the World Urban Forum in 2020, flagship programme 5 has developed a bank of digitized tools, including institutional diagnostic and capacity development tools and spatial data tools. It has established the Cities Investment Facility, which prepares and matchmakes Sustainable Development Goal impact projects with diverse sources of finance. With the tools now well advanced, the programme is piloting them in ten cities across four continents. During the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum, UN-Habitat proceeded to onboard a broader group of 25 cities. In 2022, country programmes will be established in minimum of ten cities in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Ghana, Malaysia and Tunisia, bringing the total number of cities covered to roughly one hundred.

57.   As the programme prepares to go to scale it will establish four global hubs: city monitoring, city performance, investment, and certification. The onboarding and certification function is currently handled by the World Urban Pavilion in Canada. The global hubs will serve as centres of excellence, providing training, technical backstopping, networking and technical resources to participating cities and partners. In addition, the programme proposes a series of six implementation windows, organized by constituency thematic groups: national groupings, local government networks, cities in least developed countries, youth networks, women-led businesses and faith communities.

2. Initiatives and portfolio

58.   Highlights of the programme's portfolio include the pilot cities for the programme (La Paz, Bolivia (Plurinational State of); Shanghai, China; Kyebi, Ghana; Penang, Malaysia; Mafra, Portugal; and Kasarine Ennour, Tunisia), the Sustainable Development Goals Cities Global Conference series, digitized tools and the Cities Investment Facility.

59.   In 2022, the programme has been working towards initiating national Sustainable Development Goals cities programmes in the Plurinational State of Bolivia (4 cities), Colombia (5 cities), Ecuador (14 cities), Ghana (10 cities), Malaysia (10 cities in partnership with Urbanice) Morocco (6 cities) and Tunisia (10 cities).

3. Status of the budgeting and resource mobilization strategy

60.   Some of the national programmes initiated during the period 2022–2023 are expected to be funded by national authorities (Ecuador and Malaysia) or by regional governments (Colombia) with the support of development banks. Others will be supported by donors (such as Ghana and Tunisia). The women-led cities initiative will be funded by be a consortium of women-led philanthropic organizations and companies. For the youth and sports window, discussions are underway with a philanthropic organization and with individual high net worth sports stars; for the faith window, foundations supporting inter-faith activities have been approached.

D. Way forward for flagship programme 5

61.   Aligned with the Global Urban Monitoring Framework, the programme is setting up debates to propose a model of Sustainable Development Goals cities certification to be recognized across the United Nations system.

62.   In parallel, the programme will work closely with Local 2030, the United Nations system-wide initiative to support localization of the Sustainable Development Goals. Specifically, national programmes and implementation windows will benefit from Local 2030 hubs that will provide thematic expertise. These hubs will be bolstered by the provision of digital tools developed by flagship programme 5.

Table 5
Flagship programme 5: external opportunities and challenges

Opportunities	Challenges
Demand for Sustainable Development Goals cities certification.	The need for dedicated resources at the central level to support mobilizing implementation windows and overall coordination.
Demand for technical assistance.	
Demand for finance for high-impact projects.	
Interest of financiers to engage with the flagship programme and invest in Sustainable Development Goals in cities worldwide.	

VII. Conclusion

63. As was reported to the Executive Board at its second session of 2021, the progress made on the flagship programmes has been unbalanced due to financial constraints. However, the focus on strengthening partnerships and on resource mobilization, culminating in well-attended sessions at the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum in Katowice, Poland, has enabled the programmes to gain more traction, generating positive projections for the achievement of each of the programmes' goals and targets.

64. Moving forward, there is an urgent need to drive additional capacities and expertise towards the flagship programmes. Secretarial support can be organized across the flagship programmes. Better programme coordination will allow for more effective planning of strategic partnerships across the flagship programmes, especially regarding joint resource mobilization and integrated work in priority locations. A stronger focus on programme development support to relevant subregions is also needed.

65. Further convergence across the global programmes and flagship programmes of UN-Habitat, to deliver more integrated and tailored solutions between climate change, migration, smart cities and urban regeneration and resilience, is needed.

66. As key instruments for the integration of the normative and operational work of UN-Habitat, aligned with global priorities as set out in the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, the flagship programmes have demonstrated their potential of achieving impact at scale through assistance to Member States and development partners. In order to increase impact, the flagship programmes need to expand on their strategic partnership successes and gain increased soft- or hard-earmarked funding support from Member States.