COP27 PRESIDENCY
SUSTAINABLE URBAN RESILIENCE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION (SURGe)

#JUST_AND_AMBITIOUS

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**INTRODUCTION**

Cities are at the forefront of climate change. Climate change and growing urbanization are intertwined megatrends. Rising global temperatures have caused extreme weather events including flash floods, storms, droughts and heatwaves in cities. All of these have impacts on urban services, housing, infrastructure, livelihoods, urban ecosystems, cultural practices, and health and wellbeing of city residents. Rising food and energy prices exacerbate these impacts, with the most vulnerable being hit the hardest. Today, more than three billion people live in hotspots that are highly vulnerable to climate change and more than one billion urban dwellers live in informal settlements. Climate change impacts both increase urban populations due to climate-driven displacement and migration, and aggravate the underlying socio-economic challenges that come with urbanization. At the same time, cities are a key contributor to climate change, as urban activities are major sources of greenhouse gas emissions.

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**KEY FACTS**

Cities are home to 55% of the global population. This percentage is expected to grow by 2.5 billion people to 68% by 2050.

Urban areas account for approximately three-quarters of energy-related CO₂ emissions.

70% of cities worldwide are already dealing with the effects of climate change.

Though cities are a big driver of planet-warming emissions, they are also engines of climate action and at the forefront of delivering solutions. Many cities are committing to climate action, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change and passing targets to reach net zero emissions.

There is growing international awareness that the climate battle will be won or lost in cities. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report has highlighted the role of cities as critical. Their importance for climate action is mentioned in the Paris Agreement and the preamble of the COP26 Glasgow Climate Pact recognises the need for multilevel and cooperative action. By 2021, 84% of updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) had a strong or moderate urban content, compared to 69% of the initial NDCs. More than 60 nations raised their climate ambitions by engaging local and regional governments and more than 1,000 cities and regions committed to climate neutrality by 2050 with ambitious targets for 2030.

In 2022, the G7, G20, Commonwealth and Belt-Road Initiative have included unprecedented references to sustainable cities, urbanization and multilevel action through their Ministerial or Heads of States Communiques.
There are key barriers that limit urban emissions reductions, adapting urban systems to climate change, and building urban system resilience including:

**Multi-level governance:** There is an urgent need for multilevel and cooperative action. Current NDCs are not enough to respond to the climate emergency.

**Finance:** In 2017/18, climate finance for cities reached an estimated USD 384 billion, less than 10% of the estimated need of USD 4.5 to 5.4 trillion annually. Of the existing total climate finance, just 21% goes towards adaptation and resilience and only around 10% of these investments reach the local level.

**Local capacity:** Local governments are often understaffed, yet dealing with a wide range of agendas and priorities. Especially in the Global South, they have limited capacity for development planning and implementation, particularly with the integration of climate change.

**Access to technology and innovation:** Greenhouse gas emissions in cities could be reduced by almost 90% by 2050 with technically feasible and available measures, potentially supporting 87 million jobs in 2030 and generating a global economic dividend of USD 24 trillion. However, technological and process innovations do not reach all cities due to significant research and action gaps.

**Equity:** The impacts of climate change are unevenly distributed. Urban vulnerable groups are disproportionately and adversely affected by climate change while they contribute the least to urban emissions.

To effectively address these challenges, the COP27 Presidency, in collaboration with UN-Habitat and with the facilitation of ICLEI, is developing the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the next Generation (SURGe) Initiative [working title]: which builds on existing work in this space, on commitments of local and regional governments, adds momentum to existing initiatives, and provides a holistic framework to achieve sustainable and resilient urban systems. It builds:

**Strengthen the implementation of the climate agenda in and with cities:** thereby contributing significantly to achieving the targets of the Paris Agreement, and raising the ambition of NDCs with commitments of local governments.

**Unlock urban climate finance:** work with national governments to set up context-specific finance mechanisms, work with multi-lateral development banks to facilitate access to finance, work with city networks and other partners to implement global projects in cities and develop a pipeline of bankable projects.

**Build capacity:** build up local capacity by working with city networks and other partners.

**Accelerate technology and innovation in cities:** work with city networks and other partners to support context-specific innovative solutions.

**Ensure equity:** design projects that are targeted to benefit the most vulnerable.

Urban resilience, climate-proof infrastructure and informal settlements must be turned into an economic, social and political opportunity for accelerating resilience to climate impacts and sustainable development. This is a critical opportunity for local, regional and national governments to work together and collaborate with key stakeholders and rightsholders to simultaneously advance decarbonization efforts while building resilient urban systems that allow residents to not simply survive but thrive.
**ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE**

To ensure the success of the Initiative and alignment of all stakeholders, a transparent governance structure has been developed around four different bodies:

- **Global SURGe Alliance**, which is open to participation by interested stakeholders. This Alliance provides an advisory function and will convene biennially at the margins of the World Urban Forum and present annual progress at the UNFCCC COPs with a view to providing inputs to outcomes of COPs. A current list of organizations committed to the initiative can be found in the table below, with a call for further interested stakeholders to join.

