





SDG 11

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

A. Introduction

With up to 75 per cent of the Arab population expected to be living in urban areas by 2050,¹ urban policies are critical to the well-being of hundreds of millions of people. Located largely in coastal areas and often challenged by outdated infrastructure, cities in the region are strongly exposed to climate change-related disasters. Domestic migration from rural to urban areas remains the primary source of urbanization, but Arab cities are also the world's leading destination for displaced persons.² This situation exacerbates problems related to informal employment, substandard housing, the overexploitation of natural resources and the depletion of environmental quality.

While national urban policies³ have been launched and disaster preparedness has progressed, vast policy gaps remain on affordable housing, access to basic services and public open spaces, and waste management, to name a few. Arab countries face unsustainable patterns of urban sprawl and obstacles to the achievement of SDG 11 such as limited decentralization, environmental vulnerability and the destabilizing impacts of political turmoil and conflicts. Priorities include affordable housing, access to basic services for all, climate change adaptation, better air quality, improved waste management, sustainable transportation, more green and public spaces, and protection of cultural and natural heritage.

This chapter covers SDG 11 policy areas related to informal settlements, slums and affordable housing, inclusivity and transport, resilience to disasters and urban governance.

SDG 11 addresses issues in cities and local communities such as housing, transportation, waste management, urban planning and the environment. It includes indicators related to disaster risk reduction that repeat under SDGs 1 and 13.

Progress on SDG 11 relies on shifts in consumption and production patterns (SDG 12), innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), access to water, sanitation, and electricity (SDGs 6 and 7), and accountable governance (SDG 16).

Advancing SDG 11 can catalyse progress in alleviating poverty (SDG 1), improving human health (SDG 3), rendering public services accessible to women and girls (SDG 5), and reducing environmental risks (SDGs 12, 13, 14 and 15).



What the data say

Data included in this section are from the *ESCWA Arab SDG Monitor*, unless otherwise indicated (accessed in December 2023).



The proportion of the **urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing** in the Arab region declined from 39 per cent in 2006 to 32 and 24 per cent in 2010 and 2018, respectively (about 61 million urban inhabitants in 2018). The global average in 2020 was 24 per cent.



The proportion of **the urban population with convenient access to public transport** in the region varied considerably from 8 and 10 per cent in Baghdad (Iraq) and Amman (Jordan), respectively, to 62 and 79 per cent in Doha (Qatar) and Marrakesh (Morocco), respectively, in 2020. Cities in middle-income countries have better coverage in terms of public transport networks, at 48 per cent in Tunis (Tunisia) compared to 41 and 39 per cent in Dubai (United Arab Emirates) and Kuwait, respectively, or 36 per cent in Alexandria (Egypt) compared to 21 per cent in Bahrain.⁴ This reflects high dependency on private cars in the high-income countries of the region.



The proportion of the **urban population with access to open public space** diverges considerably from 18 and 20 per cent in Sohar (Oman) and Baghdad (Iraq), respectively, to 82 and 91 per cent in Al Fujayrah (United Arab Emirates) and Tozeur (Tunisia), respectively, in 2020.⁵



The number of **persons internally displaced by disasters** was almost 1.8 million in the region in 2020 against around 200,000 in 2015, reflecting a growing trend of displacement related to environmental disasters.



The region is on track in developing **national disaster reduction strategies** but only a few countries have **local disaster risk reduction strategies**: 32 cities across 10 countries have such local strategies and action plans (see the chapter on SDG 13).



Air quality in Arab cities is worse than the global average. In 2019, Arab cities had 45.7 micrograms per cubic metre of annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5), on average, compared to a world average of 32.9.



The **cost of air pollution** in the region is \$141 billion per year, around 2 per cent of GDP.⁶

For an up-to-date view of SDG 11 data at the national and regional levels and an analysis of data availability, please refer to the [ESCWA Arab SDG Monitor](#).

On the road to 2030 – suggested policy approaches to accelerate progress on SDG 11



The following policy messages aim to address the challenges the Arab region faces from rapid urbanization, environmental stressors in cities, and the need for social and political transformations in urban settings.

- Operationalize administrative and fiscal decentralization mechanisms to grant local governments and authorities more responsibility in raising revenues and budgeting (including taxes, licenses, traffic fines, etc.) to better respond to people's needs for basic infrastructure and services.
- Strengthen the capacity of local governments and authorities in budgeting, mainstreaming gender and the inclusion of vulnerable groups (such as persons with disabilities and older people), building project proposals, raising funds from donors and fostering partnerships.
- Introduce mechanisms to monitor progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs at the local level through urban observatories to improve data collection, processing and analysis, and to stimulate inclusive governance and bottom-up transformations.



- Promote the concept of healthy cities⁷ to link the deployment of the circular economy, resilience to climate change and improved public health and well-being, among other benefits.

Urban observatories are a starting point for more robust local assessments, supporting evidence-based policymaking and monitoring mechanisms at the city level. They provide decision-makers, other stakeholders and citizens with unbiased information to facilitate informed feedback, extend technical assistance for policy formulation and review, and encourage participation through the transparent sharing of information. This results in comprehensive reviews that capture a variety of perspectives and that can help in holding decision-makers responsible for implementing tangible improvements. The combination of urban observatories and local reviews offers a potent mechanism for monitoring urban challenges and promoting cooperative solutions.

Voluntary Local Reviews

As a bridge between the global vision of sustainable development and local actions, **Voluntary Local Reviews can be a powerful accelerator of SDG localization.** They promote evidence-based policies, reflect on the challenges and opportunities of specific territories, and provide a common vision and entry point for long-term planning for sustainable development at the local level. These reviews enhance stakeholder engagement and multi-level, horizontal governance, while opening an opportunity for local governments and authorities to articulate strategic priorities with global agendas and engage in the international arena.

Voluntary Local Reviews recently undertaken in Amman (**Jordan**) in 2022 and Agadir (**Morocco**) and Al Madinah (**Saudi Arabia**) in 2023 contributed to local stakeholders' dialogue and urban policy coherence. These reviews have resulted in an unprecedented push for developing local data, giving cities the impetus to strengthen data-related processes and improve horizontal cooperation for information-sharing and vertical coordination with national statistical offices. In addition, these reviews have reinforced accountability and transparency through multistakeholder participation. They have also contributed to identifying financing mechanisms for priority development areas.

Sources: UN-Habitat, 2023b; ESCWA, UN-Habitat and UCLG-MEWA, 2024.



