

URBAN
ECONOMY
FORUM

3rd Urban Economy Forum (UEF 2021)

THE BRAMPTON RESOLUTION

On Occasion of World Habitat Day

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Supported by



TOWARD SUSTAINABLE URBAN ECONOMY

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INDEX

5	Executive Summary
8	Introduction
13	Housing
	General
	The Global Community
	National and Regional Level
	Local Level
16	The Global Pandemic
	General
	The Global Community
	National and Regional Level
	Local Level
17	Public Participation and Communities
	General
	National and Regional Level
	Local Level
19	Climate Change
	The Global Community
	National and Regional Level
	Local Level
22	Urban Resources
	The Global Community
	The Local Level
24	Urban Food Systems

Executive Summary

The 3rd Urban Economy Forum organized in partnership with UN-Habitat and supported by the city of Brampton was a great opportunity for urban stakeholders including city leaders, urban professionals, indigenous communities and the private sector from around the globe to come together virtually and share their insights and expertise on sustainable economies, housing, and urban recovery. Throughout the proceedings, the participants emphasised the need for partnerships, collaborative initiatives, open-minded exchange of ideas and information, and inclusive leadership.

The Forum's focus was "Housing and Urban Recovery" and the practical approaches needed to move toward more sustainable urban economies. Housing and Urban Recovery, Housing and Urban Economy: Building Forward Better in a World with Pandemic, Urban Economy and the Global Pandemic, Climate Change and Urban Economy, Innovation, Governance and the Urban Economy - Rethinking Urban Paradigms and Public Participation and Community Empowerment for Equitable Economic Growth were the six themes that were deliberated at the Forum

During the two and a half days, housing's central role for urban recovery was emphasised. It was clear how housing is interconnected to other aspects urban sustainability, such as climate change, economy and social development, inclusion, agriculture, transportation, and space to name a few. The urban challenges that cities are facing, like the COVID-19 pandemic, have also exacerbated the housing crisis. This in turn has also accelerated the struggle cities are facing from the pandemic, especially for the most vulnerable population. One of the most important solutions to this challenge was acknowledging and recognizing housing as a Human Right. The need to move away from the speculative nature of housing which has put so many people and communities at a disadvantage was an important facet of the discussion.

While several challenges were highlighted during the forum, actions and examples were also presented. There was a call for the global community to explore housing models that are based on the circular economy and the call for funding mechanism that can help scale approaches. Many examples already exist globally that have been proven to work. 'One size fits all' solutions do not work and there is a need to understand the local and national contexts for the housing solutions have to be adopted.

There was a general agreement at the Forum about the need for greater collaboration between all levels of government. National and local governments need to align housing priorities, re-examine government transfer payment models, and establish mechanism to collect, process, and analyze data to local priorities and strategies, including housing strategies. Planning and building codes also need to be revisited and should incorporate sustainability principles and addressing challenges faced by cities, like climate change. The participants also pointed out that governments need to involve all stakeholders in this conversation to ensure increasing housing quality does not lead to rising housing costs. Social infrastructure, financial models for affordable housing, local contexts, and the needs of people all must be considered in the quest for access to affordable and adequate housing strategies.

The global pandemic and its impacts were also explored during UEF 2021. Although it was clear that cities continued to grow during the global pandemic and people leaving cities was marginal, other long-term impacts of COVID-19 are still unknown. More data and practical examples are needed. This presents an opportunity for cities to share challenges and opportunities as they continue to look toward building forward better. Organisations, such as UN-Habitat, have also provided an extensive database on the challenges, opportunities, and practical approaches that are underway in cities due to COVID-19. Importantly, cities must continue to address the growing inequalities accentuated by COVID-19, and all stakeholders must work together to establish a more sustainable economic model that also takes advantages of the emerging opportunities, such as working from home. COVID-19 crisis also provides an opportunity for planners and policy makers to take transformative actions towards creating cities that are more just, resilient, and sustainable. This opportunity can also provide some solutions for housing.

As discussed under one of the themes, public participation is a must for urban areas and empowering local communities can lead to greater and more equitable economic and social outcomes. Appropriate education is lacking in many urban areas. While new technologies have a large potential to empower communities, access to and the functioning of new technologies should be checked by people to ensure it does not create new barriers and inequalities to public participation. Governments must have processes in place that empower and create opportunities for communities where their voices are heard and contribute to decision making. Engaging communities should not be *just another tokenism step in the process*.

The Forum also echoed the view that bringing people and opportunities closer together allows neighborhoods to flourish. Inclusive, fair, and accessible cities can eliminate inequalities seen in urban communities and create opportunities to engage marginalized and underserved communities. Using art and culture, valuing self-learning and tacit or experiential knowledge, and mechanisms for public engagement in decision making are all opportunities for better social inclusion. Furthermore, as cities look to build forward better, various perspectives, such as a child friendly city, incorporating accessibility and opportunities for the elderly, and gender inclusive buildings and public spaces are all part of the future of a more sustainable urban society.

