

# HabPost

Updates from  
UN-Habitat

UN HABITAT

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## Urban October 2020: A Summary



# Editor's note

Dear Reader,

Urban October 2020 is now behind us. Our offices around the globe have been very active in organizing events, launching initiatives, reaching out to partners, and raising the importance of the themes of World Habitat Day and World Cities Day. In this issue, we provide quick facts about Urban October at large and zoom in on a few of our locations, namely Spain, Brazil, and our New York Office. Find out how colleagues have engaged in exciting initiatives and the potential they hold for deeper cooperation and a better urban future.

Happy reading,

**The HabPost Team**



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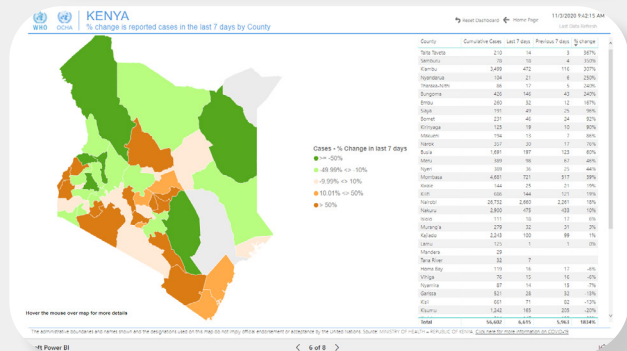
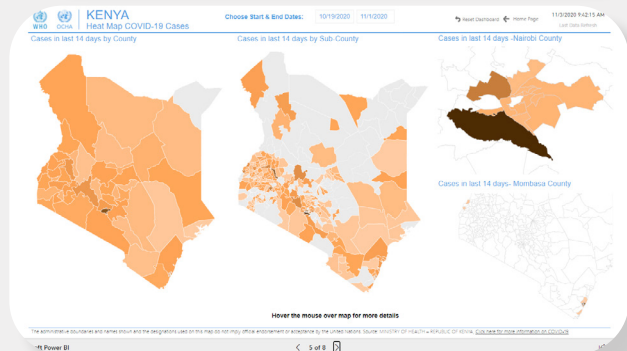
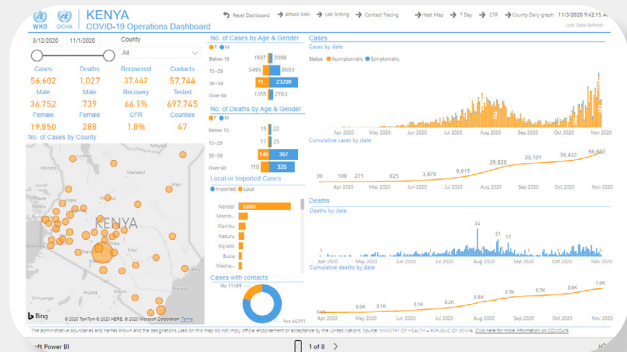
Did you know?

## Alerts

### COVID-19

→ As of 1 November 2020, there were over 40 million confirmed cases of COVID-19, including close to 1,2 million deaths, reported to WHO. Monitor the situation [here](#).

→ You can now track the statistics on the situation in Kenya on the [WHO-OCHA COVID-19 Operations Dashboard](#).



# Urban October 2020: A Summary

## Urban October in numbers

Over **750 events** | In **70 countries** | In over **200 cities**

The huge number and wide range of events organized during Urban October demonstrated that, far from being deterred by the COVID-19 pandemic, governments at all levels, NGOs, community organizations, academic institutions and many others were determined to find innovative ways to celebrate our cities and towns.

The month opened with World Habitat Day on 5 October with around 65 events being celebrated globally, in 41 countries and 55 cities.

The key event known as the Global Observance, hosted by UN-Habitat and Indonesia, featured video messages from the UN Secretary-General, the President of Indonesia and the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing. There were live links to celebrations in Cameroon, Malaysia, and our Egypt office. Over 4,800 people took part either in person or followed the live feed.