- Implement a comprehensive and integrated housing and urban planning policy framework that comprises targeted investment in infrastructure and incentivizes private sector participation in the development of adequate and affordable housing (for example, through public-private funds for social housing).
- Regulate land and real estate markets, direct the use of public lands for affordable housing projects and upgrade low-quality housing stock, while containing urban sprawl through compact forms of urbanization.
- Invest in public transportation systems to encourage a modal shift from individual cars to sustainable mobility systems, including mass transportation and interconnectivity with other patterns of mobility.
- Enshrine transport considerations in urban planning and decision-making, incentivize soft modes of mobility, and integrate smart technologies for traffic management to achieve efficient, accessible, and environmentally friendly urban transport systems.
- Eliminate discriminatory laws in access to land and housing, reform land titling, simplify registration mechanisms, and digitize land titling and cadastral systems to protect the rights of vulnerable groups, including women.
- Prioritize inclusive urban planning in reconstruction in post-conflict settings, using the rehabilitation of built heritage as a tool for reconciliation among communities; preserve and protect natural and cultural heritage; and restore damaged heritage with respect for the inherited values and traditions of different cultural contexts.

The obstacles women face in accessing safe and efficient public transport hinder their employment opportunities, restrict access to education, and curtail participation in cultural and social activities. Limitations on mobility adversely affect women's earning potential, contributing to gender inequalities in employment due to missed work opportunities and financial setbacks. Closing these gaps requires measures to enhance the affordability and safety of public transport for women, encourage greater female participation in the transport sector, and leverage technology to bolster transport accessibility and efficiency.



B. The policy landscape for SDG 11



Urban policies in the Arab region continue to focus primarily on providing adequate housing and basic services. The policy framework has yet to further integrate environmental and disaster risk management (including early warning systems); a balanced approach to territorial development, such as between urban and rural areas and among various neighbourhoods within cities; and opportunities for fostering economic development at the local level in line with the Arab Strategy for Housing and Sustainable Urban Development 2030.

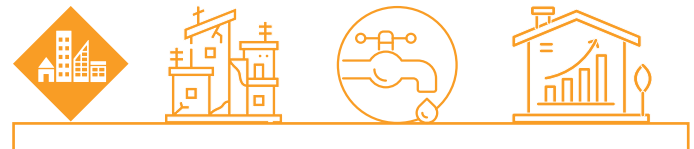
Endorsed by the Arab Council for Housing and Construction under the auspices of the League of Arab States, the **Arab Strategy for Housing and Sustainable Urban Development 2030** is complemented by a 2016 report, **Towards an Arab Urban Agenda**, including in terms of mechanisms to boost regional cooperation. The regional strategy calls on Arab countries to limit urban sprawl, boost affordable housing, and engage various stakeholders in urban planning and development.

A number of policy trends are common at the regional level

◆ **Providing access to adequate and affordable housing and basic services for all remains the primary focus of urban policies in most countries of the region.**⁸ National programmes have upgraded informal settlements and eliminated slums, including through resettlements and social housing operations targeting the most vulnerable communities. Assessments of social housing programmes reveal recurring issues, however, such as low quality, a loss of economic opportunities and social spaces due to relocation, a lack of community-based approaches and low-cost construction neglecting green standards. In addition, home ownership and access to formal services (such as water and electricity) result in additional costs that are difficult to meet from the budgets of households benefiting from social housing projects, even with public subsidies. The rising cost

of land in urban areas makes the development of affordable housing even more challenging. All these issues can exacerbate social exclusion.

Outdated building codes hinder energy-efficient construction. While higher energy efficiency in buildings raises initial costs, it also leads to lower energy bills, enhancing affordability in the longer run. Design optimization is crucial to balance construction costs with ownership and operation expenses, ensuring affordability over a dwelling's life cycle. Using inherently energy-efficient materials from the start is preferable to costly retrofits.



Morocco implemented social housing programmes, providing support for home ownership through caps on the sale price of social housing, opening new urban areas and creating new towns, using public land for housing projects, encouraging collaborations between local and national stakeholders, and establishing financing and guarantee mechanisms. This has significantly reduced the housing deficit and diversified the housing supply, including through private sector participation in expanding affordable housing.⁹ Under the Cities Without Slums programme, 59 of 85 cities were declared free of slums as of December 2022.

⁹ See Morocco, *Rapport national sur la mise en œuvre du nouvel agenda urbain 2016-2020*, 2016.

In **Tunisia**, the Housing Loans Guarantee Fund for Social Groups of Non-Continuous Income was created in 2018. It enables groups with non-fixed income who are excluded from bank loans, due to the irregularity of their monthly income, to finance their homes with a guarantee from the fund. The fund's interventions include guaranteeing housing loans entrusted by banks under the title of acquiring a ready-made house. The fund also aims to introduce as many buildings as possible into an organized framework to reduce chaotic construction and the spread of illegal settlements.

◆ **Urban policies are progressively shifting from sectoral social housing programmes to more integrated approaches and broader economic development strategies.**⁹ The adoption of national urban policies illustrates an evolution in managing urbanization, which is no longer seen as a disruptive phenomenon with negative externalities but as an opportunity to foster economic development, including through economic diversification and job creation. Only four countries of the region have explicitly formulated a national urban policy, however; most are middle-income

countries. **Saudi Arabia** is the only Gulf Cooperation Council country with a national urban policy. Ten countries have issued a national report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda,¹⁰ including three Gulf Cooperation Council countries, six middle-income countries and one country in conflict (see Table 11.1). These countries have committed to integrating the different pillars of the New Urban Agenda into policymaking, planning, budgeting and governance. They have also agreed to adopt gender-sensitive climate change policies and programmes.

Table 11.1
National urban policies and the New Urban Agenda in Arab countries

Country	National urban policy	New Urban Agenda - national report
Algeria	2010	2021
Bahrain	No explicit national urban policy	2021
Comoros	No explicit national urban policy	No national report
Djibouti	No explicit national urban policy	No national report
Egypt	2023	2022
Iraq	Feasibility phase started in 2023	In progress
Jordan	2023	2022
Kuwait	No explicit national urban policy	2022
Lebanon	Formulation phase	2022
Libya	No explicit national urban policy	No national report
Mauritania	No explicit national urban policy	No national report
Morocco	No explicit national urban policy	2022
Oman	No explicit national urban policy	No national report
Qatar	No explicit national urban policy	No national report
Saudi Arabia	2019	2023
Somalia	Diagnosis phase	No national report
State of Palestine	2023	2021
Sudan	Diagnostic study completed in 2021	No national report
Syrian Arab Republic	Diagnosis phase	No national report
Tunisia	Formulation phase (approved by the National Committee in 2022 but not yet endorsed by the Government)	2021
United Arab Emirates	No explicit national urban policy	No national report
Yemen	Feasibility phase	No national report

Source: Authors' elaboration. See the [Urban Policy Platform](#) and the [Urban Agenda Platform](#).