With COP26 happening a month following UEF 2021, the 3rd forum provided an opportune platform leading up to the global conference on climate change. Cities require access to climate financing and with appropriating financing, cities can be implementors of change to achieve climate and sustainability targets. Over 50% of the global population lives in cities and climate financing should be reflective of this reality. Cities are, responsible for three quarters of global energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. National and Regional governments need to take on a strong leadership role in accessing climate financing and boldly guide their cities toward more sustainable practices. Countries are custodians of the land and should and must protect earth's ecological limits, provide national climate strategies, and support cities in aligning their climate strategies. With access to climate financing, cities can promote global climate change mitigation and low-carbon development including in the housing and construction sector and plan their urban recovery and delivery sustainable housing solutions. Besides mitigation, cities should now play a larger role in adaptation today. UEF's participants also brought to attention that the urban poor bear the brunt of climate change effects since they live and work in informal settlements that are more exposed to hazards. Hence cities need to strengthen their capacity to

assess vulnerability to climate change impacts and to identify corresponding plans and investments to increase their resilience.

While reiterating how cities have an important role to play to address climate change, it was noted that they must also leverage all opportunities available and take advantage of city-to-city learning. There are many good examples of how cities can move forward to address impacts of climate change and contribute to global climate agendas. At the same time, it's important to understand that not all cities are created equal, and some cities will have advantages over others, and other cities will be required to adapt and address challenges quicker than others.

The subject of urban resources is one of UEF's main areas of work. Cities and communities continue to have untapped urban resources that, if accessed and used efficiently, can provide many new opportunities, and provide solutions for current urban challenges. The use of urban data was again identified as a significant gap for urban settlements. As well, cities should also consider underground spaces, urban food systems, and taking stock and maintaining infrastructure as all being critical to their urban resources management.

The 3rd Urban Economy Forum is one of the world's most premier urban gatherings on sustainable urban economies and urban management. The collaborative approach for collective action taken by the organisation is integral to strengthen urban areas and working toward a more sustainable urban environment.

We look forward to the 4th Urban Economy Forum, which will be held in October 2022.

Kind Regards,

Reza Pourvaziry
Chair, Urban Economy Forum

Anantha Krishnan
Secretary General, Urban Economy Forum

Introduction

We, the participants of the Urban Economy Forum 2021 (UEF 2021), gathered virtually from 4 to 6 October 2021 in conjunction with World Habitat Day in Brampton, Canada, with the participation of national, subnational, and local governments, parliamentarians, UN-Habitat and other UN and transnational agencies, civil society, cities' representatives, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, the private sector, professionals and practitioners from diverse fields, the scientific and academic community, youth, volunteers, students, other relevant stakeholders to debate, agree and adopt this resolution for promoting sustainable economic, social and environmental well-being in urban areas.

This resolution, the *Brampton Resolution*, aims to build upon the Urban Economy Forum's previous resolutions and to advance the cooperative goals deliberated during the presentations and discussions of UEF 2021.

We thank the Ministers, Mayors, and other Elected Officials who joined us from around the globe to bring more attention to this Forum and to share the urban economic and social challenges and opportunities faced in their countries. We thank UN-Habitat, Government of Canada, and the City of Brampton for expressing interest in, providing support, and encouragement during the process leading up to and during UEF 2021.

We appreciate the Prime Minister of Canada Honourable Justin Trudeau for his continue support of the Urban Economy Forum and recognition of the importance that cities and urban economy has on the prosperity of the society.

While UEF 2021 was held virtually, we are grateful for the partnership and opportunities provided by the City of Brampton to host a virtual gathering. We extend our appreciation to the City of Brampton for their partnership and contributions to the organisation of UEF 2021 and look forward to their continued collaboration in the future.

We recognise that our work and the work of many of our partners take place in traditional Indigenous territories throughout Ontario, Canada, and the world, and in particular, the Ancestral Traditional Territories of the Ojibway, the Anishinaabe, and the Mississauga's of the New Credit. We recognise and sincerely appreciate their historical connection to this place. We are thankful to share in this rich and diverse culture on the global stage as we work together in the spirit of collaboration for a more positive and sustainable future.

We appreciate UN-Habitat's support to UEF with substantive inputs and guidance.

In the same way as we see the need to have an integrated approach to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda, we are convinced of the need to link our major global agendas together for nature, climate, COVID-19 recovery, health and poverty reduction.

We urge for the collective removal of barriers to allow solutions to be put in place. We are calling for the unlocking of finance and promotion of investment, while prioritizing sustainability, to

ensure that solutions serve to improve livelihoods, protect the environment and chart a pathway for a just transition for sustainable development.

We share in the commitment expressed by the UN Secretary-General's report, *Our Common Agenda*, and that, "**Humanity's welfare - and indeed, humanity's very future - depend on solidarity and working together as a global family to achieve common goals**". UEF 2021 embraces this commitment and has been a virtual place to build bridges, consensus, and commonalities on what the future of sustainable urban economies and urban resources should look like.

We recognise the importance of and rally behind this year's **World Habitat Day, 2021 with the Theme: *Accelerating Action for a Carbon-Free World***. We acknowledge the intersectionality between housing and urban development and achieve a carbon-free world.

We endorse The UN Secretary General's World Habitat Day message, in particular his mention that the Day's theme "highlights how cities and towns are at the core of climate action to keep the 1.5 degrees goal within reach".

We also endorse the World Habitat Day message of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat in which she observes that "The recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity for the world's cities to put climate action on top of their agenda. This is a chance to change how we generate our power, construct our buildings, heat, cool and light up our offices and homes, and travel around from home to work."

We will continue to promote, support, and monitor the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals at the local level, among other things, through the support of the "**World Urban Pavilion in Regent Park**". We acknowledge the close collaboration with UN-Habitat with substantive inputs and guidance.

We consider in earnest, the UN Secretary General's call to connect local and regional governments and their associations, national governments, businesses, community-based organizations and other local actors, and the United Nations system to support on the ground delivery of the SDGs, with a focus on those furthest behind.