From Pakistan to Palestine, from Myanmar to Yemen, from Cameroon to Ethiopia, MOUs were signed, online events were held, national strategies were launched, projects were initiated, and innovative ways were found to replace cancelled physical events.

Fast-forward 26 days and hundreds of people connected online to attend the [Global Observance of World Cities Day](#) which took place for the first time in Africa. The hybrid event included a video speech by the Kenyan president and other video messages from the UN Secretary-General and the African Union. [The World Cities Report 2020](#) on the Value of Sustainable Urbanization launched on the same day.

## Campaigns



The **#Housing4All** Campaign picked up speed since its launch on World Habitat Day.

The Campaign features the movie [The Human Shelter](#) which has been watched over 10,000 times on our corporate YouTube channel.



The **40 Days Safer Cities Challenge** has featured dozens of events organized by more than 30 organizations.


The campaign has circulated widely on social media promoting urban safety innovations. It ended on World Cities Day with a learning event on safety and crime prevention actions.


**Learn more about Urban October initiatives by our Brazil and New York Offices in the next pages!**




## Zoom in on the Office in Spain


Urban October celebrations in our Spain Office started on World Habitat Day. The Office and the Andalusian Agency of International Cooperation for Development jointly organized Housing for all: a perspective from international cooperation, an open virtual discussion with the participation of experts from UN-Habitat, the Andalusian Ministry of Development, Infrastructure and Land Management, the Andalusian Fund of Municipalities for International Solidarity, and experts from civil society. Discussion addressed the role of housing as a catalyst for progressive delivery of human rights and a basis for well-being, from the perspective of international cooperation.

 [Watch whole dialogue](#)

 [Watch three-minute video summary](#)

To celebrate World Metropolitan Day the Office organized a discussion on Metropolitan Regions and the framework for recovery in collaboration with the Regional Government of the Basque Country and the Network of European Metropolitan Regions and Areas. The virtual event was held on 7 October with the participation of experts from global institutions and governments. It focused on initiatives being undertaken at metropolitan level to accelerate positive transformation of urban and territorial realities, in the context of the global pandemic.

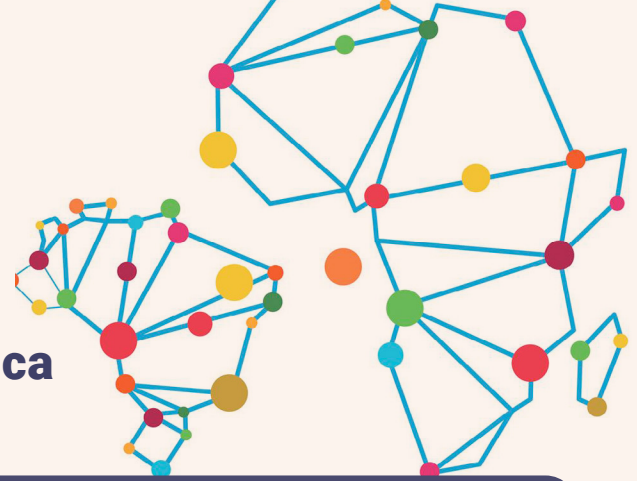
 [Watch whole dialogue](#)

 [Watch three-minute video summary](#)

From 26-28 October, the Office organized an [Expert Group Meeting on Global Urban Safety Indicators and Monitoring Tool](#) in partnership with the Madrid City Council. Over forty urban safety experts from around the world gathered to lay the groundwork for development of a global urban safety monitoring tool which will rely on data and evidence to strengthen policy and practice. Outcomes of the meeting have set the future course of the project as part of the 2020s Decade of Action Campaign.

## The Urban Circuit

# Post-COVID-19 Cities: Dialogues between Brazil and Lusophone Africa



To promote debate on the Urban October themes, the UN-Habitat Office in Brazil created the Urban Circuit in 2018. The initiative aims to support, promote and raise the visibility of events organized by a wide range of stakeholders during the month of October. Due to the pandemic, the third edition of the Urban Circuit went fully virtual in 2020, with live or recorded online events.

