

HabPost

Updates from
UN-Habitat

UNHABITAT

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The UN@75 as seen by We
the UN-Habitat Personnel

Editor's note

Dear Reader,

Last week, the 75th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 75) opened at a time of great disruption for the world. It will soon be 75 years since the United Nations officially came into existence, and we wanted to build momentum and get everyone excited and united for purpose. In addition to today's issue, we will be commemorating the work of the organization closer to the actual anniversary of the UN on 24 October: the 22 October issue of HabPost will unveil the message our Executive Director has for us all, and we'll also be talking with our Deputy Executive Director using a new, interactive format — we tell you more in this issue. As for today, we share with you in advance of this special issue on the UN@75 the thoughts and hopes of many colleagues across our agency — we'd like to thank everyone for their precious participation!

The HabPost Team



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Alerts

COVID-19

- As of 22 September 2020, there were over 31 million confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 962,008 deaths, reported to WHO. Monitor the situation at <https://covid19.who.int/>.
- 64 higher income economies have joined the [COVAX Facility](#), a global initiative that brings together governments and manufacturers to ensure eventual COVID-19 vaccines reach those in greatest need, wherever they are and wherever they live.
- A [new study](#) by UNICEF and Save the Children has found that the coronavirus pandemic has pushed an additional 150 million children into multidimensional poverty, deprived of education, health, housing, nutrition, sanitation or water.
- As the world comes together at an unprecedented virtual session of the UN General Assembly, WHO shared three messages in advance of the gathering. Find out what they are [here](#).
- [UNICEF](#) has called on governments, parents and teachers across Eastern and Southern Africa to urgently and safely re-open schools, as the costs of continued school closures escalate across Eastern and Southern Africa.
- Countries across Europe are seeing a [resurgence in COVID-19 cases](#) after successfully slowing outbreaks early in the year.



The UN@75 and UN-Habitat through the Lens of Omoh Odunbaku



The United Nations is turning diamond during a novel period that calls for greater global solidarity in our quest for a better world. In 1945, global leaders — in response to World War II — convened to establish the United Nations to avert potential calamities by maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations between nations, supporting international cooperation, and harmonizing action to ensure stability. Since then, the curve has grown steeper for the UN as its mandate keeps increasing to cater for emerging dynamic natural and man-made global changes. Guided by a charter which established the purposes, governing structure, and overall framework of the organization and its structure, the work of the UN has evolved over the years in response to its growing mandate. Despite the criticisms and challenges it faces, the UN — including its workforce and its agencies — has effectively saved millions of lives; it has also won countless awards including Nobel Peace Prizes for its humanitarian and developmental interventions.



UN75: The Future We Want, The UN We Need

Urbanization starts to draw attention

In the 20th century, the world's attention began to be drawn to the growth of cities as rapid urbanization resulting from industrialization and technological innovation gave way to new developmental issues. In response, the UN General Assembly established the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation (UNHHSF) on 1 January 1975, as the first official UN body dedicated to addressing the challenges and impacts of rapid urbanization. It also convened the first international UN Conference on Human Settlements in 1976 in Vancouver, Canada at a time when two thirds of humanity still lived in rural settlements. This conference, also known as Habitat I, gave birth to the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UNCHS) which was to later metamorphose into the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (commonly referred to as "Habitat").

Although UN-Habitat's mandate has evolved since its establishment in 1976 following the adoption of the Habitat Agenda in 1996 and more recently the New Urban Agenda in 2016, its vision for "a better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world" has remained intact, however bold and ambitious it may seem. To achieve this, UN-Habitat has raised the profile of urbanization as a positive transformative force for people and communities, and as a means of reducing inequality, discrimination and poverty. Several enablers have been designed and used to support these efforts such as the World Urban Forum, the World Urban Campaign, World Habitat Day, Urban October, and the work of the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities. Through these platforms, UN-Habitat works with partners to build inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and communities.

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UN-Habitat & Me

Having spent most of my life in a developing country and having been exposed to the dynamics of poverty and inequality, the desire to boost prosperity through interventions based on empirical evidence has not only fueled my personal enthusiasm for and interest in research, but also informed my choice of a professional career in urban planning. During my time as an undergraduate and postgraduate student, I passionately followed UN-Habitat's events and applied its tools, outputs and publications in my work. As a young lecturer, I also adopted them to impact learning during lectures and tutorials. I have been guided in my journey by Martin Luther King Jr's words: "each of us who works for social change is part of the mosaic of all who work for justice; together we can accomplish multitudes."

