



UN-HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

GLOBAL REPORT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS 2009

FOREWORD



The major urban challenges of the twenty-first century include the rapid growth of many cities and the decline of others, the expansion of the informal sector, and the role of cities in causing or mitigating climate change. Evidence from around the world suggests that contemporary urban planning has largely failed to address these challenges. Urban sprawl and unplanned periurban development are among the most visible consequences, along with the increasing vulnerability of hundreds of millions of urban dwellers to rising sea levels, coastal flooding and other climate-related hazards.

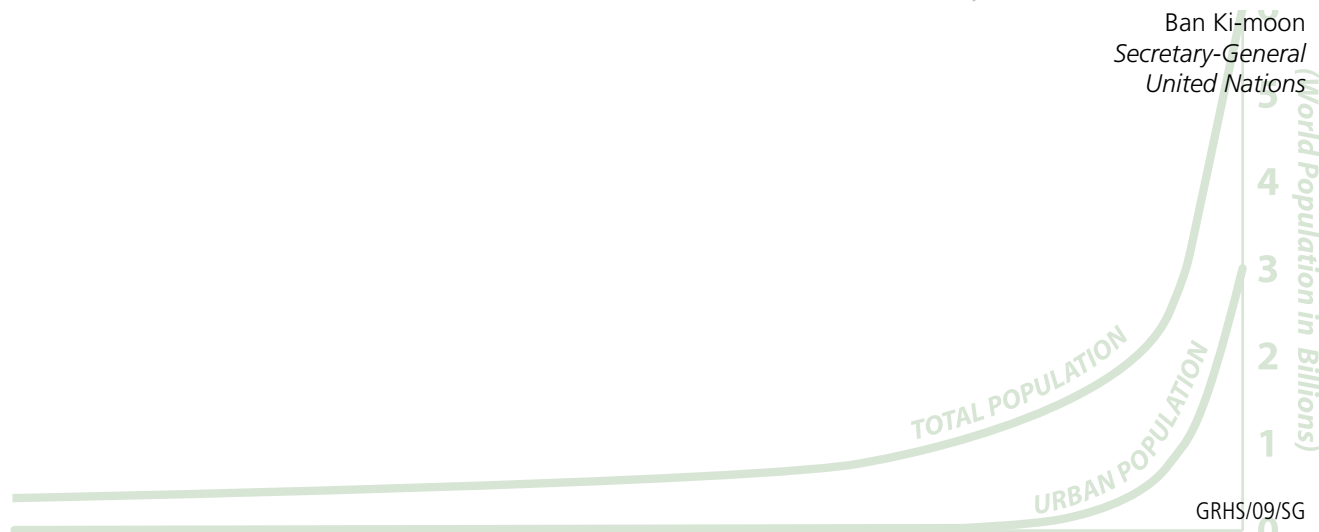
Planning Sustainable Cities: Global Report on Human Settlements 2009 looks at the widespread failure to meet the needs of the majority of urban inhabitants, especially those in the rapidly growing and predominantly poor cities of the developing world, and identifies ways to reform urban planning.

The report identifies a troubling trend in most cities in developed and developing countries: the growth of up-market suburban areas and gated communities, on the one hand, and the simultaneous increase in overcrowded tenement zones, ethnic enclaves, slums and informal settlements, on the other. Strong contrasts

have also emerged between technologically advanced and well-serviced economic production and business complexes such as export processing zones, and other areas defined by declining industry, sweatshops and informal businesses.

This report documents many effective and equitable examples of sustainable urbanization that are helping to define a new role for urban planning. I commend its information and analysis to all who are interested in promoting economically productive, environmentally safe and socially inclusive towns and cities.

Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations



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PLANNING SUSTAINABLE CITIES