The seventeen goals of the globally endorsed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have given fresh impetus to collective efforts to strengthen the linkages between the social, economic and environmental aspects of development. Goal 11 in particular aims to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.

Whilst many countries have made progress on the seventeen goals of the 2030 Agenda, cities have proven to be particularly agile and innovative partners. Well-designed policies in cities can also have positive effects on neighbouring rural areas, meaning urban development resonates beyond municipal boundaries. UNESCO stands as a bridge between international ambitions and local realities.

UNESCO believes that for cities to become truly liveable places, we need innovation in all spheres of human activity. Innovation – whether it is social, cultural, educational or in science and technology – strengthens resilience and builds more inclusive societies.

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City stakeholders are the engines of sustainable development at the local level, and can offer valuable success stories and experiences. UNESCO, as a laboratory of ideas and a catalyst for international action, works to help cities collaborate to find practical and effective ways towards the sustainable development of cities.

By 2050, two out of every three people will live in cities. We are truly living in the Urban Age. Our cities are now denser, more diverse, more multicultural, more educated and more connected – locally and internationally – than at any point in human history. Yet, all cities are facing the threats of poverty, social inequalities, environmental degradation, health threats, discrimination and disasters caused by natural hazards.

With so much at stake, we have to ‘get cities right’ for the future of the planet and all of its inhabitants. All countries have committed to making urban spaces more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
GLOBAL NETWORK OF LEARNING CITIES

The UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, comprising of 170 active cities from 123 countries, is an international policy-oriented network providing inspiration, know-how and good practices. A learning city promotes lifelong learning for all, from primary to higher education, within families, communities and the workplace. It promotes the use of modern learning technologies, while encouraging both global citizenship and sustainable development.

INTERNATIONAL COALITION OF INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES (INLCC) – ICCAR

Recent, discrimination, xenophobia and exclusion are challenges in cities worldwide - a problem that has been exacerbated by socio-economic and demographic shifts. To implement the Ten Point Action Plan of the Coalition of Inclusive Cities, UNESCO’s Department of Culture initiates and promotes a series of local initiatives and knowledge-sharing activities.

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