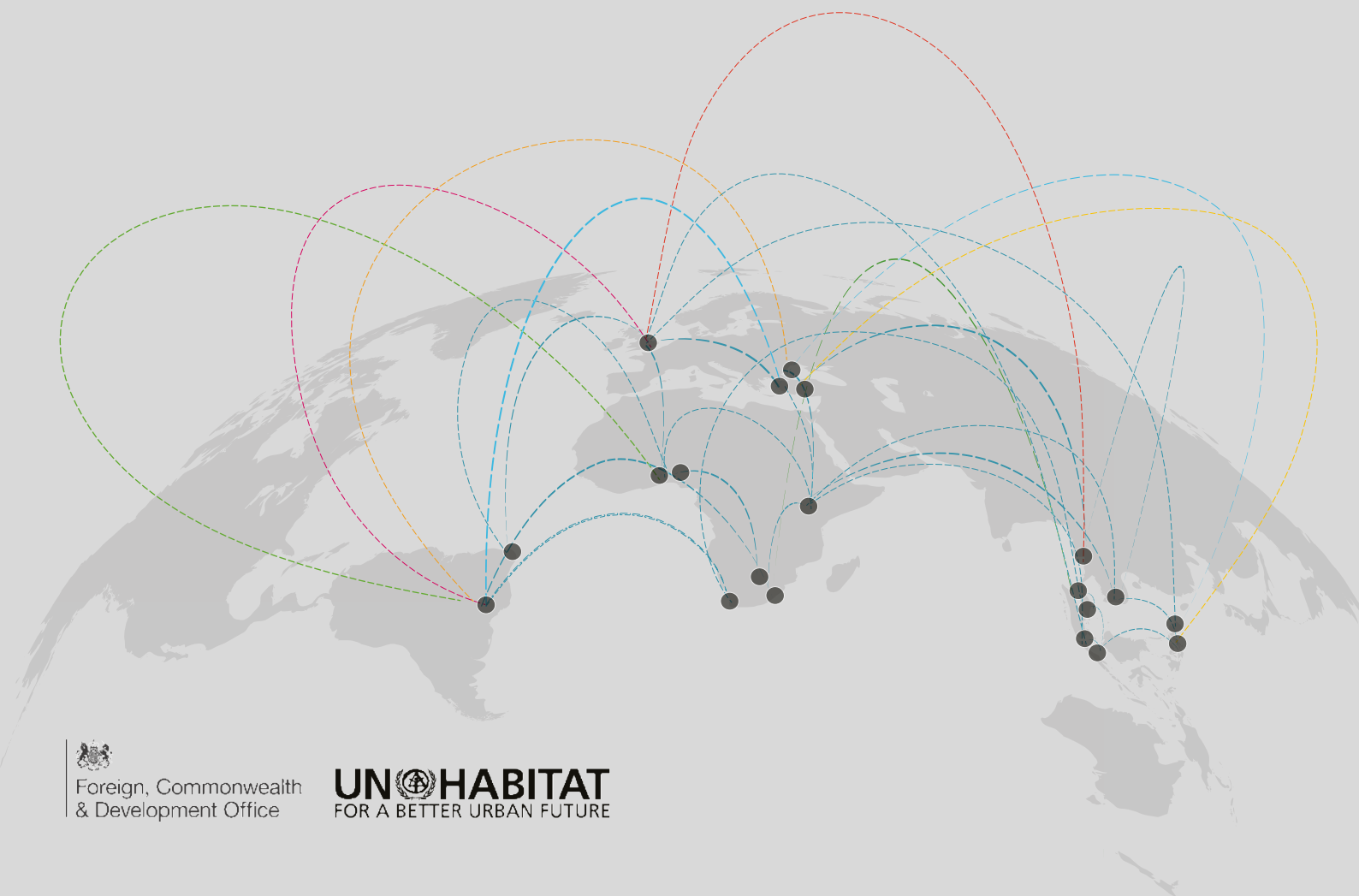


Partnering for Transformative SDG-Oriented Urban Development

Guidance for Multi-Partner Initiatives
from the Global Future Cities Programme



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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1st Edition

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HS Number: HS/054/21E

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This report has been prepared by UN-Habitat's Urban Lab. The Lab is UN-Habitat's multidisciplinary facility supporting cities and Member States with innovative methodologies and multi-stakeholder processes. The Lab aims to achieve sustainable urbanisation through integrated and transformative urban interventions that contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Who is this report for?

