

# LAND AND THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

Land underpins all the key aspects of the NEW URBAN AGENDA because it is a key driver for inclusive and sustainable urban development



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The New Urban Agenda is about people. People need a place to live in dignity and a place means land; land for housing, working, education, commercial activities, leisure and transport. Today's high population growth puts increasing pressure on land, which in turn becomes increasingly scarce and may cause social unrest and conflict. We are at a turning point! Use of and access to land need to be managed with care and responsibility in order to harness the transformative potential of the New Urban Agenda, in particular in situations where cities need to grow.

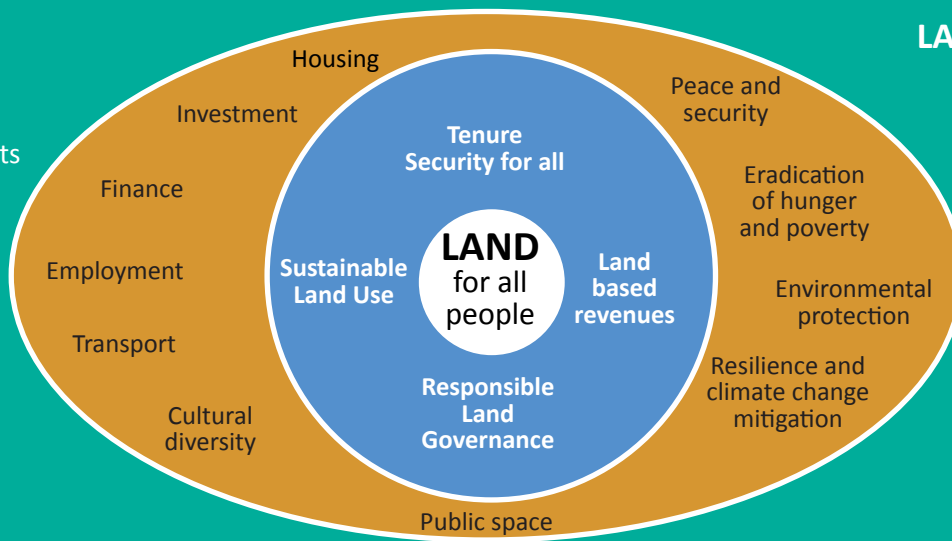
Governments that ensure affordable and equitable access to land and tenure security for all, that establish frameworks to ensure the sustainable use of land and mechanisms to generate revenue from land, can guide and finance sustainable urban development and create inclusive and resilient cities.

Governments that do not regulate access to land and its use, leaving everything to

the market and the elites, and that do not benefit from increased land value, cannot influence urban development. But these governments do increase the risk of conflicts, social instability and unrest, negative impacts on climate, and disaster.

When finalizing the New Urban Agenda, United Nations Member States should address land as a key focus area and give attention to all types of human settlements: urban, peri-urban and rural, rich and poor. Member States should confirm and build on existing international instruments that promote the following: secure tenure for all, the public control of land use, the generation of land-based revenue to benefit everyone, and responsible land governance. In particular, Member States should embrace and incorporate all commitments related to land made by the Vancouver Action Plan, the Habitat Agenda, the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure and the relevant UN-Habitat Governing Council resolutions.

Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by managing land responsibly



United Nations Member States should make the following **FOUR KEY COMMITMENTS** to achieve the goals of the New Urban Agenda:

## 1 ENSURE TENURE SECURITY FOR ALL

The New Urban Agenda should stress that no one should be left behind concerning land rights. The New Urban Agenda needs to confirm the duty of states to recognize, respect and safeguard all legitimate land tenure rights along the continuum of rights, including informal and customary tenure, and it needs to promote and facilitate the enjoyment of them. The New Urban Agenda should confirm that businesses are responsible for respecting human rights and legitimate land tenure rights. The New Urban Agenda should also promote lasting solutions for displaced people.

*Tenure security matters because it is the basis for adequate housing, responsible private investment and the overall prosperity of an inclusive and safe city.*

## 2 ENSURE SUSTAINABLE LAND USE

The New Urban Agenda should a) stress the importance of responsible public regulation of land use, determined by the long-term interests of the public, in particular the affected communities, including the poor and the marginalized; b) prioritize minimizing land consumption while planning at scale for the expected population growth in order to reduce the ecological footprint of settlements, to protect nature and to conserve cultural landscapes; c) promote respect for the social function of land and promote the provision of safe public space responding to the needs of all, including women, children, youth and LGTB; d) promote land management tools such as spatial planning, land readjustment and land sharing that provide important opportunities for sustainable urban development; and e) highlight the importance of balanced territorial development.

*Sustainable land use matters because it allows for a balance between the different needs and interests of all urban inhabitants, which makes cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.*

## 3 GENERATE LAND-BASED REVENUES FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

The New Urban Agenda should stress the high potential of a) establishing transparent, fair and effective land value sharing mechanisms, e.g. land value capture, betterment levies and sale of development rights; b) selecting one or several types of land taxation adjusted to local conditions, e.g. land acquisition, land holding, land sales and land value increment tax; and c) developing and implementing a strategy on land banking and generating income from public land.

*Land-based revenues are fair and socially sustainable because those who benefit more from urbanization contribute more to its costs; they matter because they expand the revenue base of local governments and enable them to finance inclusive and sustainable urban development.*

## 4 ENABLE RESPONSIBLE LAND GOVERNANCE

through a) the elimination of administrative and political corruption, fraud and clientelism in land administration and management, b) the accountability, transparency and participation of all when managing land; c) the establishment and implementation of national land policies, laws and standards in accordance with international law; d) the creation of short, simple, affordable procedures and standards adjusted to local requirements; e) customer-friendly delivery systems that are effective and efficient, accessible and affordable, accountable and transparent, and that exploit digital and communication technologies as well as the wide range of data and information, including geospatial information; f) transparent and responsible public land management; and e) monitoring the application of global and national frameworks.

*Responsible land governance matters because it protects cities from land-based corruption and can solve and prevent conflicts and social unrest that lead to more inclusive and sustainable cities.*

**THE INCLUSION OF ADEQUATE LAND IN THE NEW URBAN AGENDA IS CRUCIAL FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT!**

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