Economic Commission for Europe

Seventy-ninth session
Geneva, 4-5 October 2018
Item 2(b) of the provisional agenda

Review of the implementation of the programme of work 2017-2018
Review and follow-up to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other relevant agreements

Draft Guidance for the alignment of the activities of the Committee on Housing and Land Management with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other agreements

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

At its seventy-eighth session in October 2017 the Committee on Housing and Land Management discussed strategic approaches and challenges to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant global and regional agreements at the national level. The need for governments and the UN system to re-focus their activities to ensure they effectively support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and address other relevant international commitments was highlighted. Following the discussion, the Committee requested the Bureau to prepare a guidance document for the alignment of the activities of the Committee to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and other key agreements within its existing mandate. Preparation of the guidance document started in March 2018 by the secretariat under coordination of the Bureau.

The Committee session official document ECE/HBP/2018/2 provides the information on the history, background and progress with the development of the guidance document. This Information Document presents the draft guidance document. The Committee is invited to provide comments to the draft and to invite the Bureau to finalise the Guidance document and present it for the Committee’s endorsement at its eightieth session in October 2019.
Contents

I. Introduction and objectives of the document ................................................................. 3

II. The Guidance document .............................................................................................. 4

   II.I. Key global and regional agreements and their relevance to urban development, housing and land administration and management .............................................................. 4

      A. UN global agreements .......................................................................................... 5

      B. Regional processes and documents ...................................................................... 7

   II.II. Approach to the implementation of global and regional agreements ................... 10

      A. Implementing innovative financial mechanisms to support urban infrastructure and to accelerate the achievement of urban related SDGs ............................................................. 11

      B. Governance for sustainable urban development, inter-sectoral cooperation and partnerships ......................................................................................................................... 13

III. Conclusions ................................................................................................................. Error! Bookmark not defined.
I. Introduction and objectives of the document

1. The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management is an intergovernmental body which works since 1947 to address housing and land management challenges across 56 member States in the UNECE region. The Committee facilitates dialogue between governments and supports knowledge transfer on innovative practices, gives advice and develops policy guidelines to address common housing, urban development, and land administration and management problems.

2. The Committee’s objectives are:
   
   (a) Improving policy harmonization on housing, urban development, and land administration and management among government agencies in the UNECE member States;

   (b) Addressing major housing, urban development, and land administration and management challenges in the UNECE region;

   (c) Providing guidance for establishing more efficient legal and institutional frameworks for housing, urban development, and land administration and management; and

   (d) Strengthening national and local capacity on affordable and adequate housing, smart and sustainable urban development and effective land administration and management.

3. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, the adoption of the New Urban Agenda in 2016 and of other key international agreements together with the reform agenda by the Secretary General on the repositioning of the UN development system, established a comprehensive policy framework for activities on sustainable housing and urban development at international, national and local levels. Therefore, the adoption of these documents has direct implications for the future work of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. This new policy framework requires the implementation of an integrated and coordinated approach at the global, regional, national, subnational and sub-regional levels, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

II. The Guidance Document

4. The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management at its seventy-eighth session in October 2017 discussed strategic approaches and challenges to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant
global and regional agreements at the national and local levels. The need for governments and the UN system to re-focus their activities to ensure they effectively support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and address other relevant international commitments, through the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development in the UNECE (March 2018) and the High-level Political Forum (July 2018) was highlighted.

5. Following the discussion, the Committee requested the Bureau to prepare a draft guidance document for the alignment of the activities of the Committee to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and other key agreements within its existing mandate. Preparation of the guidance document started in March 2018 by the secretariat under coordination of the Bureau. This Information Document presents this guidance.

This document was prepared through a desk review of relevant global and regional policy documents as well as of the ‘state of play’ in UNECE member States activities with the 2030 Agenda and other agreements. A survey of member States on the alignment of their activities supported the preparation of this study further.