◆ **Urban environmental issues are often covered by sectoral approaches instead of being addressed in integrated urban policies. Capacity and investment in this domain remain low.** Rarely featuring in national urban policies, climate change adaptation is addressed through national sectoral strategies by specialized central bodies or in specific development programmes. For instance,

Egypt formulated national strategies on climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and the environmental management of vulnerable areas, such as coastal zones. Yet measures and actions in these areas are not integrated in the national urban policy. National urban policies and national adaptation programmes have yet to be instrumentally linked to maximize impact.

The region lacks capacity and expertise in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Data limitations make it challenging to develop adaptation strategies at the local level – where financing is missing for small towns as the focus is mainly on capital cities. Some cases are however exemplary in terms of disaster risk strategies at the local level (see the chapter on SDG 13). For instance, the Government of **Morocco** supported cities in designing urban resilience strategies, with local action plans aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015–2030.¹¹ Nablus City

in **Palestine** also aligned its disaster risk management strategy with the Sendai Framework.¹² Dubai (**United Arab Emirates**) adopted an institutional framework that enables stakeholders to assess disaster risks and direct resources to reduce them. Aqaba (**Jordan**) has integrated the risk of flooding and earthquake mitigation into land use planning. Ain Draham (**Tunisia**) has initiated partnerships between the private sector and NGOs to address flood risks, while **Lebanon** has created a national flash flood risk assessment that incorporates recommendations for urban planning.¹³

Amman Climate Action Plan: A Vision for 2050

In **Jordan**, the Amman Climate Action Plan outlines a local government strategy for a carbon-neutral capital by 2050. It targets a 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 while meeting the needs of a rapidly growing city. The plan encompasses various sectors such as sustainable mobility, energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste reduction, water conservation, urban planning and green infrastructure. It includes measures such as a rapid bus transit system, LED street lighting, green building incentives and waste-to-energy facilities. Urban farming is encouraged through zoning and financial incentives. Cross-sectoral initiatives emphasize community engagement, education and recreational projects, with coordination across public agencies, civil society and the private sector. Amman has also developed complementary strategies and action plans, namely Amman Green City, Amman Smart City and Amman Resilience City.

◆ **While cities have major infrastructure projects, mobility strategies remain largely car-oriented, limiting the transformative potential of urban mobility.** The focus remains on physical infrastructure (roads, mass transportation systems), neglecting neighbourhood designs that can reduce traffic by creating a physical environment for walking and cycling. Although public-private partnerships have proven efficient in ensuring better service levels, public transport in most Arab cities continues to face challenges. The gap is often filled by informal operators, a sign of the failure to deliver a more holistic and integrated approach to transport at the community level. Planning and investments are not sufficient to enhance public transportation and to encourage people to shift from private vehicles to public transport. Integrated urban transport systems to improve “last mile connectivity”, where the last mile to and from public transportation hubs allows commuters to transition between modes of transportation, are largely absent. This undermines the shift from private vehicles to more sustainable modes of transport. In the same vein, many Arab cities do not have safe and accessible walking and cycling infrastructure, hindering environmentally friendly mobility. A lack of “pedestrianization” results in traffic congestion and poor safety.

Reducing the impacts of urban mobility on the environment: Policies promoting eco-friendly models of urban mobility using green technologies and smart digital services have potential to reduce the impact of urban mobility on the environment, resulting in more inclusive, smart and sustainable cities. Yet developing these models requires funding, such as for investing in electric vehicle fleets for the public sector and charging infrastructure. Incentives and facilities to catalyse the adoption of electric vehicles may also be required, such as tax breaks, waivers and reduced electricity fares for electric vehicle charging.





◆ **Sustainable smart cities are emerging in the region: 14 out of 22 countries have related initiatives** (see the sections on the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and middle-income countries). Smart digital solutions are enhancing urban safety, increasing traffic safety, unlocking the potential of real-time data in predicting and preventing crime and terrorism, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing violence against women and girls in public spaces. In the rapidly evolving urban landscapes of the Arab region, the integration of emerging technologies and the adoption of people-centred smart city approaches are crucial to achieve sustainability. Leveraging digital technologies, AI and big data analytics, people-centred smart cities could enhance the efficiency of urban services and infrastructure and build urban resilience. Digital platforms could facilitate citizen engagement and participatory governance, allowing more transparent and inclusive decision-making. People-centred smart cities in the Arab region should be seen with a focus on aligning technological innovations with the cultural, economic and social needs of the population, ensuring that technology enhances the quality of life for all residents.

◆ **The decentralization process is unfinished in most countries of the region.** Decentralization has been pursued to enhance local governance, service delivery and participation in decision-making, especially after

the 2011 uprisings. Yet the experiences and outcomes of decentralization vary significantly. Overall, since they depend on transfers from the central government, local governments and authorities still have weak capacities for mobilizing local resources. Central government actors and national public agencies retain major roles in urban governance, with limited room for manoeuvre by local authorities.

Some attempts to engage the private sector, civil society and the public have emerged in the formulation and implementation of urban policies and projects. In the **Comoros**, the elaboration of the National Urban and Housing Policy involved a participatory approach at the local level. The most advanced example of an inclusive approach is the “Politique de la Ville” in **Morocco**. The formulation phase was accompanied by national debates, and implementation relies on contracts between national institutions, local authorities and other stakeholders.

The national management of infrastructure with the limited and sometimes non-existent involvement of local governments and authorities has hindered the ability of Arab cities to innovate and contribute to meaningful change.

Sources: UN Habitat, 2023c.

C. Policy trends by subregion

1. Gulf Cooperation Council countries

Gulf Cooperation Council countries have invested in urban planning and infrastructure to support rapid urbanization and accommodate growing populations. They are focused on building smart cities that incorporate technologies for energy efficiency, waste management, sustainable transportation and green building initiatives.

◆ **Housing policies target nationals, using a variety of financing mechanisms to support different income levels. Migrant workers, who form a significant share of the populations in these countries, are not covered by these policies. Their accommodation falls under the purview of private employers.** National urban policies and disaster risk reduction strategies do not consider migrants.

