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Update for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

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Committee Overview

Recent Developments

The United Nations (UN) Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held from 17 to 20 October 2016, culminated in the adoption of the *New Urban Agenda* (NUA).¹ The NUA focuses on sustainable urban development and supporting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015).² In addition, the NUA is expected to guide the action of international organizations such as the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), national governments, civil society, and professionals in the fields of urban planning and sustainable urban development for years to come.³

UN-Habitat launched its Urban Labs publication at Habitat III, describing the methods used by the Urban Planning Lab in the past three years.⁴ Drawing from its experience, the Lab highlights its project-based approach to sustainable urban development and the collaborations with local governments, community members, and stakeholders crucial to achieving change in the community.⁵ Special emphasis is placed on participatory approaches and the role that community members can play in ensuring the success of urban interventions.⁶ In addition, UN-Habitat organized a side event on migration, *Managing Migration Well: For More Inclusive and Resilient Cities*, in collaboration with numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to draw attention to the phenomenon of migration and its role in driving city growth and urbanization.⁷ In particular, the event emphasized the role of the NUA in creating an enabling environment for migrants to integrate into their communities and become agents of development through mainstreaming sustainable migration policies on the local and national levels.⁸

The emphasis that UN-Habitat places on participatory planning and grassroots initiatives is particularly evident in the online platform titled “Localizing the SDGs.”⁹ Launched in November 2016 by the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, the UN Development Programme, and UN-Habitat, the platform aims to support the 2030 Agenda.¹⁰ Localizing the SDGs provides access to information and best practices on urban topics, and it also classifies tools that are available to various stakeholders such as governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector to address different urban issues.¹¹ The toolbox is intended to raise awareness about the SDGs and enable local stakeholders to apply the SDGs within their own local urban contexts.¹²

In early December, UN-Habitat held a workshop with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Iran and the Iranian Ministry of Roads and Urban Development in Tehran.¹³ Housing for low-income families in Iran is particularly challenging, requiring large investment in housing projects.¹⁴ The workshop aimed at sharing of knowledge and experiences, as well as policy formulation on the issues of housing finance, construction technologies, and new towns.¹⁵

UN-Habitat has been active on the ground with work being carried out in Member States such as Afghanistan, where it recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Kabul Municipality to invest in urban clean-up and sewage infrastructure as part of the Clean and Green City Programme.¹⁶ UN-Habitat also reviewed the new master

¹ Habitat III, *The New Urban Agenda – Habitat III*, 2016.

² Ibid.

³ UN-Habitat, *Implementing the New Urban Agenda*.

⁴ UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat Launches Publication on Urban Labs approach at Habitat III*, 2016.

⁵ UN-Habitat, *Urban Planning and Design Labs: tools for integrated and participatory urban planning*, 2016, pp. v – 28.

⁶ Ibid., p. 52.

⁷ UN-Habitat, *Migration and the New Urban Agenda*, 2016.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments et al., *Localizing the SDGs*, 2016; UN-Habitat, *Launch of the platform on localizing the SDGs*, 2016.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ UN-Habitat, *Housing Finance & Construction Technology: Challenges and the Way Forward*, 2016.

¹⁴ Golpira, UN office, Republic of Korea, and Iran address housing challenges, *Tehran Times*, 2016.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat and Kabul Municipality sign MoU on services improvement*, 2016.

plan for the city of Belmopan in Belize, in which a workshop was carried out with the involvement of local stakeholders, students, and community leaders.¹⁷ In addition, UN-Habitat worked with the State of Palestine Ministry of Local Government to issue two publications, one of which was titled *Human Rights Impact Assessment Mechanism: Statutory Detailed Outline Plans Prepared by Palestinian Communities in the Israeli Occupied Area C of the West Bank and Submitted to the Israeli Civil Administration*, addressing spatial planning policies in Area C of the West Bank.¹⁸ A second publication entitled *National Advocacy Strategy for Planning and Development in Area C of the West Bank (2016-2018)* focused on a participatory approach to propose the scope and type of interventions to be carried out in Area C of the West Bank.¹⁹