II.I. Key global and regional agreements and their relevance to urban development, housing and land administration and management

6. In the last few years, governments adopted at the global and regional level several milestone agreements that have direct implications to the work of this Committee. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development1, the New Urban Agenda2 along with other key global and regional agreements, including the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing which was endorsed by the Committee in 2014, highlight the need for policy reviews and refocus at the global, regional and national levels.

A. UN global agreements

7. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015. The 2030 Agenda is an ambitious, transformative global framework for sustainable social, economic and environmental development with the primary commitment of “not leaving anyone behind”. Achieving the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is

2 http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/
highly dependent on the joint efforts of governments and stakeholders working at national, global, regional and local levels, the civil society, including the private sector and local communities. The 2030 Agenda stresses the importance of an integrated approach to addressing diverse challenges and the importance of cooperation between and within countries.

8. Sustainable urban development is the focus of SDG 11 – “Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Work on achieving SDG 11 is crucial for implementing the 2030 Agenda since more than half of the planet’s inhabitants live in cities and this number continues to grow. Further, given the interconnectedness of the SDGs, most of them are directly relevant to the work of the Committee due to the integrated nature of housing and urban development challenges.

9. The Resolution of the High Level Political Forum, which took place in New York from 7 to 18 July 2018, stressed the importance of developing a holistic approach to urban development and human settlements that provides for affordable housing and infrastructure and prioritizes slum upgrading and urban regeneration. The focus of the resolution is on improving the quality of human settlements, including the living and working conditions of both urban and rural dwellers in the context of poverty eradication so that all people have access to basic services, housing and mobility. Sustainable development policies will be implemented to support inclusive housing and social services; a safe and healthy living environment for all, particularly children, youth, women and the elderly and disabled; affordable and sustainable transport and energy; the protection and restoration of safe and green urban spaces; safe and clean drinking water and sanitation; healthy air quality; the generation of decent jobs; reduce inequalities, and improved urban planning and slum upgrading.

10. New Urban Agenda (NUA)³: The Habitat III Conference in October 2016 was the first of the UN global conferences discussing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Conference approved the NUA, which embodies a major shift in UN policy as it emphasizes the direct link between urbanization and sustainable development. The NUA addresses principles of planning, construction, development, management, and improvement of urban areas along its five main pillars of implementation: national urban policies, urban legislation and regulations, urban planning and design, local economy and municipal finance, and local implementation. The NUA directly links to SDG 11 and other urban related SDGs, it emphasises the important role of local authorities in achieving

urban related goals and promotes territorial approach to the implementation. As part of the follow-up to and review of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the first of five quadrennial reports was produced in 2018, “Progress on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda: report of the Secretary-General” 4 (A/73/83-E/2018/62).

11. Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing Development5: The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted in July 2015 is a holistic and forward-looking framework that aims at further strengthening financing for sustainable development and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. This agenda provides a foundation to support the implementation of the SDGs, with the aim of mobilizing public finance, setting appropriate policies and regulatory frameworks to unlock private finance, trade collaborations/opportunities, science and technological development, and incentivizing changes in production and investment patterns. It recognizes that funding from all sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, domestic and international, as well as alternative sources, will need to be tapped into in order to benefit the cities.

12. SENDAI framework for Disaster and Risk Reduction 2015-20306: The Sendai Framework was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, on March 18, 2015 and strives to tackle the issue of disaster and risk reduction. Building on the Hyogo Framework for Action, the SENDAI framework focuses on improving livelihoods and health in all its dimensions through “the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, health, cultural, educational, environmental, technological, political and institutional measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery, and thus strengthen resilience”. Effective disaster risk management contributes to sustainable development and tackles underlying disaster risk drivers, such as poverty and inequality, climate change and variability, unplanned and rapid urbanization and poor land management.

13. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change7: The Paris Agreement was elaborated within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was adopted in December 2015 during the 21st Conference of the Parties. For the first time, all nations undertook ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries.

4 https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1628008?ln=en
6 http://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordren.pdf
7 http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf
to do so. As such, the Agreement charts a new course in the global climate effort. Ensuring that housing and cities are resilient to climate change and extreme weather conditions is critical for sustainable urban development.

