

Compendium of Inspiring Practices:

HEALTH EDITION

International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning

Compendium of Inspiring Practices: Health Edition

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Summary

The need for simple, universally agreed principles to guide actors and decision-makers involved in the planning of towns and cities led to the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning being approved by UN-Habitat's Governing Council in 2015.

These Guidelines provide a global reference framework for improving policies, plans, designs and implementation processes that will lead to more compact, socially inclusive, better-integrated and connected cities and territories that foster sustainable urban development and are resilient to climate change. They consist of 12 key principles and 114 action-oriented recommendations targeted at four stakeholder groups: national governments, local authorities, planning professionals and their associations, and civil society and its organizations.

The evidence and lessons learned in relation to the Guidelines from various regions and contexts were documented in the publication IG-UTP: Towards a Compendium of Inspiring Practices. That document is intended to be of use to the global IG-UTP network and relevant planning constituencies.

This second collection of case studies, the ***Compendium of Inspiring Practices: Health Edition***, showcases 20 urban and territorial planning projects that positively and explicitly contribute to human health through the improvement of the built and natural environment. It is the result of an open call for case studies by UN-Habitat in mid-2018.

Four key lessons about planning and its relationship with the health of people can be learned from the cases here.

- 1) Close collaboration between health practitioners and urban and territorial planners is a key element of successful spatial development. Collaboration as a process is not only a methodology to bring together two or more parties for engagement and participation; it is also a learning tool that involves intellectual exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas from different perspectives.
- 2) Several layers of stakeholders being involved, from neighbourhood residents to local government officials, creates the advantages of ownership and involvement, among other things.
- 3) Putting health at the centre of any planning and letting it lead the process ensures health benefits are an outcome.
- 4) Putting health practices into urban policy is an effective way to improve and strengthen government systems that are aimed at achieving better health.

This edition focuses on 20 stories from countries around the world that highlight different issues as well as the approaches taken to resolve these issues or manage their associated health problems and the innovative features of each case. The stories are all very different from each other and are drawn from a wide range of countries that have different levels of development and therefore different concerns.

Introduction

Background

Different approaches to planning have been tested and implemented worldwide. While these diverse efforts provide valuable lessons to learn from, there is still a need for simple, universally agreed principles that can guide actors and decision-makers towards common goals. The International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (IG-UTP or Guidelines), approved in 2015 by UN-Habitat's Governing Council under Resolution 25/6, fill this critical gap by providing a global reference framework for improving policies, plans, designs and implementation processes that will lead to more **compact**, socially **inclusive**, better **integrated** and **connected** cities and territories that foster sustainable urban development and are **resilient** to climate change. The IG-UTP complement two other sets of guidelines adopted by the Governing Council: The International Guidelines on Decentralization and the Strengthening of Local Authorities (2007) and Access to Basic Services for All (2009).

The Guidelines were based on strong evidence and lessons learned from various regions and contexts as documented in the IG-UTP: Towards a Compendium of Inspiring Practices. They consist of 12 key principles and 114 action-oriented recommendations targeted at four stakeholder groups, namely national governments, local authorities, planning professionals and their associations, and civil society and its organizations.

Today, the IG-UTP are being used and implemented in selected cities and countries as a critical instrument for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Paragraph 93 explicitly acknowledges the IG-UTP as a key mechanism for its effective implementation in cities and territories. Considering the New Urban Agenda advocates for a re-invention of planning through more people-centred and integrated practices, the Guidelines represent an enabling mechanism towards this paradigm shift by bringing together actors from a diversity of sectors and different governance levels to the planning table to address key territorial and thematic issues. One example of such thematic approaches is the area of urban physical and mental health.

Resolution 25/4 of the Governing Council requested UN-Habitat "to consider health and well-being aspects, including the promotion of and access to health services, in developing policies on urban and territorial planning and human settlements". With the support of the Government of Norway, UN-Habitat, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), is working on implementing the Guidelines to generate health benefits for people through the improvement of the built and natural environment. This

will be achieved by enhancing the knowledge and building the technical capacities of actors and decision-makers in using urban and territorial planning as a tool to make cities centres for health and wellbeing. Within this initiative, the collection of inspiring practices will act as an instrument to raise awareness and build evidence, encouraging them to adopt and locally implement the Guidelines.

