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Item 7 (d) of the provisional agenda*
**Parallel meetings for an in-depth review of progress made
and peer learning on the sub-themes of the Regional Forum:
sustainable cities and communities**

Progress, challenges, opportunities and priority actions to accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11

I. Introduction

1. Urbanization is a key component of economic structural transformation, which involves the movement of labour out of agriculture and into more productive manufacturing and service sectors and is thus fundamental to the continent's economic development process. African cities generate an outsized proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) and are the focal points for most productive economic activities in African countries.

2. According to data from the World Population Prospects 2022, the level of urbanization in Africa, presently at 44.4 per cent, will reach 58.9 per cent by 2050. The pace of urbanization and urban population growth in Africa varies significantly by subregion. Urbanization has been concentrated in Southern Africa, which already is the most urbanized subregion and where nearly 70 per cent of the population will live in urban areas by 2030.¹ The rapid growth of urbanization in Africa, if not managed well, will result in an increased number of slum dwellers, inadequate and overburdened infrastructure and services, worsening air pollution and unplanned urban sprawl.²

3. Cities and urban areas are at the centre of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable Development Goal 11 is directly connected to at least 11 other Goals, with actions in cities affecting progress on issues such as poverty and access to basic services (Goal 1), health (Goal 3), education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5), building resilient infrastructure and promoting sustainable industrialization (Goal 9), ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (Goal 12), governance (Goal 16), and enhanced partnerships and means of implementation (Goal 17). Goal 11 is also connected to disaster-risk reduction (Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction) and climate change (Paris Agreement). Within the global

* ECA/RSFD/2022/1.

¹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Population Prospects (2022)*.

² Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Sahel and West Africa Club, *Africa's Urbanization Dynamics 2020: Africapolis, Mapping a New Urban Geography, West African Studies* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2020).



indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals (see A/RES/71/313), around one third of the indicators can be measured at the local urban level, making the city an important unit for action and tracking progress towards sustainable development.³

4. Inclusive structural transformation will not happen without urbanization. The rapid urbanization of Africa has had profound implications for the achievement of continental targets for inclusive growth and transformation. Although theory and experience have shown that urbanization and structural transformation are closely linked, this has not been the case in Africa. The region has been urbanizing without industrializing or modernizing its agriculture, resulting in lost opportunities for growth, diversification, poverty reduction and social development. While urbanization, on its own, is not a sufficient condition to generate economic growth, with the right urban planning and linkages it could bring major productive advantages for industry, agriculture and modern services. Managing the urban transition through deliberate policy responses is thus essential for structural transformation and the well-being of African urban and rural populations.⁴ Most African countries are still at the early stages of the urbanization process and so have a significant opportunity to leverage the power of growing cities to promote inclusive growth. Strategic policies and investment at the regional, subregional, national and subnational levels will prove critical in that regard.

II. Progress in implementation

5. The following section presents the progress for each target under Sustainable Development Goal 11, using available data.

A. Target 11.1⁵

6. Housing is a basic human right recognized in many international instruments. To date, more than 100 countries globally have a constitutional provision on the right to adequate housing. Inadequate housing has a negative impact on urban equity and inclusion, urban safety, and livelihood opportunities, and leads to negative health conditions. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), through the New Urban Agenda, promotes housing as the central approach to improve access to adequate and affordable housing. In Africa, this target is particularly important, given the rapid urbanization of African settlements, without corresponding housing developments to meet the demand. Although progress in meeting this target in most African countries is generally slow, there is variation in the rate of progress among countries, areas and cities.