14. The United Nations already initiated the process of integrating the aims of Agenda 2030 and other global agreements in its work at the global, regional and national levels. The United Nations Secretary General published his first report “Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: ensuring a better future for all” (A/72/124–E/2018/3) in June 2017, and the second report “Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet” (A/72/684–E/2018/7) in December 2017. These reports marked the beginning of a change process of the UN development system to align its activities with the Agenda 2030 and other global agreements; to promote the organisation agility, higher effectiveness and efficiency. In May 2018, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 72/279 on “Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system” in which, among others, it reaffirmed the role and functions of the United Nations development system at the regional level, including the Regional Economic Commissions and the regional teams of the United Nations development system, and underlined the need to continue to make them fit for purpose in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

B. Regional processes and documents

15. It should be noted that the implementation of the global agreements at the regional level is critical for success. At the regional level, the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development follows up on and reviews the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in the UNECE region. Focusing on practical value-added and peer learning, it creates a space to share policy solutions, best practices and challenges in the implementation of SDGs and helps identify major regional and sub-regional trends.8

16. Moreover, the role of the UN Regional Economic Commissions is presented as a key element for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

---

8 https://www.unece.org/rfsd2018.html
Development\(^9\) (see paragraphs 82 of the New Urban Agenda\(^10\), paragraphs 86 and 87 of the SG report, Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: ensuring a better future for all\(^11\), paragraphs 18 and 19 of the General Assembly on Repositioning the United Nations development system\(^12\), article 87 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda\(^13\), and article 12 of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030\(^14\)) The Housing and Land Management Unit serves as a central contact point for any country within the region that needs advice or information on sustainable housing, urban development, and land administration and management, as well as a neutral platform for the exchange of experience, knowledge and best practices.

17. The UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management is one of many intergovernmental bodies working on different thematic areas in UNECE, including Economic Cooperation and Integration, Environment, Forestry and Timber, Transport, Energy, Population, Trade and Statistics. At the UNECE, the sectoral Committees’ work is coordinated through the mechanism of clusters where multiple SDGs converge, named the SDG “nexus clusters”. Four SDGs clusters have been identified as a result of the ongoing reflection: (a) Sustainable use of natural resources; (b) Sustainable and smart cities; (c) Sustainable mobility and smart connectivity; (d) Measuring and monitoring SDGs (methodology). The value of these high-impact areas is multiple, as they can serve to concentrate resources to address the multiple aspects of complex, multifaceted issues; facilitate partnerships, including with other organizations of the UN system; give potential access to new constituencies and promote a cross-sectoral dialogue with external clients; and provide more visibility to dispersed efforts under a common theme.

18. Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing\(^15\) is a non-legally binding document that aims to support member States as they seek to ensure access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all. It was endorsed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on 16 April 2015. The Charter is based

---

\(^9\) https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/rio20/futurewewant

\(^10\) http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/

\(^11\) http://undocs.org/A/72/124

\(^12\) http://undocs.org/a/res/72/279


\(^14\) http://www.unisdr.org/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

on four pillars: environmental protection, economic effectiveness, social inclusion and participation, and cultural adequacy. It established an important thematic framework for the regional cooperation on housing in the UNECE Region.

19. Following the endorsement of the Charter, the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management approved a framework for the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing 16 in December 2016, including recommendations for the establishment of the Charter Centres for implementation of the Charter in UNECE member States. The Centres perform activities such as dissemination of information on the Charter and its principles, advisory services, capacity building at all levels, networking with cities, regions and other stakeholders, etc. So far, two centres have been established in Estonia and Albania and several other countries reported during 2017 about their intentions to establish such centres.

20. The Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development 17 was adopted by the Ministers and the Heads of Delegation participating in the Ministerial Segment of the seventy-eighth session of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the Committee. The Ministerial Declaration reiterates the importance for governments at all levels and relevant stakeholders in the UNECE region to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other relevant global and regional commitments. The Declaration underlines the importance of regularly monitoring and following up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other agreements.