- ◆ In 2022, **Bahrain** completed a royal directive issued in December 2013 to provide 40,000 housing units to citizens through constructing five new cities.¹⁴ These were financed through the Gulf Cooperation Council Development Programme and built in partnership with the private sector.
- ◆ Since its population is mainly in the Kuwait Metropolitan Area, which represents 8 per cent of national land, **Kuwait** has launched policies to geographically redistribute the rapidly growing population in new cities.
- ◆ **Oman** has addressed growing demand for housing, including among low-income households, through low-interest loans and subsidized housing units in new settlements.¹⁵
- ◆ In **Saudi Arabia**, Vision 2030 includes the Housing Programme 2030, which aims to increase Saudi home ownership to 70 per cent by the end of 2030. The Sakani programme facilitates homeownership among

Saudi citizens, and the Jood Eskan initiative enables charitable donations to households in need of housing support.¹⁶

- ◆ In the **United Arab Emirates**, the Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme provides financial assistance to Emirati households to build, purchase or renovate their homes, including grants for low-income families and those with special needs.

◆ **Being strongly urbanized,¹⁷ the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have integrated their urban policies in national planning instruments, focusing on the diversification of the economy, and using oil wealth to develop a knowledge-based economy in specialized new towns.** Climate and environmental concerns are being embedded in urban policies, including through the creation of green spaces and increased energy efficiency.

- ◆ **Bahrain** has announced that the construction of new towns will be green and smart, using environmentally friendly materials, providing green areas and planting trees along streets.
- ◆ The Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan (**United Arab Emirates**) encourages public transportation and soft mobility, housing projects, green spaces and recreational facilities.¹⁸ Furthermore, Dubai has made the “smart city” an essential component of its urban strategy.
- ◆ In Riyadh (**Saudi Arabia**), a series of megaprojects include a 135 kilometre-long green urban corridor based on converting a utility highway into a green urban boulevard (the Sport Boulevard).¹⁹ The “Green KSA” and “Green Riyadh” environmental initiatives include the creation of green spaces, pedestrian walkways and recreational areas.²⁰

◆ **Gulf Cooperation Council countries have made progress in addressing jointly climate change and urban issues.** Oman has the National Strategy for Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change 2020–2040. In the **United Arab Emirates**, the Green Agenda 2015–2030 is an implementation framework for the United Arab Emirates Green Growth Strategy, complemented by the National Climate Change Plan 2017–2050, which is expected to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. **Bahrain**, which aims to have net-zero emissions by 2060, has established the Joint National Committee on Climate Change chaired by the Supreme Council for the Environment. **Kuwait** has issued the National Adaptation Plan 2019–2030. **Qatar** is preparing a climate change strategy focused on urban planning and development.²¹

◆ **Gulf Cooperation Council countries have made significant investments in high-tech transportation solutions.** As impressive as public transportation systems

are, however, the networks do not cover entire cities. A heavy reliance on private vehicles remains due to cultural and behavioural preferences.

- ◆ High-tech transportation solutions include the Dubai Metro (**United Arab Emirates**), the longest driverless rail system and one of the most advanced metro networks worldwide; the Doha Metro, an integral component of the larger **Qatar** rail network and one of the fastest driverless trains in the world; and the automated Bus Rapid Transit system under the smart mobility programme in Abu Dhabi (**United Arab Emirates**).
- ◆ The road infrastructure in **Bahrain** has witnessed continued upgrades, including safe paths for bicycles and sidewalks, afforestation and beautification, and traffic safety requirements. Under its Urban Transit Network Project, Bahrain recently launched the construction of a 100-kilometre light rail network and four fully automated and driverless metro lines.
- ◆ The King Abdulaziz Project for Riyadh Public Transport (**Saudi Arabia**) aims to address traffic congestion by reducing high dependence on private cars. It includes a 176-kilometre metro network, comprising 6 metro lines and 85 stations, and connecting residential, commercial and recreational areas, hospitals and universities. This is in addition to 24 Bus Rapid Transit lines (1,200 kilometres) and 25 park-and-ride locations as connectivity points in a multi-modal transportation system.²²

◆ **The centralization of urban affairs is still strong. Local governments and municipalities depend on oil revenue transfers from central governments,** which approve local initiatives prior to implementation. Some major cities have relative autonomy in urban planning, such as Medina and Mecca (**Saudi Arabia**). The impact of the delegation of authority has yet to be fully assessed.

2. Arab middle-income countries

Arab middle-income countries contend with unplanned urbanization fed by migration from rural areas, inadequate urban planning, socioeconomic disparities and the proliferation of illegal settlements. In the Mashreq countries,²³ these issues are exacerbated by the flow of refugees from conflict-affected countries. Middle-income countries have implemented various national programmes to upgrade informal settlements and enhance access to basic services. They have invested in mass transport systems and the creation of new towns. But progress towards decentralized decision-making is unfinished.



◆ **In the Maghreb,²⁴ urban policies seek to redirect urban growth and economic opportunities from coastal agglomerations to secondary cities and new towns.**

This follows a generation of **social housing programmes** backed by strong political commitment and operations carried out by national agencies collaborating with local authorities and the private sector. The housing policies of countries in North Africa are among the best practices in tackling a challenge faced by the entire Arab region. In addition to government-built social housing units, **Morocco** and **Tunisia** have increasingly incorporated private sector participation, developing mixed models and enhanced mechanisms for housing finance, and creating more opportunities for low-income housing. Their achievements in the **rehabilitation of historical cities (medinas)** have garnered international recognition.

◆ **In the Mashreq, flows of refugees combined with rural migration put enormous pressure on cities to provide adequate shelter. Urban policy has focused on densification, the upgrading of informal settlements and the redirection of urban growth along transport corridors.**

Countries adopt varied approaches to social housing, with prominent State-provided housing in **Egypt²⁵** and **Jordan.²⁶** **Lebanon** primarily has rent controls. Persistent informal housing points to prevailing inadequacy in housing policies.

- ◆ In **Jordan** and **Lebanon**, most refugees live in shelters that are overcrowded, do not meet humanitarian standards and/or risk collapse.²⁷ In 2017, up to 43 per cent of refugee households in **Lebanon** had either borrowed money to pay rent or were unable to pay it.²⁸ Initially intended for temporary accommodation, many refugee camps have become permanent neighborhoods, with high rates of slum conditions. Migrant households experience greater difficulties than national counterparts in accessing housing, struggling with high rents and unattainable guarantees required to obtain a lease.²⁹
- ◆ In 2022, Amman's Voluntary Local Review³⁰ (Jordan) became the first in the Arab region. It points out major challenges related to housing vacancy, affordability and informality. The refugee crisis has further stressed existing housing infrastructure. Amman has explored various strategies for fostering urban development, such as reducing the housing vacancy rate to 8 per cent by providing assurances to property owners. This encourages bringing large shares of unoccupied apartments into the rental market instead of constructing new residences on the city's periphery. Approximately 75 per cent of the city's anticipated population growth could be accommodated in existing vacant homes by 2030, while urban sprawl and the depletion of natural environments would be better contained.

