

Sport for Sustainable Urban Development Initiative **Briefing Note**

"Sport is the low-cost, high-impact tool to support all countries – big or small, rich or poor – to build together a more peaceful, healthier, more equal and more sustainable world for everyone – 365 days a year."

(International Olympic Committee President (IOC) President Thomas Bach)

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and UN-Habitat are collaborating to mainstream sport, physical activity, and active recreation in sustainable urban development processes. By bringing together UN-Habitat's SDG Cities and Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities Flagships and the IOC's Olympism365 strategy, the collaboration will strengthen the role of sport as a tool for inclusive sustainable development in cities, and progress health, social inclusion, and environmental outcomes.

Background

Olympism365 is the IOC's approach to strengthening the role of sport as an important enabler for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which it achieves by collaborating with a range of partners from both within and outside the Olympic Movement. The themes and priority areas for Olympism365 reflect the positive role that sport, and Olympism can play in society for the SDGs by contributing to creating healthier and more active communities, more equitable, safer, and inclusive communities, peacebuilding, and education and livelihoods.

SDG Cities is UN-Habitat's Flagship Programme that aims to provide a systematic approach to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in cities and urban areas guided by the principle of "leaving no-one (and no place) behind" and multilevel governance. Its comprehensive strategy focuses on three key areas: data, strategic decision-making, and implementation. The initiative deploys a set of tools to support the local capacities needed to drive sustainable urban development— data, governance, planning, financing, and basic services delivery. SDG Cities is anchored within the SDG Localization and Local Governments Team, under the Urban Practices Branch, which has the mandate of coordinating UN-Habitat's corporate work on localizing the SDGs.

The Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities programme employs urban regeneration as a tool to reduce spatial inequalities and poverty. Supporting the social, economic, and environmental transformation of deprived areas and strategic locations within a city will result in connected, dynamic, diverse and vibrant neighbourhoods. This transformation of urban areas is expected to lead to an increase in equality of outcomes for all. The programme contains a 'Mega events as catalysers for sustainable development' component. In this component, UN-Habitat aims to integrate inclusion, prosperity, and resilience agendas with the transformative potential of urban events, focusing on achieving inclusive, sustainable, and

resilient development. Collaboration with Strategic Partners will enhance the socio-economic and environmental impacts, prioritizing SDG localisation.

The collaboration

The overall objective of the Initiative is to fully realise the potential of sport, physical activity, and active recreation as an important enabler of sustainable development at scale in cities and contributor to creating more healthy, inclusive, and environmentally friendly urban societies.

This aim will be advanced through two streams of work that draw on the approach and methodology of SDG Cities and Inclusive Communities, Thriving Cities:

1. Working directly with cities and communities on project implementation and localised institutional capacity building; and,
2. Working nationally and globally to support knowledge exchange, policy development and resource mobilisation.

It will integrate sport and physical activity metrics into cities' analysis and planning tools, support capacity-building of municipal authorities and sporting bodies, provide seed funding for urban sports infrastructure and programming, focusing on urban communities that are most left behind; and produce tools and guidelines to help local authorities integrate sport more actively into urban development processes. It will thus harness sport, physical activity and active recreation as a driver of sustainable development in cities.