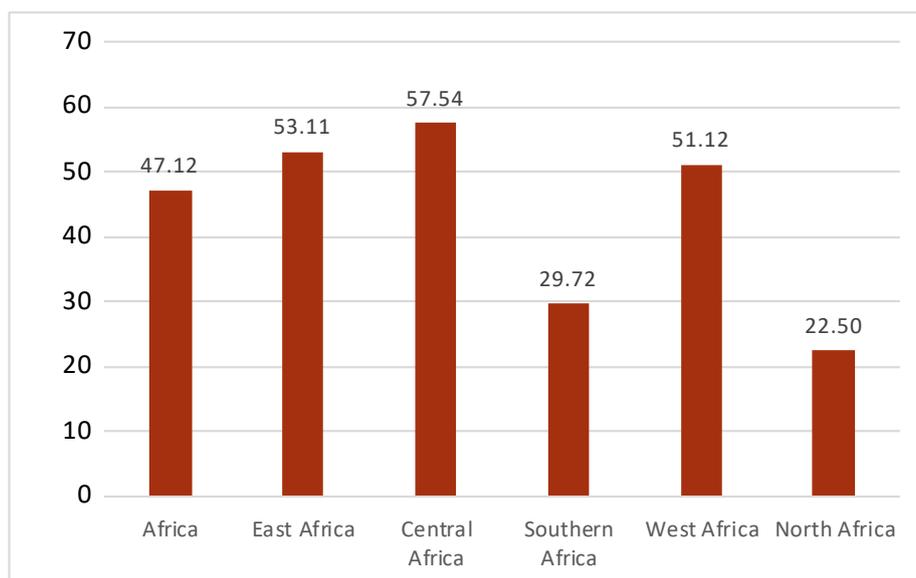
7. Between 2015 and 2020, the average proportion of the African urban population living in slums was 47.12 per cent. In East, Central and West Africa, that figure exceeded 50 per cent, whereas in North Africa it was only 22.50 per cent (see figure I).

³ United Nations Human Settlements Programme, *Tracking Progress towards Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements: SDG11 Synthesis Report – High Level Political Forum 2018* (United Nations publication, 2018).

⁴ Economic Commission for Africa, “Leveraging urbanization for Africa’s structural transformation: ECA’s contribution” (Addis Ababa, 2017).

⁵ By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

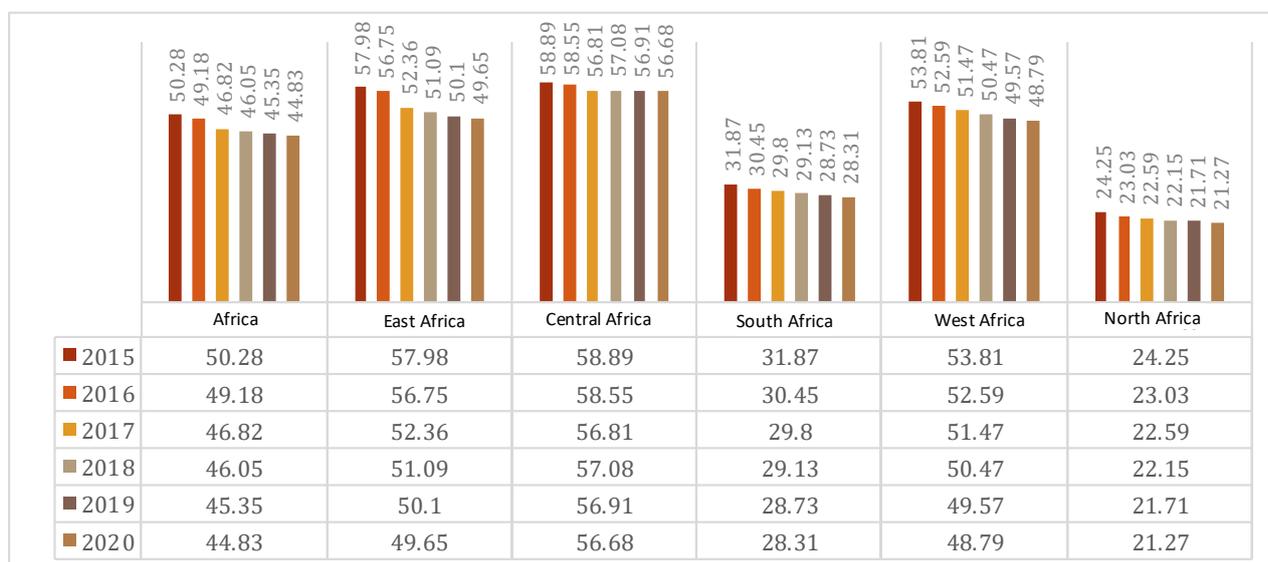
Figure I
Proportion of urban population living in slums, 2015–2020
 (Percentage)



Source: Data taken from the UN-Habitat urban indicators database (2022).