About the Compendium

The IG-UTP Compendium of Inspiring Practices is an ongoing and open initiative at UN-Habitat for which new experiences are constantly collected to document and share with the global IG-UTP network and relevant planning constituencies. The first IG-UTP: Towards a Compendium of Inspiring Practices is a collection of 26 experiences in urban and territorial planning that provides inventive, ambitious and unique cases that address common issues of urban and territorial development worldwide. The objective of the compendium is to support and illustrate, through an evidence base, the conditions for and benefits of applying the key principles included in the Guidelines.

This second release, the IG-UTP Compendium of Inspiring Practices: Health Edition, is a showcase of urban and territorial planning examples that positively and explicitly contribute to human health through the improvement of the built and natural environment. This sample of 20 international experiences from all regions of the world was developed with the submissions from an open call for case studies made by UN-Habitat in mid-2018.

Covering planning topics such as developing public space, mobility, greening strategies and food security among others, the cases demonstrate the inherent relationship between planning and public health at different spatial levels: supranational and transboundary, national, metropolitan and city-region, city and municipal, and neighbourhood levels. "Few architects, planners and engineers are aware of the health consequences of their technical choices, and similarly, few health officials re-informed of the potential impact of human settlements related interventions on community health." ¹

Hence, this compendium is intended for representatives of national governments and local authorities, planning and public health professionals, and civil society members in order to renew this awareness between planning, public health and interlinked sectors, and encourage them to work in close collaboration – in the multi-stakeholder spirit of the IG-UTP – in order to place health at the "heart" of sustainable urban development.

¹ Human Settlements Interventions addressing crowding and health issues, Nairobi 1995

Scope and Methodology

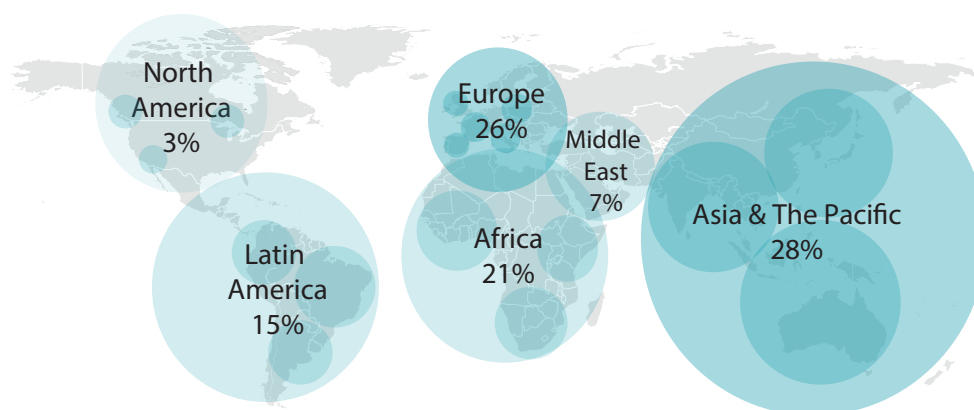
The database urban and territorial planning cases started in 2014 as part of the formulation process of the Guidelines. Nowadays, the database continues to expand, not only growing in number but also in thematic areas, with the Health Edition being the first example of this.

Beginning with a desk review and using the IG-UTP as the reference framework for the selection of case studies, a set of criteria was established to guide the collection and evaluation of case studies. Essential criteria included experiences with integrating planning and health, illustrations of strategic planning impacting multiple scales, health considerations in all phases of urban and territorial planning (i.e. not just an input or an output) and the concrete impacts of urban and territorial planning on human and environmental health.

The collection of cases on urban and territorial planning for health was made possible through an open call for case studies by UN-Habitat in collaboration with WHO, specifically directed to planning and public health actors who had formulated or implemented a planning intervention that targeted an urban health issue or that consequently contributed to the improvement of people's health in urban areas.

Finally, the inspiring cases were required to be **geographically balanced** to highlight the importance of context in urban and territorial planning, and **thematically linked to the five qualifiers of sustainable urban development** set forth by UN-Habitat: more compact, inclusive, integrated, connected and climate resilient cities and territories, **and urban health issues outlined in Health as the Pulse of the New Urban Agenda**.

Geographic Region



The Way Forward

The Compendium of Inspiring Practices: Health Edition is the second collection of case studies for the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (IGUTP). In line with the work of the first compendium, the Health Edition is intended to function as a knowledge- and experience-sharing tool for national governments, local authorities, planning and public health professionals and civil society organizations. It is designed to illustrate how health issues can be considered at different spatial planning levels and in various types of initiatives and supports the implementation of the IG-UTP from a thematic perspective.