- **Steering Committee**, consisting of co-chairs and co-leads of each Track Working Group, the COP Presidencies, High-level Champions [tbc] and the Global Secretariat.

- **Global Secretariat**, which is co-hosted by UN-Habitat and ICLEI. It oversees the day-to-day operations of the Initiative, ensures alignment of work programmes between tracks in close collaboration with working group leads, upholds the overarching principles, keeps abreast of implementation progress including monitoring, reports (once per year to the proposed Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at UNFCCC COPs), verifies and secures high-level commitment to the Initiative from Members to the Global SURGe Alliance and external partners. The Secretariat is also tasked with ensuring close collaboration with existing programmes, partnerships, initiatives and campaigns by seeking synergy and avoiding duplication. The secretariat may be complemented with national secretariats to facilitate country-specific implementation.

- **Five Working Groups with track partners**, each compromising two co-chairs (one Annex; one non-Annex country) and two co-lead organization(s) (one UN agency or international organization and one network of local and regional governments and/or other non-state actors) that build on/consider existing work, initiatives, and commitments in the respective field, convene key stakeholders and existing networks relevant to the track. While working groups are sector-specific, they should all work on cross-cutting issues. The responsible entities report back to the Global Secretariat and present their progress at upcoming COPs and will designate a focal point to coordinate with other relevant presidential initiatives.
**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Contributing to building sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban systems, the work of the SURGe Initiative is guided by the following overarching ten principles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Low-carbon:</td>
<td>reducing emissions and benefiting from cost savings from decreased energy use and improved energy and resource efficiency.</td>
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<td>2. Resilient:</td>
<td>strengthening the capacity of city systems and their inhabitants to maintain continuity through shocks and stresses and recover faster, while positively adapting and transforming towards urban sustainability, taking into account the management of internal and international migration into cities.</td>
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<td>4. Fair, equitable, and inclusive:</td>
<td>needs to reach the most vulnerable communities to climate change impacts by establishing social dialogue and participatory processes for co-design and prioritized implementation.</td>
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<td>5. Multi-level climate governance and climate planning:</td>
<td>recognizing the importance of collaboration between local, regional, and national governments and harnessing the cross-scale and cross-discipline relationships necessary for climate action to raise the ambitions of the NDCs.</td>
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<td>6. Integrated:</td>
<td>Leveraging co-benefits of investment in adaptation and mitigation measures while building on existing support, initiatives, and partnerships to leverage their impact and lessons learned.</td>
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<td>7. Locally-led and culture-positive:</td>
<td>Customise approaches depending on local contexts of new, rapidly developing cities, while recognising that culture and heritage represent both an asset to be protected from climate impacts and a resource to strengthen the ability of communities to pursue transformative change.</td>
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<td>8. Circular:</td>
<td>promoting a circular value chain in buildings and constructions, but also in supply and disposal infrastructure systems, that aims at reducing both emissions and waste drastically while promoting innovation, affordability, ensuring food security, energy efficiency, and local development.</td>
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<td>9. Financing-enabling:</td>
<td>centered on capacity building, technology transfer, enabling frameworks and delivering solutions to support and enhance existing and innovating finance channels and mobilising finance at scale while accelerating access for local and regional governments.</td>
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<td>10. Health-promoting:</td>
<td>recognising the importance of health and wellbeing as an input to resilience, the power of health arguments to motivate change, and the significant economic and social co-benefits available from health-aware climate action.</td>
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Global SURGe Alliance

High-level Champions
Parties to

UN Agencies
INGOs/ NGOs
Academia

Sub-National and Local Officials
Grass-root and Civil Society
Organizations Urban Networks & Coalitions

Steering Committee
Working group leads and Global Secretariat

Global Secretariat

Collaboration With Working Groups

Co-hosted by UN Habitat and ICLEI:
2 international staff from each organization, team assistants; secondments from partner organization encouraged.

★ Provides guidance and oversight

Working Groups

Each working group follows a similar structure

• **Co-chairs:** 2 national governments [one Annex; one non-Annex country]
• **Co-leads:** non-Party stakeholders, UN Agencies and international organisations and city networks

Building and Housing
Urban Waste/ Consumption
Urban

Urban
Urban
**SURGe TRACKS**

- **BUILDINGS & HOUSING**: Advancing energy efficiency, low-carbon materials and processes, circularity, land-use policies, and adaptation/resilience measures.

- **URBAN ENERGY**: Advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency in cities to provide energy access and tackle energy poverty.

- **URBAN WATER**: Improving equitable access to year-round potable water, and gray and wastewater management.

- **URBAN WASTE/CONSUMPTION**: Enhancing municipal solid waste management systems that enable zero waste cities and circular economies.

- **URBAN MOBILITY**: Accelerating and supporting the uptake of public transport and active mobility use in cities.

**CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

- Multi-level governance
- Climate Change Action Planning
- Urban And Territorial Planning
- Climate Finance
- Date
- Capacity Building
### Objectives of the five tracks and supporting track working group partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building and Housing</th>
<th>Urban Energy</th>
<th>Urban waste/consumption</th>
<th>Urban mobility</th>
<th>Urban water</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advancing energy efficiency, low-carbon materials and processes, circularity (including reuse of existing buildings), land-use policies, and adaptation/resilience measures to deliver solutions at scale for more sustainable, low-carbon or zero- carbon ready, resilient, healthy, and affordable housing, shelter, workplaces, communities, and settlements. Rallying national governments around a building breakthrough target which recognizes the importance of setting enabling frameworks for cities and businesses to implement sustainable, future-proof building solutions.</td>
<td>Advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency in cities to provide energy access and tackle energy poverty while reducing municipal energy costs, creating local jobs and building urban energy system resilience</td>
<td>Enhancing municipal solid waste management systems that enable ‘zero waste cities’ and circular economies while ensuring an accelerated transition towards a 1.5-degree lifestyle that supports social equity, food security, resilience, sustainable economic development, a culture of sustainability, and job creation, supported by sustainable procurement policies and strong education, training, public awareness and participation programme.</td>
<td>Accelerating and supporting the uptake of public transport and active mobility use in cities. Reduce car use. Universalise early planning and coordination to achieve compact urban forms that enable public transport and active travel to thrive and trade to flourish.</td>
<td>Improving equitable access to year-round potable water, access to and management of water for households and public buildings, and gray and wastewater management, improving the health, well-being, and resilience of urban residents. Manage water demand and water pipe leaks to preserve the resource.</td>
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#### TRACK PARTNERS

**Building and Housing**
- APE
- BENAA Foundation
- BuildingToCOP coalition
- C40 cities
- Cairo University
- Capital Cities of the Americas Coalition (CC35)
- CCFLA [TBC]
- Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
- City of Paris / Ville de Paris Climate Chance Association Climate Heritage Network
- Climate Investment Funds Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA
- Egypt Green Building
- Council European Committee of the Regions

**Urban Energy**
- BENAA Foundation C40 cities
- Cairo University
- Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
- City of Paris / Ville de Paris Climate Chance Association Climate Heritage Network
- Climate Investment Funds Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA
- Egypt Green Building
- Council European Committee of the Regions

**Urban waste/consumption**
- APE
- BENAA Foundation C40 cities
- Cairo University
- Capital Cities of the Americas Coalition (CC35)
- Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
- City of Paris / Ville de Paris Climate Chance Association Climate Heritage Network
- Climate Investment Funds Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA
- Egypt Green Building
- Council European Committee of the Regions

**Urban mobility**
- APE
- BENAA Foundation C40 cities
- Cairo University
- Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
- City of Paris / Ville de Paris Climate Chance Association Climate Heritage Network
- Climate Investment Funds Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA
- Egypt Green Building
- Council European Committee of the Regions

**Urban water**
- APE
- BENAA Foundation C40 cities
- Cairo University
- Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
- City of Paris / Ville de Paris Climate Chance Association Climate Heritage Network
- Climate Investment Funds Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA
- Egypt Green Building
- Council European Committee of the Regions

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**Additional Partners**
- C40 cities
- Cairo University
- Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
- Climate Heritage Network
- Climate Investment Funds Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA
- Egypt Green Building
- Council European Committee of the Regions
- Glasgow City Council
- ICLEI
- FMDV - Global Fund for Cities Development
- BENAA Foundation
- C40 cities
- Cairo University
- Center for Advanced Internet Studies (CAIS) GmbH
- Climate Heritage Network
- Climate Investment Funds Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)/PLATFORMA
- Egypt Green Building
- Council European Committee of the Regions
- FMDV - Global Fund for Cities Development
Indicators to track progress will be defined in collaboration with each working group and track partners.

Cross-cutting elements: Multi-level governance, climate change action planning, urban territorial planning, finance, data, capacity building.

NEXT STEPS

The SURGe Initiative was developed in a collaborative process, building on a first stakeholder meeting at the World Urban Forum in Katowice in June 2022, a stakeholder consultation workshop in Cairo in July 2022, bringing together over 120 participants. The draft concept note also underwent open peer review. For more information about the Initiative development process, consult the background information.

To evaluate the gaps that need to be closed to achieve the objectives of the SURGe Initiative, between the briefing of the Initiative and COP27, working groups will be convened and provide an assessment of priority actions to be taken. Based on this information, next steps include the development of a roadmap and key success criteria for each working group as well as for the entire SURGe Initiative. This will be developed collaboratively by all stakeholders. Moving forward, all stakeholders are invited to express their interest in joining this initiative by filling out the registration form.

Participation, partnership and further information:
To participate in the initiative, all stakeholders are kindly invited to express their interest, by filling in this registration form.

For further inquiries and Interested potential partners can also reach out to the COP27 Presidency at the following email address: initiatives@cop27.eg
REFERENCES

Full list of references can be found online.

Core initiative partners.

Further partner logos to be included by COP27.