- ◆ **Lebanon** faces housing challenges due to a highly liberalized real estate market, where urban housing prices surge and become unaffordable for middle- and low-income households. The oversupply of high-income housing exacerbates the issue. The influx of displaced Syrians intensifies pressure on urban housing markets, forcing refugees, migrants and the urban poor into informal and substandard settlements on city outskirts or in overcrowded neighbourhoods. This results in precarious tenures, deteriorating living conditions and inflated prices, creating a complex housing crisis.³¹

◆ **In middle-income countries, the diversification of the economy is an innovative component of national urban policies, including through investment in new towns and sustainable smart cities.** Elements comprise the construction of new cities with a "specialized" economic focus and policies to steer urban growth away from scarce agricultural lands as well as primary cities. Attempts to redirect urbanization have still not alleviated pressures in major cities (as in **Jordan**) or prevented further urban encroachment on agricultural land (as in **Egypt**).³²

- ◆ In **Algeria**, five new towns are under construction and are included in the 2030 National Urban Planning Scheme. In the region of Algiers, the Sidi Abdallah Technopark is expected to accommodate an industrial park and firms specialized in advanced technologies.
- ◆ In **Egypt**, the national urban policy balances the preservation of scarce agricultural land with the need to broaden the country's economic base, including through job creation in new urban settlements. The construction of 22 "fourth generation cities" is intended to satisfy the growing need for housing and employment. In addition, the Green and Smart Cities initiative pursues a holistic approach to urban planning.³³ With urbanization expanding on desert land, however, total inhabited land is expected to increase.
- ◆ **Jordan** has developed measures for in-fill development, using vacant land to achieve more compact urban development.
- ◆ In **Morocco**, the "Politique de la Ville" aims to strengthen the role of cities as socioeconomic development poles and employment generators. Casablanca was the first African city to join the network of 25 smart cities selected by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers in the United States, enabling it to accelerate its digital transformation. The Casablanca Smart City Initiative includes the digitalization of services, video-assisted driving in trams, the monitoring of electricity consumption in new buildings and carpool sharing.

- ◆ **Tunisia** has promoted the creation of technopoles in secondary cities. The Smart Africa start-up investment fund contributed to the Smart Tunisia Initiative, which complements the Digital Tunisia 2020 strategy.

◆ **Public investments in multi-modal transport systems, including mass transportation, are notable in middle-income country capitals and major cities.** Nevertheless, some mass transportation projects can be interpreted as showcasing modern and forward-looking agglomerations and city centres, potentially neglecting the essential needs of residents. In that context, informal transportation networks, such as shared taxis, remain prevalent in cities in the Maghreb and Mashreq, especially to link slums and informal settlements with other part of urban areas. This is due to a lack of transport to meet demand in underprivileged neighbourhoods.³⁴

- ◆ As part of the 2035 Urban Development Master Plan for Algiers (**Algeria**), considerable efforts aim at providing eco-friendly public transport solutions such as trams and metros, and park-and-ride facilities. The completion of subway and tramway infrastructure in the capital has been followed by ongoing projects in other large cities.



- ◆ Under the Greater Cairo Urban Transport Master Plan (**Egypt**), an integrated urban transport system includes a metro, suburban railways and expressways, complemented by a Bus Rapid Transit project and the Cairo Monorail with two automated lines.³⁵
- ◆ The national urban policy in **Jordan** promotes urban connectedness and multi-modal transportation, including a Bus Rapid Transit system in Amman. The Long-Term National Transport Strategy and Action Plan 2014–2030 introduces zero-emission electric vehicles and 3,000 charging stations powered by renewable energy. The Transport and Mobility Master Plan for Amman is expected to increase the modal share of public transport trips to 40 per cent by 2025.
- ◆ **Lebanon** is revisiting the Master Plan of the Beirut Port towards a comprehensive vision of its interaction with the hinterland, considering the relative advantages of all Lebanese ports together and the need for an integrated strategy for the development of port cities.
- ◆ In **Morocco**, 10 years after its inauguration, the Rabat-Salé tramway complements bus and taxi networks, a modal shift that contributes indirectly to the protection of the environment. By 2024, Casablanca, where two tramway lines are already operating, will also benefit from an exclusive right-of-way public transport network, offering an environmentally friendly alternative to the private car.
- ◆ In **Tunisia**, the Five-Year Strategic Development Plan for Transport seeks to enhance public transportation and advance city centre decongestion in Tunis. More prominent projects include the Trans-Maghreb rail link to connect all regions of the country with the Algerian and Libyan borders. Ongoing major projects comprise a new airport by 2030, the Tunis-Carthage international airport expansion, Rapid Rail Tunis, an intercity rail system and five express railway lines.

The rehabilitation of staircases after the 2020 Beirut port explosion

In close coordination with the Municipality of Beirut (**Lebanon**), UN-Habitat has partnered with Catalytic Action to rehabilitate and revive urban public stairs in the neighbourhoods of Gemmayzeh and Mar Mikhael in the city centre. Beyond support to pedestrian mobility, the stairs are historical landmarks used as lively spaces for social interaction. The project strives to preserve this heritage and enhance social activities by fixing damages, adding furniture and improving accessibility. The success of the project has been demonstrated by increased daily social and commercial activities on the stairs.

Source: Beirut's Public Stairs.



◆ **Decentralization reforms in the middle-income countries have led to a partial devolution of urban management responsibilities to the local level but decentralization remains incomplete.**

Without commensurate fiscal decentralization, local governments and authorities cannot raise their own resources, making them dependent on central transfers.

- ◆ In **Jordan**, the new Local Administration Law should expand the autonomy of local administrations and deepen citizen participation in decision-making.
- ◆ In **Lebanon**, unions of municipalities represent a platform for cooperation on common geographic or other aspects, such as solid waste management, environmental protection, water pollution, and education and health facilities. The unions have a legal power to elaborate their own development plans but do not have full autonomy in decision-making.
- ◆ **Morocco** has undertaken many decentralization reforms since its independence in 1956. The 2011 Constitution advanced a regionalization model supported by organic laws in 2015 that define the competencies of regional, provincial and municipal authorities. As a result, municipalities work with regional and national governments, businesses, civil society organizations and other public and private stakeholders to support the delivery of urban infrastructure and services.
- ◆ **Tunisia** created a fund for supporting solidarity among local communities, allocating more fiscal resources to municipalities and financing local development projects.