The collection of inspiring practices is part of ongoing work at UN-Habitat for which cases are constantly collected to document and share with the global IG-UTP network and relevant constituencies. The publication of the selected 20 cases is thus the first step, which will be followed by dissemination and the development of an online database of inspiring practices facilitated by UN-Habitat. In addition, this Health Edition is meant to serve as a reference for the development of tools, handbooks and other relevant

materials to assist actors and decision-makers in the use of urban and territorial planning as a channel to improve the built environment and benefit human health. Ultimately, it is expected that the compendium also works as a knowledge base to motivate the inclusion of health into urban policies and city strategies.

By exploring the relationship between health and urban and territorial planning, opportunities have been opened up to facilitate more integrated planning practices and strengthen both the health and planning disciplines. UN-Habitat may be called on to support countries, regions and cities to apply the IG-UTP when reviewing their urban and territorial planning frameworks and to improve planning systems through a health "lens". It is also proposed that the work of the compendium motivates other actors in the United Nations system, national and local governments, non-governmental organizations, professional associations and other UN-Habitat agenda partners to take action to improve human and environmental health.

Key Lessons Learned

The variety of cases – across different geographical locations, spatial scales, types of intervention and governance levels – showcases a wide range of challenges and findings that ultimately provide opportunities for learning lessons. The multiple themes and issues are cross-cutting and reflect common conclusions, paving the way for **four key lessons: (1) The need for collaboration between health professionals and urban and territorial planners; (2) The power of multi-stakeholder integration at different levels in one project; (3) The positive outcomes from putting “health at the centre” of planning; and (4) Mainstreaming health in urban policies.** These lessons can be applied at all planning levels, scales and locations, which has been demonstrated by the overall experiences (challenges and achievements) and processes implemented in the different projects.

Collaboration between health professionals and urban & territorial planners

Close collaboration between planning and other disciplines is a central element of successful spatial development. The consideration of human and environmental health in the formulation of planning initiatives (projects, strategies, policies, research or others) and their implementation therefore requires a joint effort between health practitioners and urban and territorial planners. The importance of this collaboration is described in the cases as being essential but, at the same time, is also perceived as a challenge due to the different approaches used by the parties involved in each initiative.

Collaboration as a process is not only a methodology to bring together two or more parties for engagement and participation, but it is also a learning tool that involves knowledge exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas from different angles. The case study **Planning for Health and Wellbeing in the United Kingdom** describes collaboration as a both a challenge, considering the difficulties faced throughout the engagement, and a solution: “...understanding the language and terminology used by the different organizations and professions [...] was partly resolved following the provision of a joint training and by each

public health voices into territorial and spatial decision-making processes can thus inspire successful collaborations and bring about positive results for the improvement of health in urban areas.

Multi-stakeholder integration at different levels

Significant advantages for improving urban health are generated when many levels of stakeholders are involved through integrated planning initiatives. This inclusion of different actors in spatial planning processes improves the process itself while generating wider urban outcomes. The case study of **Sanergy in Kenya** illustrates how the results of a neighbourhood-level intervention had an impact at the policy level through multi-level action: *“Sanergy has built an impressive track record with the Government of Kenya, working hand-in-hand with the Kenyan ministries of health and the environment to launch the Kenya Environmental Sanitation and Hygiene (KESH) policy (2016-2030).”*

In the cases of the **Participatory Design Process in Hong Kong**, the **PolimaraRocinha in Brazil** and the **Air Quality Management Plan in Arrubá Valley, Colombia**, the need for and benefits obtained from this integration of governance levels are explained: *“It has been widely recognized that a waste management system is more likely to be successful if an elevated level of engagement of the community is reached”* (PolimaraRocinha, Brazil). Likewise, this collaboration is identified as an important metric for the achievement of a project's goals: *“... close articulation between the different entities of the state involved in the process was carried out in order to succeed”* (Air Quality Management plan in Arrubá Valley, Colombia).

Reaching a proactive engagement on behalf of stakeholders working at different levels is also recognized as a challenge. Still, the case study **Neighbourhood Upgrading in South Africa** demonstrates a successful collaboration through *“inclusive innovation by engaging stakeholders in every step of the way through participatory planning processes. By ensuring that all stakeholders are brought on board from the start, ownership*

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