We continue to call on governments at all levels to establish global cooperation on advancing sustainable urbanism principles and concepts and work together to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the new Urban Agenda. Only through cooperation and collaboration can we truly realise the full potential of our cities. It is time for urgent action that involves all urban stakeholders - governments, firms, non-profits, and communities. There is a need to speak 'truth to power' about the major challenges that cities face.

We emphasize that the status quo is no longer an option.

We share the concern of the UN Secretary-General, expressed at the release of the IPCC report¹, prepared by 234 scientists from 66 countries, and the alert of “a code red for humanity”. We support the call for solutions that are **“Inclusive and green economies, prosperity, cleaner air and better health are possible for all, if we respond to this crisis with solidarity and courage”**

We emphasize that raising concern about climate change must also be followed by the actions needed to tackle it. For example, vastly insufficient levels of urban climate finance were invested in developing economies, such as South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, which saw an annual average investment of just USD 4 billion and USD 3 billion, respectively.² Cities in developing countries (excluding China) only saw minor volumes of climate investment despite their rapidly growing urban centers.

We have taken note that Cities especially, in the global south, lack the technical and financial capacity to access urban climate financing (funds) available and may have to act through intermediaries. Assistance provided should extend to building this capacity which allows city specific differentiated needs to be articulated and implemented in projects. Those who bear the brunt of climate change within these cities should be the target of these initiatives using a participatory and inclusive approach.

We have also noted with concern that by 2050, 143 million people will be displaced within their own countries by climate impacts in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and south Asia alone.³ Most of these journeys will end in cities, the hubs of social networks and economic opportunity. But not all these urban centres, facing their own climate-induced crises, are equally well-suited to provide refuge.

In rapidly urbanizing countries in the global south, attention needs to be paid including for people who have been forced to flee to towns and cities. It was estimated that 82.4 million people who were forcibly displaced at the end of 2020, 48 million are IDPs, meaning they stayed within the borders of their country, and most of them in cities.⁴

We recognise that housing is a human right and a catalyst for all other fundamental rights. We recognize the intersectionality between housing and rapid urbanization, climate change and the climate emergency, and increasing inequalities and inequities across the globe. **We reiterate our call for the right to adequate, safe, accessible and affordable housing for all, as well as sustainable and inclusive communities as part of the solution to achieve a more prosperous and equitable global society.**

¹ <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/>

² <https://www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/publication/the-state-of-cities-climate-finance/>

³ <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/06/20/621782275/the-refugees-that-the-world-barely-pays-attention-to>

⁴ <https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/>

We appreciate UEF 2021's emphasis on housing and urban recovery and the converging crises faced by cities, such as climate emergency, the global pandemic, and the housing crisis.

We concur with the analysis that the impact of COVID-19 has widened the narrative around climate change to highlight that collective action and change are possible, and in recovering from the pandemic, there is the opportunity to introduce further measures to tackle climate change and environmental emergencies.

We re-emphasise the call for adequate **“housing for all”** to become a reality, coordinated efforts are required from national and local governments. Local authorities are key actors in ensuring that all citizens stay safe and protected and are seen as key participants in the delivery. National governments are critical for leading housing delivery programs and supporting local decision-makers by empowering them to take proactive and preventative actions and make effective decisions to meet local housing challenges.

The Global Pandemic has clearly exposed already existing injustices prevalent in our cities and societies. While some countries are beginning to emerge from the pandemic, many still face challenges ahead with cities at the forefront. We recognize the importance of sharing resources and providing support from city-to-city and country-to-country.

Communities living in informal settlements / slum dwellers in the world's cities have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and lockdown measures, but the spotlight on them can provide further impetus and resources for slum upgradation efforts that through improved access to infrastructure can improve living conditions and provide more secure livelihoods.

We are convinced that improved access to core services like housing, energy, water and transport for the urban under-served can lead to citywide prosperity and sustainability.

We have taken note of findings of UN-Habitat and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) that the cities and urban areas in East Africa, livelihoods and incomes of populations are seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for those living in informal settlements. These urban populations are more vulnerable to food insecurity and unstable livelihoods as they mainly depend on the informal sector. It is estimated that the number of food insecure people in East Africa will increase to more than 41 million people because of COVID-19 including 14 million urban dwellers.⁵

We have noted with concern and interest that the cities in Arctic Region the trends manifest themselves most prevalently in terms of global climate changes giving rise to new threats and opportunities in terms of natural resources extraction, new trade routes and an increased geo-strategic interest. While cities in this region have triggered attention from global and powerful

⁵ <https://www.wfp.org/publications/east-africa-impact-covid-19-livelihoods-food-security-nutrition-urban-august-2020>

stakeholders within business, civil society, state and supra-state political actors, attention needs to be paid for sustainable development of these cities and prosperity of their populations.

As outlined in the policy brief for the UN Food Systems Summit, territorial food systems for sustainable development, (2021), we support a territorial approach to food and nutrition along with other approaches at the sub-national, regional and local levels. Since economic and social behaviours are fundamentally embedded in place, a territorial approach is useful to promote sustainable and inclusive food systems at the local levels.

We recognize the annual forum as a premier global gathering for sustainable urban economy and urban resources that brings together stakeholders to identify practical approaches to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and accelerates solutions with the most merit. Only through global collaboration with collective action, can a more prosperous urban future be achieved.

We reaffirm our support for Urban Economy Forum (UEF) as an organisation based on practicality that begins with dialogue that leads to actions and results.