Joining over 150 cities worldwide in developing a Voluntary Local Review, and promoting the SDG-aligned model of smart, sustainable and inclusive city development, the Municipality of Agadir (**Morocco**) in 2023 carried out the first Voluntary Local Review in North Africa. This helped the local authority to monitor progress on the SDGs, improve policy coherence, and reinforce policy dialogue between national and local institutions. The municipality has showcased its determination to use modern, SDG-aligned, inclusive urban management tools such as gender-sensitive and citizen-centred budgeting. The review informed the Municipal Action Plan 2022–2027.

Source: Morocco, Municipality of Agadir, [2023 Voluntary Local Review](#).

3. Arab least developed countries and countries in conflict

Arab least developed countries and countries in conflict face huge challenges in providing social housing and basic services and rehabilitating and conserving heritage due to a combination of rapid urbanization, poverty, displacement and political instability. They lack adequate urban planning, infrastructure and resources to accommodate growing urban populations, leading to poor living conditions and slums. They struggle to combine urbanization and economic development priorities, suffer from a lack of technical capacities related to sustainable urban development, and have made unequal progress towards decentralization.

◆ **Plans are emerging for specific cities to provide adequate shelter and basic services.** Some cities have shown resilience through forward-thinking reconstruction initiatives. Political instability often diverts resources from social housing initiatives and long-term planning, however. Financial constraints, such as high levels of public debt, limit government abilities to invest in housing. In countries with protracted conflicts, such as the **Syrian Arab Republic**, the toll of destruction is heavy. Most of the original population displaced from Syrian cities has returned and is living in damaged houses without any alternatives. Refugee communities in the cities of **Jordan** and **Lebanon** add pressure on municipalities and local governments. In **Lebanon**, which hosts the largest number of refugees per capita in the world and is in the midst of a major political and socioeconomic crisis, tensions between host communities and displaced persons simmer over access to economic and natural resources.

- ◆ The **Comoros** is preparing a cadastral plan in Moroni to ensure land tenure for citizens and better provide urban services. After destruction caused by Cyclone Kenneth in 2019, reconstruction efforts have taken place but effective national frameworks on affordable and climate-resilient housing are still missing.
- ◆ In **Iraq**, the National Housing Policy outlines a roadmap for expanding housing provision across the country. It emphasizes the creation of an enabling environment, including through partnership with the private sector.
- ◆ In **Mauritania**, as part of vast social housing programmes, plots of land are provided to households with official deeds of allocation that are not transferable to avoid resale, speculation and the return of beneficiary populations to other or new precarious areas.³⁶
- ◆ In **Palestine**, as is common in middle-income countries in the Mashreq, a comprehensive protection plan seeks to safeguard sensitive agricultural lands and redirect spatial development away from them. The Spatial Development



Strategic Framework for Jerusalem Governorate is implementing an agreed housing programme for youth and low-income families until 2030.³⁷

- ◆ In the **Sudan**, after unsuccessful attempts at slum eradication, Khartoum adopted a “sites and services” approach to slum upgrading, providing land plots with basic services for a low price, title deeds and deregulated building standards. The policy had negative effects, however, prompting migration, including of internally displaced persons, to the capital and contributing to extensive urban sprawl. The Government now promotes denser forms of housing and emphasizes the importance of connectedness through road infrastructure investments to create efficient links between urban and rural areas.³⁸
- ◆ In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, multisectoral recovery plans have been developed for the cities of Homs, Aleppo, Dar’a and Deir-Ezzor, in addition to neighbourhood recovery plans in more than 90 locations. These link short-term humanitarian activities with resilience-based activities.³⁹

◆ **Urban policies are affected by tensions and conflicts that create humanitarian emergencies and security issues.**

Because of these emergencies, economic development is not yet sufficiently targeted in responses to urbanization challenges. For instance, war and humanitarian crisis in **Yemen** have prevented the elaboration of urban policies. Unrest in **Libya** stalled implementation of urban policies. The crisis in the **Syrian Arab Republic** halted some exemplary progress in developing an integrated approach

to urban planning. The Urban Recovery Framework has become a key instrument in enhancing responses to urban crises; clarifying institutional arrangements, policies and plans; and guiding coordination mechanisms and financing instruments needed in urban recovery interventions.⁴⁰ Overall, however, linking urban resilience, humanitarian interventions and social inclusion has not yet taken off as a policy approach in conflict settings, either among national and local governments or donors.

The rehabilitation of Al-Yarmouk Park in Mosul, Iraq

Al Yarmouk Park is one of the largest public spaces on the west bank of Mosul, a city known for its limited green space. Prior to two decades of neglect and war, the park was renowned for its palms and pine trees and large open grounds. Its rehabilitation as a multipurpose public space is a critical component of an area-based, integrated project aimed at restoring essential public services disrupted by war and conflict.

- ◆ **Efforts to develop disaster risk management strategies are still limited.** Climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness and post-conflict reconstruction call for major investments in infrastructure and demand the forward-looking reconceptualization of urban planning, but insufficient progress has been made so far. Some positive developments include those in Kaéd (**Mauritania**), where the [City Resilience Action Planning Tool](#) is implemented to assess and enhance resilience to natural disasters and climate change. In the **Comoros**, City Resilience Frameworks for Action have been prepared for four cities.

- ◆ **Conflict or post-conflict countries with a federal system can have much more decentralized administration,** as in **Iraq** and the **Sudan**. The federal structure of the Sudan has delegated the responsibility for urban policy to provincial governments. The withdrawal of the national government from urban policy, however, can undermine a comprehensive vision for urban development and limit coordination among territories and administrative levels.⁴¹ The most decentralized policy in the Arab region is found in Area A in the West Bank of the **State of Palestine**, where elected local councils can raise their own revenues and are responsible for urban planning and provision of basic services.⁴² The National Development Plan (2021–2023) prioritizes decentralization in the provision of public services but commitments to decentralization have not fully materialized due to many factors, including geopolitical complexities, weak political will and the economic crisis.⁴³





