

HabPost

Updates from
UN-Habitat

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Urban October: A Month of Action for Better Lives in Cities



Editor's note

Dear Reader,

We're almost halfway through September, and this means two things: Urban October is around the corner, and time flies. A lot of us started to work from home in March and have been connecting to meetings and events from home. Urban October and its run-up will be no exception, with many events taking place online. In this issue, we give you a brief overview of what Urban October is all about and tell you about the ways you can join. There's also quite a few events looking at sustainable and smart cities taking place around the world in the coming two weeks; you can read about them and learn how to participate in the Events section.

Happy Reading,

The HabPost Team

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Alerts

Update on the COVID-19 situation in Kenya and plans to reopen the UN Gigiri complex.

- While the numbers of daily infections in Kenya seem to be declining, WHO has indicated that this could be linked to the decline in testing – from 8,000 per day at the peak of testing to less than 4,000 today – as well as less intense close-contact tracing and selective testing.
- Medical doctors do not recommend travelling by air unless absolutely necessary.
- The COVID-19 treatment facility for UN personnel in Nairobi will open by the end of September.
- The UN complex will reopen earliest December or January at no more than 40 per cent capacity. Those at risk (with underlying conditions) will not be asked to go back to the office immediately. If you have underlying conditions, declare it so that you can be authorized to stay home.
- Personnel will be required to wear masks in the office unless they can effectively maintain a two-meter physical distance, for instance in a private office. Masks will be required in all other common areas of the complex to align with the guidelines of the Kenyan Government.
- Anyone testing positive within the compound will be followed up for contact tracing and will receive medical and psychosocial help.
- The recreation centre started a phased reopening on 7 September.





Urban October: A Month of Action for Better Lives in Cities



This will undoubtedly be one of the strangest Urban Octobers we have ever seen.

At the heart of Urban October usually is the hustle and bustle of preparing huge meetings, the buzz and inspiration from dynamic discussions and crowded lectures, and the fun of children's competitions and outdoor gatherings. These will be replaced in many places by the click of computers logging on to the innovative versions of these familiar events.

Urban October is the month when UN-Habitat's mandate is in the spotlight. It starts with our very own day – World Habitat Day – on the first Monday of the month as mandated by the UN General Assembly. And it closes with another UN mandated event – World Cities Day – which was first celebrated in 2014 as a result of the International Shanghai Expo.

The month is a great opportunity for everyone to work together and to raise awareness of sustainable urbanization and the key role it plays now – and will continue to play – to ensure the world reaches the Sustainable Development Goals and moves towards sustainable development. It is also a great time to recognize good practices and share knowledge on effective urban solutions. UN-Habitat also works hard to ensure there is effective networking and enhanced collaboration among partners. And this year we are of course looking for examples of effective COVID-19 responses in cities where the pandemic has hit the hardest.

While events during Urban October itself can include any subject related to urbanization, there are specific themes

for World Habitat Day and World Cities Day. The theme of World Habitat Day 2020 is *Housing For All: For A Better Urban Future* and will involve events on all aspects of adequate housing and the right to housing particularly as it is the first line of defence against COVID-19. An action-packed campaign on Housing for All will be running throughout October to raise awareness on the essential role of housing for development, showcase and advocate for key actions, and promote alliances and initiatives.





Valuing our communities and cities

At the other end of the month, World Cities Day is looking at the often unrecognized importance and contribution of communities to our cities under the theme *Valuing our Communities and Cities*. This comes under the overall World Cities Day theme of *Better City, Better Life* and again the pandemic has really shown the critical importance of communities and why they need to be integrated into the running of our cities.

What makes Urban October special

The life blood of Urban October are the national, regional and local governments, NGOs, UN agencies, academic institutions, grass roots and community organizations, think tanks, private companies and many more organizations who put together a range of fascinating events in their towns and cities. While the COVID-19 pandemic has made it challenging in some respects, it also presents great opportunities to bring in speakers all over the world who can participate from the comfort of their own homes.

Every year, one main meeting takes place during both World Habitat Day and World Cities Day. The meeting is known as the Global Observance and is attended by our Executive Director and high-level representatives from the host country.

This year, the Global Observance of [World Habitat Day](#) on 5 October is being hosted by the Government of Indonesia in Surabaya. We expect to have the usual high-level attendance including ministers and mayors, experts,

diplomats, academics and community leaders along with a video message from the UN Secretary-General. A key event will be the launch of the New Urban Agenda Platform and accompanying discussions, along with workshops on Housing and COVID-19 as well as Housing and Informal Settlements. Other events are being organized from Cameroon to Canada and, time zone permitting, there will be live links to the Global Observance.