This online modality has been a unique opportunity to deepen the exchange of urban experiences and knowledge with other countries where UN-Habitat is also active. The 2020 Urban Circuit was held in partnership with UN-Habitat offices in Lusophone African countries (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe). The main theme was Post-COVID-19 Cities: Dialogues between Brazil and Lusophone Africa, while the sub-themes aligned with those of World Habitat Day and World Cities Day.

Moving the initiative online allowed for an exchange between people from various countries, while outreach was virtually unlimited. The Urban Circuit was host to 186 events, with more than 1,000 speakers from the six participating countries, in addition to those from 18 other countries. The Urban Circuit YouTube Channel registered over 49,000 views so far.

In addition to UN-Habitat personnel, 60 volunteers with specific skills in communication, social media, video editing, graphic design, translation, and broadcasting were selected to participate in the Urban Circuit. All their work is on the virtual [Arts Gallery](#) of the [Urban Circuit](#) website.

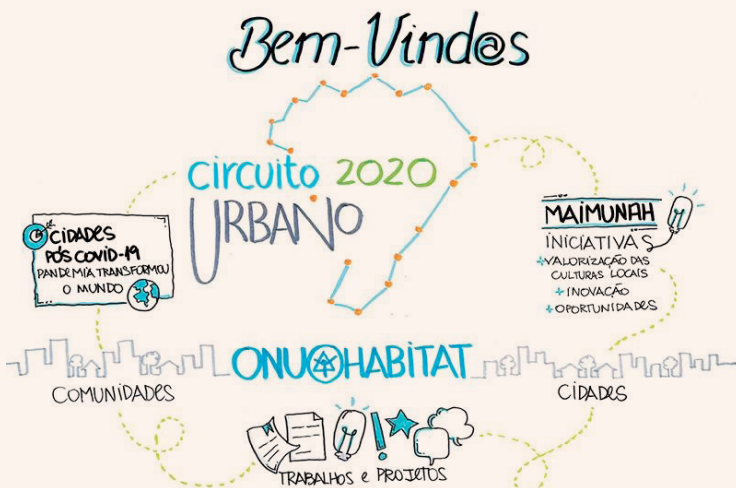
### Events

Key events available on the Urban Circuit channel on YouTube include:

- **The opening ceremony** on 1 October to promote global sustainable urban development agendas (New Urban Agenda and 2030 Agenda) and the work of UN-Habitat in participating countries, especially during COVID-19. The event was attended by regional representatives for Latin America and the Caribbean and for Africa, as well as representatives of UN-Habitat offices in Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé & Príncipe. The UN-Habitat Executive Director participated via a recorded video message.
- **World Habitat Day** on 5 October to present the housing scenario in the developing Lusophone world, its main challenges, and concepts on inclusive, accessible, and adequate housing.
- **Urban Fridays** which shared UN-Habitat's methodologies on mapping, data production, urban resilience, urban policy and financing, spatial development frameworks, and Development Plans for 2030.
- **World Cities Day** on 31 October to exchange experiences and perspectives on innovative, active and strategic approaches by local communities for post-COVID-19 resilience and recovery. Speakers shared their experiences on the importance of local action in the design of more innovative, inclusive and sustainable cities, taking into account economic, social, and environmental factors.
- **The closing ceremony** on 3 November to share the thought process behind the initiative as well as best moments and lessons learnt

From roundtables and seminars to slam poetry, meditation, and the cleaning up of cities championship, this online edition of the Urban Circuit delivered on its promises. The themes covered were more diverse, with public spaces, urban planning, public security, gender, LGBTQIA+, racism, education, the environment, climate change, the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs, and especially housing and the importance of local actors and communities being tackled.