8. Overall, the average proportion of the urban population living in slums showed a steady yearly decrease, from 50.28 per cent in 2015 to 44.83 per cent in 2020. Comparing the subregions, Central Africa showed the lowest percentage decrease, from an average of 58.89 per cent in 2015 to 56.68 per cent in 2020; while East Africa recorded the highest percentage decrease, from 57.98 per cent in 2015 to 49.65 per cent in 2020 (see figure II).

Figure II
Trends in proportion of the urban population living in slums
 (Percentage)



Source: Data taken from the UN-Habitat urban indicators database (2022).

9. Informal settlements and slums are still home to millions of urban residents in many African cities, with populations having no access to basic services such as water and sanitation. These issues, combined with other housing-related issues such as homelessness and unaffordability, make target 11.1 difficult to achieve.

10. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is estimated to have further worsened the housing situation in many African cities. As economies recover, the urban poor, many of whom live in informal settlements, continue to experience the severest impact and face the greatest risk.⁶ Achieving affordable and adequate housing for all by 2030 requires renewed policy focus and increased investment in low-cost housing. If the housing needs of the urban poor and marginalized groups remain ignored, Goal 11 will only be partially attained and millions of people will be denied the benefits of urbanization.

B. Target 11.2⁷

11. The provision of infrastructure for putting in place mechanisms to promote the use of public transport is key to enhancing access to opportunities for all urban dwellers, which is an important component of ensuring that no one and no place is left behind. Cities that provide well-connected and non-motorized public transport systems, and for which the public transport system is affordable, safe and efficient, are likely to be more prosperous and their citizens are more likely to enjoy the urban lifestyle while having easier access to diverse opportunities.

12. Public transport in African cities is diverse, ranging from informal paratransit to well-developed metro systems. In most cities, paratransit systems that are mainly operated by the private sector shape the urban public transport sector. While these systems are, in most cases, associated with a lack of infrastructure, and unclear regulatory and operating systems, the services they provide are critical to urban populations.

13. Data collected by UN-Habitat showed that cities in Africa recorded the lowest level of convenient access to public transport, which was measured as the share of the population that could walk to a public transport stop within 500 metres for low-capacity systems and 1,000 metres for high-capacity public systems. The data from 137 cities from 23 African countries revealed that the share of population with convenient access to public transport averaged only 31.7 per cent, against a global average of 51.6 per cent.⁸ There were, however, significant variations among the cities throughout the continent, with higher levels of access recorded in North African cities.

14. All African cities have shown a keen interest in investing more in public transport systems, not only on infrastructure, but on policy frameworks to make public transport more accessible, safe and to ensure that it is properly integrated into other modes of getting around such as walkways and cycling.

C. Target 11.3⁹

Indicator 11.3.2¹⁰

15. Indicator 11.3.2 measures the voice and influence of people, communities and civil societies (including grassroots and informal sector organizations) in urban planning and management. Participatory, transparent

⁶ UN-Habitat, *COVID-19 in African cities: impacts, responses and policies* (Nairobi, 2020).

⁷ By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

⁸ United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Human Settlements Programme, *Walking and Cycling in Africa: Evidence and Good Practice to Inspire Action* (Nairobi, 2022).

⁹ By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

¹⁰ Proportion of cities with a direct participation structure of civil society in urban planning and management that operate regularly and democratically.

and accountable urban planning and management, and the creation of a favourable environment, are important steps in assessing how national and local governments involve people, communities and organizations in implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes for the Sustainable Development Goals. High-quality participation by all is vital for sustainable development and for the successful design and implementation of integrated spatial and urban planning and management.

16. In general, cities and countries in Africa record fair levels of civic engagement in decision-making and governance, which also has bearing on urban planning and management.¹¹ Engagement mechanisms include formal petitions, town hall meetings, neighbourhood advisory committees, public hearings, social media campaigns, demonstrations, local referendums, elections, participatory budgeting and public consultations. Civic engagement is likely to continue increasing as more cities adopt technology for engagement and feedback processes. It must be acknowledged, however, that there are limitations when it comes to the ability to measure accountability and effectiveness, and to determine who is engaging through these methods and which groups of people, if any, are not being engaged or are being marginalized.