21. Urban Agenda for the EU 18: The European Union’s 28 member countries adopted the Urban Agenda for the EU in May 2016. For the EU, urban development is a key issue: more than 70% of EU citizens live in cities where, at the same time, approximately 85% of the GDP of the EU is generated. The Urban Agenda for the EU is a way to enable cities in Europe to better influence related EU legislation, to focus funding instruments through different funds into cities and to share experience of urban authorities across Europe. The core of the Urban Agenda for the EU is the development of partnerships in 12 thematic areas. These partnerships enable cities, countries, EU institutions and other stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to work together on an equal basis and to look for and find common ways to improve urban areas in the EU. The partnerships were


17 Available at http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=48305

launched in the following areas: integration of migrants and refugees, air quality, urban poverty, housing, circular economy, digital transformation, urban mobility, job opportunities and skills in local economy, adaptation to climate change, energy transformation, sustainable land use and solutions based on nature principles, and innovative and responsible public procurement. The partnerships generate an important knowledge base for the future work of the EU member countries to address urban development challenges.

II. II. Approach to the implementation of global and regional agreements

22. To implement the above mentioned global and regional commitments, policy changes at all relevant levels need to be implemented in order to achieve the SDGs, and objectives and targets related to other global and regional agreements. These policy changes will require stronger horizontal and vertical cooperation among governments and all relevant stakeholders, the establishment of partnerships, strengthening data driven and indicator-based review process and application of innovative financial mechanisms to support the implementation process.

   (a) Firstly, there is a need to develop capacities for data driven and indicator-based review and follow up of the implementation of the global and regional agreements. Data collection remains a key challenge. Addressing this gap in data collection is crucial to better inform the measurement of progress, in particular for those SDGs which do not have clear numerical targets. This part is not addressed in this document as it was subject of a separate document19;

   (b) Secondly, through the 2030 Agenda, member States should develop and implement a holistic approach to the SDGs, including through innovative financial mechanisms. Promoting innovative financing mechanisms will allow countries to better prevent and manage risks and develop mitigation plans. Demonstration projects will need to be developed to showcase such innovative mechanisms. The next section addresses this issue further;

   (c) Thirdly, there is a need to promote an integrated and inclusive approach through inter-sectoral cooperation at international, regional and national as well as city level; and diverse partnerships. International organisations, national and city governments, at all levels, as well as parliaments, civil society organizations, businesses and philanthropic organizations, the scientific and research community, academia, volunteer groups and other stakeholders — all have a part to play in implementing the 2030 Agenda and other global agreements.

19 ECE Information document 2.
A. Implementing innovative financial mechanisms to support urban infrastructure and to accelerate the achievement of urban related SDGs

23. To implement the 2030 Agenda and other relevant international commitments, national and local governments in cooperation with stakeholders should develop and implement a holistic approach to the SDGs, including through innovative financing mechanisms. Innovative financial mechanisms seek to improve funding for investment programs and projects; among others, their purpose is to motivate the providers of capital to be creative and think about the impact and contribution they could bring to improve the quality of life of communities and protect the planet. This especially supports the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing Development and the related shift from funding to financing of projects.

The innovative financial mechanisms approach consists of three main components: integrated urban development, people-first private-public partnerships (PPPP) and good governance;

a) First, it is assumed that urban development consists of multiple interacting variables – or assets – that are able to generate positive cash flows. To generate such flows, it is important to have, firstly, a clear vision of what a city aspires to be like in the future and accordingly which aspect of urban development should receive priority for funding. Secondly, there needs to be an understanding of how the value of urban assets varies across time and space and how this variation is caused by the mutual interaction between different assets. In this way, the funding needed for development of new urban assets or the transformation of the existing ones can be tapped into through careful study of how different assets bring up or down each other’s value over time, as well as in-depth understanding of what is the role of city government and urban dwellers in generating and managing this value.