Based on experiences from the Global Future Cities Programme (GFCP), this report provides guidance to international donors, city authorities, UN agencies, and delivery partners about how to design and run multi-partner urban development initiatives that drive transformative impact and accelerate SDG implementation in rapidly urbanising cities.

Why read this report?

The GFCP is a three-year multi-partner programme, funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (UK FCDO), that promotes sustainable development and increased prosperity in 19 cities in 10 countries. It provides technical and strategic support to cities, including knowledge sharing, with a focus on accelerating local SDG implementation and building the capacity of city authorities.

The GFCP has valuable lessons for programmes that aim to support urban development projects that are deliverable, fundable, bankable, and sustainable. This report shares lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations from the GFCP about designing, implementing, operating, and evaluating international multi-partner programmes to ensure increased impact and local engagement with the SDGs.

This report is complemented by a [three-part podcast](#), that provides listeners with an inside look at how the Global Future Cities Programme has facilitated the design and implementation of sustainable, multi-stakeholder urban projects across the world. In addition, the report is part of a series of normative publications generated by the Global Future Cities Programme and published by UN-Habitat. The other publications include:

- [Laying the Foundations for Transformative Urban Interventions in Emerging Economies: the Value of the Strategic Development Phase in the Global Future Cities Programme \(2019\).](#)
- [Addressing Systemic Barriers for Achieving Sustainable Urbanization in Emerging Economies: Learnings from the 19 Cities of the Global Future Cities Programme \(2019\).](#)
- [Integrating the SDGs in Urban Project Design: Recommendations from the Global Future Cities Programme \(2022\).](#)

FOREWORD

In the Decade of Action, we need collaborative efforts to address emerging issues for a more prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable urban future. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides the roadmap for global action. To meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we need actionable and localised initiatives that spur sustainable urban development.

The UK-funded Global Future Cities Programme has over the last several years brought partners from different sectors together to collaboratively develop and deliver 31 transformative local projects to drive prosperity and alleviate poverty, in 19 cities across 10 countries. Five private sector consortiums have together with respective city authorities developed projects with a focus on improved urban planning, mobility and transport, urban resilience, and data management.

UN-Habitat, as strategic and capacity building partner to the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UK FCDO), has supported delivery of the Programme through its urban lab. UN-Habitat has provided strategic advice and technical guidance to local authorities, while facilitating alignment of the projects with the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs, localising the global goals through the application of UN-Habitat's SDG Project Assessment Tool.

While every urban context is unique, there are common systemic challenges and barriers that can hinder progress towards a more sustainable urban future. The Global Future Cities Programme sought to address these by emphasising drivers and opportunities for development. The Programme facilitated capacity development and the transfer of knowledge among partners, both at the programme and project level.

This publication is one of a two-part series that shares insights and recommendations for global programmes that seek to drive transformative impact and accelerate SDG implementation in rapidly urbanising contexts. By sharing lessons from the Global Future Cities Programme, UN-Habitat aims to contribute to the development of more successful and impactful multi-stakeholder programmes, in both the short and long term, building on an inclusive and collaborative approach to programme design, set-up, and delivery.

This report highlights the value of aligning urban projects with the SDGs and other environmental, social, and governance criteria, also in order to increase the likelihood of sustainable project implementation and financing. It comes at a critical juncture – we have only eight years remaining to achieve the SDGs and their targets. We hope this publication, *Partnering for Transformative SDG-Oriented Urban Development: Guidance for Multi-Partner Initiatives* from the Global Future Cities Programme, will provide inspiration and guidance for how we can collectively work to accelerate progress on sustainable urban development so that no one and no place is left behind.



Shipra Narang Suri

Chief, Urban Practices Branch - UN-Habitat
Nairobi, Kenya, March 2022

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