The UN-Habitat Governing Council is expected to hold its 26th meeting in Kenya, tentatively scheduled for 3-7 April 2017, to set UN-Habitat's policies and approve its biennial work program and budget for the next two years.²⁰

Annotated Bibliography

Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments et al. (2016). *Localizing the SDGs* [Website]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://www.localizingthesdgs.org/about-us.php>

This website provides practical tools and strategies in the form of a toolbox for local governments and community activists to draw upon and assist them in addressing various urban challenges. It builds upon the SDGs, raises awareness of the 2030 Agenda, advocates for an enabling urban environment, and provides practical support for local stakeholders. The platform provides a wealth of information on urban planning and urban issues faced by cities globally.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *Implementing the New Urban Agenda* [Website]. Retrieved 27 January 2017 from: <http://nua.unhabitat.org/>

This website links the initiatives laid out in the NUA and translates it to an urbanization outline, describing action that international organizations, governments, civil society, and community members can take to support the Agenda and SDG 11. It provides important information on historical resolutions signed by the international community to support sustainable urbanization, as well as global initiatives taken in several fields such as housing, participatory slum upgrading, urban basic services, and urban economy. Most importantly for delegates, it provides successful case studies to tackle various urban issues such as governance structures, prosperity, and social inclusion in cities around the world.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016). *Urban Planning and Design Labs: tools for integrated and participatory urban planning* [Report]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/books/urban-planning-and-design-labs-tools-for-integrated-and-participatory-urban-planning/>

Based on the experiences and projects carried out by the UN-Habitat Urban Planning and Design Lab in the past three years, this report presents a strong argument for the role that urban planning labs can play, together with local governments and the private sector, in working towards sustainable urban development. The first section describes urban issues faced by cities globally and the second section describes the features of urban planning labs in detail, providing several case studies. Meanwhile, the third section provides guidance for local leaders to set up a planning lab in their cities. Delegates will find it useful as an introduction to the formulation of integrated and comprehensive urban planning processes.

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¹⁷ UN-Habitat, *Belmopan / UN-Habitat collaboration to update the Master Plan of the Capital of Belize*, 2016.

¹⁸ UN-Habitat, *Publications supporting the spatial planning initiatives in Palestine launched*, 2016.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ International Institute for Sustainable Development, *Event: 26th Meeting of the UN-Habitat Governing Council | SDG Knowledge Hub / IISD*, 2017; UN-Habitat, *Governing Council – UN-Habitat*.



Golpira, M. (2016, November 28). UN office, Republic of Korea, and Iran address housing challenges. *Tehran Times*. Retrieved 27 January 2017 from: <http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/408640/UN-office-Republic-of-Korea-and-Iran-address-housing-challenges>

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *Governing Council – UN-Habitat* [Website]. Retrieved 27 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/about-us/governing-council/>

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *Implementing the New Urban Agenda* [Website]. Retrieved 27 January 2017 from: <http://nua.unhabitat.org/>

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016, December 23). *Belmopan / UN-Habitat collaboration to update the Master Plan of the Capital of Belize* [News Article]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/belmopan-un-habitat-collaboration-to-update-the-master-plan-of-the-capital-of-belize/>

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016, December 7). *Housing Finance & Construction Technology: Challenges and the Way Forward* [News Article]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/housing-finance-construction-technology-challenges-and-the-way-forward/>

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016, November 16). *Launch of the platform on localizing the SDGs* [News Article]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/launch-of-the-platform-on-localizing-the-sdgs/>

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016, November 2). *Migration and the New Urban Agenda* [News Article]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/migration-and-the-new-urban-agenda/>

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016, November 15). *UN-Habitat and Kabul Municipality sign MoU on services improvement* [News Article]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-and-kabul-municipality-sign-mou-on-services-improvement/>

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I. Promoting Sustainable and Resilient Urbanization through Information and Communications Technology

