

News Release on Urban Monitor for Evidence-based City Crime Prevention and Community Safety Policies and Programming

The Webinar on Urban Safety Monitor for Evidence-based City Crime Prevention and Community Safety Policies and Programming was held virtually on 20th May 2021. It was jointly hosted by UN-Habitat and United Nation Office on Drug and Crime. The aim of the Webinar was to promote relevant UN standards and norms, including UN Guidelines on Crime Prevention and 2020 UN system-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements.

More than half of the world's population lives in cities with projection to rise by 60% by 2030. Urban areas are engines for innovation and growth. However, urban areas across the globe are struggling with insecurity and violence exacerbated by increase in poverty, inequality and rapid and unplanned expansion of cities. The work to promote safe, inclusive and resilient cities (SDG 11) is at the heart of global efforts to promote sustainable development.

There is need to address the conception of security and safety through prevention measures rather than repression and control. Long term sustainable impact of security can be achieved through tackling root causes of crime and changing attitudes towards insecurity from stigmatization and gating to solidarity and social cohesion.

The experience of cities is varied, and there are a range of networks fostering city-to-city engagement to promote learning and exchange. The Africa Forum on Urban Safety and European Forum on Urban Safety are examples of regional platforms offering expertise and knowledge diffusion on building safer cities. Cities around the world are strengthening their efforts to advance safe, inclusive and resilient cities by publishing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) that measure progress on the SDGs, including SDG 11.

Crime and violence disproportionately affect the most disadvantaged and marginalized people including women, children and the elderly. They have less recourse to justice and remedies and this hinders their access to basic services. There is need to embrace a more holistic and participatory solution to reduce crime in cities by adopting city-wide urban safety strategies building on socially inclusive and participatory approaches that contribute to safer cities for all.

There is need for integration of global urban monitoring framework which will support governments and other stakeholders on the processes of monitoring and evaluating urban challenges including crime prevention and community safety policies. Urban monitoring framework should be based on strong data collections and analysis which are essential to understand root causes of crime and violence and address risks.

In conclusion, there is need to recognize urban safety as a key component of progress towards sustainable urban development. To make our world safer and more sustainable, we need to take actions in cities guided by New Urban Agenda, Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 16 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Comprehensive urban design and planning approach is essential to crime prevention and development of safer cities.