b) Second, the development of innovative financial mechanisms requires partnership between multiple stakeholders: the public sector in charge of defining and defending public interest; the private sector capable of adding efficiency and capital; the civil society representing the commons and ensuring that how public interest is defined is in line with the prevailing political, social, and cultural norms; and the academia, tasked with contributing with capacity for applied research. To avoid the commonly criticised economic focus that permeates public-private partnerships (PPP) the UNECE developed the people-first PPP concept (PPPP), where the economic advantages of traditional PPPs (such as enhanced productivity and efficiency) have been complemented by, and not being subject to, social and environmental concerns (such as affordability and environmental sustainability).21
c) Third, for urban assets to be able to realise this potential to generate positive cash flows, there needs to be in place a governance structure with responsible management empowered to lead the transformation process; whilst simultaneously responsive to and supervised by a body in charge of defending public interest. For this reason, agreeing on a vision and strategy for a city and ensuring its implementation requires a dialogue between citizens, city government, and participating partners. That way, good governance is expected to increase the likelihood of having realistic, sustainable investible projects; and in return, investors and lenders will be more likely to become involved and more willing to exploit the opportunities provided by innovative financial mechanisms.

24. To test this approach, a pilot project is conducted in Astana, Kazakhstan, exploring the opportunities of applying PPPP model to solve infrastructure issues, by regenerating a low-income residential district through development of a start-up company\textsuperscript{22}. The main goal of this project is to ensure that smart and sustainable city is developed with people-first acting as the guiding principle, whilst reducing eco footprint as well as being financially sustainable. In return, this means that public interest is defended, yet that the private sector is given space to innovate and invest; and solutions designed and implemented in this project should answer the demands from both local authorities in Astana and the city’s residents. It is expected that this project will affirm innovative financing mechanisms as a solution that could be adapted and implemented for financing projects across other contexts as well.

25. To encourage and stimulate the development of innovative financial mechanisms, the Committee has been working closely with its partners to develop management tools and guidances that can be used in different phrases of urban development to generate positive cash flows. Such tools will be developed and presented with the training materials on individual country basis.

B. Governance for sustainable urban development, inter-sectoral cooperation and partnerships

International level

26. To promote the implementation of the global frameworks, including innovative financial mechanisms, there is a need for robust and transparent institutional

\textsuperscript{20} For more details, see Pedro Neves’s Innovative Financial Mechanisms for Urban PPPs (2018, unpublished)

\textsuperscript{21} Revised Guiding Principles on People-First Public-Private Partnerships for the United Nations SDGs

\textsuperscript{22} More information on this project is available in ECE/HBP/2018/Inf.II
arrangements. At the international level, the scope for action is largely defined by an array of international and regional agreements, such as the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and Urban Agenda for the EU; but also the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and Sendai Framework for Disaster and Risk Reduction. Given the interconnected nature of the issues in question – such as climate change and energy efficiency; poverty and affordable housing; environment and trade policy – an effective coordination and cooperation between governing bodies at the international level is imperative for palatable results.

27. However, the challenge to the global governance architecture is its highly fragmented nature, often resulting in intersecting mandates of different institutional units that focus on governing a specific set of issues without adequately consulting their institutional pairs. This institutional interplay may in return result in considerable waste of human and organisational resources, and it can negatively impact the formulation and implementation of solutions.

28. For this reason, it is important to manage the potential tensions that may arise from the institutional interplay and to turn these into synergies. One way of achieving this is through identification and creation of (in)formal regime complexes – whereby different organisational units within institutions work closely together in pairs to address issues within shared mandate. Among other things, the creation of such complexes would help address a common issue that arises during international efforts to take advantage of institutional interplay: that this often takes form of initiatives designed to promote the agendas of specific actors. In a highly plural and diverse environment that different regime complexes constitute, this would be significantly less likely to occur.