Recent Developments

Between August and September 2016, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) sponsored a research team to survey socioeconomic data and map urban settlements in Northern Kenya.²¹ UN-Habitat hosted a stakeholder meeting in December 2016 to discuss resulting project data; the data will contribute to more efficient and sustainable intervention efforts in the region.²² One proposed solution is to utilize information and communications technology (ICT) to monitor refugee flow from one region to the other to prevent overcrowding in urban areas.²³

On 15 September 2016, a meeting was held in Nairobi by specialists from UN-Habitat, telecommunications industry representatives, and the government of Kiambu County, Kenya.²⁴ The meeting provided a platform for participants to discuss the relationship between ICT and mobility in urban areas.²⁵ With the fourth-most congested highways in the world, Nairobi demonstrated to stakeholders the necessity of pursuing intelligent, or ICT-based, transport systems.²⁶ In Kiambu County alone, traffic congestion causes over 100 deaths each year.²⁷ Likewise, revenue productivity decreases due to the daily traffic congestion.²⁸ ICT-based systems allow governments to predict peak traffic times and share information about alternative transportation.²⁹ Implementing ICT solutions for urban transport systems enhances progress toward completing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 on the sustainability of cities and communities.³⁰

On 26-27 November 2016, representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations, private businesses, and civil society attended the first-ever Global Sustainable Transport Conference in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, which was convened by the UN Secretary-General.³¹ The conference resulted in the *Ashgabat Statement (2016)*, which establishes a framework for achieving transportation-related aspects of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)*.³² Conference participants emphasized the need to “bring about fundamental, transformative changes to transport systems” through technology, including energy efficiency technologies and ICT.³³

On 6-8 December 2016, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) hosted a Regional Development Forum and Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Arab States in preparation for the 2017 World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-17).³⁴ Hosted in Khartoum, Sudan, the forum included a high-level dialogue on ICT policy in the Arab region.³⁵ Regional Development Forums allow high-level officials, regulators, policymakers, and scholars to collaborate on pressing issues in ICT.³⁶ The WTDC-17 conference will take place in October 2017 to

²¹ UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat Holds Stakeholders Meeting on Socio-Economic and Mapping Survey in Northern Kenya*, 2016.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ UN-Habitat, *Experts discuss ICT as a solution for Mobility*, 2016.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.; UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Goal 11*.

³¹ UN DESA, *Global Sustainable Transport Conference*, 2016.

³² UN Global Sustainable Transport Conference, *Summary Report: Secretary-General's Global Sustainable Transport Conference*, 2016.

³³ UN Global Sustainable Transport Conference, *Ashgabat Statement on Commitments and Policy Recommendations of the Global Sustainable Transport Conference*, 2016, p. 4.

³⁴ ITU, *Regional Development Forum and Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-17 for the Arab States, Khartoum, Republic of Sudan*, 2016.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

analyze data and look towards the future of ICT.³⁷ The conference agenda includes focusing on the obstacles countries face in ICT, as well as fostering the development of telecommunications and ICT regionally.³⁸

On 13 December 2016, Belgium launched a collaboration with UN-Habitat and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Advancement of Women (UN-Women) to address the participation of women and youth in reconstruction efforts in Gaza.³⁹ Local stakeholders include the Palestinian Housing Council, Association for Women and Child Protection (AISHA), and Gateway for Outsourcing Information.⁴⁰ The program, entitled “Utilizing Digital Tools to Promote Human Rights and Create Inclusive Public Spaces in the Gaza Strip,” will engage women and youth leaders in ICT to facilitate the creation of three “inclusive, safe and accessible” public spaces.⁴¹ Through an interactive website, this program will serve as a resource for local councils and professionals on the use of technology and ensure that citizens have access to information on topics such as planning, land use, and development.⁴² The use of ICT will strengthen the relationship between establishments and communities, promote good governance and transparency, and increase municipal commitment to build resilience in the urban community of Gaza.⁴³