Attendees acknowledged UEF for its activities throughout the 2020-2021 year, including:

- A. Signing of bilateral agreement between Urban Economy Forum and UN-Habitat
- B. Continuing collaborations with ISOCARP, Asian Mayors Forum, and Scotland's Town Partnership
- C. Establishing working collaboration with the signing of an MOU with Habitat Norway
- D. Launching of UEF's Membership program
- E. Initiating national level activities and exploring the viability of national chapters-UEF where possible
- F. Bolstering UEF's presence throughout the globe through the establishment of local chapters
- G. Establishing collaboration with cities across Canada and the globe, including:
 - i. City of Brampton on the Brampton: Frontrunner of Urban SDGS and Co-host of UEF 2021
 - ii. Town of Collingwood on the Collingwood: Frontrunner Town of Urban SDGs and the 2nd Collingwood World Summit
 - iii. City of Kitchener on the Kitchener: Global Hub of SDG Cities in Canada
 - iv. York University: SDG Climate Solutions Neighbourhood
 - v. Urban + Future: Rethinking Global Housing Pilot
- H. The ongoing efforts in establishing the World Urban Pavilion in Regent Park

UEF 2021 will continue to advance the priorities, objectives, and projects identified by UEF 2019, UEF 2020, and UEF 2021 participants, and are in general and non-binding agreement to promote the concepts and approaches as follows:

Housing

General

- a. **Right to Housing:** Housing is a fundamental right and social good and should be acknowledge as such both globally and nationally. National, subnational and local housing policies should support the progressive realisation of the right to adequate housing for all and must include not only citizens but all people.
- b. **Bold Leadership:** Leaders need a willingness to collaborate with all stakeholders, understand what partners need, and learn from the past success and challenges. There must also be a willingness to rethink current building practices and living standards to achieve environmental, social and economic stability, transcendence, harmony and humanity.
- c. **Housing and Urbanisation:** Housing plays a significant role and is interlinked with nearly all aspects of urbanisation, such as economic development, social mobility, human spirit, health and safety.
- d. **Housing and Urban Challenges:** Housing plays a critical role in addressing urban challenges, such as climate change, mitigating implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing inequalities in our societies. The Urban Economy Forum should continue to work with international partners and national and regional governments, to encourage governments to recognize housing as a human right through legislation that is actioned through strategic planning.
- e. **Housing Affordability Crisis and Consequences:** The high cost of housing is alarming and an urgent concern that requires immediate attention. The increasing costs of housing will likely lead to increased rates of social-economic challenges, such as increased crime rates and drug use.
- f. **Housing Quality and Affordability:** The demand and needs for good quality housing is growing, such as more space, green areas, terraces, well insulated, with natural light. Increasing demands for quality has also pushed the price of housing up, creating additional challenges around housing affordability.
- a. **Circular Economy and Construction:** Circular Economy Business Model to be promoted with inclusive financing mechanism for the construction sector (infrastructure & building materials).

The Global Community

- g. **Housing Solutions based on National and Local Contexts:** Solutions to housing challenges requires different policies, actions, and solutions that must consider local and national contexts and the availability of resources. There is not a one stop solution that will work everywhere,

however, efforts should be made to identify housing solutions that could be replicated and scaled based on regionality, geographics and contexts.

- h. **Housing Funding Mechanism:** The international community and governments should further examine housing funding mechanisms like the Urban Poor Fund International and community based affordable housing initiatives such as Dignity in South Africa and explore the upscaling of proven initiatives that meet globally acknowledged standards, such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

National and Regional Level

- a. **Reinforcing Policies Across Governments:** National and Municipal governments require shared and mutually reinforcing policies, in particular those that support land and financing, zoning and land use policies.
- b. **Sustainable Building Codes:** Governments need to incorporate sustainable development principles in building codes. This should also be included within national housing policies. Aligning building codes with global sustainability agendas will require consultations with the relevant institutions, sectors, and the general public.
- c. **Sustainable Building Codes and Increasing Housing Costs:** With increasing requirements for building codes, this is also associated with additional costs and funding requirements that are associated with incorporating sustainable and inclusive building codes (as well as and using more appropriate and sustainable materials). This may also create additional limits on housing accessibility. National Governments and the private sector will need to work together to understand both the positive and negative implications this will have on urban development and housing.
- d. **Wholesale Planning:** Planning codes need to reform wholesale planning systems
- e. **Sustainable Designs and Building Materials:** Designs and standards to build cities and the materials used need to be revised to incorporate the sustainability principles and address climate change and emergencies.
- f. **Governmental Transfer Payments:** Central and Regional Government financing programmes (i.e. Community Development Block Grant) for cities and local communities that pre-allocate funding based on formulas (i.e. population, socio-economic status, etc...) should reduce application burdens on cities and local communities, allow greater flexibility on its use at the local level, and should be linked to governments' budgets. This limits resources spent by cities and local communities to apply for necessary funding and be spent on local needs.
- g. **Housing and Public Participation:** To solve the current housing crisis, governments at all levels will be required to tap into more voices, including those with lived experience such as the homeless, financiers with access to capital, and women. This may also require trying out new modes of engagement, including via the arts.

- h. **Housing Coproduction:** Governments should explore coproduction of housing across the entire housing model spectrum (i.e., from coop housing to the informal)
- i. **Housing and Data:** Housing policies require a tailored approach based on the needs of different populations and groups, identify the needs should be informed by data. There is a need for greater access to urban data that is de-aggregated.⁶
- j. **Freeing the Housing Sector from Speculation:** The future of private sector should be about making a decent profit. Place-based anti-speculation housing policies based on a territorialised diagnosis of residential vulnerability, using data and private public partnership (PPP) is necessary.