D. Policies to leave no one behind

Table 11.2
Examples of urban policies to leave no one behind

Groups at risk of being left behind	Examples of policies to leave no one behind
 <p>Women and girls suffer from heightened mobility limitations due to instability, conflict and/or the lack of safe transport and public spaces, impacting their access to employment and participation in public life. In addition, cultural and social norms, prevailing customary laws and barriers to accessing information inhibit women's exercise of property and land ownership rights.</p> <p>Despite the lack of gender-sensitive planning at the local level, some progress is evident in mainstreaming gender considerations in urban policies.</p>	<p>Egypt updated conditions to access social housing units to include female-headed households.^a</p> <p>Jordan launched the National Framework for Gender-Sensitive Public Transport as well as the Gender Action Plan for Equitable Mobility.</p> <p>Legislation in Palestine recognizes women's unrestricted right to ownership and does not discriminate in land or property registration or housing construction, although the prevalent patriarchal culture prevents the adoption of legislation on women's inheritance.^b</p>
 <p>The poor and less well-off, including informal workers and migrant workers who reside mostly in urban areas, are squeezed out of housing markets by prohibitive land and property prices. This forces them into informal settlements, as well as poorly designed migrant worker centres in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, with inadequate access to basic services.</p>	<p>Egypt plans to eradicate slums by 2030 through the Urban Development Fund and a participatory city-wide urban upgrading approach. Efforts are ongoing to support rental markets and address affordability gaps.</p>
 <p>Rural migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and people living in slums or inadequate dwellings face discrimination and are more vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change. Poorer people lack access to green public spaces, which are typically concentrated in wealthier neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>Amman and Irbid (Jordan) launched the Urban Planning and Infrastructure in Migration Contexts Programme to improve access to reliable services and socioeconomic opportunities for migrants and displaced populations, in coordination with humanitarian interventions. This approach allowed in-depth analysis of challenges and opportunities to support municipalities and key stakeholders in mainstreaming migration challenges into spatial urban analytics and urban infrastructure investment planning.^c Through its Green City Action Plan and Climate Action Plan, Amman intends to create new parks and gardens, including in underserved areas, and upgrade existing ones.</p>
 <p>People with disabilities frequently confront greater risks of social and economic isolation due to the lack of accommodation of their needs. Creating inclusive spaces for persons with disabilities would benefit other vulnerable groups, as well as older people and children.</p>	<p>The second section of the Algiers Metro line and all tramways in Algeria are accessible to persons with disabilities and comply with international accessibility standards. In addition, regulations provide persons with disabilities with free transport or reduced fares.</p> <p>Jordan places significant emphasis on fostering inclusion and diversity, ensuring the rights and participation of persons with disabilities in education and all aspects of society. This commitment is reflected in the disability law, which prohibits discrimination based on disability and includes the provision of reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities. Persons with physical disabilities and older persons, however, still encounter persistent difficulties in accessing public transport, impacting access to school, health care and employment.</p>

^a Lobet, Abdelkader and Eldidi, 2020.

^b See the State of Palestine, *Implementation of the New Urban Agenda: National Report for the State of Palestine*.

^c UN-Habitat, 2022a.

E. The financing landscape

As is the case for other SDGs, shrinking fiscal space hinders progress on SDG 11. A structural challenge relates to the fragmentation of financing for urban policies across different levels of government. National urban policies have primarily been the responsibility of line ministries owing to the tradition of strong central Governments. This results in limited cohesion and collaboration to maximize resources and efficiency in their use. In most Arab countries, the **budgets of local governments and authorities depend on transfers from national Governments**, and the management and financing of urban projects is often supervised by the central government, which is not as attuned to local needs, challenges and solutions.

Predominantly top-down, the region's urban planning system does not respond to the increasing needs of growing cities and towns.

To address the consequences of rapid urbanization, reforming urban planning instruments and procedures is imperative; it should go hand-in-hand with ongoing decentralization reforms.

People-centred approaches should be at the forefront of urban development and infrastructure provision, and more autonomy should be given to local governments and authorities because they are often best placed to respond to the needs of residents.

Compared to other regions in the world, Arab cities have lower rates of local revenue collection due to **centralized budgeting mechanisms at the national level, corruption, inefficient transaction and land records management, and poor accountability**. Local authorities have limited ability to collect property taxes, the primary source of locally generated revenue. This is due to inadequate data and human resources and to the dynamics of urbanization, including unregistered property transactions in informal settlements located on the urban fringe. Local revenue generation essentially remains low due to inefficient fiscal operations, a lack of clear divisions of power, insufficient enforcement powers within municipal jurisdiction, outdated legal frameworks and the generally low financial management capacity of local governments.⁴⁴ In some instances, where public utilities and other services are operated by parastatal organizations (such as state-owned enterprises or private companies supplying basic services through public-private partnerships), these revenues are not accessible to city governments. As a result, cities may be unable to meet demands for operating costs, such as employee salaries, building rents and equipment,

and instead must rely on subsidized operations by using transfers meant for capital investments.

Diverse financial strategies and mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, green bonds, tax reforms, Islamic finance and international aid, provide opportunities for financing infrastructure projects and bringing cities closer to realizing sustainable development targets.⁴⁵ To improve the resilience of the local financial environment, an initial strategy could involve promoting decentralization in budgets and revenues, empowering cities to establish their own sources of revenue. Examples of income streams may include revenues from licenses, taxes, traffic fines and parking spaces, all of which contribute to self-sufficient, resilient local financing. The next phase would entail creating relevant frameworks to enable cities to tap into diverse source of finance. Examples could include public-private partnerships, land- and asset-based financing, and municipal bonds, all of which could mobilize private capital and help to bridge funding gaps. Lastly, efforts should be made to create additional funding channels that finance small and medium-sized enterprises, as they represent a significant source of job creation and economic diversification. Their financial support directly contributes to the resilience and stability of the local financial environment.

The potential participation of the private sector in financing SDG 11 at the local level in Arab countries largely remains unknown and unexplored. **Public-private partnerships are still typically large-scale megaprojects with billions of dollars in sovereign funding.** Some Gulf Cooperation Council countries have developed exemplary public-private partnerships. Examples also exist in **Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia** and may be transferable to other countries. Such partnerships tend, nevertheless, to be catalysed through national government policies and programmes, transfers of public lands for private development (such as for social housing projects) and the delegation of public services. Some public-private partnerships have been subsidized with public resources to make them profitable enough for the private sector.

Islamic finance represents another potential vehicle for financing SDG 11. Green and social impact *sukuk* can be used to scale up socially responsible and environmentally focused investment in urban development projects.