In December 2016, the ITU formally recognized Dubai as the first city to fully implement the ITU’s Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Smart Sustainable Cities.⁴⁴ As one of the core pilot project members, Dubai is helping ITU create a smart city index to monitor urban sustainability.⁴⁵ KPIs measure how well companies, governments, and organizations are upholding international goals for the implementation of ICT.⁴⁶ At the Telecom Review Summit on 13 December 2016, Dubai published a case study on its experiences in the first year of the ITU pilot project for Smart Sustainable Cities.⁴⁷

The World Summit on the Information Society Forum (WSIS) 2017 is set to take place on 12-16 June 2017.⁴⁸ With a focus on ICT for development, WSIS participants will review and follow-up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the role of ICT in achieving the SDGs.⁴⁹

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This source details the Regional Development Forum and Regional Preparatory Meeting which took place in Khartoum from 6-8 December 2016. The site includes an outlined agenda for the meeting and preliminary outcome documents that highlight regional action plans for ICT. This resource is especially helpful as an example of regional collaboration for sustainable urbanization through ICT.

International Telecommunication Union. (2017). *WSIS Forum, 12-16 June 2017, Geneva, Switzerland* [Website]. Retrieved 4 January 2017 from: <http://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2017/>

This source outlines what will be discussed by international stakeholders at the upcoming 2017 annual meeting of the World Summit on the Information Society. Topics include a follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, with emphasis on the role of ICT in urban areas. This resource will

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ UN-Habitat, *Digital technology to increase participation of women, youth in reconstruction of Gaza strip*, 2016.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ ITU, *Dubai Reports Results from Implementing ITU’s Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities*, 2016.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ ITU, *WSIS Forum, 12-16 June 2017*, 2017.

⁴⁹ Ibid.



help delegates identify UN organizations, regional groups, and civil society organizations who are actively working on the topic. Understanding the preparatory process and consultations for WSIS 2017 will also help delegates align their proposals with existing efforts.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *Our Partners* [Website]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/about-us/our-partners/>

This source provides information on UN-Habitat's work with external partners, including Habitat Agenda Partners, financial institutions, private sector organizations, civil society, and other agencies within the United Nations system. As delegates continue to research this topic for the conference, this source will help identify existing relationships and venues for collaboration. As the private sector is a key stakeholder in the development of new technologies and ICT infrastructure, delegates should pay particular attention to this division.

United Nations Human Settlements Program. (2016). *Experts discuss ICT as a solution for Mobility* [Website]. Retrieved 29 January 2016 from: <http://unhabitat.org/experts-discuss-ict-as-a-solution-for-mobility/>

This source provides a specific example of ICT as a tool to improve urban transportation. This source allows delegates to better understand the correlation between ICT and the built environment. Understanding how these experts have used ICT to reduce highway congestion and road fatalities may help delegates imagine other aspects in which ICT can improve resilience and sustainability in urban areas.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2017). *UN-Habitat Hosts Stakeholder Meeting on Socio-Economic and Mapping Survey in Northern Kenya* [Website]. Retrieved from:

<http://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-hosts-stakeholder-meeting-on-socio-economic-and-mapping-survey-in-northern-kenya/>

This article discusses the outcomes of a meeting hosted by UN-Habitat to gather feedback from experts and stakeholders working towards ICT development in Northern Kenya. This source highlights the utility of data collection and mapping to create action plans for urban development. Delegates should consider this project as one example of how the topic has been practically implemented by local stakeholders.

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United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2014). *Information and Communication Technology for Urban Climate Action* [Report]. Retrieved 5 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/information-and-communication-technology-for-urban-climate-action-2/>

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016, December 13). *Digital technology to increase participation of women, youth in reconstruction of Gaza strip* [Press Release]. Retrieved 3 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/digital-technology-to-increase-participation-of-women-youth-in-reconstruction-of-gaza-strip/>

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016, September 15). *Experts discuss ICT as a solution for Mobility* [Press Release]. Retrieved 29 January 2016 from: <http://unhabitat.org/experts-discuss-ict-as-a-solution-for-mobility>

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II. Ensuring Access to Adequate Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene to Promote Urban Health