Local Level

- a. **Fragility of Cities:** While most cities are facing housing affordability and growth issues, some are more fragile than others, due to conflicts and other stressors, this is especially relevant in the Global South.
- b. **Social Infrastructure:** Social infrastructure plays a critical role in the quality of urbanization and supports a community that is healthier, wealthier, and involved.
- c. **Land-based Finance Mechanism:** Cities should use land-based finance mechanisms for affordable housing. Based on current practices and in collaboration with relevant partners, cities should explore ways to link housing finance and land value sharing mechanisms in countries and cities at all levels of economic development and with diverse legal, institutional, and political structures.
- d. **New Models for Affordable Housing Financing:** Cities should explore how affordable housing can be pooled, structured, and financed to support SDG 1: End Poverty. Current challenges include degrading credit risk and affordable housing goals are limited by existing lending and financing practices.
- e. **Local Standards for Building Materials:** Cities should develop standards for local materials that are measurable to avoid a high level of verity in implementation and the cost of building with non-conventional building materials that are based on sustainable principles should be subsidized.
- f. **Role of Community Development Financial Institutions:** Micro-financing institutions should be broadened to uplift Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the housing/construction sector, as they are equipped to provide inclusive finance, training and fill gaps not being met by conventional lending institutions.
- g. **Cities and Homeowners:** Cities will have to balance tensions between the interests and power of homeowners and residents with other tenures, which challenge policymaking in terms of enhancing sustainability and affordability

⁶ Boston's Women Advancement unit is collecting and leveraging data from and about women that can help inform decision making. <https://www.boston.gov/departments/womens-advancement>

The Global Pandemic

General

- a. **Future Impacts of COVID-19:** The long-term impacts of COVID-19 on urban economy is still unfolding and must be properly investigated. Governments and organisations at all levels will need to further explore what are these impacts. More data and practical examples are required to continue an urban transition toward sustainability. Findings and strategies should be shared to address future and ongoing challenges.
- b. **Continued Growth of Cities:** While many predicted that COVID-19 could lead to the end of cities, this has not materialised, and the flow of people moving out of cities was marginal.
- c. **Cross-sectoral Collaboration:** All stakeholders need to bolster cross- collaboration and cooperation to contribute to the ongoing progress to achieving the SDGs and building forward better post-COVID-19. Learning networks from government-to-government and across sectors should be leveraged to accelerate the transition.

The Global Community

- a. **A New Model for Urban Economy:** There are opportunities to invest in a new model of urban economy that is more sustainable, green, and inclusive. This will require adequate level of investment from both the public and private, and policy makers will need a clear and strong vision to guide investments.
- b. **UN-Habitat's Cities' COVID-19 Database:** UN-Habitat's most authoritative data-based report on 1700 cities relating to COVID-19 recovery provides a number of insights for cities, both challenges and opportunities, and ways to move forward.⁷

National and Regional Level

- a. **Growing Inequalities:** There is a clear trend of increased inequalities, as vulnerable people are even more vulnerable as a result of COVID-19, such as people working in informal economy, with non- standard contracts, or precarious working conditions. Measures for public support have been stopped, and vulnerable people do not have a safety net. Efforts must be made by national governments to continue to examine the trend and impacts of inequalities. National governments will need to work close with local authorities to support in the implementation of measures and delivery of to reduce inequalities and support the most vulnerable populations.

⁷ https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2021/03/cities_and_pandemics-towards_a_more_just_green_and_healthy_future_un-habitat_2021.pdf

Local Level

- a. **Shifting Work Conditions and New Opportunities for Housing:** The impact of working from home on real estate is still unfolding it is unclear if vacant office space will result in better opportunities for providing affordable and quality housing. Local governments in collaboration with the national and regional governments and real estate sector could explore implications of converting vacant office space to housing and share learnings with the globe.

Public Participation and Communities

General

- a. **Barriers to Education:** There is a need to further study systemic issues in education, industry stigmas, access to public spaces, barriers to create opportunities for youth
- b. **Protecting Urban and Environmental Activists:** International community should ensure measures to protect environmental activists, indigenous groups and other human rights defenders who face harassment, imprisonment and extrajudicial killing for doing their essential work. And it means implementing environmental and equity, ensuring laws and listening to the voices calling for change.
- c. **Dignity and respect:** Peoples and ecosystems should be respected. Governments should provide opportunities for knowledge and education of different approaches, perspectives, and traditions.
- d. **Technology and Public Participation:** Technology Platforms are not neutral and there is no one size fits all. Communities must raise their forces to correct technology as it is unable of correcting itself. It is also important to acknowledge that technology can be barrier to these voices.

National and Regional Level

- a. **Governmental Leadership:** Governments are encouraged to engage communities in communicating complex concepts related to climate change, SDGs, and post-COVID-19 and green recovery. A large array of climate change and environment related terminology is in circulation but vocabulary and understanding are limited. It is necessary for governments to clarify what the different climate responsibilities are and where they lie. People are looking for a strong, lucid tone, with clear targets and path to follow.
- b. **Community Empowerment:** There is a need for quality education, mechanisms to facilitate social capital, women economic empowerment, fighting discrimination, promote healthy

lifestyle, and political inclusion of youth as important tools for community economic empowerment.