Another main event from World Habitat Day is the [awarding of the Scroll of Honour winners](#). The award recognizes outstanding contributions in the field of development including improving urban lives, provision of housing and highlighting the plight of the poor or displaced. There were 61 eligible nominations this year and an internal UN-Habitat Selection Committee made recommendations to the Executive Director. The winners this year are Ucycle Africa (Uganda), Subang

Jaya Municipal Council (Malaysia), Community Impact Nepal (Nepal), the Ministry of Housing and Cities (Colombia), and ECO CASA (Mexico).

At the end of the month, the Global Observance of [World Cities Day](#) will be hosted for the first time ever in Africa, by the Government of Kenya. One key event during the Day will be the launch of UN-Habitat's flagship report, the World Cities Report on *The Value of Sustainable Urbanization*. An accompanying workshop will involve some of the report's authors along with several experts. Other events will include bringing in mayors and ministers to discuss how to work together with communities to co-create cities, a look at communities and public spaces and a workshop on the leadup to the 2021 Africities summit in Kisumu, Kenya featuring governors discussing sustainable initiatives. The Day will mark the end of the 40-day Safer Cities Challenge which will run through Urban October.



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What's in for me?

Join in! We encourage everyone at UN-Habitat to get involved – either directly by organizing an event or by working with partners. All the information, logos and merchandise templates are available on the [website](#). We encourage everyone who is holding an event – inside and outside UN-Habitat – to [post their Urban October events](#) on the website so that we can provide maximum publicity and generate excitement. There will be stories and updates on the Campaigns on the corporate website, and a lot of social media engagement with messages and material already available for [World Habitat Day](#) and [World Cities Day](#).

We look forward to hearing about your plans and celebrating Urban October with you!

› **Vacancies**

Role
Associate Programme
Management Officer,
P2
Duty Station
Nairobi, Kenya
Deadline
13 September 2020
[Apply Here](#)

Role
Programme
Management Officer,
P3
Duty Station
Nairobi, Kenya
Deadline
13 September 2020
[Apply Here](#)

Role
Programme
Management Officer,
Human Settlements
(Project Post), P3
Duty Station
Nairobi, Kenya
Deadline
15 September 2020
[Apply Here](#)

Role
Associate Programme
Management Officer,
P2
Duty Station
Nairobi, Kenya
Deadline
19 September 2020
[Apply Here](#)



Upcoming events and corporate calendar



Other organizers



Webinar: Refurbish and Reimagine the Future of Indian Cities

Cities around the world have faced the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The virus has posed several risks to the millions who live in dense megacities, whether in developed or developing nations. What has caused so many major cities to crumble under the onslaught of the virus? What are the fissures that COVID-19 has exposed in city-planning today? How can urban planning systems equip themselves better for future pandemic management? What are the frameworks to engage citizens during implementation? Join this webinar organized by Smart Cities India to find out as city leaders and urban planners come together to share their vision on changing the needs of urban India. Register for free [here](#).



14th International Conference on Urban Regeneration and Sustainability: Sustainable City 2020

Organized by the Wessex Institute, the 14th International Conference on Urban Regeneration and Sustainability addresses all aspects of the urban environment aiming to provide solutions leading to sustainability. The Sustainable City Conference addresses the multidisciplinary components of urban planning, the challenges presented by the increasing size of cities, the number of resources required, and the complexity of modern society. More information on the conference and registration on the Institute's [website](#).



Wellbeing Cities Forum: Moving from Smart Cities to Wellbeing Cities

As COVID-19 spreads, it brought to public notice that our current cities and public spaces needed many improvements to place wellbeing at the centre of our lives. In this event organized by Canadian NPO NewCities, experts and guests will be weighing in on issues such as civic engagement, housing for health, climate migration, resilience in cities, urban biodiversity, smart cities, equitable mobility future, and more. The Forum will also connect and recognize the 2020 Wellbeing Cities Award laureates, with leaders of the five winning cities presenting their initiatives. More information and registration [here](#).



Portugal Smart Cities Summit 2020

The Portugal Smart Cities Summit is an opportunity for national and international experts to share their ideas, experiences and challenges in developing a Smart City. Smart Cities Summit Portugal 2020 will have a comprehensive programme that integrates all aspects associated with cities of the future, with an emphasis on internationalisation. Information and registration (in Portuguese) on the [Summit's website](#).