Recent Developments

In October 2016, the third United Nations (UN) Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) was held, culminating in the adoption of the *New Urban Agenda* (NUA).⁵⁰ The NUA envisaged cities that provide “universal access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation,” implement best practices for disaster risk reduction and management, and promote sustainable consumption of water.⁵¹ Concretely, the Agenda outlines commitments to integrating water resource planning into long-term urban and spatial development plans, rehabilitating water resources within urban areas, and providing capacity-building for public water and sanitation utilities.⁵²

In November 2016, the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (COP 22) was held in Marrakesh, Morocco, to discuss the 2015 *Paris Agreement* and develop functional tools for states to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.⁵³ COP 22 held the first Water Action Day on 9 November 2016 to highlight water as a key element in climate action plans due to its importance in food security, biodiversity, production, and public health.⁵⁴ The Water Action Day is part of the Global Climate Action Agenda, an initiative by France and Morocco to promote collaboration between states, cities, the private sector, and civil society on the issue of climate change.⁵⁵ On this day, the Moroccan government launched its *Blue Book on Water and Climate*, which includes recommendations for sustainability.⁵⁶ It emphasizes that integrated policies across all sectors and sustainable water management can mitigate water scarcity, challenges posed by extreme weather events, and resource uncertainty.⁵⁷ Water Action Day also saw the launch of the Water for Africa Initiative with the African Development Bank and the Moroccan Government.⁵⁸ Seven of the ten states most threatened by climate change are in Africa and this initiative aims to create a specific action plan to mobilize political, financial, and international institutions to target those most vulnerable to climate change.⁵⁹ Specifically, this initiative will emphasize potable water, water infrastructure, sanitation services, and food security.⁶⁰ Two other initiatives were also launched this day: the Parliamentary Initiative, which promotes legislative best practices and knowledge-sharing of water policy, and the Delta Coalition, which is the first coalition of governments raising awareness about flooding, fertile wetland loss, shoreline erosion, and infrastructure degradation in delta areas, which often house major ports and large cities.⁶¹

On 19 November 2016, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon inaugurated World Toilet Day 2016 by saying, “Delivering on this basic human right – the right to water and sanitation – is good for people, business, and the economy.”⁶² Indeed, the theme for the 2016 World Toilet Day focused on the impact of sanitation on people’s economic livelihoods.⁶³ The World Bank identified some strategies to move toward sanitation for all by 2030, including microfinancing for sanitation facilities, sanitation marketing tools, and consulting services for latrine construction.⁶⁴

⁵⁰ Habitat III, *The New Urban Agenda – Habitat III*, 2016.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ UNFCCC, *COP22 in Marrakech: The COP22 of Action*, 2016.

⁵⁴ UN DPI, *Marrakesh: UN conference spotlights water, the ‘first victim’ of climate change, as part of the solution*, 2016.

⁵⁵ UNFCCC, *Global Climate Action Agenda*, 2016.

⁵⁶ Kingdom of Morocco et al., *Water and Climate Blue Book*, 2016, p. xx.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

⁵⁸ UN DPI, *Marrakesh: UN conference spotlights water, the ‘first victim’ of climate change, as part of the solution*, 2016.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ UNFCCC, *Global Climate Action: Water*, 2016, p. 1.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 2; Delta Coalition, *About: Delta Coalition*, 2016.

⁶² UN DPI, *World Toilet Day 19 November*, 2016.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ World Bank Group, *World Toilet Day – An Opportunity to Remind Ourselves of the Need to Ensure Universal Access to Toilets by 2030*, 2016.

