

A woman wearing a colorful patterned headwrap and a plaid shirt is smiling while washing her hands at a public water station. The station features a large blue water tank with a pump handle and a spout. A clear plastic bottle is placed under the spout to catch water. The background shows a simple outdoor setting with a building and another person standing nearby. The entire image is framed by a teal background with white geometric shapes.

LEVERAGING MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE APPROACHES TO PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY A GUIDE

A GUIDE: LEVERAGING MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE APPROACHES TO PROMOTE HEALTH EQUITY

First published in Nairobi in 2021 by UN-Habitat

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HS Number: HS/032/21E

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Cover photo: © UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu. A hand washing facility in Mathare informal settlement, Nairobi, Kenya

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A GUIDE

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEPA	United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration
COVID-19	Coronavirus SARS-CoV2 Disease 2019
HEART	Health Equity Assessment and Response Tool (WHO)
ILO	International Labour Organization
LAT	Local Action Teams
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership.
LHIN	Local Health Integration Network, Toronto
LSP	Local Strategic Partnerships
MLG	Multi-Level Governance
MSEPs	Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Processes
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PPPPs	Public-Private-People Partnerships
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium-Size Enterprise
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic is disproportionately affecting the poor, minorities, and a broad range of vulnerable populations due to its inequitable spread in areas of dense population and high prevalence of chronic conditions or poor access to high quality public health and medical care. Reducing health inequities is important because health is a key determinant for development and is a fundamental human right; its progressive realization will eliminate the inequality in opportunities to enjoy life and pursue life plans that result from differences in health status (such as disease or disability). United Nations agencies such as the World Health Organization have been advancing health equity at the local, national and international levels through tools such as the WHO Health Equity Monitor which provides evidence on existing health inequalities and avails tools and resources for health inequality monitoring.¹ UN-Habitat is also a key player in this field. In collaboration with WHO, it has provided normative evidence to suggest that good urban and territorial planning is a central component of communicable and noncommunicable disease reduction and management responses.² Despite these efforts, challenges in redressing health inequity still persist due to weak governance

Governance plays a vital role in the planning, finance, and management of urban areas. However, failure to agree on shared development visions in many urban areas has hindered cooperation, even when actors share common objectives. Limited capacity and legitimacy of government agencies, weak performance and accountability mechanisms and the immaturity of political institutions can undermine urban governance and result in pervasive clientelist relations and corrupt practices. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has not only demonstrated the urgent need of cities to have effective emergency preparedness plans and health crisis policies, but also the importance of establishing mechanisms, platforms and institutional settings for coordination across government institutions and multi-stakeholder collaboration to successfully introduce and implement emergency and recovery measures.³

UN-Habitat has developed this guide to promote an understanding of how to improve horizontal and vertical linkages among different level of governments and the non-state actors (private sector, civil society, community groups, among others). This guide will also showcase ways in which institutional frameworks can leverage

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