The Urban Circuit 2020 has shown that Brazil and Lusophone countries and cities in Africa share not only a common language, but also many challenges and potential solutions. The exchange between experts and actors from these countries has paved the way for a wider South-South cooperation platform with UN-Habitat.

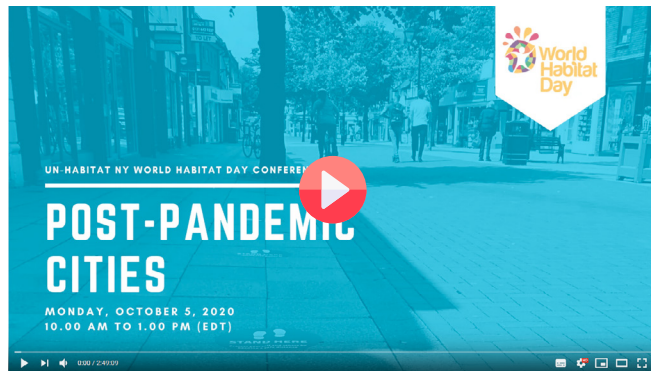


# Updates from our office in New York



Celebrations for Urban October in New York started on World Habitat Day. The UN-Habitat New York Office, along with the Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization and in collaboration with the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter hosted the event **Post Pandemic Cities Planning for the next 2.5 Billion Residents**.

The event highlighted that pandemics have historically played a unique role in shaping cities and COVID-19 presents us with a unique opportunity to reimagine the way cities are designed and planned. Planning and design have a critical role to play in ensuring that cities not only have the capacity to absorb an influx of people but also the ability to integrate newcomers as productive members of society.



Further recognizing the importance of urban innovation, the event **Mobilizing Urban Stakeholders to accelerate progress towards the SDGs by 2030** used award-winning documentaries as unique mediums to inspire individuals to take action in their neighbourhoods in megacities worldwide and contribute towards achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. The panel discussion marked the first collaboration project between the **MegaCities-ShortDocs festival** and the Office in New York. The event fostered a partnership for future events with UN-Habitat and opportunities to showcase short documentaries on the UN-Habitat YouTube Channel throughout the duration of Urban October.

The month concluded with **World Cities Day**. To celebrate, the New York Office hosted a virtual World Cities Day event on 30 October. **Local Innovations, SDGs & COVID-19**

highlighted the interactions between local innovations and the Sustainable Development Goals, and how COVID-19 has changed the sustainable development strategies of communities and organizations. The event featured welcoming remarks from UN Secretary-General António Guterres as well as our Executive Director.



The same day, the Permanent Mission of Slovakia, the Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN, NGO Committee on Sustainable Development-NY, and UN-Habitat collaborated on the event **Better City, Better Life: Valuing our Communities & Cities** to highlight UN75 and World Cities Day. The event addressed the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our communities and cities while strengthening our resilience to build back better. It emphasized that while many are utilizing innovative communication platforms that allow for better engagement to strengthen the resilience of their communities and cities, others without access are falling further behind.

It is important that we continue our focus on the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to build partnerships between Member States, UN-Habitat, national and local authorities as well as stakeholders from civil society and the private sector. This will enable us to be better prepared to achieve the inclusive, safe, resilient and healthier future we want with the UN we need – to Leave No One Behind.

## Vacancies

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

**Role**  
Associate Programme  
Management Officer,  
Human Settlements,  
P2 (Project Post)  
**Duty Station**  
Nairobi, Kenya  
**Deadline**  
27 November 2020  
[Apply Here](#)

**Role**  
Associate Programme  
Management Officer,  
Human Settlements,  
P2 (Project Post)  
**Duty Station**  
Nairobi, Kenya  
**Deadline**  
1 December 2020  
[Apply Here](#)

**Role**  
Staff Assistant, G5  
**Duty Station**  
Kabul, Afghanistan  
**Deadline**  
28 November 2020  
[Apply Here](#)