The Hungarian government, in collaboration with the World Water Council, held the 2016 Budapest Water Summit in November, which convened 1800 participants from 117 states.⁶⁵ Its mission was to provide a platform for political decision-makers, financial institutions, and the technology sector to create a practical strategy for the implementation of the 2015 *Paris Agreement*.⁶⁶ During the summit there were four thematic meetings on science and technology, youth, civil society, and women.⁶⁷ The summit culminated in the adoption of the *Budapest Statement 2016*, which provides key policy recommendations including better data collection, mainstreaming transparent water policies, and enhancing the capacity of civil society, especially women and youth, to achieve the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015).⁶⁸ Achievements following the Budapest Water Summit will be evaluated at the 2018 Brasilia World Water Forum.⁶⁹ Other regional efforts included the 8th BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Summit's *Goa Declaration* (2016), which calls upon the development community to finance urban infrastructure and share technical expertise for addressing water pollution.⁷⁰

Annotated Bibliography

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https://www.budapestwatersummit.hu/data/images/Kepek_2016/BWS2016_Messages_Policy_Recommendations.pdf

Adopted at the conclusion of the 2016 Budapest Water Summit, this document provides specific policy recommendations for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6 on water and sanitation. The document contains recommendations on ten policy areas from safe drinking water to natural disasters to legislation. The document is especially useful for delegates in the detail of the policy recommendations. It provides instructions for creating guidelines, better data collection, and coordinating legislative challenges, among others. It is particularly useful in identifying the issue's multiple dimensions, asking questions that go beyond "what to do?" towards why, how, and with whom.

Kingdom of Morocco et al. (2016). *Water and Climate Blue Book*. Retrieved 8 January 2017 from:

http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/fileadmin/world_water_council/documents/publications/20161124_blue_book.pdf

This document is written in companion to the COP 22 at Marrakesh to present recommendations for climate change resilience in the context of water. It promotes ten main recommendations that include recognizing water as the first victim of climate change, improving access to finance for climate change projects, and developing research and capacity-building. The document is informative in its background of climate change and context of the issues surrounding water scarcity. It provides key facts and figures that delegates should be familiar with to create multi-dimensional recommendations. It is also useful in providing background information on past international efforts on this topic and the remaining gaps in the policy agenda.

United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. (2016). *The New Urban Agenda – Habitat III* [Website]. Retrieved 27 January 2017 from: <https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda>

The NUA is a declaration by states to discuss sustainable urban development. For this topic, delegates should consider the ways in which water intersects with other issues related to urban development including infrastructure, vulnerable populations, public health, and sanitation. Item 119 is specific to promoting investments in accessible and sustainable infrastructure for water, sanitation, and hygiene. In particular, this document stresses the importance of balancing the need for water use for all and water conservation and sustainability. The NUA will become a foundational document to guide UN-Habitat in the years to come, making it a critical document for delegates to read.

⁶⁵ Lou, 12 Moments for Water in 2016, *The World Bank Group*, 2016.

⁶⁶ Budapest 2016 Water Summit, *Budapest Water Summit 2016 – "Water Connects"*, 2016.

⁶⁷ Budapest 2016 Water Summit, *Programme of the Budapest Water Summit 2016*, 2016.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Budapest 2016 Water Summit, *Budapest Water Summit 2016 – "Water Connects"*, 2016.

⁷⁰ Indian Express, *8th BRICS Summit Goa Declaration: Here is the full text adopted by the member nations*, 2016.



United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2016). *Global Climate Action Agenda* [Website]. Retrieved 8 January 2017 from: <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/climate-action/global-climate-action-agenda>

This roadmap provides information on past agendas and what should be done to improve upon these recommendations, including increased transparency and creating coalitions. The roadmap also emphasizes the need for more technical assistance for policymakers to create concrete solutions. The roadmap also demonstrates that key policy work is needed to support geographically diverse initiatives and bolster credibility of initiatives through transparency and better data. Delegates will benefit from its recommendations on how to approach the topic.

The World Bank Group. (2016, November 17). *World Toilet Day – An Opportunity to Remind Ourselves of the Need to Ensure Universal Access to Toilets by 2030* [Website]. Retrieved 8 January 2017 from:

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/11/17/world-toilet-day-an-opportunity-to-remind-ourselves-of-the-need-to-ensure-universal-access-to-toilets-by-2030>

This website provides some key facts on sanitation and hygiene globally and puts it in the context of World Bank projects and initiatives and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It highlights five priority areas for the international community to consider: sustainability, inclusion, institutions, financing, and resilience. Most useful for delegates will be the list of World Bank-supported solutions regarding sanitation for all. These projects provide excellent examples of the wide range of solutions being implemented in this topic. It also demonstrates the ways in which the international community can engage with civil society, non-governmental organizations, and national governments.