17. The way unprecedented urban growth is managed in the years ahead will be crucial in the quest for sustainable urbanization in Africa. The consequences of excessive unplanned urban expansion include increased demand for mobility, increased energy consumption, environmental degradation, increased cost of providing basic services per capita (water, sanitation, drainage), increased cost of public space and infrastructure per capita, reduction in economies of agglomeration, and decreased urban productivity.

D. Target 11.5¹²

Indicator 11.5.1

18. Indicator 11.5.1 monitors the number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population. The indicator provides mortality rates, numbers of internally displaced persons, and total numbers affected by natural disasters.

19. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate change.¹³ In 2022 alone, every part of the continent had been affected by extreme weather events, ranging from deadly floods in Nigeria to devastating drought in Somalia, and from wildfires in Algeria to catastrophic flooding in South Africa.

20. The Carbon Brief¹⁴ analysis of disaster records found that extreme weather events in Africa had killed at least 4,000 people and affected a further 19 million since the start of 2022. According to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, based on information taken from the Emergency Event Database,¹⁵ the continent's share of the global population affected by disasters rose from 8 per cent for the period 2001–2020, to 29.4 per cent in

¹¹ UN-Habitat, *Tracking Progress Towards Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements: SDG 11 Synthesis Report – High-Level Political Forum 2018* (Nairobi, 2018).

¹² By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.

¹³ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability – Working Group II Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and New York, 2022).

¹⁴ Carbon Brief, “COP27 Sharm el-Sheikh”. Available at www.carbonbrief.org/policy/un-climate-talks/cop27-sharm-el-sheikh/.

¹⁵ Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, “2021 disasters in numbers” (Brussels, 2022).

2021. Given the impact of extreme events in Africa often goes unrecorded, the true figures are likely to be much higher.

21. There are various initiatives and programmes underway in Africa that are aimed at achieving target 11.5. For example, The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction's call to zero climate disasters by 2030, is intended to ramp up global efforts to tackle vulnerability and exposure to climate risks, with a focus on those countries and communities that are on the frontlines of the climate emergency, in particular by supporting early warning and action for all by 2027.¹⁶ Countries with substantial-to-comprehensive early-warning-system coverage have one-eighth the disaster mortality rate of those with limited or no coverage. Only 40 per cent of Africa, however, is covered by such systems, and even those are compromised by quality issues.¹⁷

Indicator 11.5.2

22. Indicator 11.5.2 measures direct economic losses from disasters at the global and national levels in relative terms as a percentage of GDP. It measures the monetary value of total or partial destruction of physical assets in areas affected by natural disasters.

23. Since 1990, droughts and floods have lowered African countries' GDP by 0.7 per cent and 0.4 per cent, respectively. An analysis of disasters in the period 1990–2019¹⁸ revealed that no continent has been more affected by climate change-induced natural disasters than Africa. During that period, Africa has suffered 1,107 floods and droughts, leading to 43,625 deaths and at least \$14 billion in damages to crops, livestock and property.

24. The total economic losses due to natural disasters in Africa have been estimated at around \$12 billion per year, on average, over the past decade. This includes direct losses, such as damage to infrastructure and crops, and indirect losses, such as loss of income and productivity.

25. Drought and floods have been documented to contribute the most to disaster-related losses. Droughts can have a particularly severe economic impact in Africa, as they can lead to crop failure, reduced livestock productivity, and increased food insecurity, which can have knock-on effects throughout the economy. Floods can cause significant damage to infrastructure, disrupt economic activity, and reduce income and productivity.

26. Since the adoption of the Sendai Framework in 2015, the States Members of the United Nations have been using the Framework to monitor and report on disaster-related losses. While the aggregated losses in lower income countries will inevitably remain below those in higher income countries, due to lower asset values, the cost in human and financial terms can, however, be enormous at the household and community levels, especially when damaged or destroyed property is uninsured. Lost crops and damaged agricultural land also have the greatest impact on the poorest, with chronic long-term consequences.

