



UN-HABITAT

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

PRESS RELEASE

UN-Habitat partners with University College London to leverage expertise for sustainable urban development

London, United Kingdom, 17 January 2024 — The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and University College London (UCL) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on 16 January to foster exchange of expertise on sustainable urban development, the New Urban Agenda, and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11.

Capitalizing on UCL's cutting-edge research and UN-Habitat's real-world experience, the collaboration will bridge the gap between theory and practice by facilitating knowledge exchange to develop solutions for sustainable urban development.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Dr. Neil Khor, Special Advisor to the UN-Habitat Executive Director, Prof. Geraint Rees, UCL Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation & Global Engagement), and Prof. Michael Walls, Director of the Development Planning Unit at UCL.

In his speech, Dr. Khor said: "By fostering an exchange of expertise, we open avenues for UCL's esteemed faculty and researchers to contribute directly to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the vital goals enshrined within SDG 11. Their knowledge will inform our policies, sharpen our tools, and empower city leaders to build spaces where every resident can flourish."

On his part, Prof. Walls commented: "We are enormously excited at this opportunity to build a dynamic partnership that helps address some of the key opportunities and challenges of urban sustainability in which the complex and interlinked issues of inclusivity and climate change demand evidence-led and socially sensitive planners and practitioners."

Under the Memorandum of Understanding, UN-Habitat and UCL will actively promote capacity development through training, learning engagements, and events. The partnership will also guide discussions on topics related to sustainable urban development.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding marks a significant step towards the launch by UN-Habitat of a knowledge hub on the financing of sustainable urbanization. It will also provide technical guidance for the development of the Cities Investment Facility (CIF) – a multi-stakeholder initiative providing assistance for project preparation with the aim of unlocking private capital in urban infrastructure projects. UCL's expertise will be crucial in refining the activities of CIF, ensuring they align with the latest sustainable development principles and best practices and providing technical guidance to city officials through capacity-building programmes.

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About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. It has programmes in over 90 countries that support policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action. To know more, visit www.unhabitat.org or follow us on X @UNHABITAT.

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