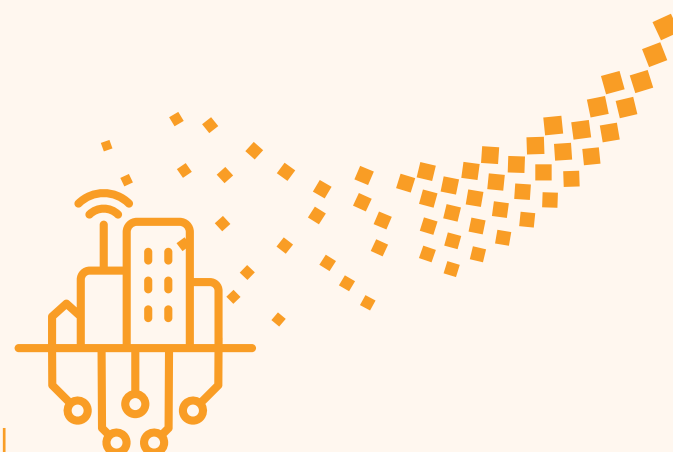




F. Regional dimensions

Arab countries can seize several opportunities for regional collaboration on SDG 11.

- **Accelerate local data collection to measure progress on SDG 11 through the creation of urban observatories and monitoring systems on the environment and development.** These can aim at stimulating vertical integration and bottom-up transformations, supporting integrated and inclusive local governance frameworks, and reinforcing evidence-based policymaking processes. The global Urban Monitoring Framework endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2020 offers opportunities to standardize local monitoring systems, which can also benefit from synergies in activating cooperation mechanisms. In **Jordan**, the Amman Urban Observatory is an example of a knowledge management platform that maximizes local capabilities for data collection and analysis. Its role in the Voluntary Local Review of Amman was crucial in leading the process and facilitating data collection and analysis.
- **Strengthen the capacities of local authorities and facilitate exchanges of knowledge and good practices through regional networks of cities and local governments to advance sustainable urban development.** The involvement of Arab cities in regional networks has the potential to boost city-to-city cooperation and bring positive impacts in terms of urban skills and management. Regional and international networks of cities and local authorities serve as platforms for information sharing, exchanges of best practices and problem-solving on sustainable urban development and strategic urban planning. By engaging in them, cities can harness the knowledge and experiences of their regional counterparts and increase their capacity to address local challenges. Examples of such networks include the International Coalition of Cities of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities,⁴⁶ United Cities and Local Governments Middle East and Western Asia,⁴⁷ Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI),⁴⁸ the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy,⁴⁹ the Arab Towns Organization, MedCities,⁵⁰ Connective Cities,⁵¹ the Strong Cities Network⁵² and C40 Cities.⁵³
- **Support promising “healthy cities” initiatives that are spreading in the region, focusing on interlinkages among different SDGs and partnerships that contribute to achieving SDG 11.** These initiatives encourage better urban planning to reduce road traffic injuries, improve air quality, promote physical activity and save lives from disasters. Currently, 109 cities from 15 Arab countries are part of the Eastern Mediterranean Healthy Cities Network.⁵⁴ The recently launched global Quality of Life in Cities initiative builds on the Quality of Life Program in **Saudi Arabia**.⁵⁵ This initiative intends to produce an index to measure common values, needs and objectives based on high-quality, and disaggregated urban data to fill significant information gaps that have limited the implementation of the SDGs at the local level.



Endnotes

1. UNDP, 2022a.
2. UN-Habitat, 2018.
3. National urban policy is understood as “a coherent set of decisions through a deliberate government-led process of coordinating and rallying various actors towards a common vision and goal that will promote more transformative, productive, inclusive and resilient urban development for the long term” (UN-Habitat and Cities Alliance, 2014).
4. UN-Habitat data for 2020, in UN-Habitat, 2023c.
5. Ibid.
6. World Bank, 2022.
7. According to the WHO, “a healthy city is one that continually creates and improves its physical and social environments and expands the community resources that enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and developing to their maximum potential”. See “[What Is a Healthy City](#)”.
8. UN-Habitat, 2017.
9. Ibid.
10. [The New Urban Agenda](#) was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016. It was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly on 23 December 2016 and represents a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future urbanization.
11. See the World Bank, 2020.
12. See the State of Palestine, [Implementation of the New Urban Agenda: National Report for the State of Palestine](#).
13. UN-Habitat, 2023c.
14. See Bahrain, [Voluntary National Review report 2023](#).
15. Prabhu, 2021.
16. See Saudi Arabia, [Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda](#).
17. The Gulf Cooperation Council countries are the most urbanized in the region with more than 80 per cent of their populations on average residing in urban areas. The country with the highest urban population share is Kuwait at 100 per cent (UN-Habitat, 2023c).
18. See more on the [Dubai 2040 Master Urban Plan](#).
19. See more on the [Sports Boulevard](#).
20. See Saudi Arabia, [Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda](#).
21. UN-Habitat, 2023c.
22. See Saudi Arabia, [Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda](#).
23. Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon; Iraq, the State of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic fall under the group of fragile or conflict-affected countries.
24. Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia; Libya and Mauritania fall under the groups of fragile or conflict-affected countries and the least developed countries, respectively.
25. In addition, based on the published 2020 National Housing Profile Strategy, a shift from area-specific development to a participatory city-wide urban upgrading approach was endorsed in Egypt (UN-Habitat, 2023c).
26. In Jordan, despite efforts to implement policies that encourage the construction of affordable homes for the poor, it is still easier to find expensive high-end homes than more affordable alternatives (UN-Habitat, 2023c).
27. United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination in Lebanon and others, 2020.
28. UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, 2017.
29. See Morocco, [La Migration Forcée au Maroc – Résultats de l’Enquête Nationale](#).
30. See Amman, [Voluntary Local Review](#).
31. See Lebanon, 2021, [National Report on the Progress of the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda](#).
32. UN-Habitat, 2017.
33. UNEP, 2023.
34. UN-Habitat, 2017.
35. See Egypt, [Voluntary National Review Report 2021](#).
36. See Mauritania, [Voluntary National Review Report 2019](#).
37. See the State of Palestine, 2020, [Spatial Development Strategic Framework: Jerusalem Governorate](#).
38. UN-Habitat, 2017.
39. UN-Habitat, 2022c.
40. See UN-Habitat, [Urban Recovery Framework publication series](#).
41. UN-Habitat, 2017.
42. Ibid.



43. See the State of Palestine, [Implementation of the New Urban Agenda: National Report for the State of Palestine](#).
44. UN-Habitat data for 2020, in UN-Habitat, 2023c.
45. Ibid.
46. See more on the [International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities](#).
47. See more on [United Cities and Local Governments-Middle East and Western Asia](#).
48. See more on [Local Governments for Sustainability](#).
49. See more on the [Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy](#).
50. See more on [MedCities](#).
51. See more on [Connective Cities](#).
52. See more on the [Strong Cities Network](#).
53. See more on the [C40 Cities](#).
54. Elfeky and others, 2019.
55. See more on the [Quality of Life Programme](#).

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