- c. **Middle Class and Reducing Regional Inequalities:** National governments are encouraged to implement regional plans/projects/strategies for sustainable urbanization and strengthen middle-sized cities in less developed areas and decrease regional inequalities within a country.

Local Level

- a. **Support the Integration of Minorities and Migrants:** Local governments and civil society organizations need to be sympathetic to the needs of the displaced persons in their towns or cities. They must and there are cases where they are complicit in stoking ethnic tensions and discrimination.
- b. **Process for Local Collaboration to Address Urban Issues:** Cities should engage with local communities in understanding and communicating authentic feelings and experiences on a wide range of issues such as climate change, homelessness, unemployment, gender-based violence and collectively explore ways of addressing them.
- c. **Meaningful Participation of Local Communities:** Urban development, redevelopment and community development should be undertaken with policies and practices that include meaningful and empowered participation of local communities as knowledgeable stakeholders and contributors to the decision-making process. Governments cannot establish effective and efficient urban management strategies without the involvement of all stakeholders, especially those that are most vulnerable.
- d. **Harnessing Youth to Transform Urban Communities:** Youth contribute to the formulation of effective urban policies and governance. As such, it is recognized the importance of avoiding tokenism and creating meaningful platforms for youth civic engagement in the decision-making process to transform urban communities into safe, resilient and sustainable places of work, home and play. A vibrant city needs to engage youth and have them at the forefront of change. Youth should be recognized as advocates of positive change which requires full participation of youth in all political and socioeconomic spaces. Good examples include of urban youth council and youth-led and youth-focused initiatives.
- e. **Self-learning and Tacit Knowledge:** Urban planning experts do not only come from academia and formal education. Self-learning and tacit knowledge should be acknowledged and promoted as an important component to urban planning, management, and decision making and should be respected and encouraged as part of the urban development process.
- f. **Importance of Social Inclusion:** Social exclusion and alienation leads to many socio-economic challenges, such as gangs and drug use. Involving society and youth in meaningful decisions can lead to better long-term outcomes for both the individual and the community. Local governments should explore programs that promote family cohesion, youth in decision-making roles, access to cultural, social, and economic opportunities (i.e. jobs, extra-curricular programs, mentoring programs).

- g. **Arts and culture:** Art and culture should be recognized as fundamental pillars of urban wellbeing. There is a need to co-create a transformative urban world integrating the voices of indigenous communities, women, young people, aged and the “unrepresented”. All voices, experiences, and traditions that are well represented and celebrated in local communities create a harmonious city to live in.
- h. **Urban Planning and Gender Inclusion:** Urban planning should emphasize gender-inclusion, for example by acknowledging that girls play and relax in different ways from boys, which requires different spatial design and facilities.
- i. **Cities and Elderly:** The elderly should not be seen as just vulnerable victims of climate changes, such as heatwaves, but as important urban resources that are capable of sharing wisdom and offering solutions to the challenges they face

Climate Change

The Global Community

- a. **Access to climate financing:** Climate financing should center at the City level, community participation, and public-private partnerships (PPPs)
- b. **Urban Climate Financing:** Cities require financial support to implement requirements to address climate change. “UrbanShift “ initiated by World Resource Institute and UNEP8 is a good example for city focused climate financing. It will improve integrated planning in 23 cities in Argentina, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Rwanda and Sierra Leone cities, impacting the lives of more than 58 million people.
- c. **Gender focus:** Funding is now shifting to incorporate gender through examples such as the Adaptation Fund (AF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) with its origins in the Paris Agreement that began with a gender lens.
- d. **Global Climate Financing should Emphasize Cities:** More than half of the global population is urban (~55%) and this proportion of funding should go to urban areas to help mitigate urban issues, such as public transportation and renewable energies. Most cities, however, do not have the capacity to apply for these funds. Funding should support countries to retain experts and support to formulate their projects and establish a link between what is needed and what is required by global climate agendas. Some countries require support to formulate projects and submit to climate financing agenda, such as COP.

⁸ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/un-and-partners-launch-billion-dollar-initiative-transform-cities>

National and Regional Level

- a. **Leadership:** Strong leadership at all levels is required to lead others toward more sustainable and equitable practices. Many are looking for direction with bolder leadership.
- b. **The Role of National Governments to manage Earth's Ecological Limits:** National governments should explore ways to observe Earth's limits and inequities and deploy mechanisms that ensure long-term prosperity, such as through rationing, taxing, state regulation, polluter pays, mixed tenure neighbourhoods and responsible producer policies.
- c. **Country-level Approach to Address Climate Change:** To mobilize urban climate finance at scale and in time to address the climate change crisis, there is a need to take a systems level and whole of economy approach, whereby country, city and climate policies, data and activities are aligned, well-funded, and executed at the local level.
- d. **Aligning National and City-level Climate Policies:** Support national and city-level climate policy alignment both top down and bottom up. For example, national governments should incorporate and incentivize the efforts of cities when developing and updating their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) as well as during their implementation.
- e. **Gender Equality and Climate Financing:** Gender inequality across multiple urban contexts can be intensified or augmented by climate change policies since women have been disproportionately affected by climate change. Focus areas such as agriculture, water, energy and transportation have gendered dimensions that have been poorly addressed in mitigation measures. Deployment and resource mobilization require a gendered perspective which should extend to elements of programming, monitoring, technical assistance and outreach to ensure impact. Allocation of climate funds should mainstream gender perspectives.
- f. **Strengthening National Climate Standards:** Strengthen national level standards, regulations, and data systems that support low carbon and climate-resilient urban planning and development and carbon pricing mechanisms at the municipal level.
- g. **Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers and Climate Change:** Adapt and leverage intergovernmental and fiscal transfer systems to support and incentivize city-level climate action.
- h. **Role of National Development Banks:** National Development Banks (NDBs) are generally well positioned to support climate-smart urban infrastructure investments and should be encouraged to finance cities directly.
- i. **Reporting on Climate Financing Projects:** Donors, development finance institutions, local governments, and cities should increase efforts to monitor and report climate finance projects that benefit urban dwellers. Tracking investments at the project level provides valuable information to support progress monitoring, measure gaps, identify synergies, and optimize and identify opportunities surrounding the urban green transition.