# Upcoming events and corporate calendar



## Other organizers



### Smart City Live 2020

Smart City Live aims to empower cities and collectivize urban innovation across the globe. The event is dedicated to creating a better future for cities and citizens by promoting social innovation, establishing partnerships, and identifying business opportunities. [More information](#)



### 3rd International Conference on Future Smart Cities

International Experts for Research Enrichment and Knowledge Exchange (IEREK) is organizing the third international conference on Future Smart Cities in collaboration with Xiamen University Malaysia. Decision-makers, citizens, researchers, universities, companies and planners are all invited to discuss the theme further and to maximize benefits of the conference. [More information](#)



### 56th ISOCARP World Planning Congress - Post-Oil City: Planning for Urban Green Deals

As cities produce their own place-specific plans — or Urban Green Deals — a wealth of experience evolves, thereby enhancing understanding of current challenges, adoption of effective solutions, and implementation of effective change. Urban Green Deals ensure the well-being of citizens, while profoundly changing the way cities operate. The congress will discuss how Urban Green Deals can be shaped in specific settings, the most critical issues in particular settings, how to plan for and implement them, and how they can contribute to the Global Agenda. [More information](#)





## Learning

### United to Respect Dialogues

The United to Respect Dialogues is a new training initiative which aims to help UN Secretariat staff members prevent, identify and respond to instances of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority, in accordance with the SGB on prohibited conduct (ST/SGB/2019/8) and related guidance in the [United to Respect: Promoting dignity and respect in the workplace](#) toolkit.

The training will take place on 24 and 25 November 2020. Enroll [online](#).



### Reminder: Leadership Dialogue 2020

We all face ethical challenges in our day-to-day work. As we mark the 75th anniversary of the UN, the United Nations Leadership Dialogue is an opportunity for all personnel to discuss topics that bear great meaning for our work.

Under the theme of *Acknowledging Dignity through Civility: How can I communicate for a more harmonious workplace?*, this year's Dialogue will focus on creating a respectful environment for providing constructive feedback and for challenging ideas. The Dialogue is an opportunity to

shift mindsets and to explore a new possible dynamic of workplace interactions.

The session is mandatory for all personnel and runs for about 1.5 hours. The deadline for completion of this year's session is 30 November 2020.

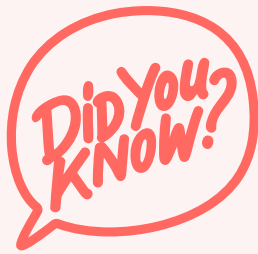
Remember to actively participate, ask questions, contribute relevant examples, and discuss situations that you may know of or have heard about!

#### Documents

- [Leaders Guide and Materials 2020](#)
- [Participants' Guide and Materials 2020](#)
- [Presentation](#)







## Bolivia launches its Cities Policy to promote sustainable urban development

Bolivia presented its national urban policy, called the Cities Policy, on 7 October 2020. This strategic instrument will guide the sustainable development of its cities and territories and the country as a whole.

The Ministry of Public Works, Services and Housing, together with UN-Habitat Bolivia and with the cooperation of Sweden, presented in October Bolivia's first national urban policy – the Cities Policy. This strengthens the country's commitment to implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

The Cities Policy becomes the strategic instrument for guiding urban development in Bolivia. The Policy identifies and proposes actions to manage the challenges and opportunities of urbanization; it will be implemented at the city, territorial, and national levels.

The Policy uses a systemic approach towards achieving inclusive, healthy, sustainable, and resilient cities. UN-Habitat Bolivia relied on a participatory process to generate more than 250 events and workshops including 2 national urban forums, with the participation of over 7,000 representatives from a broad range of institutions and organizations.



The drafting and implementation of this policy marks a regional milestone and will contribute to the country's recovery following the socioeconomic crisis brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also help the country achieve its national development agenda as well as the Sustainable Development Goals.



## Participate!

Want your story featured? Submit your ideas or reach out to us at [unhabitat-habpost@un.org](mailto:unhabitat-habpost@un.org).

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