



UN HABITAT

FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

How to engage?

1 Engage in social investment and philanthropic partnerships

Such partnerships include philanthropic giving, employee volunteer and donation programs, pro bono core business expertise, donations of products or services, and creative financing mechanisms. Pro bono core business expertise is targeted to address specific gaps in needed organizational technical expertise, or for beneficial technologies that cannot be afforded. Your expertise can be of great value to UN-HABITAT projects and initiatives.

2 Focus on core business and value-chain partnerships

Core business partnerships tend to be longer-term and draw on the core competencies of both private sector and UN-HABITAT. This involves mobilizing the innovative technologies, processes, financing mechanisms, products, services and skills of the Business Sector to create wealth and employment and develop and deliver affordable goods and services in cities.

3 Develop advocacy and public policy engagement

This is to promote and advance a specific cause in support of the UN goals and more specifically UN-HABITAT mandate or promoting multi-stakeholder dialogue on issues related to the purposes and activities of UN-HABITAT. This can include promoting a concept of corporate responsibility; working with companies to bring about change in their internal business practices to align with UN-HABITAT goals; and developing norms or guidelines to engage stakeholders in support of UN-HABITAT goals.



A girl in parish of Kingston
© Markisz/ UNICEF



Urban transport system in China
© UN-HABITAT



Tropical Storm in Gonaives, Haiti
© UN/ Marco Dormino



Join the World Urban Campaign: Building Partnerships for Better City, Better Life

Join a global campaign towards better cities with UN-Habitat and its wide range of partners - local authorities, non-governmental organizations, professionals and experts – to advocate on and learn from best practices to the key challenges of cities, transforming learning into action. Join the campaign as a partner and be part of a unique decision-making process where your resources and actions will be leveraged with those of others.

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THE CORE BUSINESS PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION

The core business principles for sustainable urbanization were approved at the Private Sector Strategy Meeting held on 14 April 2011 during UN-HABITAT 23rd Governing Council.

"We, members of the private sector are committed to sustainable urbanization and development. To demonstrate our commitment in meeting the needs and expectations of all stakeholders in the creation of sustainable and harmonious urban areas, we affirm that our activities and behaviors wherever we do business will be guided by these principles":

1. Responsible Business

We shall create and sustain responsible business practices that foster economical, environmental and social wellbeing in our urban centers. We endeavor to engage in practices that respect human rights, uphold the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, are non-discriminatory, and are anchored on sustainability of urban environments and urban social networks. We directly take responsibility for all our business actions and mitigate their impacts on the ecology and society.

2. Eco-Friendliness

We commit to pursue business objectives through strategies that are eco-efficient. We shall engage in business processes for the production of economically valuable goods and services while effectively reducing the negative ecological impacts of production on the urban environment.

3. Collaboration and Partnership

In the spirit of sharing and multilateralism, we agree to engage in multi-sectoral collaborations on cross-cutting issues that will provoke action on how we can create opportunities for the poor. We shall also foster partnerships with other stakeholders with the aim of sharing information and technologies that will improve the overall performance of the private sector worldwide, without eliminating fair competition. We endeavor to work with other businesses and the local government to foster an environment where innovative practices can occur. We also aim to engage the urban poor through the informal sector to create systems that are mutually beneficial to the poor communities and business concerns.

4. Innovation and Creativity

We affirm to invest in the growth of innovation and creativity. We shall support efforts made by academia, professional bodies, governments and civil society organizations to develop solutions that address the urban challenges of today and the future. We shall invest in new technologies that cut down negative ecological impact, reduce wastage and increases production output.

5. Urban Social and Ecological Capitalization

We commit to invest in the aggregation of social and ecological resources through business-driven systems that will create and strengthen the social and ecological wealth of urban centers.

6. Options for the Poor

We shall make deliberate efforts to recreate and grow inclusive and sustainable market initiatives. We shall increase our contribution to the war against urban poverty through sustainable corporate social responsibility activities and market-based strategies that aim to make our goods and services affordable, accessible and available to the urban poor.

7. Optimal Value

We resolve to undertake business growth and prosperity that generates ecological, social and economic value. We commit to operate at business levels that optimize the wealth of the urban environment and minimize harmful externalities. We define wealth to mean the health and wellbeing of citizens, environment and economy of the urban environment.

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UN-HABITAT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Partnering with
the **UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME**
towards sustainable and livable cities



UN-HABITAT THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

“ UN-HABITAT is the United Nations Programme in charge of the built environment and coordinating the urban agenda within the United Nations system. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all. ”



The City of Zhejiang, China
© Zhejiang Publishing United Group

Achieving better cities

At the dawn of a new urban era, with most of humanity now living in cities, UN-HABITAT is at the front line of the battle against fast growing urban poverty and the scourge of climate change, caused by poorly planned urbanization and threatening the lives and livelihoods of entire cities and communities.