- j. **Green Recovery and Urban Areas:** Green recovery stimulus funds should be directed to urban areas which have borne the brunt of COVID-19 cases and face continued economic uncertainty. Also direct green stimulus funds to areas that are urbanizing rapidly in an unmanaged way and at risk of locking in carbon intensive and climate vulnerable pathways, especially in developing economies.
- k. **Financial Measures and Climate Change:** The use of fiscal measures to mitigate use of non-climate friendly behaviours, such as the use of road tolls for private cars, should also bear in mind equity issues.

Local Level

- a. **The Role of Cities for Earth's Global Commons:** The future of the Earth's global commons, as well as its economy, will be decided in cities in the next decades, which could spearhead green, low-carbon prosperity. The ecosystems, biomes and processes that regulate the stability and resilience of the Earth-system are the very foundation of our global economy and modern society of which cities and towns are part of. Protecting and nurturing sustainable cities also means protecting nature and cultural heritage.
- b. **Financing Urban Solutions to Climate Change:** Existing urban resources, access to external finance, and assistance available for climate financing for cities from sovereign or regional governments vary significantly and reflect existing political, economic and financial inequalities. Cities operate in a wide spectrum of enabling environments for urban climate financing across countries. Therefore, each city's context must determine the relevant policy that is needed and financial tools for mobilizing urban climate finance.
- c. **Strengthening Municipal Finance Capacities:** To access climate financing, cities should strengthen their municipal finance capacities, including budgeting, financial management, contract management, and procurement to improve the overall quality of service provision and investments. This can also lay a stronger foundation for climate finance through the improved use of fiscal transfers, own-source revenues, and blended finance instruments.
- d. **Indigenous Communities and Urban Resilience:** Incorporate indigenous people's eco-friendly practices to further advance sustainable urban development and climate resilience.
- e. **Cities and High-use Consumers:** local authorities can target high consumers in terms of limiting resource and energy use, for instance through taxation.
- f. **Local Solutions and Sustainability:** Many solutions for urban challenges arise at the local level because the local has the greatest understand of their situation, especially when considering the lived experience. For example, African solutions to challenges presented by numerous and various kinds of domestic waste, such as waste plastic being turned into bricks for housing. This presents an important area that is key for urban sustainability.

- g. **10-minute City and Accessibility:** As cities continue to move toward environmental measures in cities such as 10-minute neighbourhoods, measures should bear in mind the needs of differently abled.
- h. **Cities in the Circumpolar North:** The Forum recognized the economic, ecological and equity challenges of cities in the circumpolar North and the pervasive impact of climate change. Indigenous people, women and youth are at particular risk of inequality and human rights violation. The situation is, to a very limited degree, highlighted by the international community including the global media.
- i. **On Arctic cities:**
 - 1. a closer regional cooperation with focus on the urban challenges and opportunities be coordinated through the Arctic Council and relevant UN mechanisms, e.g. the Economic Commissions of Europe, Asia and America.
 - 2. the major cities of the circumpolar north are given observer status in the Arctic Council.
 - 3. a "State of Arctic Cities" report be produced (ref. UN Habitat Governing Council resolution on Arctic cities of 2008) by seeking funding by the eight (8) Arctic council member states.
 - 4. investment needs, including innovative funding mechanisms, are investigated focusing on future adaptation and mitigation activities
 - 5. UN capacity to meet humanitarian and natural disaster situations in Arctic cities is strengthened
 - 6. Collaborating with civil society initiatives in the region including MAPS, the Marine Arctic Peace Sanctuary. MAPS is a 360° initiative to awaken interconnection globally in order to protect all life.

Urban Resources

The Global Community

- a. **Urban Demand Tool for Local Resources:** Examine the use of an urban demand tool that can guide the quantity of local resources, such as food, to balance the supply. This can limit surplus supply of resources in one city when another city is in dire need. This would help international organisation, such as the World Food Programme, to intervene if necessary and at the right place while also minimize waste.

The Local Level

- a. **Cities and Underground Spaces:** Cities' underground spaces are untapped and underutilized spaces and could offer significant opportunities to address current urban challenges. Urban sprawl is a growing challenge faced by cities and utilizing underground spaces could provide cities with new opportunities for housing and economic and social development. These spaces need to be planned and regulated for more efficient use.