27. On average, low- and middle-income countries suffer more from disasters, accounting for an average of 80 per cent of aggregate economic losses worldwide, compared with 20 per cent of aggregate economic losses occurring in high-income countries. Every year, low- and middle-income countries lose 10 times more of their GDP to disasters than high-income countries. In addition, the former have less capacity to cope with and recover from disasters, which further worsens their economic losses.

¹⁶ For additional information on “zero climate disasters by 2030”, see www.undrr.org/undrr-cop27.

¹⁷ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, “Early warnings for all of Africa”, 21 November 2022; and, www.undrr.org/news/un-warns-half-world-not-prepared-disasters.

¹⁸ Mounir Bari and Sébastien Dessus, “Adapting to natural disasters in Africa: what's in it for the private sector”, Working Paper (Washington, D.C., International Finance Corporation, World Bank, 2022).

E. Target 11.7¹⁹

28. Urban design is a key contributor to the functioning of cities, and significantly determines how liveable cities are. A city that adopts an urban planning and design model that balances the built and the natural environment presents its residents with opportunities for a better quality of life. At the centre of a good urban design is a well-developed street network that balances the needs of various users with a network of open public spaces. Cities that do not provide enough land to streets with adequate walking and cycling spaces and adequate open public spaces are likely to be less prosperous and less people friendly. A city can tackle inequality through equitable distribution and provision of inclusive, safe, and accessible public spaces. Equally, investment in networks of streets and public spaces improves urban productivity, livelihoods and enables better access to markets, jobs and public services, especially in countries where the majority of the workforce is informal.²⁰

29. According to data compiled by UN-Habitat, many African cities are still lagging in the provision of open public spaces. Data from 159 cities in 28 countries show that, on average, cities in Africa allocate only 17.4 per cent of land to streets and open public spaces, which is far below the average of 30–40 per cent recommended by UN-Habitat. Given the limited allocation of land to open public spaces, only 37.4 per cent of the urban population in Africa has access to an open public space within 400 metres, which is below the global average of 45.2 per cent. This means that the majority of urban populations in Africa are deprived of the massive social, health, environmental and economic benefits associated with such spaces.

30. A major lesson learned from the COVID-19 pandemic has been the usefulness of open public spaces in enhancing the quality of life during crises. City governments in Africa should work towards increasing the share of land devoted to streets and open public spaces, along with making the open public spaces friendly and safe for all.

F. Target 11.a²¹

Indicator 11.a.1

31. Indicator 11.a.1 refers to the number of countries that have national urban policy or regional development plans that: (a) respond to population dynamics; (b) ensure balanced territorial development; and (c) increase local fiscal space. Most of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have such national urban policies or regional development plans.²² National urban policies can contribute to a more balanced and polycentric urbanization by aligning sectoral policies, facilitating multilevel dialogues, fostering rural-urban linkages and addressing sociospatial inequality in cities.

32. While countries have different definitions of and expected outcomes from their national urban policies, the three most relevant outcomes for the 14 African countries that took part in a national urban policy survey in 2020 were:

¹⁹ By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

²⁰ *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019* (United Nations publications, 2019).

²¹ Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.

²² Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Human Settlement Programme, and United Nations Office for Project Services, *Global State of National Urban Policy 2021: Achieving Sustainable Development Goals and Delivering Climate Action* (Paris, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Publishing, 2021).

a coherent vision for national urban development; balanced territorial and urban development; and improved basic urban services and infrastructure.

33. The most important source of financing national urban policy implementation is national government investment. Countries recognize, however, the need to mobilize diverse sources of financing, including national-subnational co-financing, public-private partnerships, and private financing and mobilization of communities or cooperatives.

34. African countries face persistent challenges in developing effective national urban policies, such as coordination, resources, capacity and data gaps. The lack of financial and human resources are the two main challenges to implementation. A lack of expertise at the intersection of climate change and urban policy and limited coordination mechanisms between the national and local levels are common obstacles to integrating climate objectives into a national urban policy. Despite growing concerns, sociospatial inequality and divides in African cities have not been extensively addressed in surveyed national urban policies. Lastly, bottom-up processes for data collection could be improved by using data from subnational governments in the national urban policy process.²³

35. Notwithstanding the negative effects of the pandemic, it has prompted countries to rethink how they deliver services and how they plan their space, focusing on the need to rebuild cities in the long term, and taking better account of needs such as social distancing and teleworking. Essential concepts such as the circular economy, localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, tactical town planning and “the 15-minute city” can improve quality of life while preserving productivity, social inclusion and the environment.