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III. Eliminating Urban Slums and Ensuring Access to Adequate Housing

Recent Developments

In September 2016, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) co-hosted a discussion with the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on funding to implement the *New Urban Agenda* (2016) and achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11.⁷¹ Discussions focused on cities in Africa where, by 2035, the urban population is expected to double.⁷² This dialogue highlighted the infrastructural and financial hardships that hinder inclusive, planned, and safe urbanization.⁷³ Delegates laid the groundwork for increased multi-level cooperation between states, municipalities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to ensure sustainable development of African cities and meet the demands of rapid urbanization, including housing demands.⁷⁴

World Habitat Day occurs each year during the first week in October, drawing attention to the right to adequate shelter.⁷⁵ On 3 October 2016, UN-Habitat's Executive Director, Joan Clos, urged the development community to prioritize housing as the core of urban planning.⁷⁶ Clos stated that “affordable housing policy ... can become not only the solution to a social and humanitarian problem but also a very powerful instrument of local development and prosperity.”⁷⁷ Moreover, Clos emphasized that millions of lives will change in Africa as the continent experiences substantial “economic and social transformations” over the next decades.⁷⁸ However, Clos noted that without necessary support, urbanization could lead to slum expansion and increased poverty.⁷⁹ The Government of Myanmar celebrated World Habitat Day by asserting its commitment to ensuring affordable housing.⁸⁰ UN-Habitat officials met individuals living in the Hlaing Tharyar Township slum area in Yangon and hosted an open dialogue on obstacles faced by urban slum dwellers.⁸¹ The community requested that the government halt slum evictions and collaborate with the impoverished urban dwellers to establish sustainable housing projects.⁸² The UN-Habitat Country Programme Manager, Bijay Karmacharya, upheld this dialogue and continues to engage with officials in Yangon to identify alternative options for slums.⁸³

The third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) concluded on 21 October 2016.⁸⁴ Habitat III, which took place in Quito, Ecuador, convened diverse participants, including mayors, local and state authorities, civil society representatives, and other key stakeholders.⁸⁵ Delegates finalized the *New Urban Agenda*, outlining a framework that stipulates how cities should be planned and managed to ensure sustainability.⁸⁶ The primary outcome of Habitat III was a commitment by the international community to address urbanization as a shared responsibility through the *New Urban Agenda*.⁸⁷

On 2 November 2016, UN-Habitat hosted an Urban Crisis Response Conference in Lebanon, highlighting the unique issues facing urban residents in Lebanon.⁸⁸ In honor of World Cities Day 2016, this conference was facilitated as an interchange between stakeholders in urban response and discussed how the influx of refugees

⁷¹ UN-Habitat, *Policy Dialogue with OECD looks at financing cities, the New Urban Agenda, and SDG 11*, 2016.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ UN-Habitat, *Putting housing at the centre this World Habitat Day*, 2016.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ UN-Habitat, *Myanmar celebrates World Habitat Day*, 2016.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ UN-Habitat, *New Urban Agenda adopted at Habitat III*, 2016.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat hosts 'Urban Crisis Response' conference in Lebanon*, 2016.

necessitated a reevaluation in urbanization processes in order to meet community needs.⁸⁹ Information-sharing was a primary outcome of this conference, with panels on managing urban displacement, urban governance, and urban economies.⁹⁰ Speakers also emphasized that refugees often relocate in large groups to a centralized location, which negatively affects their ability to access public services and housing.⁹¹

In December 2016, UN-Habitat partnered with the embassy of the Republic of Korea in Tehran and Iran's Ministry of Roads and Urban Development to host a workshop on "Housing Finance & Construction Technology: Challenges and the Way Forward."⁹² This workshop shared best practices that worked for each respective country, such as the regulatory frameworks to advance sustainable development and the implementation of preferential housing prices to better manage housing demand.⁹³ The bilateral workshop served as a potential model for other states seeking to engage in international cooperation and promote efforts to provide adequate housing.⁹⁴