Convinced of its importance in maintaining global stability and furthering development, I decided to pursue a career with the United Nations. In my current role as Human Settlements Officer at the

Regional Office for Africa, I oversee the Africa Urban Agenda, manage several country portfolios, and work hand-in-hand with the partners such as the Africa Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). I couldn't appreciate more the added value that our agency brings to helping meet the Sustainable Development Goals and the wider objectives of the UN.



Without any doubt, UN-Habitat ensures a better quality of life for humanity by focusing on shelter

— one of the most basic human needs after food. Its work promotes transformative change in cities and human settlements as it embodies thinking, doing, sharing and collaborating to deliver normative and technical advice based on its unique expertise in sustainable urbanization and crisis response. I am convinced that UN-Habitat constantly demonstrates value addition through its commitment to a better quality of life and a better urban future for all.





The UN@75 as We See It

What does the UN@75 evoke? Does it matter at all? Are we hopeful, are we critical about our work? To find out, we've asked 75 colleagues across UN-Habitat to tell us what the UN@75 means to them. Read about their sentiment below!



Quotes



After 75 years, the UN is still a reflection of the politics of the member states. In many contexts the UN was relevant, impactful and helped millions of vulnerable people in humanitarian crises, however neither the development nor the peace agendas were similarly successful.

Coming together and holding a dialogue on how to improve our world in an equitable, accountable, just, and sustainable manner.

United in purpose for 75 years through collaboration and cooperation between diverse nations, people and organizations in pursuit of a better world.

The UN has positively contributed to a changed world and humanity for 75 years, the biggest challenge now is to ensure that the UN itself is not left behind amidst all this positive change.

When we unite for a common purpose, we can achieve the impossible.



Podcasts are coming!

What does our Deputy Executive Director think about the UN@75? Find out in the first podcast of a series which will launch on **22 October**. More soon, stay tuned!

Vacancies

Role

Programme Management Officer, Human Settlements, P3

Duty Station

Nairobi, Kenya

Deadline

24 October 2020

[Apply Here](#)

Role

Programme Management Officer, Human Settlements, P4

Duty Station

Nairobi, Kenya

Deadline

17 October 2020

[Apply Here](#)

Role

Programme Officer (Team Leader), P4

Duty Station

Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

Deadline

13 October 2020

[Apply Here](#)

Role

Intern, Programme Management

Duty Station

Bangkok, Thailand

Deadline

28 September 2020

[Apply Here](#)

Role

Programme Management Officer, Human Settlements, NOC

Duty Station

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Deadline

14 October 2020

[Apply Here](#)

Role

Chief Technical Adviser (Project), P5 (Temporary Job Opening)

Duty Station

Kinshasa, DRC

Deadline

07 October 2020

[Apply Here](#)

Role

Intern, Waste Management

Duty Station

Nairobi, Kenya

Deadline

01 October 2020

[Apply Here](#)

Role

Intern, Communications and Design

Duty Station

Nairobi, Kenya

Deadline

25 September 2020

[Apply Here](#)



Upcoming events and corporate calendar



UN HABITAT



World Habitat Day

Every October, UN-Habitat and partners organize a month of activities, events and discussions on urban sustainability. The purpose of World Habitat Day is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world that we all have the power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns. The theme of World Habitat Day 2020 is Housing For All: A better Urban Future, and the Global Observance will be hosted by the city of Surabaya, in Indonesia. [More information](#)



World Metropolitan Day 2020

To mark the anniversary of the Montréal Declaration on Metropolitan Areas, UN-Habitat and Metropolis commemorate the World Metropolitan Day. Every year, we celebrate metropolitan spaces worldwide and promote cooperation to achieve more sustainable and integrated territorial development. In the current global context characterized by the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Metropolitan Day 2020 will provide the occasion to discuss the challenges and opportunities that metropolitan governments have in addressing current scenarios. [More information](#)

Other organizers



IEEE International Smart Cities Conference: Smart Cities Solutions for New Challenges, Including a Pandemic

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) International Smart Cities Conference is the flagship IEEE Smart Cities event which brings together practitioners, city policymakers and administrators, infrastructure operators, industry representatives and researchers to present technologies and applications and share their experiences and views with current and future Smart Cities applications. The conference includes keynote and panel session discussions, tutorials given by experts on state-of-the-art topics, and special sessions on emerging topics with the aim of complementing the regular programme. [More information](#)



The GovTech Summit 2020: From Crisis to Recovery

The GovTech Summit brings together the world's brightest technological innovators and Europe's leading public sector decision-makers to rethink how governments can operate and thrive in the new post-COVID-19 world. Taking place on 29 September, this virtual event will offer you access to some of the most prominent political and public figures leading Europe's accelerating transfer to the digital economy and recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. Register [here](#)