G. Target 11.b²⁴

36. While there has been notable progress, more needs to be done to accelerate the adoption and implementation of national disaster-risk reduction strategies through the engagement of national platforms and other in-country coordination mechanisms, along with support from the United Nations system and the larger international community.

37. Only 39 per cent of local governments reported having local disaster-risk-reduction strategies in 2019, compared with 29 per cent in 2015. Given that the number of countries reporting on this indicator remains relatively low, it is vital that a stronger push be made for more countries and their local governments to focus on this aspect through the Making Cities Resilient 2030 initiative.

III. Challenges, constraints and emerging issues

38. As urbanization in Africa continues to grow, poverty will shift towards urban areas, and the battle to reduce poverty on the continent will increasingly be won or lost in cities. Decent job creation is arguably fundamental in defeating poverty and inequality. Although Africa has experienced a relatively long spell of strong growth during the past two decades, that growth has failed

²³ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Human Settlement Programme, and United Nations Office for Project Services, *Global State of National Urban Policy 2021: Achieving Sustainable Development Goals and Delivering Climate Action* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2021).

²⁴ By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels.

to create enough jobs. In many African countries, growth has been driven by job-poor commodity sectors, while most of their populations remain trapped in small-scale agriculture and the urban informal sector.

39. The impact of the war in Ukraine (which led to soaring food, fuel and fertilizer prices) and the COVID-19 pandemic has been exacerbated by the higher frequency and intensity of global natural disasters. The combination of the three overlapping shocks has pushed more people into extreme poverty and further increased inequality around the world, in particular in Africa, which now accounts for the highest proportion of the world's poor. Whereas some 35 per cent of the African population was living in extreme poverty in 2019 (down from 55 per cent in 2000), the pandemic-related setbacks in economic growth pushed 55 million people into extreme poverty. Indeed, with more than 80 per cent of employment being in the informal sector, the absence of social security or healthcare coverage was compounded by the loss of livelihoods and sources of income because of pandemic-induced lockdowns.

40. Tens of millions of people throughout Africa face the risk of famine, drought, disease and displacement in the coming decades. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,²⁵ multiple African countries are projected to face a combination of risks, including: reduced food production across crops, livestock and fisheries; increase in heat-related mortality; heat-related loss of labour productivity; and flooding from rising sea levels rise. Countries need to re-evaluate their current policies, strategies and plans given the greater likelihood of such events. Exposure of people, assets and infrastructure to climate hazards is increasing in Africa, fuelled by rapid urbanization, infrastructure deficits, and a growing population in informal settlements.

41. For urban transport to contribute substantially to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, mobility should be equitable in access, efficient, safe, and climate-responsive. In Africa, a high proportion of poor people walk or use non-motorized transport, especially for journeys less than 5–8 km.²⁶ In many cities, a substantial proportion of poor people live in suburban areas (informal settlements) and they face long and expensive journeys to work, often more than 20 km, commuting 3–4 hours per day.

42. To reap the demographic dividends of urbanization, the region must quickly ensure that investment in development is protected through proper risk-informed development planning. In addition to the rural-urban migration of people in search of an improved quality of life, the projected climate trends will see increased movement of migrants escaping drought, crop failure, and food insecurity, which will further drive urbanization.

43. The availability of data on such events plays a critical role in ensuring informed decision-making and proper planning. In African countries, however, there is inadequate access to information and there are gaps in current data, information and knowledge management, which contribute to low-risk governance capacity to systematically record the disaster-related losses and damage.

²⁵ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability – Working Group II Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and New York, 2022).

²⁶ Sustainable Mobility for All, *Global mobility Report 2017: Tracking Sector Performance* (Washington, D.C., 2017).