The combined impacts of rapid urbanization, climate change and the global financial crisis are resulting in increasing inequality, which brings about tremendous challenges. At the same time, the world has become predominantly urban, with more than 50 percent of the world population living in cities. Up to three-quarters of global energy consumption occurs in cities, and an equally significant proportion of greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming comes from urban areas.

The growth of slums and the deterioration of urban infrastructures are threats to business and the private sector has a major stake in maintaining the health of cities. Dysfunctional cities mean insufficient conditions to run business and lower productivity, in turn affecting economic development.

Urbanization challenges are also getting too complex and resource-driven to be addressed by the public sector alone. The private sector is equipped to deal with the complexity of those challenges and also able to harness the tremendous potential of cities.

Building and sharing expertise and knowledge

As the United Nations gateway for cities, UNHABITAT is constantly improving its focus and responsiveness to the aspirations of cities. Key areas of UN-HABITAT'S agenda are better urban planning, improving city financing, disaster mitigation and reconstruction, urban mobility, and cleaner, greener cities that take the lead in tackling climate change.

UN-HABITAT helps cities learn, know and understand their own needs: the agency provides the facts, figures and studies that can help decision makers at every level and even local residents make optimum choices.

UN-HABITAT helps countries and cities develop urban policies and strategic plans through a shared vision for the city and through multi-partner approaches.



Reviewing a housing plan, Pakistan
©UN-HABITAT

A proven operational capacity

With a vast global reach, UN-HABITAT runs more than 200 technical cooperation programmes and projects in 72 countries. These countries include many of the poorest in the world, such as Afghanistan, Somalia, Haiti, and Nepal. Much of the work is aimed at strengthening the urban fabric, helping slum dwellers with better shelter and basic services such as water and sanitation. Most of the programmes are run by UN-HABITAT staff who are nationals of their own countries, proudly trying to improve their cities or to rebuild after disasters.



New Housing units in Aceh
© UN-HABITAT



Informal settlement in Madagascar
©UN-HABITAT

UN-HABITAT has three main regional offices: for Africa and the Arab States (Nairobi, Kenya), Asia and the Pacific (Fukuoka, Japan), Latin America and the Caribbean (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), as well as liaison and information offices in New York, Brussels, Geneva, Moscow, Beijing, Chennai, Amman and Budapest.

This geographical distribution confers an incomparable advantage to UN-HABITAT in terms of out-reach, and helps bring tangible impacts.

The World Urban Forum: A first class international partners event

Since its first session in Nairobi in 2002, the World Urban forum has been held every two years: in Barcelona (2004), Vancouver (2006), Nanjing (2008) and Rio de Janeiro (2010). Each session has grown in numbers, to the point where it now attracts upwards of 12,000 people, turning it into the world's premier global conference on cities.



World Urban Forum
Barcelona (2004)



World Urban Forum
Vancouver (2006)



World Urban Forum
Nanjing (2008)



World Urban Forum
Rio de Janeiro (2010)

“ The United Nations and business need each other. We need your innovation, your initiative, your technological prowess. But Business also needs the United Nations. In a very real sense, the work of the United Nations can be viewed as seeking to create the ideal enabling environment within which business can thrive. ”

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.

UN-HABITAT AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon to renew and reform the United Nations provide the overall rationale for closer cooperation and partnership between the United Nations and the Business Sector.

United Nations definition of the private sector

The United Nations officially defines the private sector as encompassing:

- for-profit, and commercial enterprises or businesses;
- business associations and coalitions (cross-industry, multi-issue groups; cross-industry, issue-specific initiatives; industry-focused initiatives);
- corporate philanthropic foundations.

Nowadays, most of the business community shares common objectives of more efficient, productive and inclusive cities with the United Nations.

UN-HABITAT is also well aware that the private sector is not merely a part of the solution to urban challenges, but a vital partner that must be engaged if the world's cities are to achieve sustainability.

UN-HABITAT is looking for partners that can join hands in delivering better cities, companies committed to its mandate as part of their core business or their corporate social responsibility.

As part of the UN family, UN-HABITAT supports the principles of the Global Compact and requests all its partners to be members and adhere to the 10 Global Compact principles.

www.globalcompact.org

What can your company gain from partnering with UN-HABITAT?

- Recognition for engaging in social responsibility and green business, which offers a comparative advantage over competitors;
- Access to knowledge and expertise;
- Improved understanding of challenging issues and sustainable solutions;
- Increased efficiency and capacity of the company's supply chain;
- Introduction to multi-stakeholder policy fora, local governments and thought leaders;
- Increased professional development opportunities for staff to apply their skills in complex environments.