Urban Mobility Days 2020

The Urban Mobility Days conference combines two leading events from Europe's transport calendar: the CIVITAS Forum Conference and the European Conference on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP). It will allow policymakers, local authorities, academics, NGOs, urban transport practitioners, urban planners and all those putting the SUMP concept into practice to share their experiences using a virtual forum. Over the course of the digital conference, delegates will hear sustainable urban mobility success stories from the CIVITAS Living Labs projects, and other examples of pioneering excellence from Europe and further afield. [Learn more](#)



Upcoming events and corporate calendar



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Urban 20 Mayors Summit 2020

The third Urban 20 (U20) Mayors Summit will be taking place in Riyadh, prior to the 15th G20 Leaders Summit that will be presided over by Saudi Arabia. U20 will bring together mayors to discuss urban challenges and calls for action. The Summit provides a platform for sharing solutions and announcing bold commitments towards global urban goals. A series of thematic sessions will be held including on Circular Carbon Economy, Inclusive Prosperous Communities, Urban Nature and Green Infrastructure, Urban Infrastructure Finance and Investment, Urban Innovation and Technology, and Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.



Greencities: 11th Forum of Urban Intelligence and Sustainability

Greencities 2020 will bring together mayors to address post-COVID-19 governance and the future of mobility in cities. The mayors of Zaragoza, Valencia, Santander, Bilbao, Benidorm, Murcia, Cordoba, Lugo, Valladolid, Logroño and Alcoy, among others, will participate in a debate in which they will address city projects and measures to be adopted for economic recovery after the health crisis. [Learn more](#)



Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and Cities Symposium

The University of Melbourne's Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, and the Connected Cities Lab will hold a workshop featuring interactive sessions with keynotes and breakout rooms to showcase the role cities and urban partners are playing in implementing the SDGs. [Learn more](#)



9th European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns: Mannheim2020

What is the change we need and what can cities do to make this happen? How can integrated urban development and management respond to the challenge? ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and the City of Mannheim will aim to answer these questions by bringing together local and regional leaders, European and international institutions, businesses, and civil society to forge a more sustainable Europe. [More information](#)



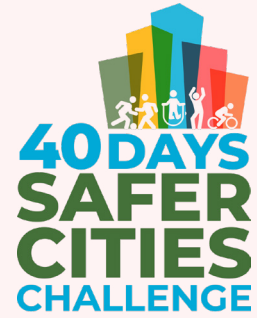
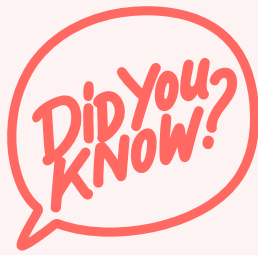
Forum of Mayors 2020

Organised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Forum of Mayors will bring together city leaders from Europe, North America, Central Asia and the Caucasus to address key challenges of our time. The 2020 Forum will focus on City action for a resilient future: Strengthening local government preparedness and response to emergencies and the impact of disasters and climate change. [Learn more](#)



81st Session of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management

The 81st session of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management will take place from 6 to 8 October 2020. The meeting will discuss the implementation of key international agreements such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda and the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. To participate, register [here](#). The registration deadline is 30 September 2020.



40 Days Safer Cities Challenge

On 21 September, UN-Habitat launched the 40 Days Safer Cities Challenge, on the International Day of Peace. 40 days to...

Raise awareness worldwide of safety in cities and urban crime prevention.

Promote concrete citizens' actions and innovation for cities.

Amplify innovation towards action to achieve the urban and safety dimensions of the SDGs.

The challenge will end on World Cities Day, 31 October, with a learning event to review the innovations shared during the 40 days.

Here's what you can do to help:



Mobilise partners to join the [40 Days Safer Cities Challenge](#) to commit to action and share innovations towards safer cities. Partners may join the challenge [here](#).



Share impact stories and videos about your projects. We will be able to promote these on the News and Stories section of the campaign website.



Promote leaders and influencers engaged in your projects by sharing their quotes on the impact of safety and crime prevention in cities.



Last but not least, do use and share the dedicated [toolkit](#) to communicate on the 40 Days Challenge!

For further information on the campaign and for submissions, please contact **Flossie Mbiriri** (Flossie.mbiriri@un.org), Advocacy and Campaigns Unit. For substantive information on the Safer Cities activities, please contact **Juma Assiango** (Juma.assiango@un.org).

We look forward to your participation!



Participate!

Want your story featured? Submit your ideas or reach out to us at unhabitat-habpost@un.org.

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