- b. **Ensure Policy Coherence:** SDGs should be prioritized within the municipality, including in their strategic, urban planning and economic frameworks.
- c. **Address Infrastructure and Maintenance:** Cities need to develop long-term funding plan(s) against infrastructure gap(s) (aging infrastructure, replacing vs. cost of maintenance vs. new green infrastructure requirements).
- d. **SDG 4 & 5:** Municipalities are effective implementors to deliver trade skills development to address SDG 4 (sustainable development) and SDG 5 (gender equality) amongst populations. Many municipalities will require support from high-levels of government.
- e. **Sustainable resources and key untapped capacities in urban economy:** Cities, in collaboration with the global urban community, must identify sustainable resources and key untapped capacities within the urban economy to create innovation-based economies that promote sustainable development. There is a need to further explore how to connect the identification of new resources with urban management strategies and how urban management strategies can create an environment to identify and use untapped urban resources. Considering the scope of SDGs and their applicability in urban development, with the principles of Earth Agenda in mind, multifaceted management is a foundational approach. As a result, identifying sustainable resources and their key untapped capacities are necessary as applicable tools in multifaceted management. Resources and their capacities are usually vast and variable. They may be social, economic, cultural, and environmental which can be identified by fields like anthropology, psychology, and ecology, and other STEM and non-STEM sectors. In this area, the perspective of city leaders is important since they will be able to find opportunities to identify new resources and use these resources in the urban economy.
- f. **Data and Knowledge:** Innovation and governance through data and knowledge is required to shift the urban paradigm. As such, data governance and management is necessary at all levels of government, with cities, states and companies working collaboratively to collect, analyse and monitor all data gathered. Effective data management should consider the following:
 1. Digital: Data needs to be in a digital format to be useful, reliable and accurate.
 2. Security and Privacy: Government regulatory measures for data security and privacy are imperative to uphold the trust civil society has placed on the public/private sector with personal data.
 3. Regulator Frameworks: Need a regulatory framework by government, policies and legislation to protect data. Need right infrastructure in place (storage, visualization, etc.)
 4. Data Governance: Cities have more data than they know and need to know how to use it. Data governance is a set of processes to realize data value. The need to meet regulatory requirements around security and privacy. Where is the data, who owns the data set, catalogue the data.
 5. City, states, companies need to work together on data collection and collaboration.
 6. Housing for urban poor: Innovation and governance is required through data and knowledge. UN-Habitat to set up systems to estimate slum dwellers. Policy interventions required. Community led programs required. A formal recognition that informal settlements are part of the urban fabric. Proven innovation related to housing

- needs to be adopted by government. National and local governments need resources/budgets to support policy change.
- g. **Measure Success:** Cities require the scorecards and tracking metrics for SDGs and identify where systems have to be changed to accommodate the tracking and managing of SDG's progress. UN-Habitat's SDG Cities Initiative is a good model that is being implemented globally.
 - h. **Time is an Urban Resources:** a slow city, a city harmoniously embracing numerous rhythms of diverse lifestyles and the '15-minute city' have all draw attention to time as a significant urban dimension.

Urban Food Systems

- a. **Circular Food Systems and Urban Economy:** Circular food systems in cities can be coupled with the emergence of food communities and social movements challenging the assumption of the 'take-make-dispose' food economy, and creating a new idea of a place-based food economy in the very core of urban areas. From this perspective, urban agriculture and food communities represent an opportunity to create new place-based food economies, communities and systems.
- b. **Food Systems and COVID-19:** The management of the current crisis by city and local governments can play a major role in preventing the spread of the virus and, at the same time, in mitigating the disruptions in their food systems and any negative effects on vulnerable populations.
- c. **Public Participation and Urban Food Systems:** Urban food policies, active civil society participation with local governments and alternative food networks also need expert attention to be developed into enduring mechanisms that can promote access to safe and nutritious food. These spheres of active citizen participation deserve encouragement and support from the government at all levels.
- d. **Education and the Environment:** Community action to promote educational campaigns on food safety and sustainable food choices that support nature friendly and lower carbon footprint deserve active support from the local government as well as the private corporate sector.
- e. **Food Equity, Lifestyles and Resilience:** Urban food systems across diverse urban contexts have features that ensure an equitable access to safe and nutritious food, promote responsible food choices and sustainable consumption patterns, support nature positive food production in urban and peri-urban areas, and advance equitable livelihoods that together builds resilience. These require closer study and research to develop innovative solutions to challenges that afflict urban food systems in many countries.
- f. **Regional Approaches to Local Food Systems:** Urban and rural governments should further examine the relevance of bio-regional approaches based on agroecological principles for nature

based solutions to strengthen and build resilient local food systems. It is also relevant to consider the positive elements underlying local indigenous food systems, the role of municipal and local governments in operationalising SDGs at the local level as well as to strengthen rural-urban functional linkages for an integrated and effective approach to territorial development.

- g. **Climate and Urban Food Systems:** Urgent Need for systems that do not aggravate climate change and contribute to environmental degradation
- h. **Ecology:** Urban agricultural must acknowledge the Importance of soil health and explore approaches to Regenerative farming
- i. **Resilience:** Urban food systems should be built with the ability to cope with disruption
- j. **Decent profits, decently:** Urban food systems should embrace the Circular local economy model and can be a mechanism for wealth-building for local community. Local communities urban agriculture can contribute to value creation, create employment opportunities, reduce food waste and transportation costs, and integrate innovation + traditional urban practices.
- k. **Place:** Urban agriculture requires area-specific solutions that is built on local uniqueness and regional approaches. Efforts should be made that encourage to move away from intensive farming that reduces food miles and promote consumption of foods that are non-exotic (i.e., distant, out of season, or celebrated as luxuries).

Urban Economy Forum 2022

We recommend that the *next UEF will be held in October 2022, in conjunction with the World Habitat Day*.*

*These resolutions were written and edited during Day 3 of Urban Economy Forum on 6 October 2021 by attendees, input was also provided by UEF 2021 participants prior to the final review.