IV. Transformative actions and partnerships

44. The following transformative actions and partnerships are suggested with a view to making progress towards meeting the Goal 11 targets discussed above:

(a) **Leverage urbanization to create jobs and diversify economies.** This can be achieved by pairing economic planning and spatial planning in appropriate locations and by prioritizing labour- and skill-intensive employment. National development planning mechanisms could prove to be ideal vehicles for strengthening synergy between the Sustainable Development Goals and urbanization. In that regard, cities will prove critical in facilitating countries' efforts to achieve Goal 1 (on eradicating poverty) and Goal 8 (on inclusive growth and decent work).

(b) **Invest in cities according to their role in regional integration.** Under the African Continental Free Trade Area, cities will play a critical role in supporting the regional integration process as major production and consumption nodes, connecting national and regional economies along transport, energy and trade corridors. Furthermore, with the increasing important role played by information and communications technology in social and economic life, cities are well placed to become the backbone of regional connectivity, spurring faster economic integration and growth. As economies mature and the share of intraregional trade grows, cities and urban systems will transform into manufacturing, trade and logistics hubs that can support emerging regional supply chains in agriculture and industry. Already, urban agglomerations along regional corridors, including along the Lamu Port–South Sudan–Ethiopia Transport Corridor, the Praia-Dakar-Abidjan Corridor, and the Abidjan–Lagos, Doula–Bangui and Doula–Ndjamena Corridors, are testimony to the strong organic link between urbanization and regional integration.

(c) **Focus on those living in slums.** Given the high proportion of the urban population living in slums on the continent, it is imperative that African countries “leave no one behind” through improvements in housing quality, coverage and affordability in disadvantaged areas, thereby galvanizing action to achieve an equitable, inclusive and resilient urban environment.

(d) **Create platforms for managing transboundary crises and building resilience.** Matching the interlinked ambitions that are set out in the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 and the Sendai Framework requires coordination that is people-centred, inclusive, and locally oriented. It is the responsibility of Governments to manage complex crises, which are often transboundary in nature. This requires the creation of platforms for mutual learning among Governments to collect data on best practices that increase resilience.

V. Key messages

45. The following recommendations are put forward with a view to accelerating the achievement of Goal 11:

(a) **Strengthen the capacity of local governments to play a critical role in economic planning.** Countries, in their economic planning, should target sectors that leverage the economic potential of urbanization and cities. Enhancing urban productivity will require strategic infrastructure investment, with a particular focus on urban sectors that have the capacity to generate high economic returns, in tandem with efforts to strengthen planning and land governance mechanisms. In that regard, it is crucial to strengthen the capacity of local governments and expand their mandates beyond service delivery.

(b) **Optimize African cities' productivity and revenue-generation potential.** Cities require enormous investment, but they can also generate enormous resources. There is an array of instruments available to better link urban investment and revenue, and developing adequate subnational financial management capacity will likely play a critical role in the implementation of these instruments. Land value capture and leveraging the private sector are two entry points for ensuring adequate resources to fund and guide urban development.

(c) **Develop resilient infrastructure.** Developing resilient infrastructure that is resistant to natural disasters, such as floods and earthquakes, is an important component of effective strategies to manage African cities, by making them able to better withstand and recover from various shocks.

(d) **Put housing at the centre of national and local agendas.** Prioritization of policies and programmes that are intended to improve access to housing for those living in slums is crucial. Putting housing at the centre of national and local urban agendas will shift the focus from simply building houses to a holistic framework for housing development that is orchestrated with urban planning practice to place people and human rights at the forefront of urban sustainable development.

(e) **Make urban governance architecture inclusive.** While migration policies are often designed at the national level, cities are the pertinent grounds for the integration of migration into urban planning, in terms of managing service delivery systems and facilitating social and economic inclusion. Evidence-based urban planning, in which stakeholders, including migrants and other mobile populations, participate in consultation, decision-making and implementation processes, is crucial for the development of urban governance systems that facilitate integrated development.

(f) **Enhance multisectoral and inter-institutional coordination.** Resilience-building functions and responsibilities should be clearly defined across ministries and institutions at all levels of government. Countries are urged to accelerate the implementation of initiatives such as the Making Cities Resilient 2030 initiative, which has been recognized by the General Assembly for its partnership approach to programming, with a view to building risk-management capacity for make cities safer.