29. The UNECE has been active in recognizing the opportunities for cooperation and forming such regime complexes to ensure a more effective exchange of best practices and foster between-country cooperation towards completing SDGs for issues within its mandate. For instance, the nexus cluster “Smart and sustainable cities” SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities is one of the identified core SDGs for UNECE. Many UNECE sub-programmes are contributing to the implementation of targets under this SDG. In addition, SDG 11 has linkages with many other SDGs, including the other eight UNECE core SDGs. The solution of many sustainable development challenges – in transport, energy, economic development, management of natural resources and many others – passes through finding and implementing appropriate solutions at the city level. The rate of urbanization is high in the UNECE region and it is expected to continue to increase. In some parts of the region, where urbanization rates are comparatively low, faster growth can be expected. Cities are and will increasingly become a major focus for

23 Adapted from Young, O. (2013) “On Environmental Governance: Sustainability, Efficiency and Equity”.
the delivery of SDGs. At this level, the linkages between SDGs often appear as particularly visible and the need for integrated solutions is strong. The high-impact area “Smart and sustainable cities” is merging the existing UNECE activities under a common umbrella. This will also facilitate strengthening the existing partnerships and developing new ones.

National level

30. With respect to the national level, there is a need to promote an inclusive approach through inter-sectoral cooperation at country and local level and diverse partnerships. National and local governments, at all levels, as well as parliaments, civil society organizations, businesses and philanthropic organizations, the scientific and research community, academia, volunteer groups and other stakeholders — all have a part to play in implementing the 2030 Agenda and other global agreements;

31. In this context, this alignment should be understood as a dynamic process, where new opportunities can be explored and acted upon, while respecting existing mandates and within currently available resources, to better serve the demands of member States and the UN system. Opportunities will likely lie in new cross-sectoral activities, as the 2030 Agenda creates new possibilities for collaboration that reflect the linkages between different goals and targets. These activities would allow the organization to benefit from existing synergies, increase the efficiency of its work and have a multiplying effect on its actions to implement the SDGs. It is therefore necessary to nurture a cooperative culture with partners that facilitates undertaking cross-sectoral activities.

City level

32. At the city level, it is also important to establish cross-sectoral cooperation. The existing tools, such as those described below, can assist in promoting cross-sectoral cooperation.

33. Under the umbrella of the U4SSC, in 2017, UNECE, ITU and their partners elaborated a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Smart Sustainable Cities. The KPIs fully reflect the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and serve as a tool for evidence-based decision making, progress monitoring and achieving the SDGs at the local level. In fact, they help cities to evaluate their performance and assess their achievement against the SDG targets. The KPIs provide cities with a consistent and standardized method to collect data and give guidance and support in measuring performance and progress when transitioning into a smarter and a more sustainable city and to set up priorities for action. The KPIs include 92 indicators divided in 3 dimensions: economy, environment, and society and culture, which are in fact the areas of urban development. They are divided between core, which are
basic indicators that all cities are supposed to be able to collect; and advanced, which are indicators for cities which want to challenge themselves on sustainability and/or on smartness, and encompass the following topics: ICTs, transport, productivity, infrastructure, spatial planning, innovation, air quality, water and sanitation, waste, public spaces, energy, education, health, culture, safety, housing, food and social inclusion.

34. UN-Habitat’s City Prosperity Initiative has over 450 cities with 72 urban indicators data points available, and this has been complimented by other global data from 200 cities from the Global Sample of Cities. The growth of this large set of cities data offers a platform to study the systems of cities in countries and across regions across several indicators, helping city managers to assess the urban policy implications at the national or regional levels that goes beyond the assessments of the single urban indicators.

Conclusions

35. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 11 and other urban goals, alongside the New Urban Agenda offer a renewed opportunity for the global community to address several emerging global urban challenges including the urgent need to address the uncontrolled urban sprawl, the growing urban slum populations, the need for smart, safe and efficient urban transport systems, and how to improve urban environments through creating safe public spaces, and managing air pollution and municipal solid waste.

36. Moving forward with the implementation of global agreements, a critical step for realizing the sustainable development goals and other goals under these recent international agreements, is an integrated and coordinated approach at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

37. The Committee is invited to take note of the preparation of the Guidance for the alignment of the Committee activities with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, The New Urban Agenda and the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing; and to invite the secretariat to further develop the guidance and present it for the Committee’s endorsement at its eightieth session in October 2019.