The world's urban population is expected to double by 2050, which will place high levels of stress on the global housing sector, infrastructure, sustainability, and access to vital resources such as potable water.⁹⁵ In light of these challenges, it is evident that multi-level cooperation between states, the private sector, NGOs, and subnational authorities must occur.⁹⁶ In order to implement the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015) and the *New Urban Agenda*, sustainability must be central to progress and the heart of ensuring adequate housing for all.⁹⁷

Annotated Bibliography

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This website provides background on the importance of advancing multi-level collaboration between states, local governments, and communities. It showcases valuable publications, data, and research highlighting global best practices. Additionally, this website discusses strategic initiatives that have been implemented to promote inclusive, sustainable cities. Delegates should use this resource as inspiration for creating their own policies to ensure accessibility to adequate housing and the elimination of urban slums.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *International guidelines on urban and territorial planning: A synopsis* [Report]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/books/international-guidelines-on-urban-and-territorial-planning-a-synopsis/>

This resource can be utilized as a guide to understanding the challenges global urbanization poses to ensuring adequate housing globally. The Governing Council of UN-Habitat endorsed the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning as a non-binding global guide for the sustainable development of cities. Delegates should use this resource as a reference for framing their respective Member State policies when considering the topic under discussion. In addition, this resource provides a list of alternative resources for delegates to utilize during their research process.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016). *Final Evaluation: Promoting low emission urban development strategies in emerging economy countries (Urban-LEDS)* [Report]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/books/final-evaluation-promoting-low-emission-urban-development-strategies-in-emerging-economy-countries-urban-leds/>

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² UN-Habitat, *Housing Finance & Construction Technology: Challenges and the Way Forward*, 2016.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ UN-Habitat, *International guidelines on urban and territorial planning: A synopsis*.

⁹⁶ International City Management Association, *Overview*.

⁹⁷ UN-Habitat, *Economic Foundations for Sustainable Urbanization: A Study on Three-Pronged Approach: Planned City Extensions, Legal Framework, and Municipal Finance*, 2017; UN-Habitat, *Final Evaluation: Promoting low emission urban development strategies in emerging economy countries (Urban-LEDS)*, 2016.

This resource is useful for delegates to develop alternative strategies for addressing the urban slum and housing crisis. In light of the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs, it is evident that sustainability must be at the heart of all housing and infrastructure development. This report showcases the importance of transitioning countries with emerging economies to enact urban low emission development strategies. Likewise, there are detailed lessons learned sections that delegates can utilize to build from in order to address the topic.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2016). *Final Evaluation of the UN-Habitat Jordan Affordable Housing Programme, Phase 1, November 2016* [Report]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/books/final-evaluation-of-the-un-habitat-jordan-affordable-housing-programme-phase-1-november-2016/>

This resource is useful for delegates to examine the implementation of UN-Habitat programs. This report investigates the Jordan Affordable Housing Programme and assesses its overall impact. Likewise, this report discusses strengths and weaknesses and provides a path forward for a second phase of the program. This source should be utilized as a basis to frame policy, particularly with respect to affordable housing as a strategy for eliminating slums.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2017). *Economic Foundations for Sustainable Urbanization: A Study on Three-Pronged Approach: Planned City Extensions, Legal Framework, and Municipal Finance* [Report]. Retrieved 6 January 2017 from: <http://unhabitat.org/books/economic-foundations-for-sustainable-urbanization-a-study-on-three-pronged-approach-planned-city-extensions-legal-framework-and-municipal-finance/>

This report is essential for delegates to understand recent priorities and challenges that city planners face around the world. Urbanization challenges include: population growth, poverty, and inequality, among many others. This report outlines the role of local government in ensuring adequate housing and development for all. Delegates should use this resource to identify gaps in their respective country's policies to address the committee topics.

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