Nordic Edge Expo 2020

The 6th edition of Nordic Edge Expo & Conference is going digital in 2020. While the common thread of the programme is "trust" and "rethinking normality", topics such as urban energy, places and spaces, green and blue mobility, active citizenship and knowhow, as well as smart health will be addressed by speakers and panellists. More information [here](#).



Climate Week NYC

Climate Week NYC is one of the biggest climate summits taking place this year. As the focus shifts to how we rebuild after COVID-19, the summit will explore what lessons we can learn in the pursuit of a net-zero future through just transition. Ten themes will be looked at including transport and infrastructure, which will showcase how to scale innovation to build a cleaner, net-zero future – from developing climate resilient cities to building electric vehicles infrastructure. More information [here](#).



Davos Digital Forum 2020

The third Davos Digital Forum is moving to the Internet. The Forum will cover several topics including urban and local planning through keynote lectures, workshops, webinars, and Q&A sessions. To attend the Cities of the Future programme, connect to Live Stream 3 on the [Forum's website](#). The one-day event is free of charge for participants.



Learning

Umoja Employee Self Service (ESS) and UNON Portal Orientation.

The purpose of this orientation session is to gain familiarity with the Umoja Employee Self Service (ESS) and the UNON Applications Portal. You will learn about Umoja in general and how to use the Employee Self Service interface, as well as receive a demo on UNON's Applications Portal. This session is targeted at new staff members and existing staff members who would like a refresher session on these HR systems. For dates, times and enrolment, please click [here](#).

Staff Selection Training for Hiring Managers

Staff Selection Training for Hiring Managers discusses best practices and tips to consider when hiring staff members. Learn about dates and times and enroll in Inspira under code LMS-2411.

LinkedIn Learning: Critical Thinking for Better Judgment and Decision-Making

The pace of change and volume of information we encounter in daily life make it hard to think through decisions. Instead, people often rely on biases and rules of thumb, which trap them into drawing faulty conclusions. The most successful teams use critical thinking – objective and rational analysis – to illuminate the wisest conclusions. This course prepares leaders to hone the critical thinking skills of their entire organization. Learn how to upgrade critical thinking to avoid deceiving fallacies, spot misleading cognitive biases, craft better arguments, hone judgment, and improve decision-making. Click [here](#) for more details.

LinkedIn Learning: Develop Your Presentation Skills

Presentation skills are critical to success in nearly every occupation. Learn how to design presentations that will hold people's attention, present your ideas with confidence, and engage an audience by presenting well-organized material in an understandable format. Learn more [here](#).

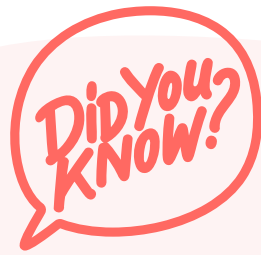
LinkedIn Learning: Communication within Teams

Communication is an integral part of strong teamwork. In this course, you will learn how to cultivate the communication practices of high-performing teams. The foundations of successful teams will be explored, and you will learn how to craft a team charter to establish ground rules for how you work together as a cohesive group. You will also be introduced to essential elements of team communication – such as creating a shared vision and holding teammates accountable – and how to best communicate with your team in different settings. Learn more [here](#).

LinkedIn Learning: Creativity: Generate Ideas in Greater Quantity and Quality

Creativity is not an external force or a rare skill; it's a habit that can be learned and exercised every day. This course challenges preconceived notions about creativity and provides valuable tools that will unlock this skill to help you generate better ideas faster. Click [here](#) for more details.





Stay safe with contactless payments

COVID-19 is affecting our everyday habits. One such habit is the way we pay for goods and services in stores. Many shops and restaurants no longer accept cash to complete transactions, so it begs the question: what are your options?

Contactless credit and debit cards of the United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU) are one way of overcoming the decreasing use of bank notes and coins. Tapping your card helps you avoid touching a payment terminal compared to inserting your card and typing your card code. And if you want to move on to the next stage and go card-less, you can also download credit and debit cards onto your digital wallet. This will provide you with additional contactless payment options, including your smartphone.



Learn more about contactless payment options and how to configure your devices [here](#).



Participate!

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

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2020 AND BEYOND



IMPLEMENTING
THE NEW
URBAN AGENDA