



UN INTERAGENCY
TASK FORCE ON NCDs



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Working in partnership to improve health and wellbeing in urban settings

Wednesday 6 November 2024. 13.00-14.30
ONE UN Room B

This event will also be live streamed. Virtual participation is through the WUF12 App. To get access to WUF 12 events all participants must register on Habitat's [Global Event Management System \(GEMS\)](#).

Cities are where the battle for health will be won or lost! Join us for a rich discussion that will see if and how governments, city authorities, the UN system, the private sector & civil society are fulfilling their responsibilities.

This is a WUF12 ONE UN event. ONE UN events aim to tie the New Urban Agenda to the work being done across the globe in service of the UN mandate and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Guidance for [WUF12 One UN events](#):

- Hosting is restricted to UN agencies, funds, programmes, and inter-governmental organizations exclusively.
- Focus: United Nations cooperation and success stories.
- Duration: 90 minutes.
- In-person capacity: approx. 80 to 100 participants.

Summary

Improving health is critical to meeting several SDG targets and 2030 is only a few years away. Cities and urban setting are where the battle for health will be won or lost. Between now and 2030 many cities will be built – and they need to learn lessons from existing cities in terms of what works and doesn't work when it comes to providing an environment that is healthy and as a result maximizing economic productive.

This rich discussion will be one that looks at what governments, city authorities, the UN system, the private sector and civil society are doing to fulfil their responsibilities for developing and sustaining healthy cities and urban environments. And importantly, what more they need to do.

This event is jointly led by the Secretariat of the UN Non-communicable Diseases Task Force, the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO), and UN-Habitat.



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Most factors that influence health are outside the health sector. In cities and regions, planning and design play central roles in the prevention of disease and in fostering healthier environments.

For many years, WHO has supported local initiatives aimed at improving health in cities, established global partnerships and networks of cities to allow sharing of experiences, supported global and national advocacy efforts on urban health, and contributed to building the evidence base to enhance urban health outcomes. One of these efforts is the Healthy Cities initiative which was conceived with the goal of placing health high on the social and political agenda of cities by promoting health, equity and sustainable development through innovation and multisectoral change. Healthy Cities is a strategic vehicle for health development and well-being in urban settings and to achieve urban health. Healthy Cities and local governments have gained new attention and significant prominence in the context of the implementation of the SDGs.

Deliberate action in planning cities and territories can contribute directly or indirectly in improving health and wellbeing, for example implementing population-based evidence-based measures to improve air pollution, reduce tobacco and alcohol use, and improve access to a healthy diet and physical activity.

By 2050, 70% of the world's population will live in an urban space. As many have yet to be built, there is an opportunity to encourage urban designers and policy makers to develop cities and towns that promote health, wellbeing and happiness and address risk factors— and as a result are more economically productive.

Together, UN-Habitat, WHO and other members of the UN NCD Task Force aim to support Member States position health at the center of urban development, through creating enabling environment for health and wellbeing including effective systems and processes and maximizing the impact of existing tools.

The UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2025 emphasizes: (i) the need for UN-Habitat to leverage partnerships with local and regional governments, and development partners; and (ii) that sustainable development means addressing basic human rights of the millions of marginalized urban dwellers living in poverty and subject to marginalization. The next UN-Habitat strategic plan is expected to have health as a strategic priority.

The WHO Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019-2025 (GPW13) includes urban health as a growing priority for the Organization to address the root causes of ill health and reducing health inequities through action on social, economic, environmental, commercial, and cultural determinants at the local and city levels. WHO recognizes that urban health relies on coordinated action across various sectors—beyond just health, to include planning, housing, transportation, water, sanitation, energy, and more. A strategic approach to address urban health in an integrated way are being further elaborated and supported through the key global WHO workstreams.

At the global level, WHO and UN-Habitat work together to develop resources that integrate health and wellbeing in city planning, tools that quantify the health and socioeconomic impact of planning and designing urban areas from a health perspective, capturing successful initiatives, and developing training material on urban planning and health. The Task Force has a dedicated workstream that drives forward action on urban health.



WHO's Eastern Mediterranean region (EMRO) and UN-Habitat's Arab States Region have gone further by incorporating urban and green indicators in WHO's Healthy Cities programme at the regional level to have

an updated list of healthy cities domains and indicators. This will guide cities authorities to measure, plan for, and invest in change for a more healthy, sustainable urban future.

The meeting will consist of keynote addresses, panel discussions and plenary discussion. Panelists will consist of experts from government and city authorities, academia, the UN system, private sector and civil society. A small number of contributors are listed below, but space precludes including all of them.

The first panel will focus on action in the Eastern Mediterranean/Region for Arab States. The second panel will focus on regions in other parts of the world.

Objectives

1. To strengthen the commitment to urban health by implementing the Healthy Cities Programme to improve urban health and multisectoral actions for health and wellbeing.
2. To advocate for the importance of urban planning in achieving health and wellbeing and addressing risk factors.
3. To underline the importance of strengthening data for evidence-based decision-making and sustainable development action.
4. To share concrete experiences and best practices led by health authorities and local governments in promoting urban health.
5. To emphasize the importance of impactful partnerships at the national and local authorities' level within and between countries.
6. To facilitate the interorganizational and multisectoral collaboration, experience exchange.
7. To highlight the importance and commitment for including urban health into WHO, UN Habitat and broader UN system policies and plans.

Programme

Overall moderator:

[Nick Banatvala](#), Head of Secretariat, UN Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases

5 min	Welcome and introduction Nick Banatvala , Head of Secretariat, UN NCD Task Force Nagwa Lachine , Programme Officer, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States
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7 min	Keynote Address Alian Li , Assistant Director-General, Universal Health Coverage, Healthier Populations, WHO
25 min	Panel 1: Action across the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) and UN Habitat Regional Office for Arab States <i>Moderator: Samar El-Feky, Regional Adviser for Health Promotion and Social Determinants of Health, WHO EMRO</i> Abdelaziz Derouiche , President of the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Prefectural and Provincial Councils, and President of the Council of Rabat. Mohammad Khashoggi , General Director, Ministry of Health, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Amaal Alyahiya , Head of Healthy Cities Department in MoH, Kuwait Mazen Malkawi , RA Environmental Health and Climate Change, WHO Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action
7 min	Keynote speaker Michael Mylnar , Deputy Executive-Director, UN-Habitat
25 min	Panel 2: Actions across other regions <i>Moderator: Nick Banatvala, Head of Secretariat, UN NCD Task Force</i> Claudia Lopez , former Mayor of Bogota, Colombia Nicholas You , Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation, China Kristie Daniel , Program Director, Livable Cities, Heathbridge Foundation of Canada Atsani Ariobowo , Director, Child and Youth Health, FIA Foundation
10 min	Q&A and discussion (with a focus on opportunities for mobilizing resources for action)
5 min	Reflections and way forward Graham Alabaster , Head of Geneva Office, Office of the Executive Director, UN Habitat
6 min	Closing Remarks Hanan Balkhy , WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean

1 November 2024