



## PRESS RELEASE

# UN-Habitat, UNOPS, Cities Alliance join forces for World Cities Day 2024 in Africa

**Nairobi, 24 October 2024** – Ahead of World Cities Day 2024, UN-Habitat, UNOPS, and Cities Alliance are collaborating to shine a spotlight on the role of Africa’s youth in addressing climate change through local actions in cities. The social media campaign, which kicks off on 25 October, will showcase stories of young changemakers who are pioneering urban sustainability efforts. This year’s World Cities Day theme, **“Youth climate changemakers: Catalyzing local action for urban sustainability,”** underscores the critical impact of youth leadership on climate resilience.

Through daily posts, video snippets, and real-life stories, the campaign aims to raise awareness of how young changemakers are driving urban sustainability and empowering communities to take climate action.

### **A shared commitment to urban sustainability**

This partnership reflects a shared commitment to amplifying the voices and actions of young people in Africa, especially in vulnerable and informal settlements, leading climate action. Africa’s urban population is set to double by 2050. Young population represents a significant demographic dividend, with over 60 per cent of the population under the age of 25.

“By 2035, 6 cities in Africa will house more than 10 million people and become the world’s largest metropolitan hubs,” said Oumar Sylla, Director of UN-Habitat’s Regional Office for Africa. “Africa’s young population represents a critical asset. Active youth engagement can drive urban sustainability and innovation, a message relevant to cities worldwide.”

African cities are among the most vulnerable to climate change, affected by rising temperatures, extreme weather events, rising sea levels and pressure on resources. Youth have emerged as powerful catalysts for change at the local level. As cities across the globe grapple with the effects of climate change, the actions of youth offer hope for a more sustainable urban future. This campaign seeks not only to raise awareness but also to inspire more young people to take up the mantle of climate leadership.

“In recognition of the vital role of youth in shaping a more sustainable and resilient future for urban cities in Africa, we need to empower more youth to lead climate actions at the local level. This campaign conveys a strong message to all of us by spotlighting the young people across Africa who are driving change with firm conviction and solid action for their cities,” said Dalila Goncalves, UNOPS Regional Director for Africa.

“Africa’s young people are not just the future; they are the present leaders who will determine the continent’s trajectory. By harnessing their energy, innovation, and resilience, Africa can become a global leader in urban and climate solutions,” said Julian Baskin, Senior Urban Advisor of Cities Alliance.

The social media campaign will feature:

- **Stories of youth changemakers:** Showcasing real-life examples of young people leading climate action in their communities.
- **Video testimonials:** Hear directly from youth climate leaders on how they are making a difference in their cities and communities.
- **Inspiring snippets:** Quick highlights and facts on the nature and impact of youth-driven climate initiatives across urban areas globally.

Through the hashtags #Youth4Climate and #WCD2024, UN-Habitat, UNOPS, and Cities Alliance encourage youth, as well as everyone committed to sustainable urban development to engage and share their own stories and insights on how young leaders are shaping the future of our cities.

### **About World Cities Day**

The United Nations General Assembly designated 31 October as World Cities Day. Celebrated each year in a different city, the Day is designed to promote the international community's interest in global urbanization and push forward cooperation among countries in addressing the challenges of urbanization.

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### **About UN-Habitat**

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. It has programmes in over 90 countries supporting policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action. To know more, visit [unhabitat.org](http://unhabitat.org) or follow us on X @UNHABITAT.

### **About UNOPS**

UNOPS's mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. We help the United Nations, governments and other partners to manage projects and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement in an efficient way. Read more: [www.unops.org](http://www.unops.org)

### **About Cities Alliance**

Cities Alliance is a global partnership fighting urban poverty and supporting cities to deliver sustainable development. Hosted by UNOPS, Cities Alliance operates a multi-donor fund, to manage its activities and support its mission. We focus on improving the well-being of the most vulnerable people in cities, through innovative, multisectoral solutions, addressing climate change, migration and forced displacement, gender equality, and economic development, primarily in the informal sector, in secondary cities. Learn more: <https://www.citiesalliance.org>